

# A Fact-Finding Report on the Events at the University of Hyderabad

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<sup>†</sup>The views expressed in this report are only those of the authors and do not represent the views of their respective institutions. Institutional affiliations are given purely for purposes of identification.

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## 1 Preface

This report originated in discussions, involving faculty members from many scientific institutes, that were based on shared concerns about the events at the University of Hyderabad in January and March 2016. Apart from the three authors listed here — Suvrat Raju, Prajval Shastri and Ravinder Banyal — these conversations also involved Saikat Ghosh from the Indian Institute of Technology (Kanpur), Samridhi Sankar Ray from the International Centre for Theoretical Sciences (Bengaluru),

N. Raghavendra, Dileep Jatkar and Sumathi Rao from the Harish-Chandra Research Institute (Allahabad), Sugata Ray from the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science (Kolkata), Srikanth Sastry from the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (Bengaluru), Sandeep Krishna from the National Centre for Biological Sciences (Bengaluru), Bhanu Das formerly of the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (Bengaluru) and now with the Tokyo Institute of Technology, Alladi Sitaram, formerly with the Indian Statistical Institute (Bengaluru), Rahul Siddharthan from the Institute of Mathematical Sciences (Chennai), and Rama Govindarajan who was then at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (Hyderabad) and is now with the International Centre for Theoretical Sciences.

Many of us felt that it would be useful if a small group of academics could visit the University of Hyderabad to learn, first hand, about the events there. For various reasons, only the three authors of this report were able to visit Hyderabad. However, we are grateful to all the other scientists mentioned above for their support in this process. Rama Govindarajan joined us for some of our conversations in Hyderabad and although she was not part of preparing the final report, we are grateful for her inputs and help.

At the University of Hyderabad itself, we were pleasantly surprised that a large number of students and faculty, on both sides of the current divide, were willing to speak to us, and were very generous with their time. We are very grateful to them for their assistance in preparing this report. We have provided summaries of a cross-section of these conversations in Appendix A but apart from the students and faculty mentioned there, we would like to thank Prof. Bindu Bambah, Prof. E. Harikumar, Prof. Naresh BV Sepuri, Prof. Sasheej Hegde, Prof. Sheela Prasad, Prof. Venusa Tinyi, and especially Prof. Archana Morje.

We present this report as our best attempt to understand the events at the University of Hyderabad. We have also provided some suggestions that may help to resolve the conflict there, and perhaps prevent similar issues from flaring up at other institutes. We hope that this report will be read as an attempt at constructive fact-finding and criticism and not in an antagonistic spirit.

Apart from issues that are specific to the University of Hyderabad, we also had some other objectives in mind while undertaking this exercise. We feel that it is imperative to have open discussions, within educational and research institutions in India, on questions of academic freedom and various forms of discrimination including caste-discrimination. Although these discussions sometimes take place in the broader academic community, they are especially needed in the scientific community, which tends to steer clear of these issues. This attitude is reinforced by the fact that some of the country's leading scientific institutions are also among its least diverse. We hope that this report will help inform discussions on these issues.

We also feel that it is important for academic institutions in India to be democratically accountable. Once again, while India has a vibrant tradition of fact-finding

exercises conducted by independent civil-rights groups, members of scientific institutions have seldom been part of these activities. We hope that this report will encourage other scientists to undertake similar activities and, in general, be more involved with public and policy issues.

Although we have tried our best to be accurate and careful in our conclusions, we would be happy to make corrections in this report if any factual errors are brought to our attention.

## 2 Executive summary

We provide a summary of our findings below. We elaborate on these conclusions in the main text of the report. In the summary below, we have provided links to the section in the main text where each conclusion is elaborated.

1. The sequence of events at the University of Hyderabad was triggered by a conflict between student members of the Ambedkar Students Association (ASA) and Mr. Susheel Kumar, a leader of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) on the night of 3 August 2015. This was a minor conflict and indeed the first report of the University’s proctorial board recommended that both parties be let off with a warning. In our opinion, the matter should have been allowed to rest there. (See section [4.1](#).)
2. We understand that Mr. Susheel Kumar approached Mr. Bandaru Dattatreya — the Union Minister of Labour and Employment — and other members of the BJP to demand that the University take stricter action against the ASA students. Mr. Dattatreya decided to intervene in the matter by complaining about the ASA to the Ministry of Human Resource Development. Mr. Dattatreya’s actions constitute a disturbing and illegitimate attempt by a minister to violate the autonomy of a Central University. (See section [4.2](#).)
3. The University initially succumbed to this pressure by suspending the ASA students, but when this decision was protested, it decided to place this punishment in abeyance. Eventually, the vice chancellor changed, and in December 2015, the new vice chancellor, Prof. Appa Rao Podile, decided to suspend the ASA students from the hostel but not from academic activities. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that Prof. Appa Rao’s actions were influenced by external factors, including tremendous pressure from the Ministry of Human Resource Development. The Ministry escalated a minor incident by writing five letters in quick succession to the University. The Ministry’s actions also constitute a serious breach of the University’s autonomy. (See section [4.2](#).)
4. The suspension order issued by Prof. Appa Rao was insensitive and contained a phrase banning the ASA students from “common places in groups”.

The students felt that this phrase was casteist and insulting. Moreover, when Mr. Rohith Vemula wrote a distressed letter to the vice chancellor that should have set off the alarm bells, Prof. Appa Rao failed to take any action, and did not even coordinate with the PhD advisors of the suspended students. (See section [4.2.](#))

5. Mr. Rohith Vemula committed suicide on 17 January 2016. This led to large scale protests in the University, and a shut down of all academic activities. Prof. Appa Rao proceeded on indefinite leave, and after a brief period in which Prof. Vipin Srivastava took over, Prof. Periasamy started functioning as the acting vice chancellor. (See section [4.3.](#))
6. On 22 March 2016, Prof. Appa Rao returned to the University without any prior warning leading to spontaneous protests by some students. In the morning, a group of agitated students vandalized his house and was involved in a conflict with non-teaching staff members. However, the situation subsequently settled down for several hours. In the *evening*, when the situation was entirely peaceful, and *several hours* after the tension in the morning, the police decided to evacuate the protesters from the vice chancellor's compound by force. There is absolutely no doubt that, in this process, the police used excessive force. The video evidence of police chasing down and beating students is chilling. We do not understand how these events could have happened without at least the tacit approval of the University administration, which should be held to account for this violence against its students and faculty. Several students, and two faculty members were also arrested in this process. (See section [4.4.](#))
7. It is clear that the police violated the fundamental rights of the arrested protesters. Their families and friends were not even told of their whereabouts for more than 24 hours. Some of those who were arrested told us that the police intimidated them, and even told them that their fundamental rights had been suspended. (See section [4.5.](#))
8. In June 2016, well after these events, the administration suspended the two faculty members who had been arrested. The administration argues that it was simply going by the letter of the service rules. However, this does not explain why it took three months for the administration to wake up to the presence of this rule. Moreover, after widespread protests, the administration quickly rescinded the suspension using discretionary powers that it could have called upon to not suspend the professors in the first place. This strongly suggests that the suspensions were an attempt to intimidate the dissenting faculty, from which the administration backed down when it was confronted with opposition. (See section [4.6.](#))

9. The central question, which underpins this entire conflict, has to do with the implementation of the reservation policy in Indian Universities. Although the University of Hyderabad is a diverse institution that has successfully implemented the letter of the reservation policy, it is clear that this has not been enough to stop discrimination on the campus. This is because it is insufficient for an institution to just assemble a diverse body of students, faculty and staff. The institution must also ensure that it does not become a microcosm of society at large that reflects dominant social prejudices. We found scant evidence for such an effort at the University of Hyderabad. The University does not have adequate sensitization programs for its administrators, faculty members and students; nor does it have forums for dialogue and discussion among its members, or meaningful complaint mechanisms against discriminatory behaviour.

In its most pernicious form, discrimination at academic institutions is not explicit but rather disguised as a concern for “merit”. The issue of “merit” also relates to the interplay between caste and other forms of marginalization in society. At the moment, Dalit students, who may also come from economically weaker backgrounds, and may have less exposure to English, are thrown into the mix with other students who have had many more privileges in their early education. But the system makes no allowances for students from different backgrounds. In this setup, even talented students find it difficult to adjust, and in our opinion this is part of the reason that the University has seen so many suicides of minority students.

10. In view of our conclusions above, we would like to put forward the following suggestions. (See section 5.) We do not have any formal relation with the University of Hyderabad; but we are well-wishers of the University and members of the broader academic community. So we hope that these suggestions will be considered seriously by the University community in keeping with the democratic principle of accountability that is necessary to strengthen the legitimacy of public institutions.

- (a) It is clear that the University administration failed to discharge its responsibilities in a non-partisan manner, and failed to protect academic freedom on campus. Instead of amicably resolving the dispute between the ASA and the ABVP students, the administration succumbed to pressure from the BJP and the central government and took ill-advised and one-sided decisions that led to prolonged agitations and disquiet among a large section of students. Prof. Appa Rao himself failed to act on Mr. Rohith Vemula’s letter in December 2015, displaying an alarming lack of empathy. Furthermore, the administration failed to prevent the brutal assault by the police on dissenting students on 22 March 2016. We feel

that, as the head of the University administration, Prof. Appa Rao should accept responsibility for these failures.

We wish to emphasize that this issue is not about individuals. Any administrative post in an academic institution is about serving the community. In fact, sincere academics are commonly wary of administrative positions, since they are a distraction from academic work. Therefore it makes sense for an academic to continue in an administrative post only to the extent that he or she is able to contribute constructively to the institution. As such, Prof. Appa Rao should carefully consider whether his continued presence is helpful for the University. As far as we can see, Prof. Appa Rao has turned into a polarizing figure, and his mere presence as vice chancellor has led to a constant conflict, which has disrupted the academic activities of the University. So, we hope that Prof. Appa Rao will heed his own conscience and decide to step down from his position as vice chancellor for the larger good of the University.

- (b) We strongly urge the University to take up the matter of the violation of the civil rights of the dissenting students and faculty on 22 March. We urge the administration to pursue the matter, either with the police administration, or through the courts, and ensure that action is taken against the errant police officers who attacked and threatened the protesters.
- (c) The suspension of the two faculty members, Prof. Tathagata Sengupta and Prof. K.Y. Ratnam, on the pretext that they violated a clause in the government's "Civil Service Conduct Rules" should lead to a broader debate in the academic community on these rules. The Civil Service Rules are an anachronistic set of rules, designed for the government bureaucracy and ill-suited for members of academic institutions. As a coordinated exercise, staff at Universities and research institutions should formulate an alternative set of guidelines that would be better suited for academic employees and would ensure the protection of academic freedom.
- (d) The University does have an anti-discrimination officer, as per the relevant UGC regulations. But it would be very useful for the University to create a larger, more accessible and more powerful anti-discrimination cell that goes beyond the minimal protection mandated by the UGC. This anti-discrimination cell should have representatives from students, faculty, the administration, and the non-teaching staff and also some members from outside the University. Contact details for members of the cell should be available easily, and the cell should have the powers to investigate and act quickly on any complaint of discrimination that it receives.
- (e) We are aware that discrimination is a complex and multidimensional problem and it cannot be addressed at a purely administrative level. Moreover,

powerful political forces have a vested interest in the status quo and this is the reason that reforms like the reservation policy are not implemented whole-heartedly. This also means that meaningful progress on this front will require sustained and broad-based efforts.

Nevertheless, the academic community must explore possible paths forward. In this context, we feel that some simple reforms in the structure of courses may help to ameliorate at least some of the problems that we witnessed at the University of Hyderabad.

For example, we feel that one helpful reform would be to introduce a more flexible curriculum. It may be possible to have a three year M.Sc. degree, with foundational courses in the first year. The length of the PhD can be extended similarly from five years to seven years, with foundational course work in the first few years. It is important that these foundational courses be part of the course-structure for all students — not just students who are admitted through a quota. But the structure should be flexible enough to allow students who are better prepared to skip some or all of these foundational courses by giving “drop tests”. Such systems already exist in some of the country’s research institutions and they can also be implemented in the Universities.

### **3 Introduction to the main report**

#### **3.1 Background**

In January 2016, a Dalit PhD student at the University of Hyderabad, Mr. Rohith Vemula, took his own life. In our report, we briefly describe the sequence of events that led to this tragic death. Ever since, the University of Hyderabad has been engulfed by a fierce conflict, motivated by allegations that Rohith’s death was caused by the insensitivity of the University’s administration. Protests around this issue, led by students, who organized themselves as a “Joint Action Committee for Social Justice” (JAC) brought the University to a halt in January, and forced the vice chancellor, Prof. Appa Rao Podile, to proceed on indefinite leave. When the vice chancellor returned in March, a large number of students and faculty gathered at his residence to protest his return. Later in the evening, the police violently dispelled the protesters.

When videos of this police violence began to circulate in the broader academic community, they caused great consternation. These events came close on the heels of the controversy at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, where several students were arrested for organizing a protest on the University campus. In response to these events, a group of scientists from several institutions across the country, including the three authors of this report, started to informally discuss the lessons that academic

institutions could learn from these events. The idea of a fact-finding exercise, as an attempt to obtain accurate and neutral information, emerged from these discussions.

### 3.2 Fact-finding objectives

On 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> July 2016, the three authors of this report visited the University. The questions that we wanted to understand better in this visit were as follows.

1. Did the University administration succeed in protecting academic freedom? Did the University maintain an atmosphere where its members could express their opinions freely, even if their views were at odds with those of the administration?
2. Did the administration successfully protect the University's autonomy when the Central government chose to intervene in the controversy?
3. Has the University succeeded in establishing a non-discriminatory atmosphere on campus, where its members, including Dalit students and faculty, women and other minorities can operate comfortably and without fear of discrimination?

To seek answers to these questions, we sought appointments with members of the university administration, and we also contacted a cross-section of faculty from various disciplines. Among others, we contacted Professors Appa Rao Podile (vice chancellor), B. P. Sanjay (pro-vice chancellor), Prakash Babu (dean of students' welfare), Krishnaveni Mishra (Biochemistry), Naresh BV Sepuri (Biochemistry), Tathagata Sengupta (Mathematics), Sasheej Hegde (Sociology), Archana Morye (Mathematics), Aloka Parasher-Sen (History), Sanjay Subodh (History), B.S. Padmavathi (Mathematics), Vasanthi Srinivasan (Political Science), Bittu Kondiah (Neural and Cognitive Sciences), and Bindu Bambah (Physics). We heard back from most of them, and some put us in touch with other faculty members who were willing to share their views. A few expressed their inability to meet us, and we were unable to meet a few others due to schedule-constraints.

When we visited the University, we were glad to find that almost all the students and faculty members we met were willing to speak to us at length. Although the vice chancellor, Prof. Appa Rao Podile, did not meet us, we had a long discussion with the pro-vice chancellor, Prof. B.P. Sanjay.

Some of the faculty members in the list above put us in touch with the protesting students, including some of the members of the ASA who had been suspended with Rohith. We had a detailed discussion with the dissenting students. We also contacted Mr. Susheel Kumar, the PhD student and president of the ABVP on campus, who is at the center of the controversy. Although he was unable to meet us, he directed us to some of his associates — also members of the ABVP — who gave us their

perspective. We are very grateful to all these members of the University for taking the time to meet and discuss the issue with us.

A representative cross-section of these conversations are summarized in the Appendices to this report. We would like to recommend these Appendices to the careful reader since they may help to provide a more detailed understanding of the events at the University. We have taken care to separate our own conclusions and views from these summaries.

### 3.3 Brief conclusions

A quick summary of our conclusions is available in section 2. Here, we describe our answers to the specific questions that we framed above in some more detail.

With reference to Question 1 above, it seems quite clear that the University, under Prof. Appa Rao, failed to take several important steps in protecting the freedom of students and faculty to register their dissent. When student members of the ASA launched a protest against the administration in early January 2016, by setting up a “velivada”, the University did not treat them with appropriate sensitivity. We were particularly disappointed to note that the PhD advisors of the students, who should have been the primary conduit between the administration and the students, were not consulted adequately in this period.

Two months later, in March 2016, when a group of students and faculty gathered to protest the return of the vice chancellor, the administration again failed to protect their civil rights. We were particularly shocked by the description of police violence in this incident. Earlier in the morning, there was some tension and the VC’s house was allegedly vandalized by some students. But this was no justification for the ferocity with which the police attacked the students several hours later, when the situation had calmed down substantially. The police also arrested two members of the faculty, and the University administration later suspended them. It even issued them a show-cause notice on an absurd pretext — “for not reporting the fact of ... [their] arrest” to the University — even though this arrest was widely reported in the media, and well known to all members of the administration.

Why did the University act in this manner? We believe — and this is related to Question 2 above — that this is partly explained by the fact that the University succumbed to pressure from the Central government. In fact, soon after the conflict between the ASA and the ABVP, the Union Minister of Labour and Employment, Mr. Bandaru Dattatreya took it upon himself to complain to the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) about the activities of the ASA on the University campus. The minister’s complaints have no merit but what is even more troubling is that subsequently the MHRD chose to intervene in the dispute by writing several letters to the University. We find it hard to avoid the conclusion that the government was intervening politically in favour of the ABVP, and against progressive politics on the University campus. This is, unfortunately, part of a broader trend in the

country, where the BJP has misused its powers at the center to aggressively intervene and promote its youth organizations and suppress competing political student organizations.

Question 3 is more subtle. It seems clear that the University of Hyderabad has a diverse student-body and faculty. The University has also evidently taken efforts to implement the norms on reservations. However, it is also the case that discrimination, in more subtle forms, continues on the campus. Moreover, in the current dispute, several actions of the University give cause for grave concern. These include taking punitive actions against Dalit students, who were also from an economically under-privileged background, without giving serious thought to the possible consequences. Some of the orders of the vice chancellor were extraordinarily insensitive. For example, his order suspending the Dalit students included a line stating that “they are not permitted to ... enter the hostels, administration building and other common places in groups.” This appears to have been a mischievous statement, where the University preserved plausible deniability and blamed the statement on poor phraseology, even as it was interpreted as an insulting form of social ostracism by the punished students.

Moreover, the University does not have adequate mechanisms to sensitize its students and faculty about discrimination. There is no statutory committee that students can approach, if they suffer from caste-discrimination. In contrast other forms of harassment such as ragging tend to be taken more seriously.

Eventually, the issues at the University of Hyderabad also pertain to broader issues regarding the implementation of the reservation policy in education. Students from a Dalit or an OBC background are often, also, from economically weaker sections and may not have had adequate exposure to English, which is the medium of instruction. As such, it is important for educational institutes not only to implement the laws on reservation but also devote a significant fraction of resources to ensuring that the students who are admitted are then able to thrive at the University. Unless this second step is taken, the reservation policy remains ineffective and, in fact, becomes a form of perpetuating discrimination, while pretending that steps have been taken to address it.

The findings that lead to our conclusions above are presented in section 4. In this section, we have attempted to reconstruct the sequence of events, starting with the conflict between ASA and ABVP students in August 2015, and leading up to the suspension of two faculty members, Prof. Tathagata Sengupta and Prof. K. Y. Ratnam in June 2016. In section 5 we have provided some brief suggestions. Some of these suggestions are specific to the University of Hyderabad; some others may be useful as starting points for broader discussions in the academic community on how to prevent such incidents from recurring in the future.

In Appendix A we have provided summaries of some selected conversations at the University. In fact, some readers might want to bypass our perspective and simply

read these summaries as primary evidence and make up their own mind on the issue. Appendix B contains copies of several relevant documents. We have included them to support our conclusions but once again, they may be viewed independently as primary source-material.

## 4 Our reconstruction of events

Our reconstruction of events in this section relies on our conversations with several faculty and students at the University of Hyderabad, our perusal of the available documents and the publicly available video footage. In fact, as far as we could determine, the sequence of events is largely uncontroversial and all parties agree on the broad outlines, although at times, there are varying interpretations, which we record below. As we mentioned in the preface, at any stage, we welcome corrections and are willing to update this report to correct factual inaccuracies.

### 4.1 The conflict on the night of 3 August 2015

The University of Hyderabad has several strong student groups with various political viewpoints. Two of these are the Ambedkar Students' Association (ASA) — an old and established Dalit group at the University — and the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) which is, of course, closely tied to the youth wing of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). On 3 August 2015, an ABVP leader and a PhD student at the University of Hyderabad, Mr. Susheel Kumar, wrote a Facebook post mocking the ASA. The ASA was protesting the disruption of a screening of Muzaffarnagar Baaqi Hai in Delhi University by the Delhi-unit of the ABVP. In response, Mr. Susheel Kumar wrote that “ASA Goons are talking about hooliganism — feeling funny.”<sup>1</sup>

Members of the ASA found this post deeply offensive and in response, several of them gathered at Mr. Susheel Kumar's room the same night. This was evidently somewhat excessive on part of the ASA. Its members should have used a social media campaign of its own to protest Mr. Kumar's post. Soon afterwards, the University security, Mr. Kumar's friends, and even the police reached the spot. However, the police itself stated that Mr. Kumar did not suffer any significant injuries, and moreover that the police officers present did not witness Mr. Kumar being beaten up. (See affidavit filed by the police commissioner starting with Doc. 18.) This is consistent with the testimony of Mr. Kumar's friends (See subsection A.3.1) that while Mr. Kumar was probably intimidated by the large gathering of students, there was no *significant* actual violence inflicted upon him. It is likely, however, that Mr. Kumar was pushed around and threatened.

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<sup>1</sup>The original post is no longer available, but a copy has posted by Mr. Dontha Prashant on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/dontha.prashanth/posts/1024599760904414> and may be viewed publicly.

At the time, Mr. Kumar succumbed to this pressure, and withdrew his Facebook post. Although this was clearly done under duress, the ASA students seem to have also made him state that his apology was written “when am in full conscious and with out any force.” (See Doc. 1)

However, Mr. Kumar obviously found this sequence of events very humiliating. Coincidentally, it turned out that Mr. Kumar was also suffering from appendicitis and soon after this event, he was operated on for an appendectomy. Mr. Kumar alleged that he was punched in the abdomen by ASA students, and this is what forced him into surgery. But, in fact, the commissioner of police of the Cyberabad commissionerate inquired into the matter, and based on medical reports and a police investigation stated in a court affidavit that Mr. Kumar’s appendectomy had nothing to do with the conflict with the ASA but was related to a pre-existing ailment. (See Doc. 22 — which is part of the commissioner’s submission in court.)

While Mr. Kumar was in hospital, the University decided to hold an inquiry into this event. In its initial inquiry, the proctorial board of the University decided to let both parties off with a slap on the wrist, warning Mr. Kumar about his offensive Facebook posts, and the ASA for its intimidatory tactics. (See Doc. 2.)

On the whole, it appears to us that the first decision of the proctorial board was the correct one. This was a minor incident involving students, with no attendant serious consequences. After warning the students, the University should have brought the case to the attention of their respective advisors for further counselling, and allowed them to proceed with their PhD dissertations.

In fact, we do not have much more to say on this conflict precisely because it seems to have been a minor one, and ought to have been settled with the first inquiry mentioned above.

#### **4.2 Political pressures, administrative actions and the suicide of Rohith Vemula**

Unfortunately, after these events, Mr. Kumar of the ABVP launched a sustained campaign against the ASA using political forces outside the University. On one hand, his mother Ms. N Vinaya, who is also affiliated with the BJP lodged a writ-petition in the High Court asking the court to direct the University to take action against the ASA. On the other hand, Mr. Kumar met the Union Minister of Labour and Employment, Mr. Bandaru Dattatreya asking him to intervene on his behalf. We also have on record a letter written by the local BJP unit to Mr. Dattatreya. In this letter, they raised several questions including one that asked “why is it made to perceive on campus that it is shameful to be Hindu and Indian in Indian Universities”. They also requested that Mr. Dattatreya “direct University of Hyderabad to enquire on all activities of ASA and other radical groups on campus” and moreover requested him to “set up committees to monitor activities of radical and anti-national students and faculties at the University of Hyderabad.” (See Doc. 6.)

The local BJP unit seemed blissfully unaware of the fact that the minister has no authority over the University, and seemed blind to the authoritarian implications of its requests. In turn, Mr. Bandaru Dattatreya wrote to the Ministry of Human Resource Development on 17 August 2015 stating that Hyderabad University had “become a den of casteist extremist and anti-national politics”. (See Doc. 9)

It is hardly necessary to say that it is extraordinarily disturbing that a Union Minister would choose to intervene in this manner in the internal affairs of a University. Moreover, these letters raise grave concerns that the ruling party is conflating criticism of itself with “anti-national” behaviour, and moreover using allegations of “anti-national” behaviour as a rhetorical cover to suppress opposing political forces.

Although the University publicly stated that it was not influenced by these actions, several dissenting faculty members told us (see subsection A.1.1) that privately administration officials admitted that they were under tremendous pressure. Indeed, this is hardly surprising since the Ministry of Human Resource Development, in practice, has several levers of control over the University, and can even recommend the dismissal of the vice chancellor.

Subsequently, under mounting political pressure, the University decided to hold another inquiry on the same incident. In this second inquiry the proctorial board reversed itself completely and recommended harsh punishment for the ASA students, and no punishment for the ABVP student, Mr. Susheel Kumar. It is revealing to read the two reports of the proctorial board, spaced just a few weeks apart (See Docs. 2 and 10) with their stark difference in tone. As we mentioned above, the first report treated the incident as a minor one, but the second report recommended “complete suspension from University ... for ongoing/current semester”.

Referring to one particular student, Mr. V. Sunkanna, it even asked the vice chancellor “to take appropriate and strict action against him” as “a matter of security” and treat him as an “intruder since his presence in campus is dangerous.” Mr. Sunkanna received his PhD degree from the University of Hyderabad in 2016,<sup>2</sup> one year after these events so we do not understand what the proctorial board meant by stating he was not a bona-fide student. Perhaps the committee was using bureaucratic language to suggest that his registration had expired, due to some bureaucratic difficulty, at the University. But PhD students often take some extra time to complete their research and continue visiting the University in this period and therefore this recommendation to treat him as an “intruder” makes no sense.

It seems quite clear that this reversal in the University’s position was not due to the emergence of any new facts. Rather the University’s administration simply

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<sup>2</sup>In the convocation, Mr. Sunkanna refused to accept his diploma from Prof. Appa Rao leading to an embarrassing situation, which was widely reported in the media. For example, see “UoH scholar refuses to accept PhD degree from V-C”, *Hindu*, 2 October 2016 available at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Hyderabad/UoH-scholar-refuses-to-accept-PhD-degree-from-V-C/article15421854.ece>.

succumbed to external pressure, in a shameful display of cravenness. We note that although the decision of the second proctorial board preceded the official receipt of the first letter from the Ministry of Human Resource Development, the board met only after the letter that Mr. Dattatreya wrote to the ministry. It seems very likely that the administration was well aware of the interest that the BJP was taking in this conflict. We can think of no explanation for this sudden change of heart except that the members of the disciplinary board felt that it was necessary to feign an absurd level of outrage to deflect this external political pressure.

This subsequent punishment was strongly protested by ASA students and sympathetic faculty. Since the second decision of the proctorial board was manifestly disproportionate, the University reversed course once again and decided to place this punishment in abeyance.

At the same time, the University itself was in flux, and Prof. R. P. Sharma who was functioning as vice chancellor at the time of these incidents relinquished the post and Prof. Appa Rao Podile took over as the vice chancellor in September 2015. By this time, the Ministry of Human Resource Development had written to the University several times. For example, after asking the University for details on 3 September, the Deputy Secretary in the MHRD wrote to the University again on 24 September with a subject stating “Antinational activities in Hyderabad Central University – Violent attack on Sri Nandanam Susheel Kumar, Ph. D. student and President of ABVP”! On 6 October, 20 October, and 19 November, the Ministry wrote again to the University again asking for information on the matter. All of these letters are included with this report. See Docs. [12](#) – [17](#).

What explains this extraordinary interest taken by the Ministry in this minor event, when there are issues of far greater importance that remain unaddressed in our University system? The fact that the Ministry’s letter explicitly mentions the ABVP shows beyond reasonable doubt that even bureaucrats in the Ministry were aware of the political affiliations of the parties involved, and were clearly taking sides in the conflict.

As a result of this pressure, on 16 December 2015, Prof. Appa Rao decided to reinstate a modified form of the punishment recommended by the second proctorial-board meeting. He ordered that five students of the ASA be suspended from the hostel, although not from academic activities. However, using a remarkable phrase, his order stated that “they are not permitted to participate in the Students’ Union Elections, enter the hostels, administration building and other common places in groups”. (See Doc. [25](#).)

The ASA students viewed this line as casteist and felt that it was inserted to insult them. Supporters of the administration argue that the order was simply poorly phrased and this line was intended to prevent the students from intimidating the administration by gathering in a large group. However, given Prof. Appa Rao’s long association with the University and his knowledge of the intricacies of caste-

sensitivities, we find this unlikely. The order was undoubtedly insensitive but, in addition, we find it quite plausible that this sentence was inserted deliberately and mischievously. The order aimed to send an insulting message, but nevertheless maintain plausible deniability. This is what, in political discourse, is called a “dog whistle”.

Second, even though suspension from the hostel appears to be a relatively mild punishment it can, in fact, be a significant blow to students who come from an economically weaker background. The University hostel provides sustainable accommodation for students, and to expect them to find their own accommodation outside campus, on a meager scholarship, and find the funds to pay a large advance deposit is unreasonable. It is unfortunate that the University did not take this into account while deciding on this form of punishment.

Moreover, as some of the dissenting faculty members mentioned to us (subsection [A.1.1](#)), given the history of Dalit student suicides at the University of Hyderabad, it was very important for the University to have been sensitive while punishing the students. In fact, just a few days after Prof. Appa Rao’s reinstatement of the punishment, Mr. Rohith Vemula wrote an alarming and agonized letter to the vice chancellor. This letter is reproduced in full in Doc. [27](#). In this letter, he said that perhaps it would be best for the University to simply “serve 10 mg of Sodium Azide to all the Dalit students at the time of admission with directions to use when they feel like reading Ambedkar” and “supply a nice rope to the rooms of all Dalit students from your companion, the great Chief Warden”. In the same letter he also stated “I request your highness to make preparations for the facility “EUTHANASIA” for students like me” (emphasis in the original).

But the vice chancellor in a remarkable display of callousness did not take any action on this letter.

In January, when the University reopened after a winter-break, the ASA students launched a sustained protest against their punishment. They established a “velivada” (which roughly translates to “Dalit ghetto”) near the shopping complex, and put up tents since they had been prevented from staying in the hostels. The crisis could have been defused at this point, if the administration has proactively negotiated with the students.

In fact, it is the vice chancellor’s job to deal with crises of this sort, and he should have visited the students’ protest to understand their point of view, or at least tried to establish mediation in some form or the other.

The administration claims that it was monitoring the protests closely. (See section [A.5.1](#).) However, after speaking to the dissenting students, we came away with the impression that the administration simply asked the students to end their protest, and did little to understand their real problems and find a workable solution. (See section [A.2.1](#).)

Mr. Rohith Vemula, in particular, came under tremendous pressure as a result

of this punishment, and he was unable to even communicate with his mother. On 17 January, he took his own life.

The suicide of Mr. Rohith Vemula was the most tragic event in this entire period. However since the purpose of our report was not specifically to examine the circumstances surrounding this untimely death, and since this event has been discussed extensively elsewhere, we do not enter into any further details here.

### **4.3 Protests after Rohith Vemula’s suicide**

Immediately after Mr. Rohith Vemula’s suicide, the University erupted in protests against the insensitivity of the University administration. The students organized themselves in a “Joint Action Committee for Social Justice” (JAC). In their eyes, the primary culprit was the vice chancellor, Prof. Appa Rao. On the other hand, the administration appeared to be stunned at the sequence of events and had no coherent response.

Understandably, the students were extremely agitated and the protests brought the University, including all academic and administrative activities, to a temporary halt. At the same time, various mainstream political forces outside the campus also intervened. Students from the JAC told us that they welcomed the support of all outside political forces, except for the BJP that, they felt, was largely responsible for Rohith’s death.

Some members of the faculty, who were supportive of the administration, and a senior member of the administration complained to us about this outside intervention. (See, for example, section [A.5.2](#).) They felt that the University would have been able to handle the protests better, if the they had been limited to students and not political parties from outside.

However, it is important to recognize that it was the initial intervention of the BJP, including the letters written by Mr. Bandaru Dattatreya and the constant pressure exerted by the Ministry of Human Resource Development that opened up an opportunity for external political forces to intervene at the University of Hyderabad. We also doubt that the Indian National Congress — to take one example — was particularly interested in obtaining “justice for Rohith.” Its primary objective was to attack the central government and gain political mileage. But conversely, if the BJP had not intervened in the ASA-ABVP dispute earlier, none of these political parties would have entered the fray in January. Therefore, it is the BJP that, through its initial crass interventions, bears the primary responsibility for the political attention that the University of Hyderabad received in January.

On 24 January 2016, the vice chancellor, Prof. Appa Rao proceeded on indefinite leave. On the same day, the registrar of the University also issued an order revoking the suspension of the four students who had been suspended along with Rohith.

According to the University’s hierarchy of seniority, Prof. Vipin Srivastava took over as acting vice chancellor. However, in 2008 when another Dalit student, Senthil

Kumar committed suicide, Prof. Srivastava was the dean of the school of physics. The University’s internal inquiry into that incident suggested several institutional changes including a “need for all faculty members to internalize greater sensitivity about students belonging to the reserved categories.”<sup>3</sup> However, many students who were part of the JAC went further and felt that, as the administrative head of the physics department, Prof. Srivastava had himself been insensitive to the concerns of Dalit students. (See section A.2.4.) As a result the JAC protested the appointment of Prof. Srivastava.

In a few days, on 30 January 2016, Prof. Srivastava himself stepped down as interim vice chancellor, and Prof. Periasamy of the school of Chemistry took over.

Some members of the administration, some faculty members from the school of life sciences, and some student-members of the ABVP contended that the JAC’s demands in this period were unreasonable, and that the JAC’s actions in bringing the University to a halt took its toll not only on teaching but also on research activities including routine procurement. (See sections A.5.2, A.3.4, A.4.2.)

While we understand this perspective, we feel it is also important to recognize the tremendous shock that the student community suffered as a result of Rohith’s suicide. In our opinion the JAC’s demands for the resignation of the vice chancellor were not unreasonable. It is true that, in our system, students do not have a formal say in the appointment of the vice chancellor who is appointed by the visitor — the President of India. However, this does not mean that students cannot express their unhappiness with the vice chancellor. Moreover, their views should be taken extremely seriously since they are the primary stakeholders in the University.

The students were justified in boycotting classes and it is evident that most of them did so voluntarily. However, from several conversations it also seems clear to us that some of the protesting students stopped others — who were reluctant to participate in the protest — from going to their classes and labs. While we understand and sympathize with the emotions of the protesting students, it would certainly have been preferable for the leadership of the JAC to use their moral authority to prevent such incidents. A boycott of academic activities is already effective if a large proportion of students and some proportion of the faculty participates. It is not necessary to make the boycott universal. In fact, by preventing other students from attending classes and going to their labs, the protesters handed the administration a rhetorical tool that it could wield by arguing that the students were obstructive.

#### **4.4 Return of the vice chancellor on March 22**

After Prof. Periasamy took over, the Justice for Rohith movement continued, since Prof. Appa Rao had merely gone on leave and not resigned. Soon afterwards, the

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<sup>3</sup>See “Report of the fact-finding committee appointed in the wake of the death of Mr. Senthil Kumar, a Ph.D. student in the school of Physics”, University of Hyderabad, April 2008. Available at <http://uohyd.ac.in/images/pdf/prof.pavarala.cr.pdf>.

central government made another clumsy intervention — this time, in the Jawaharlal Nehru University. Its *modus operandi* was similar to the one it adopted at the University of Hyderabad. The central government decided to turn some slogans at an internal University protest into a national issue and furthermore started to term opponents of the BJP “anti-national”. Together with the events at the University of Hyderabad, this led to a broader debate on the autonomy of Central Universities, and the meaning of “nationalism”. However, in this period, academic activities at the University of Hyderabad continued normally.

On 22 March, the vice chancellor, Prof. Appa Rao decided to return to the University. We understand, from conversations with several faculty members, that very few members of the University were aware of Prof. Appa Rao’s return. The administration’s official position seems to have been that Prof. Appa Rao had proceeded on voluntary leave and had the right to return whenever he wanted. But this is again symptomatic of the insensitivity with which the administration has treated the student-protesters. The administration’s attitude stems from a perception that the vice chancellor is above the University, and since he is not administratively answerable to the students, he is not morally answerable to them either. We do not feel that this is tenable.

In any case, shortly after the vice chancellor returned, some faculty and students from the school of life sciences, which is seen as broadly supportive of the administration, gathered at his residence to meet him. As the news of the vice chancellor’s return spread, another group of students came together quickly outside his residence to protest his return. Prof. Krishnaveni Mishra of the school of life sciences was present with the vice chancellor when the protesting students first gathered. (See section [A.4.2](#) for her description.) She said that she saw some of the protesting students physically vandalize the fixtures and furniture in the vice chancellor’s house.

This vandalism was condemnable. Once again, while we understand the strong emotions of the students, they would have been well advised to refrain from this violence. These actions also diverted attention away from the central issues of academic autonomy and discrimination to the issue of vandalism.

We were unable to obtain further details about these initial incidents. All of the dissenting students and faculty that we spoke to said they were not present in this initial period and arrived only later. Some of them insinuated that the vandalism may have been carried out by ABVP students as a smokescreen, and to defame the dissenting students, but we do not find any evidence for this assertion.

Several non-teaching staff also gathered at the vice chancellor’s house. Some of the dissenting students and faculty stated that the non-teaching staff shouted slogans in favour of Prof. Appa Rao, and this led to a conflict between them and the students. Shortly afterwards, the police also arrived at the scene, as did various representatives of the media.

After this initial vandalism, the situation appears to have settled down into an

uneasy truce for several hours. Some of the faculty members we spoke to said that they inspected the scene, and then left because, in spite of the vandalism in the morning, things appeared to have become peaceful subsequently, and they did not expect any dramatic escalation. (See section [A.1.2](#).)

However, towards the evening, the police asked the protesters to clear the vice chancellor’s compound. The protesters themselves argued that since the vice chancellor was “working from home”, his residence was an “official building” and they had the right to protest outside it. (See section [A.1.2](#).)

At this point, the police decided to use force to evacuate the compound. Various protesters were dragged out of the compound. The protesters who were present there told us that the police was brutal as it evacuated the protesters. They also said that they were taken out of the compound and immediately placed in a waiting police vehicle. The fact that the police was harsh, and physically dragged protesters out is borne out by video-evidence. These videos are available publicly, and we strongly suggest that the interested reader view them.

One possible public source is YouTube, where these videos have been uploaded by Ajay Kumar Koli. They are titled “Police Brutality in University of Hyderabad” and may be viewed at

1. Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y71ir0W6H0w>
2. Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KuprGfr7d7Q>
3. Part 3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q6Hu0DU3C2U>

Prof. Krishnaveni Mishra said that there was stone throwing by the protesters, and a policeman was hurt in this throwing. Prof. B. P. Sanjay also told us that a policeman was hurt. (See sections [A.4.2](#) and [A.5.3](#).) It is correct that videos of this incident show that as the protesters were pushed out, there were some scattered incidents of stone-throwing although it is also clear that most protesters did not engage in this. It was indeed, extraordinary irresponsible on the part of the students who threw stones to have done this. Not only did they risk hurting the policemen and policewomen, they also endangered their own fellow students by infuriating the police.

However, the police did not identify those who were throwing stones, but instead arrested some students and members of the faculty quite arbitrarily. For example, Prof. Sengupta and Prof. Ratnam both of whom were, by all accounts, attempting to control the situation were both arrested by the police. The dissenting students and faculty also told us that the police picked up some students who were almost entirely uninvolved, and just happened to be standing on the side. (See section [A.1.2](#) and section [A.5.3](#).)

We find this incident of police violence extremely disturbing. Although the administration denied that it gave any directions to the police to take these actions, we

find this somewhat disingenuous. It is well known that the police does not enter and take action inside a University campus without the permission of the vice chancellor. Moreover, while the police arrived in the morning, the police-violence occurred in the evening. At this time, there was *no imminent* law and order situation. Particularly when the protesters refused to move after police orders, it seems clear that the police could have consulted the vice chancellor on the situation.

Even if the administration did not directly ask the police to clear the compound and use force if necessary, it is nevertheless *culpable* for not keeping the situation under control. The vice chancellor should have intervened and ensured that the police did not use violence against the students. As the administrative head of the University, the vice chancellor is responsible for the security of all students — even those who opposed his return and do not support his tenure.

The police violence of 22 March is a shameful episode, and the University administration bears a large share of the responsibility for that incident.

#### **4.5 Police violence after arrests**

We are even more disturbed by what we heard about police violence and intimidation after the police arrested the protesters. Prof. Sengupta and some others who were arrested have filed writ-petitions against the violation of their fundamental rights by the Telangana police, and these petitions present a chilling picture.

In his petition, Prof. Sengupta explains that a police officer threatened to “kill” those who had been arrested and then also told them their “human rights stand null and void for the next 24 hours”. It is also not disputed that the arrested protesters were taken away, and their family and friends were not informed of their whereabouts for more than 24 hours.

In his discussion with us, Prof. Ratnam also told us how he was humiliated and slapped by the police. (See section [A.1.3](#).) It is extraordinary that the police should think that they have the right to physically assault a senior member of the faculty.

Prof. Ratnam also described to us that he was not given proper medical care. He suffers from blood pressure, and when his pressure was taken in police custody, it was measured to be 220/180 mm Hg, which is widely accepted as a critical level requiring immediate medical attention. In spite of this, the police only produced Prof. Ratnam and others with him before a magistrate after a delay of more than 24 hours, and did not provide the necessary medical attention.

Moreover, Prof. Ratnam told us that while he was in the police van, the police asked him why he was teaching “lessons on Pakistan” and that his “mother had come from Pakistan.” Prof. Sengupta also told us that when they reported to police, after being released on bail, the police would ask them questions like “why do you support Muslims” and “why do you oppose Hindus”.

The behaviour of the police in this entire sequence of events should give all citizens great cause for concern. We would like to draw attention not only to the brutal

treatment of protesting students and faculty by the police, but also the communal and illiberal attitude of police officers after the arrest. In fact, students and faculty at the University of Hyderabad are a relatively privileged group. If the police can behave in such an atrocious manner with them, we shudder to think about how the police behaves in other cases.

#### 4.6 Suspension of two faculty members

Several months after this sequence of events, in June 2016, the University administration decided to suspend Prof. Sengupta and Prof. Ratnam, ostensibly because they had been in custody for more than 48 hours. We have reproduced a copy of this suspension order in Doc. 29.

This suspension was supposedly made under Rule 10.2 of the Central Civil Service Rules pertaining to discipline and appeal. It is true that the relevant rule reads that a “member of the service who is detained in official custody ... for a period longer than forty-eight hours, shall be deemed to have been suspended”.<sup>4</sup>

It is pertinent to note that the set of various Central Civil Service Rules constitute an undemocratic and outdated set of rules, which were framed to be applicable to bureaucrats in the central government. For example, the Civil Service Conduct Rules explicitly prevent “criticism of the government”! The same Conduct Rules have other absurd provisions including one that states that a “member of the service shall ... not consume any intoxicating drink or drug in a public place” thus technically barring all employees from drinking alcohol at a restaurant.<sup>5</sup> As such, it makes no sense to apply these rules to members of the central Universities. Unfortunately, various central institutions have simply incorporated these outdated rules into their own contracts.

In any case, even under these rules, we find no explanation of the fact that more than three months elapsed before the University administration woke up to this fact. Indeed, in the interim period, the professors had rejoined work, taught their classes and otherwise discharged their duties.

What is even more puzzling is that the show-cause notice issued by the University asks the suspended faculty members to explain why they did not *inform* the University of their arrest. (See Doc. 30.) However, their arrest and subsequent release was widely reported in the national media, and there is no sense in which they attempted to suppress this fact.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>See Central Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1965. Available from [http://persmin.gov.in/Archive/Acts\\_Rules\\_Archive/AISRules\\_Archive/Revised\\_AIS\\_Rules\\_Vol\\_I\\_Updated\\_Upto\\_31Oct2010/Revised\\_AIS\\_Rule\\_Vol\\_I\\_Rule\\_12.pdf](http://persmin.gov.in/Archive/Acts_Rules_Archive/AISRules_Archive/Revised_AIS_Rules_Vol_I_Updated_Upto_31Oct2010/Revised_AIS_Rule_Vol_I_Rule_12.pdf).

<sup>5</sup>See Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules 1964. Available from [http://persmin.gov.in/DOPT/Acts\\_Rules/AIS\\_Rules/Revised\\_AIS\\_Rules\\_Vol\\_I\\_Updated\\_Upto\\_31Oct2011/Revised\\_AIS\\_Rule\\_Vol\\_I\\_Rule\\_10.pdf](http://persmin.gov.in/DOPT/Acts_Rules/AIS_Rules/Revised_AIS_Rules_Vol_I_Updated_Upto_31Oct2011/Revised_AIS_Rule_Vol_I_Rule_10.pdf)

<sup>6</sup>See Press Trust of India, “27 get bail in Hyderabad varsity campus violence case”, *the Hindu*,

Moreover, the rules clearly grant ample discretion to the “appointing authority” to revoke this suspension. Indeed, after an international protest at the suspension of these faculty, this is precisely what the University did. Given the extraordinary circumstances of the arrest, we do not feel that this suspension was justified. In fact, it appears to us that the suspension was an attempt to intimidate the arrested faculty members, and prevent them from lending their support to the protesting students.

## 5 Suggestions

We would like to conclude this report with a few brief suggestions. As we explained in section 2, we do not have any formal relation with the University of Hyderabad. Nevertheless, as members of the broader academic community and as well-wishers of the University, we have a natural and legitimate interest in its affairs. Moreover, we feel it is important for public institutions, including Universities, to be democratically accountable. So we hope that the University will take these suggestions seriously, and appreciate that they are offered in a constructive spirit. Some of our suggestions below pertain to the broader community — including our own institutions. We hope that these suggestions can serve to initiate broader discussions on preventing such incidents in the future, and on strengthening our Universities.

1. We feel that the University administration must accept a large portion of the responsibility for the current conflict. The University of Hyderabad is a diverse institution and many students on campus hold sharply diverging ideologies. So it is especially important for the administration to be non-partisan in its conduct. The administration must also ensure that members of the University are free to express themselves and pursue their ideas, and it should act as a shield when external political forces attempt to suppress student groups on campus. The administration has repeatedly failed to uphold these principles, from the time of the conflict between the ASA and ABVP students in August 2015.

The initial conflict was a relatively minor dispute that could have been resolved within the University. However, the administration succumbed to external political pressure, from BJP politicians and the central government, and repeatedly took partisan steps against ASA activists, including passing an extraordinary order that banned a set of ASA students from “common places in groups.” Prof. Appa Rao himself failed to appreciate the significance of Mr. Rohith Vemula distressed letter in December 2015. In March, the administration was complicit, either through its tacit approval or at least through

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28 March 2016. Available from <http://www.thehindu.com/news/hyderabad-varsity-campus-violence-27-get-bail/article8405711.ece>.

inaction, in police brutality against protesting students. Subsequently, the administration failed to defuse tensions on campus, and instead suspended two dissenting faculty members on flimsy grounds.

The administration cannot justify its actions by pointing to some hot-headed actions by the dissenting students. Rather, this conflict casts light upon some significant systemic weaknesses, including the unwillingness of academics involved in administration to stand up for principles against pressure from those in power. These issues go beyond individuals. Nevertheless, as the first step in a healing process, we feel that it would help greatly if Prof. Appa Rao Podile were to voluntarily step down from his position as vice chancellor. As the head of the administration, he must accept responsibility for its multiple failures.

Moreover, it is important for academics to keep in mind that administrative posts are ultimately about service to the community. They are presumably not an end in itself and involve significant personal sacrifice, since they prevent an academic from doing his or her own work. As such, while members of the academic community are sometimes willing to put aside their academic careers to take on administrative responsibilities, this only makes sense if they are able to contribute to the institution in a constructive manner.

After having visited the University, and spoken to its members on both sides of this conflict, we do not see how Prof. Appa Rao can possibly contribute positively to the University in the current polarized atmosphere. His very presence as vice chancellor has led to a sustained conflict that has embarrassed the University. It is clear that Prof. Appa Rao cannot be forced to resign, as he continues to have the support of the central government. However, if his intention is genuinely to contribute to the welfare of the University, it is clear to us that he cannot do so while remaining as vice chancellor.

2. It is exceedingly important for the University to take steps to withdraw all cases against the protesting students and faculty. As far as we can see, the only actionable event that happened on 22 March pertained to vandalism of property in the vice chancellor's house. No one was hurt in this process. Moreover, many of the students and faculty who were arrested were clearly not involved in that event. There is no excuse for a continuing police investigation that constitutes constant harassment of these students and faculty. The students who vandalized the vice chancellor's house can be identified, and counselled in internal University proceedings.
3. It is also important for the University to ensure that action is taken against the policemen who used excessive force on the protesters on 22 March. The University should support the cases filed by students and faculty on this issue, and ensure that a strong message is sent, through the courts, that this kind of

police misbehaviour will not be tolerated. The dissenting students and faculty have made several grave allegations. Some police officers allegedly even told them that their fundamental rights had been suspended. The University should push for an internal inquiry against these officers, and ensure that they are disciplined if these allegations are found to be true.

The behaviour of the police, and particularly the fact that they linked the dissenting students to “supporters of Pakistan” and characterized them as “anti-Hindu” and “pro-Muslim” is a symptom of the communal rot that has infected elements of our law-enforcing agencies. As a society, it is important for us to weed out these tendencies and ensure a sensitive and secular police-force.

4. It is important, in the future, for the University to strongly resist undue pressure from the central government. As the Ministry of Human Resource Development has itself pointed out, it has “no role to play in day to day affairs” of the University.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, intrusive letters from the MHRD should be met with a firm reminder of this fact, and a refusal to share personal information about students or faculty, beyond what is publicly available
5. It is important for the University to have a more comprehensive anti-discrimination cell. We understand that the University has appointed an anti-discrimination officer, and this is consistent with the relevant UGC regulations.<sup>8</sup> But a larger anti-discrimination cell — with representations from students, and various faculty and non-teaching staff, and also representation from outside the University — would be significantly more effective. This cell should have the power to investigate complaints of discrimination even against members of the administration and its members should be easily accessible to the University community. Moreover, incoming students should be familiarized with the role of this cell, and the procedure to contact it.
6. The issue of the suspension of faculty members leads to a broader issue of academic freedom in Indian Universities. Some, although not all, academic institutes in India have incorporated the civil service rules of the government of India into their contracts for academic staff members. As we described above, these rules are anachronistic. It is not clear that they are appropriate even for bureaucrats, and they are certainly inappropriate for University teachers. For instance, it is obvious that University teachers should be at the forefront of

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<sup>7</sup>See Srinath Vudali, “Appa Rao can’t be removed: MHRD to HC”, *Times of India*, 23 June 2016. Available from <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/Appa-Rao-cant-be-removed-MHRD-to-HC/articleshow/52878276.cms>.

<sup>8</sup>See “UGC Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Regulations 2012”, *Gazette of India*, 19 January 2013. Available from [http://www.ugc.ac.in/pdfnews/2147890\\_gazetteequity-Eng.pdf](http://www.ugc.ac.in/pdfnews/2147890_gazetteequity-Eng.pdf).

critical-debate in society, but the civil service rules technically prohibit them from criticizing the government. Often, University employees are unaware of these rules. Administrations also do not implement them strictly, except in times of conflict when the precise wording of the rules is suddenly wielded as a weapon against recalcitrant faculty members.

It is important for the broader academic community in India to formulate a new and appropriate set of guidelines to govern academic employees. These guidelines should make ample allowance for academic freedom and the freedom of speech that is crucial on a University campus. Of course, this change will not be easy, but unless the academic community initiates this debate on service rules, the status quo will continue.

7. The broader issues in this conflict pertain to the manner in which the reservation policy is being implemented. The University of Hyderabad, on paper, is an excellent example of a diverse institution that has successfully implemented the letter of the policies on reservation. However this, by itself, does not imply the end of discrimination. Over the past several years, multiple students from Dalit and other minority communities have committed suicide at the University. This points to a pervasive problem that cannot be solved with small administrative tweaks.

In fact, one of the objectives of a public institution of higher learning such as the University of Hyderabad is to provide educational opportunities for marginalized sections of the society. This a small step towards combating injustice. So the University must take greater efforts to ensure a healthy social fabric on campus. As some of the University's own documents note, it is important to have sensitization programs for administrators, faculty members and students. As we mentioned above, it is also important to have meaningful complaint mechanisms against discriminatory behaviour. The University can also help to promote inclusiveness by explicitly supporting social programs that celebrate diversity and encourage the intermingling of students from different backgrounds.

Apart from this, we feel that structural changes in the curriculum may also be beneficial. In fact we are glad that at least some members of the administration indicated that the University has, itself, been pushed to think along these lines. (See section [A.5.6](#).)

One possibility is to redesign both the M.Sc. and the PhD curriculum to allow for greater flexibility for students who come in with different levels of preparation. For instance, the M.Sc. course could be formally extended to three years, instead of two years, with the first year consisting of foundational courses. It is important that these foundational courses be mandated for all

students. This is necessary to avoid stigmatization and the creation of a parallel stream for students who are admitted through a quota. Moreover, students who are admitted through the so-called “general category” also have widely varying levels of preparation, and many of them may benefit from these courses. On the other hand, to cater to students who are better prepared, the course structure should allow for the possibility of “drop tests”, where students can demonstrate their preparation and skip the foundational courses. A similar structure can be introduced at the PhD level. It is, of course, true that these flexible structures will require greater resources in teaching and research. But it is necessary for society to make this investment to redress persistent injustice.

In the absence of such systemic reforms, the reservation policy simply continues discrimination in a hidden form. These shortcomings are not the result of oversight. Rather, efforts at meaningful reform of the reservation policy are confronted by powerful conservative political forces at each step. It is this broader societal contradiction — between those who seek to redress injustice and build a more egalitarian society, and those who have a vested interest in the status quo — that lies at the heart of the conflict at the University of Hyderabad.

## Appendix

### A Summary of selected conversations

In this appendix, we provide a summary of selected conversations that we had with students and faculty at the University of Hyderabad. These conversations are only a small subset of the broader conversations that we had across the University. We have selected them because we feel that they provide a representative sample of the various viewpoints at the University.

We have tried to separate these summaries from our own conclusions, which are provided above. In fact, it is possible for a reader to read these documents as primary evidence that we collected and come to her own conclusions which may be quite different from ours.

We emphasize that these summaries are *not* transcripts. In each case, after preparing the summary, we contacted the individuals who spoke to us, and requested them to verify the accuracy of the summary to ensure that we were not misrepresenting them. These summaries have all been approved by the concerned individuals. We have repeated this disclaimer in each subsection.

## A.1 Conversation with dissenting faculty members

The fact-finding team met with about 15 dissenting faculty members in the UoH guest house on 19 July 2016 at around 1:30 pm. This document simply provides a summary of the conversation (not a transcript), with no implied endorsement about the veracity of the claims. The committee's conclusions are detailed separately in the main report.

This appendix was sent to Prof. Tathagata Sengupta and Prof. Bittu Kondaiah on 1 November 2016, who distributed it among the other attendees of this conversation. Some corrections were made as per a response we received on 3 November 2016. After some additional correspondence, on 17 December 2016, Prof. Anupama Potluri advised us that there were no other corrections and advised us to publish the transcript in the form below.

### A.1.1 Events leading up to Rohith Vemula's suicide

After the initial conflict between members of the Ambedkar Students Union and the ABVP leader Susheel Kumar, the University of Hyderabad held multiple disciplinary hearings to formulate an official response to the conflict. Prof. K. Laxminarayana, who was then the President of the University of Hyderabad Teachers' Association (UHTA) and Prof. Deepa Sreenivas—then the general-secretary of the UHTA—met the fact-finding committee and discussed the official response of the University.

Prof. Laxminarayana and Prof. Sreenivas were invited to attend the initial proctorial board meeting to investigate the events of 3-4 August 2015, as representatives of the UHTA. When they arrived at the meeting venue, they were told that they should provide their opinion and leave the meeting. Moreover, they were told that they would not have any say in the final decision. They were surprised by this since they had received an official letter inviting them to the meeting.

They told the fact-finding committee that in the initial meeting, the proctorial board only gave a warning and concluded that there was “no evidence” of physical violence. They said that the ABVP student, Susheel Kumar, was hospitalized unnecessarily. The proctorial board scolded both parties. Susheel Kumar did not appear before the committee because he was in the hospital. Prof. Laxminarayana provided a copy of the report of the first proctorial board meeting to the fact-finding committee.

The committee asked them whether they felt that Susheel Kumar had been intimidated on the night of the conflict (Aug 3 night). Prof. Ratnam told the committee that Susheel Kumar was not intimidated. He said that the University security was present throughout and so there was no violence. But Prof. Ratnam agreed that many people had gathered outside the hostel at night, and that in talking to them Susheel Kumar may have felt intimidated. Moreover, Prof. Ratnam said

that while he was not beaten, it is possible that there was some “pushing” and “scuffling.”

Prof. Sreenivas continued her description of the University’s disciplinary process. She told the committee that after the first proctorial board meeting, a BJP leader called the vice chancellor and told him that unless he takes action “we will show you how to live in the country.” This pressured the University into reviewing the first decision and convening a second meeting of the proctorial board.

In the second meeting, the Dean of Students’ Welfare (DSW) was also invited and Susheel Kumar also deposed. Prof. Sreenivas and Prof. Laxminarayana were invited as representatives of the UHTA but they did not go. Prof. Sreenivas provided the fact-finding committee a copy of their letter to the Chief Proctor, Alok Pandey. In this letter, Prof. Sreenivas and Prof. Laxminarayana objected to their lack of voting rights and say in the final decision and stated that they would not attend unless “we are equal members and are in a position to contribute to the deliberations.”

They explained that since the DSW, Prakash Babu, who is a Dalit, was present in this second meeting, Smriti Irani made a statement in parliament that a Dalit faculty member was involved in the decision to punish the students.

Prof. Ratnam told the fact-finding committee that the ASA students were not called in the second proctorial board meeting.

The second proctorial board meeting reversed the decision of the first meeting decided to completely suspend the ASA students who were involved in the conflict.

The then vice chancellor, Prof. R. P. Sharma put the decision of the second proctorial board in abeyance, subject to a fresh inquiry. However, the dissenting faculty members told the committee that when Prof. Appa Rao took over as the vice Chancellor, he neglected to hold a fresh inquiry, but only appointed a subcommittee of the executive council to look into the matter based on existing evidence. Moreover, the dissenting faculty members alleged that the vice chancellor suppressed the report from the Commissioner of Police of Cyberabad that stated that no serious violence occurred on the night of August 3, 2015. The commissioner’s affidavit was filed in court in the context of a case lodged in the high court by Ms. N Vinaya, Susheel Kumar’s mother.

The dissenting faculty members provided the fact-finding committee with a copy of this affidavit (see Doc. 18), and highlighted the portions where the affidavit reads that

“The injuries sustained by Susheel Kumar (son of the petitioner) during the incident were “SIMPLE” in nature but during the course of treatment it was revealed that Susheel Kumar was suffering from *Appendicitis* and was operated for that. He also stated that during the examination it came to know that *Appendicitis* is not due to the result of any assault

and it is coincidental that existing ailment was diagnosed and treated when Susheel Kumar got admitted.”

The dissenting faculty members told the committee that in spite of these records, the subcommittee of the executive council went ahead and decided to punish the ASA students. They pointed out that the E.C. members who took the decision to suspend the students did not know them personally and this was not desirable while taking disciplinary action.

The dissenting faculty members told the fact-finding committee that the “five boys” who were suspended came from very under-privileged backgrounds.<sup>9</sup> So they emphasized that extreme caution should have been exercised in dealing with them, particularly given the history of suicides on campus. For example, they pointed out that Rohith used to send money home, and could not even tell his mother about what had happened.

The dissenting faculty members told the committee that after the decision of the vice chancellor to punish the ASA students, they erected a “velivada”, meaning “Dalit ghetto”, on the campus. The vice chancellor told them not to continue their agitation

Then, on 14<sup>th</sup> December, the supervisors of the punished students were called by the vice-chancellor to discuss the conflict. Prof. Ratnam said that in that meeting, he asked the vice chancellor why a fresh inquiry was not conducted before punishing the students. He said that the registrar and the vice chancellor claimed that there was no time to conduct a fresh inquiry, and that the University was under pressure from the court to take some action on the issue. Prof. Ratnam said that these court orders were passed due to the efforts of RSS-affiliated lawyers. He also said that by the time of this meeting, the University had received five letters from the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

Prof. Ratnam told the committee that he asked the vice chancellor to come to the Velivada, but that the vice chancellor refused. He also told the vice chancellor that he felt that not enough opportunity for natural justice had been given to the students. Prof. Ratnam told the committee that in this meeting, the vice chancellor admitted that the University was acting under pressure. He told the committee that other supervisors present at this meeting also asked the vice chancellor several questions.

In spite of this meeting, and requests by the supervisors of the punished students in this meeting, the dissenting faculty members told the committee that no one from the administration came to the velivada until Rohith’s suicide.

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<sup>9</sup>At this point. Prof. Tathagata Sengupta intervened to emphasize that the entire issue needed to be framed as a “struggle for self-respect” and should not be reduced only to an argument on economic issues.

Also the UHTA failed to take coordinated action to intervene in the matter. Prof. Tathagata Sengupta said that, as early as August 2015, there was a petition asking the UHTA to take more responsibility in the matter. But the dissenting faculty members told the committee that Prof. B. P. Sanjay and others opposed further involvement of UHTA in the matter.

Prof. Sreepati Ramudu who was the head of the CSSEIP also spoke to the fact-finding committee.<sup>10</sup> One of his students, Seshiah, was one of the students who was punished in the matter. Consequently, he also attended the meeting with the vice chancellor in December. He told the committee that he asked the vice chancellor several questions, but felt that Prof. Appa Rao was unable to answer them.

Prof. Ramudu also emphasized to the committee that his student was not getting a Junior Research Fellowship, and was subsisting on the University's fellowship. So his means were very limited. Moreover, he told the committee that Seshiah was an "orphan boy", and that his father had died in caste riots.

Prof. Ramudu said in his opinion the vice chancellor rushed into taking action against the students for several reasons. One of them, according to Prof. Ramudu, was that the vice chancellor wanted to curry favour with the government. Prof. Ramudu told the committee that soon after taking over. Prof. Appa Rao suggested replacing the gown with a dhoti in the commencement ceremony and he felt that this was additional evidence for the fact that the Prof. Appa Rao was trying to please the government. Prof. Ramudu also told the committee that in 2002, Prof. Appa Rao was responsible for suspending 10 Dalit students. He felt that it was possible that Prof. Appa Rao wanted to settle scores this time, and even that he wanted to crush the organization of Dalit students.

Prof. Ramudu said that the vice chancellor should have appointed a fresh inquiry committee. He also felt that the vice chancellor should have met the students, which he did not do. He also felt that that this was a small issue that could have been resolved easily and that the vice Chancellor escalated the matter in many ways, including by suspending the students. He told the committee that the non-conciliatory attitude of the vice chancellor during the student's protest was also reflected in his later decisions when he encouraged the lathi charge of students, and the arrest of faculty on March 22 and later when he suspended the faculty-members who had been arrested.

### **A.1.2 Events on the day of return of the vice chancellor**

On March 22, the vice chancellor. Prof. Appa Rao, who had gone on leave returned to duty leading to protests by students and subsequent police action. Prof. Grace Tansen related the events of that day in the detail to the committee. She had a

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<sup>10</sup>He later resigned from this position, and provided a copy of his resignation letter to the committee.

class from 9 AM to 10:50 AM in the southern campus of the UoH. While going to her class, she saw several police vans but she didn't know the purpose of these vans. She told the committee that nobody knew about the vice chancellor's arrival until that morning.

When she completed her class and went to the vice chancellor's house later, the media had already arrived on the spot. Various deans and other faculty members, and also some more junior "faculty-fellows" were cooped up in a back room of the vice chancellor's house.

When she reached the scene, she saw some non-teaching staff come out of the compound of the vice chancellor's house. The non-teaching staff had earlier had a conflict with the students, but from their attitude Prof. Grace felt that they were not seriously or genuinely aggrieved with the students but rather that they were taking Prof. Appa Rao's side due to extraneous factors.

Many students were sitting outside. Grace remembered being puzzled that Prof. Appa Rao had not come out to face the students and remembered asking this question to her Head of the Department, who was present there. She said that by 12:45 or 13:00, Prof. Tathagata also came to the vice chancellor's house, and by 14:00 many faculty members including Prof. Laxminarayana, Prof. Ratnam, Prof. Tathagata etc. were present.

On the whole she felt that the situation was not very tense, although at some point some of the members of the media started an impromptu protest because of some conflict between a reporter and students.

She told the committee that if the students had wanted to reach Appa Rao in this period, they could have done so.

She said that after some time, the police started asking the students and faculty who had assembled in the compound of the vice chancellor's house to disperse. She said that the administration was aware of the actions of the police and she told the committee that at periodic intervals someone from inside the house would open the window of the house to see what was happening. In particular, she told the committee that when the police shouted at faculty members and physically pulled the students away, this happened in front of the Deans inside the vice chancellor's house and they were aware of this police violence.

Prof. Grace told the committee that soon the police dragged the students out of the side gate and threw them out.

The committee asked the dissenting faculty members whether the police lathi charge happened because of stones thrown by the students. Prof. Tathagata denied that this was the case. He said that as soon as the students came out of the vice chancellor's compound, they were beaten up by the police.

Prof. Ratnam said that the students were beaten outside the compound of the vice chancellor's house because the building itself has a CCTV installation, and the police did not want their violence to be captured on the CCTV.

The dissenting faculty members told the committee that the police argued that the assembled students needed to leave because the premises were private. On the other hand, the protesting students argued that the premises were official because an official meeting was happening inside the house.

Many faculty members told the committee that many people were arrested by the police when they started filming. But soon afterwards, the police started chasing students and catching them. Prof. Grace told the committee that she saw two policeman pick up a student and kick him.

Prof. Ratnam and Prof. Bittu were arguing with the police while this happened. Prof. Grace told the committee that 4-5 policeman shouted at her using filthy words like “desh drohi”, “kutte” etc. The dissenting faculty members told the committee that the police and the rapid action force were chasing students even until 5:45 pm in the evening. In all, 27 people were arrested, including 2 faculty members.

While Prof. Ratnam was talking to the police, he came to know that Prof. Tathagata had been arrested. He saw that Tathagata was in bad shape. Prof. Ratnam saw a University security guard nearby who was observing the situation. However, when he talked to him, that security guard did not know that Prof. Tathagata was a faculty member.

The dissenting faculty members told the committee that at the time of the police violence, there were only two male faculty members present: Prof. Tathagata and Prof. Ratnam. Subsequently, both of them were arrested. Prof. Shobha, a female faculty member who was present was pushed but not arrested. Prof. Ratnam told the committee that before arresting him, the police asked him his name and only after confirming that he was “Ratnam” did they arrest him.

### **A.1.3 Police brutality after the arrest**

After Prof. Tathagata and Prof. Ratnam were arrested, they were taken into a police van and an ambulance respectively. These two groups were separated for more than 24 hours and their experiences are described separately below as related by Prof. Ratnam and Prof. Tathagata.

#### **The Police Van**

In the van, Prof. Ratnam said that the police was both verbally and physically abusive. They told Prof. Ratnam that he was teaching “lessons on Pakistan” and that his “mother had come from Pakistan.”

The police also physically assaulted Prof. Ratnam. He told the committee that as soon as the police van crossed the main gate the police started beating and abusing the people inside the van. In particular, they also slapped Prof. Ratnam.

The dissenting faculty members told the committee that the police took them to several police stations and locations, and this made it difficult for their supporters outside to get information on their whereabouts.

In particular, Prof. Ratnam was taken to the Miyapur police station. There, the police asked them several seemingly unrelated but intrusive questions. Prof. Ratnam gave a partial list of these questions which included

What kind of colour do you like? Do you smoke? Do you take alcohol?  
Do you take narcotics? Who is your father? Who is your father's father?  
Give contact details of other relatives?

Prof. Tathagata explained that he felt that this was part of a strategy to intimidate young students by making them feel that the police could find out everything about their lives and even intimidate their relatives.

Then, Prof. Ratnam and the others who had been arrested with him in the police-van were taken to the Balanagar police station. After that they were taken to the Kondapur Area hospital. On the night of 22<sup>nd</sup> March, Prof. Ratnam's blood pressure shot up and was measured to be 220/180, which is a critical number. Prof. Ratnam and other students who had been arrested were made to sleep at the Miyapur police station that night. They were produced before a judge only at 10:30 pm the next night, more than 24 hours after they were initially arrested.

### **The Ambulance**

Prof. Tathagata and several other students were taken away in an ambulance. Prof. Tathagata said that one of the students who had been arrested was not even a participant in the protest and merely a bystander.

In the ambulance, the students and Prof. Tathagata were kept in the dark about the charges against them, or what was going to happen to them until the next morning. The police intimidated them and told Prof. Tathagata that he had no idea what the Telangana police was capable of and *that he could be "encountered"*.

The group was not allowed to contact their family or friends. At one point, they succeeded in borrowing a phone from a visitor who had come to visit someone else in police custody. As soon as the police noticed this, they got very angry and beat up the visitor. They then moved the entire group to another police station and put them inside a locked room.

Some policemen told Prof. Tathagata that his "rights had been suspended." Then, in the evening, they were taken to Kondapur hospital for checkups and all of them were declared fit for custody in spite of the fact that several of them had injuries.

They were then asked to sign that they were aware that they had been arrested, and were not allowed to put the date and time of their signature. At night, they were taken to the magistrate's house. Prof. Tathagata told the committee that the magistrate saw only a few people from the group, but then proceeded to deny bail to the entire group and remanded them to judicial custody.

### **Attitude of the police**

The committee asked the dissenting faculty members, why the police used phrases like “anti-national”, which had little to do with the conflict at hand. Prof. Tathagata explained that the Gachibowli police has been keeping track of various events and demonstrations on campus, and has classified a certain section of the progressive student movement as “anti-national.” He felt that it was this attitude that was reflected on the day of the arrest.

He told the committee that, even after being released, they need to report to the police on a weekly basis. During this reporting, the police often asks them questions like “why do you support Muslims?” and “why do you oppose Hindus?”

#### **A.1.4 Intimidation of faculty members supportive of the movement**

The fact-finding committee asked the dissenting faculty members whether they were facing any intimidation from the University for their oppositional stance.

Several teachers said that this was indeed the case. As a significant example of such intimidation, they pointed to the suspension of Prof. Tathagata and Prof. Ratnam.

After Prof. Tathagata and Prof. Ratnam were released from judicial custody, they communicated with the heads of their departments, and Prof. Tathagata wrote formally intimating his department that he had joined duty. On 13 June 2016, both of them were issued memorandums, signed by the vice chancellor stating that they had “10 days from the date of receipt of this memorandum” to explain why they should not be suspended for “not reporting the fact of [their] arrest by the police”. This memorandum was issued in spite of the fact that the arrest of Prof. Tathagata and Prof. Ratnam was widely known and reported upon in the news media as well.

Moreover, on the same day as this memorandum, and in spite of the period of 10 days mentioned there, they also received a suspension notice where they were “deemed to have been suspended in effect from ... 22nd ... March”. Prof. Tathagata shared a copy of his suspension notice and also the memorandum with the committee.

Apart from this major instance, the faculty members pointed to other instance that they felt displayed intimidation by the administration.

1. When Prof. Sudhakara Babu helped in providing some space for them to hold meetings, the director of academic staff called him and asked him why the staff college was becoming the “headquarters” of anti-University administration meetings.
2. When a dissenting faculty member wanted to go abroad he asked for a “no objection certificate”. But the administration created difficulties by telling him that he had not asked for “permission” to leave the country and suggesting that there was a difference in applying for a “no objection certificate” and in asking for “permission”.

3. In some cases, the dissenting faculty members felt that the administration had prevented qualified members from assuming positions like the “head of the department” because they felt that those faculty-members were antagonistic.
4. The dissenting faculty members also told the committee that when, during the protest, a group of teachers took “mass leave” the administration contacted the departments and asked them to determine the individual purpose of each leave application .
5. They told the committee that when SC/ST faculty members resigned collectively from responsible bodies in the University, the administration tried to sabotage this by calling individuals and offering them positions.

In addition to the examples above, the dissenting faculty members told the committee that the executive council of the University has passed a resolution threatening action for any “meeting that obstructs duty.” They also pointed to a recent circular issued by the registrar that was issued on 17 July 2016 for the 6-month anniversary of Rohit’s death and greatly restricts freedom of expression on campus.

In spite of these examples of intimidation, Prof. Ratnam felt that there were some positive points of the current movement, including the coming together of students irrespective of class and caste. He felt that the support from the faculty was also a positive feature. This has bothered the University, and makes it uncomfortable.

#### **A.1.5 Conflict between Prof. Appa Rao and Dalit students in 2002**

In 2002, a conflict between Prof. Appa Rao, who was then the chief warden, and members of the Ambedkar Students Union led to several Dalit students being suspended.

Prof. Ratnam who was also involved in this incident related its story to the committee. In 2002, when Prof. Ratnam was appointed as a “warden”, there was an effort to privatize the functioning of the student messes. The administration claimed that Dalit students were taking over the messes and eating for free.

Prof. Ratnam opposed this, leading to a conflict with Prof. Appa Rao who was the chief warden.

Prof. Ratnam said that Prof. Appa Rao then asked Prof. Ratnam to accompany him to inspect and raid the rooms to unearth various “boy-girl” relations. Prof. Ratnam refused and, in response, Prof. Appa Rao started removing various staff-members who were assigned to him as a warden. He also assigned Prof. Ratnam to be in charge of sanitation and cleaning.

The Ambedkar Students Association protested the assignment of these duties to Prof. Ratnam, since this was perceived to be a caste-based insult. The ASA also protested the formation of a central purchasing committee. They also felt that mess-bills had gone up.

Prof. Ratnam was identified as being “pro-Dalit”. Later when, during the protest there was a conflict between ASA students and Prof. Appa Rao, very stringent action was taken against the students. But Prof. Ratnam did not feel that Prof. Appa Rao’s conflict with him was personal or that there was any personal animosity towards him, but rather that it was part of a broader systemic conflict.

Prof. Shivarama Padikkal also talked about the 2002 incident with the committee. He felt that there were some similarities between that conflict and the current one.

He felt that even at that time, when there was a conflict between some ASA students and Prof. Appa Rao, the violence and destruction of property was played up greatly. He told the committee that at the time, the whole university came out in support of Appa Rao, in processions, thinking that through their actions, the ASA had assaulted the democratic atmosphere on campus.

As a result of this majority view, several ASA students were rusticated without a hearing. But, in fact, many of them were very bright students. He told the committee that one of them, Nageshwar Rao, is now a faculty member at the University of Hyderabad.

## **A.2 Conversation with dissenting students**

**The fact-finding team met with about 20 student activists in the UoH shopping center on Monday, 18 July around 7 pm. The names of individuals who spoke to the team are not provided here to preserve their anonymity. The students are referred to just as “the students”. This document simply provides a summary of the conversation (not a transcript), with no implied endorsement about the veracity of the claims. The committee’s conclusions are detailed separately in the main report.**

**This appendix was emailed to Prof. Tathagata Sengupta and Prof. Bittu Kondaiah on 11 October 2016. We understand that they distributed it to the dissenting students. We also emailed some of the students directly on 17 December 2016 and 21 December 2016. We received some corrections, on the phone, on 25 December 2016, and we have incorporated them below.**

The fact-finding team told the students about its conversations with the administration, and briefly outlined the administration’s position. The students also felt that the broad facts were not in dispute, but pointed out that it was important to view events from the correct perspective.

### **A.2.1 Conflict with Mr. Susheel Kumar in August and subsequent events leading up to Rohith Vemula’s suicide**

The students related their version of the events in August, which started the chain of events. On 3 August 2015, various student groups held a protest demonstration

against the disruption of a screening of “Muzaffarnagar Baaqi Hai” by the ABVP in Delhi. Much later in the evening, after the protest was over, the students learned that there was a Facebook post by the UoH ABVP leader, Susheel Kumar, in which he had called activists of the ASA “goons”. They were very hurt by this, and they were concerned that the post would spread rapidly by the morning. So, several of them decided to go to Susheel’s room at night.

The students said that they asked Susheel to explain his post. They said that he would have been justified in calling them goons, if they had committed a crime, but felt that they had not done anything to deserve this term.

The fact-finding team pressed them repeatedly on whether there was any violence against Susheel, or whether he was intimidated. The students denied that they used any violence, and said that they simply demanded an explanation. They said that the University’s security was also present at the spot, and could vouch for the fact that they did not use any violence.

The students told the team that soon after this event the proctorial board held an inquiry into the incident, and after this inquiry, it issued warnings to both parties. However, it then took up the same issue for a *second time* and suspended the ASA students for the same transgression. The students felt that this was unjust since they were tried and punished twice for the same incident. Moreover, the students claimed that the proctorial board’s report was inconsistent since, in its first report, the board declared that there was no physical violence involved in the interaction with Susheel, whereas in the second report it reversed that conclusion.

The students told the committee that they protested this decision and the vice chancellor at the time, Prof. R. P. Sharma, revoked the suspension after this protest. The students claimed that when Prof. Appa Rao took over as vice chancellor, he dissolved the new inquiry committee, and disregarded the written report of the Chief Medical Officer saying that there were no signs of injury on Susheel and that Susheel’s hospitalization was related to appendicitis and not to injuries sustained in the confrontation.

Moreover, Prof. Appa Rao passed a punitive order that not only evicted them from the hostel, but contained a clause preventing the students from entering “common places” in groups. This was a form of social boycott, and the students took this extremely seriously.

The students explained that in December, Rohith Vemula wrote to the vice chancellor saying that if he wanted to support the ABVP he should simply hand incoming Dalit students some “*sodium azide*” and provide a “*euthanasia facility*” for Dalit students so that the “campus could rest in peace.”

The students were unhappy that Prof. Appa Rao withheld information about this letter from the rest of the University community. Eventually, the students decided to put up tents on campus as a form of protest on January 5. On the first day, the administration came to the tents with security and asked them to wrap

up their protest. After that, the administration simply ignored them for two weeks.

The students pointed out that they continued to work in those two weeks, and even completed their “doctoral committee reports” (an end semester report) in their tents. On the whole, the students who were present for discussions with the committee felt that their supervisors were supportive. They told the fact-finding committee that their supervisors, including Rohith Vemula’s supervisor, Raghav Reddy, went to meet the vice chancellor and told him that the punishment was unjustified.

The fact-finding committee asked the students what steps the administration took to address their concerns in these weeks, but the students reiterated their concern that they felt ignored by the administration. The administration took note of the protest and revoked the suspension only *after Rohith’s suicide*.

### **A.2.2 Protest after Rohith Vemula’s suicide**

The students strongly felt that the punishment was a result of political pressure on Prof. Appa Rao, and they blamed him for setting off the sequence of events that led to Rohith’s suicide. After Rohith’s suicide, the students, under the leadership of a “Joint Action Committee” (JAC), started a sustained protest on campus. The students told the fact-finding committee that the JAC’s demand was that Prof. Appa Rao should be arrested and that Ms. Smriti Irani and Mr. Bandaru Dattatreya should be sacked.

The fact-finding committee asked the students about the JAC’s position towards political leaders who joined the event from outside the University. This was one of the issues that the University administration had complained about.

The students explained that the JAC invited support from everyone except for the BJP or BJP-allied organizations. The JAC was also helped legally by sympathetic lawyers from outside the campus.

The fact-finding committee asked the students about the administration’s claim that the JAC forced other students to boycott classes. The students denied this charge, and said that no one was forced to boycott classes—instead there was a large-scale voluntary boycott of classes. Moreover, as soon as Prof. Vipin Srivastava stepped down from the position of interim-vice chancellor, and Prof. Periasamy took over, the JAC lowered the intensity of its protests and the University was able to function normally.

### **A.2.3 Events on the day of return of the vice chancellor**

The students said that not much of note happened after that until 22 March when Prof. Appa Rao returned. They said that the meeting at his residence in the morning did not just involve deans but was broader. Moreover, they claimed that when they entered his residence, they found “task sheets” scattered there. The students claimed that these task-sheets contained a plan to orchestrate the vice chancellor’s return. For example, some of them instructed the Dean of Students’ Welfare to

inform the police of his return. Other task-sheets contained instructions to mobilize “like-minded faculty and students” from the life sciences.

The committee asked the students about the allegations that they vandalized the vice chancellor’s house. The students denied that any of them engaged in vandalism. They said that the vandalism was a pre-planned conspiracy involving students from ABVP and the life sciences.

When the students who met the fact-finding committee reached the vice chancellor’s house that morning, they found some broken glass, and they did not personally witness any of the vandalism. The committee told the students that the administration suggested that there were videos of the vandalism. However, the students said that these videos had not been shown to them, so they could not comment on them.

The committee asked the students about the conflict between students and the non-teaching staff. The students said that some of the non-teaching staff had a vested interest in supporting Prof. Appa Rao. This is because the vice chancellor can offer accommodation in University housing, especially now that some new housing is coming up. The students also felt that the non-teaching staff were provocative, and when they came onto the scene, they shouted slogans like “Appa Rao zindabad”. This is what led to the conflict.

Turning to the events later in the evening, the students claimed that the lathi-charge started *inside* the compound of the vice chancellor’s house, and *not outside* the house. Moreover, when the police lathi-charged the students, they used batons to hit them. The police also chased students down and hit them. The students told the committee that the police dragged a faculty member, Prof. Ratnam and complete tore the shirt of another faculty member — Prof. Tathagata Sengupta. The students told the committee that they heard a senior policeman instructing the policeman under his command to catch several students.

The committee asked the students about the administration’s charge that the students were unwilling to participate in a dialogue. The students denied this charge. They said that the administration had clear double standards since, while they talked about dialogue, they failed to take any action on the desecration of Ambedkar’s statue. They claimed that the vice chancellor’s motivation was not dialogue but rather to stop the “justice for Rohith” movement.

The students also denied that the administration was taking a conciliatory attitude on the issue of the withdrawal of cases that were filed against them on the day of the vice chancellor’s return. The students claimed that the administration wanted students to beg for the withdrawal of cases, and to end their involvement in the movement for “justice for Rohith”.

#### **A.2.4 Discrimination**

The committee asked the students about broader issues of discrimination on the UoH campus. When asked if the students had access to any formal means for redress, in

cases of discrimination, the students said they did *not have access* to any institutional mechanisms to lodge a complaint.

When asked if they had experienced discrimination personally, or if they knew of other cases where discrimination was evident, the students mentioned several instances.

The students mentioned the case of *Senthil Kumar*—a PhD student at the University who committed suicide in 2008—to the committee. They claimed that when Prof. Vipin Srivastava took over as dean of the physics departments, several Dalit students failed to clear the course work. They claimed that Prof. Vipin Srivastava also made continuation of the fellowship contingent on students clearing the course work. As a result, Senthil’s fellowship was stopped. Senthil was also told by faculty members that “this was not the place for him”. The students claimed that these were some of the factors that led to his suicide.

The students also mentioned the case of *Madari Venkatesh*—another student who committed suicide in 2013. When Venkatesh was admitted to the University (in the Advanced Center of Research in High Energy Materials), the students said that 12 positions were available. Nevertheless, the students alleged Venkatesh was not allocated a formal guide and was instead simply asked to interact with the director. The students said that there was no justification for this, given that Venkatesh had published two papers on his own and was AIR-23 in the GATE exam.

The students also described how the head of a particular department questioned the admission of reserved category students under the general category. The students also alleged that, in some departments, faculty members hold strategy meetings and set the intake of students at particular numbers to reduce the number of reserved category students.<sup>11</sup>

The students then told the committee about the issue of mess dues, and a change in policy instituted by the current vice chancellor. They said that, until last year, reserved category students were exempt from mess dues, which were canceled against sources of financial assistance available to them. The students told the committee that there are two sources of financial assistance available to reserved category students, totaling up to Rs. 1,650 per month. The earlier policy was to cancel part of this against mess dues. But, under the new policy, students have to pay their mess-dues up front and then they can balance their personal accounts when they receive the financial assistance due to them. However, their scholarships are often delayed and this causes financial hardships to students from weaker economic backgrounds.

The students also talked about the broader perception that Dalit students were not meritorious. They pointed out that from childhood, many of them had had less

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<sup>11</sup>This is because the number of reserved category students is set as a fraction of the total intake. So, it jumps at discrete intervals when the intake is increased. In particular, the absolute number of reserved category students mandated may not increase at all for certain values of the increase in intake.

access to education than students from upper castes who had access to books from an early age.

One of them gave his own example, and said that his lack of confidence was so severe that he was afraid of uttering his own name in a group. Then the ASA held hostel level meetings, and seniors encouraged him to talk. These ASA sessions had discussions on self-respect, and this helped him grow and come out of his shell. The ASA also holds programmes for freshers, and invites speakers to talk to incoming students. Moreover, they recognize that “one cannot run away from English” and so the ASA helps students learn English.

The students pointed out that discrimination was not restricted to the Sciences but also existed in Social Sciences. As an example of difficulties faced in the social sciences, they gave the example of a specific professor in one of the social science departments. They said that this professor was a well known academic but also known for her “harassment”. As an example, they mentioned that once she handed out a syllabus sheet to her class with a description of grades. She then asked a student a question, and when the student was unable to answer, she asked the student to look at the syllabus sheet and read out what “B grade” means and what “C grade” means. The students characterized this as “pure casteist humiliation.” The students also alleged that, in one of her courses, the same professor prescribed a very expensive reader that some students were unable to afford. Some of them also felt that this professor also victimized students, if they asked too many questions in class.

The students also said that many of the supportive faculty members were from the life sciences. Moreover, they claimed that several students from the life sciences wanted to join the movement but could not do so because of pressure from some members of the faculty who strongly supported the vice chancellor. Some professors from the life-sciences told the students that the activities of the JAC were anti-national, and that students needed to be involved in research and not in activism.

One of the students said that when he joined the ASA, he lost friends in the school of life sciences and was socially ostracized.

### **A.3 Conversation with ABVP students**

**The fact-finding team met with 3 student members of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad on 19 July around 5:30 pm. The fact-finding committee was referred to these students by Mr. Susheel Kumar, although he was not personally able to meet with the committee. This document does not provide the names of the students to preserve their anonymity. The students are referred to just as “the ABVP students”. This document simply provides a summary of the conversation (not a transcript), with no implied endorsement about the veracity of the claims. The committee’s conclusions are detailed separately in the main report.**

This summary was emailed for verification to one of the ABVP students on 11 November 2016, but we did not receive any corrections. On 19 December 2016, one of the students who spoke to us confirmed on the phone that the summary was accurate and that we could go ahead and publish it.

### **A.3.1 Conflict between ASA students and Mr. Susheel Kumar on the night of 3 August 2016**

On the night of 3 August 2015, several members of the Ambedkar Students' Association went to Mr. Susheel Kumar's room in response to his comments on Facebook calling where he termed them "ASA goons." One of the students who met the fact-finding committee was called by one of his friends when this happened. He went to Susheel room and found about 30 members of the ASA gathered there. This student told the committee that some of the ASA students were drunk.

The ABVP students felt that if the ASA-students had grievances, they should have used social media to express their unhappiness rather than physically gathering at Mr. Susheel Kumar's room.

According to them, the ASA students told Susheel that he had a few minutes to call anyone that he wanted. The ABVP students felt this was a method of intimidating Susheel and giving him the impression that no one would be able to help him at that point.

The ABVP students agreed that the duty officer was present at the scene. After a while, more members of the University security arrived at the scene, and they asked Susheel to get inside their vehicle. By that time the ASA students had grabbed Susheel's collar and they had started "beating him." The ASA students demanded that he write a letter apologizing for his comments on Facebook.

When asked for details by the committee, the ABVP students said that they did not personally see Susheel receive too many "punches" but they learned that he had been hit near his room.

The ASA students then forced Susheel to write and upload an apology letter on his Facebook account. The ABVP students told the committee that the letter has a line which states that Susheel was "writing freely" and without any compulsions and and they felt that this line was absurd.

After this, Susheel and some others went to the security office. The ABVP students told the committee that while he was there, Susheel felt giddy and vomited blood. Then his brother came and took him away.

### **A.3.2 Events leading up to Rohit Vemula's suicide**

The ABVP students pointed out to the committee that the initial proctorial inquiry did not depose Susheel as he was admitted in the hospital. Later, after the members of the board talked to Susheel, the second inquiry came to a different conclusion. As

a result of this second inquiry, the University suspended the ASA students for six months although the vice chancellor at the time, Prof. R. P. Sharma, soon revoked the suspension.

The ABVP students told the committee that Susheel wrote to Mr. Bandaru Dattatreya, the Union Minister of Labour and Employment, because he is the only member from Telangana in the cabinet. They told the committee that Susheel met Mr. Dattatreya and told him all about the case. Subsequently, Mr. Dattatreya wrote to the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and the Ministry then asked the vice chancellor for an explanation.

The ABVP students felt that in spite of all of this, when Prof. Appa Rao took over as vice chancellor, he actually reduced the initial punishment: he only suspended the students from the hostel, and allowed them to continue with their academic activities.

The ABVP students said that they never imagined that this suspension would become such a big issue. They said that the University has a tradition of handing out suspensions. Referring to the ASA's claim that the suspension from public places was a form of social boycott, they said that this was "nonsense."

The ABVP students told the committee that when one takes up the Dalit issue, it attracts attention. But one of them told the committee that he was also Dalit. And he felt that it was the ASA that was casteist because it was the ASA that immediately asked students questions like "what is your caste? what is your subcaste?"

When pressed by the committee about whether the ASA had approached him, when he joined the University, to ask him these questions, this student told the committee that he was part of ABVP from the beginning and got admitted to the University with the help of the ABVP. As a result, the ASA did not ask these questions to him personally, but he was aware that they asked such questions to other students.

The ABVP students felt that the ASA launched an agitation on the issue of the suspension of their members in order to become a "power-hub" on campus. They felt that several professors also participated in the movement, and helped to suppress pertinent facts.

### **A.3.3 Discrimination**

The ABVP students felt that there was no significant discrimination against Dalits on the campus. They told the committee that it was not as if the University was not allocating hostel rooms to Dalits, or assigning them rooms in a separate hostel. They also said that it was not as if Dalits were asked to sit on one side of the class, separate from others.

They agreed that there were some problems faced by Dalit students. But these problems had to do with financial support, family pressure, and personal issues —

not caste. They also agreed that while they had not personally witnessed discrimination on campus, it was possible that some students on campus did experience discrimination.

The Dalit student-member of ABVP told the committee that he did face discrimination in his childhood. And that, in the villages, the caste-system exists. He said that in his village he cannot even go to the temple. But he felt that in educational institutions, discrimination was low.

#### **A.3.4 Protests after the suicide of Rohith Vemula**

The ABVP students told the committee that after Rohith Vemula's death, classes were "forcibly suspended" for 21 days. The ABVP requested the protesting students to allow the classes to restart. But, at the time, keeping in mind the atmosphere on campus the ABVP decided "not to make a big issue" of the matter. The ABVP students told the committee that eventually students from the life-sciences started an agitation against the Joint Action Committee (JAC). They were then joined by other science students, and this is what led to the classes restarting.

The ABVP students told the committee that they felt that most of the students who participated in the shutdown were from the social sciences.

#### **A.3.5 Events on the day of return of the vice chancellor**

The committee asked the ABVP students about their perspective on the events of March 22, 2016, when the vice chancellor returned to campus. One of the students told the committee that on that morning, he received a call informing him that a crowd had gathered and people were breaking things in the vice chancellor's house. When he reached there, the protest was still continuing. He felt that the non-teaching staff "saved Prof. Appa Rao's life" that day.

He told the committee that Prof. Appa Rao had invited some teaching and non-teaching staff to meet him that morning. Members of the joint action committee went to the vice chancellor's house at the same time and vandalized it. However, the ABVP student told the committee that he did *not* personally witness the vandalism in progress. He also said that he believed that a video of the vandalism was available, although he had not viewed it himself and was not aware of the exact facts.

The ABVP students were not in favour of the subsequent lathi charge on students. They agreed that a "lathi charge on students is not good." Nevertheless, they felt that police cases against the students should not be withdrawn. In their opinion, if these cases were withdrawn, the dissenting students would "continue violence." Their perspective was that if someone commits a mistake, that person should be punished; so the students who vandalized the vice chancellor's house deserved punishment.

### **A.3.6 Subsequent violent events on the campus**

The committee asked the ABVP students about subsequent violent events on the campus. Just a few days prior to the committee's visit, the media reported that a conflict involving ABVP members led to the hospitalization of a student, Amol Singh. For example, the Hindu reported on 18 July that "a student, Amol Singh, was beaten up allegedly by ABVP cadre who *mistook him* (emphasis added) for a Kashmiri".<sup>12</sup>

The ABVP students told the committee that it was completely false that the conflict resulted from mistaken identity. In their version, which they related to the committee, the ABVP held a motorcycle rally that night to support the Indian army in Kashmir. Their slogans were "Kashmir hamari. Nahin kisi ki baap ki" and "Bharat mata ki jai." They told the committee that the JAC instead held a protest in favour of the Kashmiri militant leader, Burhan Wani.

When the rally reached the hostels, they encountered two students Amol Singh and Sumedh Singh. The ABVP students alleged that Sumedh was not a student and was staying in the hostels "illegally". They also alleged that, near the hostel annex, Amol and Sumedh started shouting "Kashmir mange azadi, Punjab mange azadi, North-East mange azadi". They also said "fuck Bharat Mata. Fuck Indian army". They then started attacking the ABVP students. They were joined by some other students, all of whom were "non-boarders."

When the police arrived, these non-boarders vanished because they were not entitled to stay on the campus. The police left at about 1 am or 2 am at night. One of the ABVP students told the committee that he went to the health center afterwards, and he was alone there, thereby suggesting that the alleged injuries suffered by Amol Singh were not serious enough for him to even visit the health center.

### **A.4 Conversation with Prof. Krishnaveni Mishra**

**The fact-finding team met Prof. Krishnaveni Mishra in her office at around 5:30 pm on 18 July 2016. This document simply provides a summary of the conversation (not a transcript), with no implied endorsement about the veracity of the claims. The committee's conclusions are detailed separately in the main report.**

**This appendix was sent to Prof. Mishra on 12 November 2016 for verification. Prof. Mishra responded on 17 November 2016, and we incorporated the corrections that she indicated to ensure that this summary represents her accurately.**

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<sup>12</sup>See "Echo of Kashmir unrest: student beaten up at UoH", *the Hindu*, 18 July 2016, special correspondent. Available from [www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Hyderabad/Echo-of-Kashmir-unrest-student-beaten-up-at-UoH/article14495835.ece](http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Hyderabad/Echo-of-Kashmir-unrest-student-beaten-up-at-UoH/article14495835.ece).

#### A.4.1 Events leading up to Mr. Rohith Vemula's suicide

Prof. Mishra narrated the sequence of events leading up to Mr. Rohith Vemula's suicide to the committee. She said that when the initial conflict between student members of the Ambedkar Students' Association (ASA) and the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) took place in August 2015, they were told by the Dean of Student's Welfare that the matter had been taken care of. She said that at the time, many faculty members were preoccupied with another matter where the University security had barged into the house of another faculty member, Prof. Grace Temsen. When this happened, Prof. Grace was not present herself but some of her relatives were present in the house. When the neighbours complained about noise, the security entered the house and humiliated the occupants.<sup>13</sup>

Prof. Mishra said that most faculty members agreed that University security should not have entered the house, and many of them protested this incident. As a result, she said that many faculty members did not pay too much attention to the event in August 2015 involving the ASA and the ABVP.

Prof. Mishra said that the issue flared up again in September 2015. She felt that this was because of student elections that were held at the time.

She told the committee that the initial punishment meted out by the University was meant to find a compromise between discipline and the interests of the students. In September, the proctorial board suspended some of the members of the ASA who had been involved in the conflict in August. But the vice chancellor at the time (Prof. R. P. Sharma) "suspended the suspension" by putting the punishment in abeyance.

Prof. Mishra told the committee that subsequently the University came under pressure because the Telangana High Court<sup>14</sup> started asking the administration why it had not taken action on the matter. Moreover, the Ministry of Human Resource Development sent a number of letters to the University. This is what caused the University to act, when Prof. Appa Rao took over as vice chancellor.

She said that it was important to understand the University's version of events, and directed the committee to some details that the University had put up publicly on its website. In particular, she said that when the students (Mr. Rohith Vemula and others) were suspended from the hostel, by Prof. Appa Rao, they retained access to their fellowship and also a house rent allowance. When the committee asked her about the part of the order that banned them from entering "the hostels, administration building, and other common places in groups" she said that this had nothing to do with social ostracism but was meant to ensure that the students could not all go together in a large group and harass the administration. Prof. Mishra

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<sup>13</sup>The committee separately spoke to Prof. Grace Temsen, as detailed in Appendix A.1, although it did not ask her explicitly about this issue.

<sup>14</sup>The High Court was hearing a petition filed by Ms. N Vinaya, the mother of Mr. Susheel Kumar of the ABVP

pointed out that although the punishments were given in December just before the vacation, the students took a decision to sleep in the open in January. She felt that this was perhaps it probably took time to plan the agitation. Prof. Mishra also said that it was puzzling that when the High Court was supposed to give its judgment on all these cases the next day, and the University, through the Dean of Students Welfare, had told the students to wait until then, that Rohith committed suicide just the previous day.

Although Mr. Rohith Vemula was initially in the School of Life Sciences, Prof. Mishra did not remember him clearly. She told the committee that she believed that he was “not particularly interested” in the subject, and she could not say much about him personally.

#### **A.4.2 Events on the day of return of the vice chancellor**

Prof. Mishra was present at the vice chancellor’s residence on March 22, when he returned to campus, and so she provided the committee with her perspective on the events of that day.

She said that the tension started when some students marched to the vice chancellor’s house, and she claimed that they started shouting and breaking things in the house without any provocation. She told the committee that the students damaged Prof. Appa Rao’s family pictures, and broke his computer.

The committee asked her about the allegation that students from the ABVP were present with the vice chancellor when he returned. Prof. Mishra agreed that the vice chancellor was accompanied by some students, but she said that they were life science students, and not ABVP students. She said that life science students had, in general, *not* been entirely with the joint action committee (JAC) that was organizing the protests. Prof. Mishra also said that when the JAC “locked buildings using chains” in January, after Mr. Vemula’s death, it was life science students who opened the building.

Prof. Mishra said that the students then manhandled some of the non-teaching staff who had arrived at the vice chancellor’s house. In some time, the police also arrived on the scene.

Prof. Mishra told the committee that the police continuously asked the students to move from about noon to 5 pm. Although the students inside the vice chancellor’s house left by lunch-time, the students in the compound stayed until the evening. Therefore, Prof. Mishra said that the police started to move the protesting students out of the compound several hours after they were first requested to move by the police.

Prof. Mishra did not see any instance where female students or protesters were handled by male policemen. She also told the committee that the students were not arrested at this stage. She did see that some students, who refused to move, were

picked up bodily. But then, she said, all of them were simply left outside the gate, and not put in the police vans.

Prof. Mishra said that after the students were removed from the compound they started throwing stones. One policeman got hurt in the stone-throwing, and she herself saw him bleeding. She said that the people inside the vice chancellor's house administered first-aid to the injured policeman. She said that until the time the stone-throwing started, the police were relaxed and when the pelting began they ran for cover. After this she saw the police run out of the compound. Prof. Mishra said that she did not see any of the reported police violence since there was "no one in the compound for them to get violent with, and I did not leave the compound".

Turning to the arrest of Profs. Tathagata Sengupta and Ratnam, she emphasized that she did not have personal knowledge about this issue. But from speaking to people outside the compound she gathered that as Prof. Tathagata was being picked up, Prof. Ratnam came to stop the arrest, and he was also arrested.

Prof. Mishra told the committee that she felt that the cases against the students should be dropped. She felt that this reconciliation was being prevented by the students' distrust of the administration. However, she felt that this distrust was unwarranted since, knowing Prof. Appa Rao, she felt that he was not casteist. She also felt that much of the criticism leveled at him was "politically and personally motivated."

#### **A.4.3 Discrimination and University student politics**

Prof. Mishra said that she was glad that the committee had come to speak to her. She felt that the entire controversy, from the start, had been very educative, and she felt that the media had been very biased. She said that an employee of a news agency told her directly that they had instructions to be only "pro Dalit" and not "pro University." When asked why these two positions were dichotomous at all, she explained that the media had created a false dichotomy and was one of the primary culprits responsible for the current vitiated atmosphere.

The committee asked her about the letter from Mr. Bandaru Dattatreya, which alleged that the University had become casteist. Prof. Mishra agreed with Mr. Dattatreya that casteism was a concern and felt that the University was getting divided along lines of caste and region. She said that she did not understand why students identified themselves politically by region or caste. She pointed out that an ideology like that of the students' federation of India (SFI), in principle, included all of these identities; so why did some students have to organize themselves in these subgroups? Prof. Mishra felt that these caste and regional divisions were unhelpful for the students.

On the issue of discrimination, Prof. Mishra felt that discrimination was not as institutionalized in the University as it was being made out to be. She said that faculty members take efforts to integrate students into the community. The University's

teachers deal with incoming students, who range from “completely village students” to “ultra-modern students” and try to make these different groups gel together. Once again, she felt that the media had misrepresented the situation. Prof. Mishra felt that this was possibly because of a dominant culture “where people are afraid of not being on the left”.

#### **A.5 Conversation with Prof. B. P. Sanjay**

**The fact-finding team met Prof. B. P. Sanjay, the pro vice chancellor of the University of Hyderabad in his office at around 11 am on 18 July 2016. This document simply provides a summary of the conversation (not a transcript), with no implied endorsement about the veracity of the claims. The committee’s conclusions are detailed separately in the main report.**

**In our conversation, Prof. Sanjay initially suggested that we speak informally and that we could mail him a detailed list of questions later. We did email him this list on 4 September 2016 and had some additional correspondence on 7 September 2016. Since we did not receive a reply to these questions, we emailed him a copy of this summary on 18 December 2016. Prof. Sanjay sent his comments and clarifications on 30 December 2016, which we have incorporated below**

*Prof. Sanjay has requested us to preface this summary with the following clarification:*

*Prof. Sanjay met us in response to our request and did ask for the Terms of Reference of the fact-finding committee. As on the date this summary was sent (Dec 18), the commission of inquiry formally constituted for this purpose by the Ministry had submitted its report. (This report is not yet public although media reports about it have appeared.) His responses are intended to put this event in perspective and are not purported to be any official submission.*

Prof. Sanjay said that the University was very concerned about the conflict from an institutional perspective. However, he pointed out that it was important to recognize that University of Hyderabad is a liberal arts institution, and is inclusive. It has large number of SC/ST students, and also SC/ST faculty. The number of such students is quite high because the University does not slot students and faculty and reserved category students have the right to compete in the open-category, and if they get admitted in that category, then their seat in the reserved category opens up for another student.

He felt that this particular incident resulted from a clash of ideologies. And he felt that this clash of ideologies was affected by the larger political process in the country, which was also polarized.

### A.5.1 Events leading up to the suicide of Rohith Vemula

Prof. Sanjay told the fact-finding team that after the initial conflict in August, the University held a disciplinary process that was protested very fiercely. Due to this protest, the deans took a position where they decided to defer the punishment and put it up to a larger body.

In the meantime, Prof. Sanjay said, the mother of Mr. Susheel Kumar filed a court case accusing the University of not taking action in spite of the complaint. Also, a member of parliament had written to the University asking it to explain what action it had taken. Prof. Sanjay told the committee that when a member of parliament writes to the administration, it is necessary for them to respond; usually the administration will simply write back saying that the case has been looked into but does not necessarily have to take action according to the MP's demands. Most of these events took place before the current vice chancellor was appointed. So, Prof. Sanjay emphasized to the committee that the vice chancellor walked into a tense situation and it was not that he had an ambitious intention to settle scores.

After the vice chancellor, Prof. Appa Rao took charge, he appointed a subcommittee of the executive council that looked into evidence and recommended a punishment where the students would retain their academic privileges but were barred from the hostel.

Prof. Sanjay emphasized that except for hostel access, other privileges such as library-privileges were preserved, and de-emphasized the part of the punishment barring them from common places. He felt that there was no implicit or explicit casteist motive to this line, and felt that the students were unnecessarily reading meaning into this statement.

He emphasized that caste did not play any role in the punishment. He told the committee that sometimes people can read multiple meanings into any administrative action. And in such situations, "identity is deciphered to the last bit."

The committee asked Prof. Sanjay about whether the autonomy of the University was being eroded by this interference by political leaders. Prof. Sanjay agreed it was being eroded but placed the blame for the erosion on the media, and not on the central government. He said that media was trying to run down public institutions. He felt that this explains why the media is unwilling to comment on the scientific contributions of members of the faculty, but blows up the smallest controversies in the University into national issues.

Prof. Sanjay agreed that when the protest against the punishment first started, faculty members and others did not take the protest very seriously. He also felt that the students waited to ramp up the protest. The initial punishment was delivered in vacation time and since the University was re-opening on January 4-5, the students may have felt that they would get a stronger reception then.

Prof. Sanjay also said that the vice chancellor was keeping track of the situation

through the Dean of Students Welfare (DSW). He also pointed out that the DSW, Prakash Babu, was a Dalit himself.

Prof. Sanjay expressed his extreme sorrow at the suicide of Rohith Vemula.

When the committee asked him whether he felt that the administration erred in any way, Prof. Sanjay replied that that he had not been part of the administration at that time. But he admitted that perhaps the administration needed to see if they had reached out enough to the students and worked with them when the punishment was meted out.

In this context, Prof. Sanjay also felt that the “concerned faculty” in the University who are now taking an active role could have taken the same role earlier and badgered the administration to ensure that matters did not come the pass that they have come to.

### **A.5.2 Protests in January**

After Rohith’s suicide, Prof. Sanjay said that there was a second institutional crisis at the University. He felt that there had been a relentless movement that ostensibly aimed at “justice for Rohit” but which had now taken on different dimensions. In January, he said that the campus was initially “free for all”, and that everyone could come in and do whatever they wanted in the movement. He said that for 18-20 days after the suicide, the University placed no restrictions on the movement of people, and was willing to let the protest “play its course”. But, as a result, the University turned into a media jamboree.

In this time, Prof. Sanjay said that politicians from all parties, except for the BJP came to the campus, including Rahul Gandhi, and intellectuals, lawyers and many others. All of them were allowed free entry. This setup led to a paralysis of the administration for several days. In particular, Prof. Sanjay emphasized that various goods addressed to the University were not cleared through customs, because there was no one to sign the requisite documents.

Prof. Sanjay felt that the students were unwilling to engage in dialogue in this period, and shouted at the administration and, on the whole, were very offensive. Prof. Sanjay also said that the vice chancellor was willing to talk with the students, but was initially advised by the police that he should not enter the campus.

Prof. Sanjay also said that the students were strident in their demand that the vice chancellor, Prof. Appa Rao, should be removed, that the minister of human resource development, Smriti Irani, should be removed, and that the union minister of labour, Mr. Bandaru Dattatreya should be removed. He said that these constituted unreasonable demands since the University had no power over ministers and the vice chancellor was also appointed by the president.

Prof. Sanjay also told us that the student protesters forcefully locked up the departments and prevented others, who were not part of the protest, from resuming their activities. As an example, he pointed out that there were women workers

coming in the bus every day who then had no place to even freshen up. Prof. Sanjay felt that although the protest in January appeared to be large, the core number of students involved in this was small.

He also emphasized that during this protest in January, the administration had not taken the help of the police in this time. Moreover, he said that the administration respected the students and their ideological restlessness, and did not take advantage of their authority over students as professors to browbeat them.

### **A.5.3 Events on the day of return of the vice chancellor**

Prof. Sanjay told us that on March 22, Prof. Appa Rao returned to campus and held a meeting at his house in the morning. He said that a number of students gathered there and went on a rampage. He also told the committee that the students wanted to enter the room where the deans were meeting, and perhaps even physically push Prof. Appa Rao around.

Prof. Sanjay said that the police was called in by the registrar's office when the situation was getting out of hand, to control the law and order situation and to prevent further damage.

Prof. Sanjay said that the students completely ransacked the vice chancellor's house, broke the windows and also his computer. He also said that if there was an impression that the administration directed the police, this was incorrect. Moreover, he emphasized that the administration had not filed a complaint on the issue of intimidation. The only case the University had filed was on the vandalism charge, and the police had not acted on this complaint even though they knew the students who were involved.

Speaking about the events later in the day, when the police dragged away the students, he told the committee that this happened only after one policeman was hit.

Referring to the faculty members who had been arrested, Prof. Sanjay said that the administration was willing to give them the benefit of the doubt and accept that they were there to probably exercise restraint on the students, and not to incite them. But he also said that some faculty members had taken it upon themselves to guide the students. And that this was an ideological battle that they had taken up. He disapproved of this because while it was their right to express their opinion, he felt that they were not concerned about 5000 other students.

When asked about whether the University was making an attempt, in the interests of de-escalation and dialogue, to request the police to withdraw the cases, he said that the administration was in favour of de-escalation. He claimed that the problem was that the students had been told by some of the faculty members not to engage with the administration in any kind of compromise.

Prof. Sanjay returned to the point that a section of the students and the faculty don't go to the administration, and are unwilling to even address the vice Chancellor

and seek withdrawal of the cases. He claimed that their attitude was confrontational, where the students simply say that they have their rights and will see the matter off in court. Nevertheless, he claimed that the administration is trying to see what can be done, but again emphasized that whenever they move towards a negotiated settlement, it is blocked by the students. He said that they use filthy language, and pointed to an incident that had happened just the previous night, when the students manhandled the security.

When asked about recognized student unions, and whether they could help in de-escalating the conflict, he told the committee that there was a recognized student union that gets elected every year. This year, the students union election was won by the Students Federation of India (SFI). Prof. Sanjay said that the University was always willing to pursue a dialogue with the unions. But in this case, he felt that the students union had now become part of the joint action committee. So he said that students union president was unwilling to even talk to the administration. Prof. Sanjay reiterated that the some of the students' demands were unreasonable and again characterized their position as: "Appa Rao should resign; Smriti Irani should resign; Bandaru Dattatreya should resign; and only then will we come for a negotiation."

#### **A.5.4 Suspension of members of the faculty**

The committee asked Prof. Sanjay about the suspension of the two faculty members, Prof. Tathagata Sengupta and Prof. Ratnam. Prof. Sanjay said that the government civil service rules apply automatically to faculty. His point was that since the rules state that a civil servant is "deemed to be suspended" if he or she has been in custody for more than 48 hours, this happened automatically and the University had no choice in the matter. Prof. Sanjay told the committee that in the past there had been similar cases where employees had been arrested for personal reasons, and were then deemed to be suspended.

However, Prof. Sanjay felt that the University administration was as conciliatory as possible and fast-tracked the lifting of the suspension. He described this by saying that they opened discussions on the matter at 7:30 in the morning and by 5:30 they had completed the lifting of the suspension.

#### **A.5.5 Freedom of speech on campus**

The committee asked Prof. Sanjay about freedom of speech and movement on campus. Prof. Sanjay said that the administration was just following the instructions of the high court, and he said that the high court had observed that outsiders had no role in the University. He said that a free-for-all entry for everyone was not possible at the moment, and that it would take the University time to get back to such a free setup.

But he said that the campus was open to visitors, who were willing to follow the right procedures. For example, the media could enter the campus by contacting the PRO who would facilitate the entry. And he said that all that the administration had said was that visitors should have legitimate ID and tell the security where they wanted to go.

The committee also asked Prof. Sanjay about the recent constraints that the administration had imposed on posters on campus. Prof. Sanjay said that the University was large and there were many families staying on campus with their children. He said that provocative posters were problematic for this reason. He said that the administration was only trying to say that there should be a space for political expression, and that University walls were not for graffiti.

#### **A.5.6 Discrimination and possibility of administrative reforms**

The committee asked Prof. Sanjay about discrimination on campus, the previous suicides of Dalit students and the possibility of reforms to prevent such events in the future.

On the issue of suicides of other Dalit students, Prof. Sanjay said that part of the problem had to do with the aspirations of students, and a mismatch between that and the expectation of the supervisor. He brought up the possibility of extending the PhD program to 7 or 9 years, and of having formal remedial programs. But Prof. Sanjay said that the administration had not yet seriously tried to implement such measures because academic programs had a finite length.

Prof. Sanjay also told the committee that anything that stops the access of Dalit students to their fellowship is a major source of frustration. But, in situations, where the continuation of the fellowship is related to progress reports from the supervisor, he felt that it was an institutional challenge to delink the two. He felt it was possible that institutions could take a perception that “fellowship was a right” and that the fellowship could be treated as a salary for some fixed number of semesters and sent directly to their account. But he pointed out that this could lead to other problems where the institution was accused of not taking enough pains to motivate the students and bringing them up to a level.

Prof. Sanjay said that the administration was talking to Canara bank to ensure that scholarships reach the students in time. When asked, what role the bank had to play, he said that when the scholarship does not reach the students, they tend to suspect bank officials and not just the administration. And he admitted that sometimes the bank does have concerns about reconciling payments, because it does not have accurate data and documentation for its student customers.

Prof. Sanjay admitted that to some extent part of the problem of Dalit students adjusting in the program had to do with possibly socially insensitive comments from the faculty made either wittingly or unwittingly.

As a social scientist, Prof. Sanjay said that he also recognized that some students from the reserved category may not come from English speaking backgrounds, and so he valued their ideas more than their articulation. But he said that in sciences there was a problem if they were not able to get the right results and steps.

As a result, he said that the issue of Dalit students not performing well was a more severe problem in the sciences than in the social sciences. Prof. Sanjay said that the science faculty had faced a lot of criticism. But the science faculty plead helplessness. Prof. Sanjay said that they feel that they are being impartial, and are doing their work, and they claim that they cannot even identify the identity of students in a class of 40.

Prof. Sanjay also pointed out that the UoH was diverse compared to scientific research institutions and was rated highly on social inclusiveness. He felt that one of the reasons for lack of diversity in the scientific institutions was because they did not have a liberal arts programme. He felt that other scientific institutions could also attempt to broaden their curriculum and diversity. He mentioned the IIT's attempts to include humanities in the course, but felt that it did not go far enough.

Prof. Sanjay said he was happy to meet the fact-finding team, and also happy that the team had contacted him to ask him for his opinion. He said he told the vice chancellor that he was about to meet the team, and the vice chancellor had not objected in any manner.

## **B Supporting documents**

In this section, we provide some supporting documents for some of the facts that we have outlined in the report. We are grateful to Prof. Laxminarayana, Prof. Deepa Sreenivas and Prof. Tathagata Sengupta for giving us access to some of the documents here.

4/8/15

To,

ASA,

University of Hyderabad.

I apologise for the comment,  
(ASA goes, talking about Hooliganism  
with emotion - feeling funny). I  
am withdrawing my words ~~and~~  
written on facebook on ASA.

I have written it,  
when am in full confusion  
and without any force.

  
N. Susheel Kumar

Ph.D. (A-L)  
Maddur.  
Utt.

D.S.O



4-8-2015

2-AM.

Doc. 1: Apology letter written by Susheel Kumar

Annexure I

Confidential

University of Hyderabad  
Office of Chief Proctor

UH/CP/2015/320

August 12, 2015.

Note

With reference to the Registrar's note vide No. UH/REG/2015/ dated 5.8.2015, basing on the orders of the Vice-Chancellor to include special invitees as directed, the Proctorial Board took up for inquiry into the incident occurred on 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> August 2015.

In this connection, the Proctorial Board thoroughly inquired all the involved students in the incident (excluding Mr. Susheel Kumar) the Security staff and Dr. Anupama, Medical Officer.

The report with the decisions of the Proctorial Board is enclosed herewith for kind perusal.

Submitted please.

To  
The Vice-Chancellor

1. The board decision is approved as interim report on which the Proctorial Board can observe the departure of Mr. Susheel Kumar ~~with~~ at earliest possible opportunity.
2. The board recommendation be included as norms of samples being to be followed by all students. For number 1 the student community can debate and come to a consensus.

1 and 2  
31/8/15  
Chief Proctor 15

Received

L. R. Govd  
21 Dec. 15

A. R. (RTG),  
Assistant Registrar UoH.  
HR/EC-LG/RTI

University of Hyderabad  
Office of Chief Proctor

The decision of the Proctorial Board is based on the below mentioned findings:

1. The Board could not get any hard evidence of beating of Mr Susheel Kumar either from Mr Krishna Chaitanya or from the reports submitted by Dr Anupama. Dr. Anupama's reports also could not link or suggest that the surgery of the Sushil Kumar is the direct result of the beating. She could only say that she found out some scratches on his left soldier. though Dr Anupama also acknowledged that her finding are based on the conversation with the treating doctors of Archana Hospital and their pathological reports only. She was unable to check Mr Sushil kumar primarily and thoroughly, because his admission in Archana Hospital. So she can't be medically certain in her findings.
2. According to DSO, Mr. Dilip Singh, who was the first to reach to the spot, there was a big gathering of ASA cadres and discussing with Sushil Kumar. When asked about the beating, he told that he didn't witness any beating of Mr Susheel Kumar during his presence, and the scratches on the left soldier could be the result of trying to pull out Mr. Susheel kumar, from the security jeep, by ASA cadres. That could also be the reason of his torn shirt.
3. Mr. Susheel Kumar was not present for deposition nor he could submit any letter or medical report from his current hospital. When asked, Mr Krishna Chaitanya informed the board that Mr Susheel Kumar is under treatment and recovering from surgery in the Archana Hospital and will only be able to present his medical report after getting discharged, since hospital has refused to give medical report, because of police case.
4. Mr. Krishna Chaitanya could not present any hard evidence of Mr. Sushil Kumar's beating in the support of his letter.

Assistant Registrar  
HR/EC-LC/RTI  
University of Hyderabad  
Hyderabad-500 046, T.S., India

L. R. Gowd

A.R. (RTI)

22/11/15

21/11/15  
12.8.15

5. It was clear from all the depositions that Mr Susheel Kumar posted the said comments on face book and ASA people went to Mr. Susheel's room to seek apology and for the removal of the post.
6. There were heated arguments and there was a big gathering of ASA cadres too while Mr. Susheel Kumar was almost alone.
7. This whole argument ended with the apology letter of Mr. Susheel Kumar.
- 8.

**The Decision;**

Basing on above mentioned findings, with a sense of incompleteness ( since the main complainant Mr. N. Susheel Kumar was unable to be present for deposition or his medical report, due to being in the hospital) And hastiness, (due the order of yours for submitting the report in 3-4 days), the Proctorial Board's decisions are ;

1. A strong warning is to be issued to Mr. Susheel kumar for posting of such comments on Face Book.
2. Strong warnings to be issued to Mr. D. Prasanth, Mr. Vincent, Mr Rohit Vemula, P Vijay, Mr. Sunkanna, Mr Seshu Chemudugunta for going to Sushil Kumar's room and hostel and asking for apology and deleting his comment from face book, in the midnight, instead of complaining to appropriate authorities.

And,

the Proctorial Board, based on many past experiences too, strongly feels and want to convey to you that students politics has become caste, religion, ideology and community centred in the past few years. Because of this changing character of student politics, the academic and social fabric of our respected university is getting destroyed day by day.

So, we suggest you to pl tell to all student's political organizations following things, if you find appropriate, to stop further fall of this prestigious campus;

1. to impose ban on those student organizations who are based on caste, community, ideology, region and religion,

2. to not to put any graphics or pictures in their actions and functions that could hurt anyone's sentiments.

Assistant Registrar  
HR/EC-LO/RTI  
University of Hyderabad  
Hyderabad-500 046, T.S., India

*L. R. Bond*  
*21/11/15*  
*(R.T.I), UoH.*

*21/11/15*  
*12. B. 15-*



Annex 1A

UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD  
REGISTRAR'S OFFICE, SECURITY DEPARTMENT  
PO Central University Campus, Hyderabad - 500 046 Ph.040-23132424

UH/SEC/2015/DSO

Dt: 5<sup>th</sup> Aug 2015

INCIDENT REPORT

Sub- Incident report of ASA Vs. ABVP group of Students on early hours of dt: 4<sup>th</sup> August 2015 (around 1.20 am) - Reg

\*\*\*\*\*

I, S. Dalip Singh, Duty Security Officer, of "C" Shift submit to state that on dt: 4<sup>th</sup> August 2015 early hours around 1.20 am on receiving phone call from DSW, myself and Sri K. Venkateswarulu, Security Guard rushed to the Annex Hostel and found some of the students standing in front of Annex Hostel, Mr. Susheel Kumar was standing alone and talking over phone and it is noticed that Mr. Susheel Kumar was 50 feet away from the ASA group of students around 30 members.

After we reached the place, Two Police personnel have reached there saying that there was a phone call received by Inspector of Police saying that there is a threat to the life of the Students at the said hostel. After 5 minutes Police patrol vehicle has reached to the spot. The ASA group of Students questioned Mr. Susheel Kumar asked "why such bad comments posted against ASA group students in Face book".

Initially he refused later he confessed that it was posted by him only. Finally he agreed and apologized and the same was written by him for withdrawing his comments which was posted in his face book in my presence, after that the ASA group of students demanded the same should be uploaded on his face book. For this reason Mr. Susheel Kumar was brought to the Main gate by Security Vehicle escorted by around 10 students of ABVP group to upload the matter of withdrawal comments which was written by him.

When Mr. Susheel Kumar opened his face book account to withdraw the comments the ASA students noticed that certain comments were received, in addition with the comments which he has posted against the ASA group of students; then ASA group of students demanded to upload the letter without the earlier post.

5-8-2015

Assistant Registrar  
HRIEC-LQ/RTI  
University of Hyderabad

Contd

A. R. Bhowal  
21/XII/15

Annexure - 3

Nandanam Diwakar  
Vice President  
Bharatiya Janata Party  
Ranga Reddy District  
24-808, Pancha Sheela Colony  
Ranga Reddy Nagar  
Hyderabad 500037  
Mobile 9490760989  
e-mail : diwakarnandanam@gmail.com

10<sup>th</sup> August 2015,  
New Delhi.

To,  
Sri Bandaru Dattatreya garu,  
Hon'ble State Minister  
Labour & Employment  
Government of India.  
New Delhi.

Respected Madam.

**Sub : Antinational activities in Hyderabad Central University premises - Violent attack on Sri Nandanam Susheel Kumar, PhD Student and President of ABVP by AMBEDKAR STUDENT ASSOCIATION upon Hanging of Yakub Memon hanging - Terrorisism - University of Hyderabad - Regarding**

I bring to your kind notice dastardly attack on Mr N Susheel Kumar, President of ABVP-UoH and Exective Committee Member, ABVP Telangana State Unit for protesting against the prayer meeting conducted for Yakub Memon!

It is part of the series of anti-national activities conducted and organised in University of Hyderabad by ASA (Ambedkar Students Association) and following is a history of it, concluded by our prayer to you.

What happened on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2015, 01:30 am in University of Hyderabad:-

Mr N Susheel Kumar (14 HAPH 04), PhD student of Department of Applied Linguistics and inmate of Room no 113 of NRS-Annexe was attacked by a mob of students numbering more than 30 led by Dontha Prashant (former Students' Union President and PhD student in School of Economics), affiliated to ASA (Ambedkar Students' Association) at around 01:30 am of 4<sup>th</sup> August 2015 in the hostel room.

#### Incident

He was abused, interrogated, manhandled, tortured, humiliated and heckled for a Facebook status - "ASA goons are talking about hooliganism- feeling funny" (posted around 9 pm on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2015). He was abused by various students especially Prashant in the most deplorable manner which cannot be repeated again. They confronted him to know why he wrote a post like that. He tried to reason that, on campus they attack students physically and otherwise.

**Doc. 6: Letter from local BJP unit to Bandaru Dattatreya, Pg 1**

they conduct prayer for Yakub Memon and still they condemn alleged hooliganism elsewhere in the county and shed crocodile tears on 'human rights violations', so He posted it as a critique of politics of hypocrisy, hatred and misinformation of ASA. Moreover, he was criticising the goonda tendency of the organisation and not the organisation per se.

In between the arguments and counter arguments, Prashanth tore his shirt and pushed him around. In between some of them showered punches on him in front of the swelling crowd of students, now numbering 100 or more.

University security team arrived and took him to the security office at the main gate. As per the 'demand' of ASA and also to save his life from the mob that was ready to lynch, he wrote a letter as dictated to me. For medical diagnosis he left the campus by around 02:30 am. We have been informed that ASA has formed teams of students to man all the 3 entrances of the campus in order to pounce on him and beat him if at all he enters the campus.

### Background

He is the President of ABVP on campus and also a State Executive member of ABVP-Telangana. Recently, we have taken strong objection to the way ASA has conducted open prayer meeting for Yakub Memon and circulated posters in this regard particularly to the suggestion that 'if one Yakub is hanged 100's of Yakubs will rise'. More than the party politics of and on campus we see it as an issue impinging the moral and ethical fabric that constitutes our society - nation and nationalism, wherein an open support for a convicted terrorist and defiance of the Supreme Court is nothing but contempt of court and anti-national. This public positioning and our counter campaign against the propaganda about Yakub being hanged for being a Muslim has exposed the politics of hypocrisy and hatred of ASA, which as an organisation is dismissive of nation and nationalism basing it on caste and identity politics.

We oppose ASA for not being pro-dalit and adivasi students association but for its methods and orientations that is nothing short of unwarranted aggression in the name of assertion and equality, contempt and hatred for all except them in the name of protecting particular social groups (threatening and intimidating dalits who subscribe to other political ideologies is one of their main political activity) and disintegrating the idea of unity in diversity that underwrites India as a nation-state in the name of narrow caste politics (paradoxically it is the identity politics of subaltern elites that they practice!) geared at pecuniary benefits rather than any tangible re-organisation and re-alignment of material conditions and mentalities.

In the past the politics of ASA included.

1. Disrupting the lecture of Prof Amartya Sen. no action taken!
2. Disturbing a national seminar conducted by Department of Telugu, no action.
3. Brutally attacking a Physics Department student in NRS Hostel. for which only a warning was issued!
4. Beating an activist of ABVP for stopping another ASA activist from tearing the posters of ABVP on July 2015.
5. Verbally threatening students who critique ASA for its political positioning.

The omissions and inactions of the disciplinary mechanism of the university has encouraged violent tendencies within ASA and this has made them believe that this is the rightfully way to pursue their goals and politically engage individuals, groups and organisations with contrary ideas and ideologies. Who is responsible for this deplorable condition of student politics on campus?

#### Our Prayer

1. Why is it made to perceive on campus that it is shameful to be Hindu and Indian in Indian Universities?
2. Why does university allow programs like prayer meeting for Yakub Memon?
3. Why it is that students indulging in conducts unbecoming of students are not equally and proportionately punished?
4. Direct University of Hyderabad to enquire on all activities of ASA and other radical groups on campus.
5. Formulate guidelines and policies to streamline what kind of program can be and cannot be conducted in Universities.
6. Ensure ideas of nation, nationalism and nation building are propagated and spread in universities by the authorities at regular interval.
7. Set up committees to monitor activities of radical and anti-national students and faculties in University of Hyderabad.

Attack on him is a consequence of an unchallenged growth of violent tendency on campus aided by the failings of the university administration. Moreover, it is an attack on the liberty and freedom of an individual who wants to record and register protest regarding issues on and off campus.

Any further delay in addressing the problems as outlined above will not only harm him individually but also other students in the future, hence an expeditious processing of our demand is expected.

I am enclosing representation submitted to the Registrar of University along with injured photos of Sri N. Sushil Kumar and clippings of newspapers and SMS messages, for your record, to initiate necessary action with the University Authorities by taking up matter with Home Minister, Intelligence Agencies and Human Resource Minister who has monitoring powers on the institution.

Thanking you in anticipation of a positive and quick response.



Nandanam Diwakar  
Vice President  
Bharatiya Janata Party  
Ranga Reddy District  
Mobile 91 9490760980

Encl : copies of representations with photos and

बंदारु दत्तात्रेय  
BANDARU DATTATREYA



Annexure 4

D.O. No. 113/MOS(IC)/MP/2015

श्रम एवं रोजगार राज्य मंत्री  
(स्वतंत्र प्रभार)  
भारत सरकार  
श्रम शक्ति भवन, नई दिल्ली-110119  
MINISTER OF STATE  
(INDEPENDENT CHARGE)  
LABOUR & EMPLOYMENT  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
SHRAM SHAKTI BHAVAN  
NEW DELHI - 110119

Dear Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani Ji,

17 AUG 2015

As you are aware, I represent Secunderabad in Parliament which constitutes major part of Hyderabad. Hyderabad University, a Central University located in Hyderabad has, in the recent past, become a den of casteist extremist and anti-national politics. This could be visualized from the fact that when Yakub Menon was hanged, a dominant students union, that is, Ambedkar Students' Association has held protests against the execution. When Shri Shushil Kumar, President, ABVP in the campus protested against this, he was manhandled and as a result he was admitted in the hospital. What is more tragic is that the University Administration has become a mute spectator to such events. I am also enclosing a few details to buttress my point.

The purpose of my writing this letter is only to highlight the affairs in Hyderabad University. I earnestly hope under your dynamic leadership things would change in this Campus for the better.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

(Bandaru Dattatraya)

Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani,  
Hon'ble Minister of Human Resource Development  
Government of India,  
New Delhi

Doc. 9: Letter from Bandaru Dattatreya to the MHRD

Annexure 2



UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF PROCTOR

UH/CP/2015/334

Date: 31.08.2015.

NOTE

With reference to the Registrar's note vide no.UH/REG/2015/4854, dated 13.8.2015 basing on the orders of Vice-Chancellor dated 12.8.2015 for obtaining the deposition of Mr.N.Susheel Kumar, the Proctorial Board took up for continuation of inquiry into the incident occurred on 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> August 2015.

In this connection, the Proctorial Board thoroughly inquired into the incident along with two witnesses and Dr.Arupama, Medical Officer.

The report with decisions of the Proctorial Board is enclosed herewith for kind rusal.

Submitted please

Vice-Chancellor

Chief Proctor

L-R-board  
21/XI/15  
A.R.-(R79), UoH.

Assistant Registrar  
HR/EC-LC/RTI  
University of Hyderabad  
Hyderabad-500 046, T.S., India

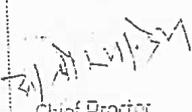
UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD

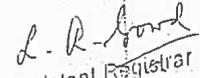
Office of Chief Proctor

"Based on the Medical Officer report (explained by Dr. Anupama)", main complainant Susheel Kumar's deposition and pictures by him and the depositions of two eyewitness (names are kept confidential) of the incident, it was evidently clear that Mr. Susheel Kumar was abused, manhandled, beaten, forced to write apology letter by a group of more than 30 students, lead by Prashant. The main and most active students involved and named by the complainant and mostly confirmed by eyewitnesses, in abusing and hitting are Prashant, Rohit, Sheshu, Vijay and Sunkanna.

**The Proctorial Board's decisions are:**

1. Complete suspension from University - from classes or courses, hostels and other relevant/connected things a student gets from University, with immediate effect, for ongoing/current semester for Mr. Dontha Prashant, Mr. Rohit Vemula, Mr. P. Vijay and Mr. Sheshu Chennudugunta, on account of leading a group of 30 persons to Susheel's room, abusing and hitting to Mr. Susheel Kumar.
2. About Mr. Velpula Sunkanna, who had a very active part in this incident, not only in the helping in hitting but dictating the apology letter, is not a bonafide student of University, so he is out of board jurisdiction. Henceforth the board suggests to the Vice-Chancellor to take appropriate and strict action against him. Since its the matter of Security. He must be treated like a intruder since his presence in campus is dangerous.
3. The board also suggests to the Vice-Chancellor to issue strong warning to all student political groups not to indulge in any sort of indiscipline.

  
Chief Proctor

  
Assistant Registrar  
HR/EC-L/CRTI  
University of Hyderabad  
Hyderabad-500 046, T.S., India.

Annexure 5

Subject: Comments on VIP reference of Shri Bandaru Dattatreya, MoS for Labour and Employment

Date: 03.09.15 11:55

To: Registrar CU Hyderabad <registrar@uohyd.ernet.in>  
Cc: Shri Subodh Ghildiyal <subodh.ghildiyal@nic.in>

From: Ramji Pandey <ramjipandey.edu@nic.in>

Shri Bandaru Dattatreya.pdf 4.5 MB

Dear Sir

Please find attached herewith a copy letter dated 17.08.2015 of Shri Bandaru Dattatreya, MoS for Labour and Employment along with enclosures.

It is requested that issues raised by Hon'ble MoS may kindly be examined and facts may be intimated to the Ministry to enable us to submit reply to MoS.

With regards

Ramji Pandey  
US

9/3/2015 12:53:19 PM

Annex 9

REMINDER  
By Speed Post

No 7-4/2015-Desk(U)  
Government of India  
Ministry of Human Resource Development  
(Department of Higher Education)  
Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi

Dated, the 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2015

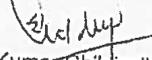
To,  
The Registrar,  
University of Hyderabad,  
Prof. C.R. Rao Road,  
Gachibowli, Hyderabad, 500046

Sub: Antinational activities in Hyderabad Central University premises -  
Violent attack on Sri Nandanam Susheel Kumar, Ph.D. student and  
President of ABVP - reg.

Sir,  
I am to refer to e-mail dated 3.9.2015 (copy overleaf) of this Ministry  
regarding above mentioned subject and to say that the comments/facts have not  
been received so far.

It is requested that the same may kindly be expedited to enable the  
Ministry to reply to MoS.

Yours faithfully,



(Subodh Kumar Ghildiyal)  
Deputy Secretary to the Govt. of India  
Phone: 011-23384508

Doc. 13: Second letter from MHRD to UoH

By Speed Post

No.7-4/2015-Desk(U)  
Government of India  
Ministry of Human Resource Development  
(Department of Higher Education)  
Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi

Dated, the 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2015

To,  
The Vice-Chancellor,  
University of Hyderabad,  
Prof. C.R. Rao Road,  
Gachibowli, Hyderabad, 500046

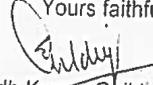
Sub: Antinational activities in Hyderabad Central University premises –  
Violent attack on Sri Nandanam Susheel Kumar, Ph.D. student and  
President of ABVP - reg.

Sir,

I am to refer to e-mail dated 3.9.2015 and letter of even number dated  
24.9.2015 addressed to the Registrar regarding above mentioned subject and to  
say that the comments/facts have not been received so far.

It is requested that the same may kindly be expedited to enable the  
Ministry to reply to MoS.

Yours faithfully,



(Subodh Kumar Ghildiyal)  
Deputy Secretary to the Govt. of India  
Phone: 011-23384508

Doc. 14: Third letter from MHRD to UoH

Annex 9

REMINDER  
By Speed Post

No 7-4/2015-Desk(U)  
Government of India  
Ministry of Human Resource Development  
(Department of Higher Education)  
Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi

Dated, the 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2015

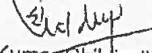
To,  
The Registrar,  
University of Hyderabad,  
Prof. C.R. Rao Road,  
Gachibowli, Hyderabad, 500046

Sub: Antinational activities in Hyderabad Central University premises -  
Violent attack on Sri Nandanam Susheel Kumar, Ph.D. student and  
President of ABVP - reg.

Sir,  
I am to refer to e-mail dated 3.9.2015 (copy overleaf) of this Ministry  
regarding above mentioned subject and to say that the comments/facts have not  
been received so far.

It is requested that the same may kindly be expedited to enable the  
Ministry to reply to MoS.

Yours faithfully,



(Subodh Kumar Ghildiyal)  
Deputy Secretary to the Govt. of India  
Phone: 011-23384508



Dr. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu  
Joint Secretary  
Email Id: sandhu.edu@nic.in  
Tel: 011- 23381097



सूचना का  
अधिकार

भारत सरकार  
मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय  
उच्चतर शिक्षा विभाग  
शास्त्री भवन  
नई दिल्ली - 110 115  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION  
SHASTRI BHAVAN  
NEW DELHI-110 115

DO No. 7-4/2015-Desk U

Dated: 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2015

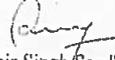
Dear Prof. Podile,

Please refer to Shri Bandaru Dattatreya, Minister of State for Labour & Employment (Independent Charge) letter dated 17.8.2015 (copy enclosed for ready reference) regarding affairs of the University of Hyderabad. The facts called for through Email on 3.9.2015, reminders dated 24.9.2015 and 6.10.2015 on the issues raised in the letter has not been received so far.

2. I would appreciate if you could kindly look into the matter personally and get the facts provided at the earliest to enable the Ministry to submit a reply to the MOS.

With regards,  
Encl: As above

Yours sincerely,

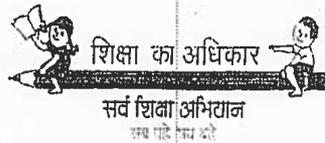
  
(Sukhbir Singh/Sandhu)

dlc

Prof. Appa Rao Podile,  
Vice-Chancellor,  
University of Hyderabad,  
Hyderabad.

21/10

FTS-55314



By Speed Post/E-mail

No.7-4/2015-Desk(U)  
Government of India  
Ministry of Human Resource Development  
(Department of Higher Education)  
Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi

Dated, the 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2015

To,

The Vice-Chancellor,  
University of Hyderabad,  
Prof. C.R. Rao Road,  
Gachibowli, Hyderabad, 500046

Sub: Antinational activities in Hyderabad Central University premises –  
Violent attack on Sri Nandanam Susheel Kumar, Ph.D. student and  
President of ABVP - reg.

Sir,

I have been directed to refer to DO letter of even number dated  
20.10.2015 of JS(CU&L) (copy enclosed) regarding above mentioned subject  
and to say that the comments/facts have not been received so far.

It is, therefore, requested that the same may kindly be expedited to enable  
the Ministry to reply to MoS.

Yours faithfully,



(Ramji Pandey)  
Under Secretary to the Govt. of India  
Phone: 011-23384412

Doc. 17: Fifth letter from MHRD to UoH

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT HYDERABD  
FOR THE STATE OF TELANGANA  
AND  
FOR THE STATE OF ANDHRA PRADESH

W.P. No.28073 of 2015

Between:

N.Vinaya,  
w/o.N.Karunakar  
aged 47 years, r/o.Flat No.504  
Sunshine Residency  
HUDAColony  
Chandanagar, Hyderabad

..Petitioner

A n d

The State of Telangana  
Rep.by its Principal Secretary  
Home Department, Secretariat Buildings  
Hyderabad and 8 others.

..Respondents

COUNTER AFFIDAVIT FILED BY THE RESPONDENT NO. 3

I, C.V. Anand, Son of Sri. C.R. Damodar , aged 47 years, Resident of Hyderabad, do hereby solemnly and sincerely affirm and state on oath as follows:-

1. I am working as Commissioner of Police, Cyberabad Commissionerate and the Respondent No.3 in the above writ petition and as such, well acquainted with the facts of the case. I have gone through the affidavit filed in support of the Writ Petition and hereby deny all the allegations made therein except those that are specifically admitted by me herein.

It is respectfully submitted that the petitioner herein filed the writ petition seeking a Writ of Mandamus declaring the inaction on the part of the respondent authorities in providing security to students like the son of the petitioner and in taking any remedial steps in this regard as illegal.

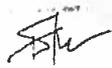
Mn

3. At the outset, it is respectfully submitted that on coming to know the filing of the present writ petition, this respondent summoned the Asst. Commissioner of Police, Madhapur Zone as well as the Station House Officer, Gachibowli Police Station and perused the entire record and got the matter thoroughly enquired with them. As per the instructions of the Director General of Police, State of Telanagana, I am deposing to this counter affidavit.

4. Before advertng to the various averments made in the affidavit, it would be appropriate to bring the brief history of the case for proper appreciation of the Hon'ble Court.

I submit that on 04.08.2015 at 06:30 AM a Medical intimation was received by the Police of Gachibowli Police Station, Madhapur zone, Cyberabad from Archana Hospital, Madinaguda about the admission of one Nandanam Susheel Kumar, Hyderabad Central University student (son of the writ petitioner herein) alleged to have been beaten by some fellow students of the same university belonging to another student's group at Hyderabad Central University Campus, on the intervening night of 3/4.8.2015. Accordingly, the Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police of Gachibowli PS visited the hospital and recorded the statement of the victim Susheel kumar. Basing on the statement of Mr. Susheel Kumar a case in Cr. No. 296/2015 U/s 448, 341, 506, 323 r/w 147 IPC was registered at Gachibowli Police Station, Cyberabad on 04.08.15 and the ~~investigation was taken up.~~ investigation was taken up.

It is respectfully submitted that during investigation, it came to knowledge of the investigating agency that the alleged incident took place inside the

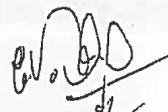




Hyderabad Central University campus at Annexue Hostel wherein the said Susheel Kumar, Ph.D linguistics student (son of the petitioner herein) is staying in Room No. 113 Annex hostel, Hyderabad Central University. He is the President of Akhila Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) student group of Hyderabad Central University. Ambedkar Student Association (ASA) is another student group which is very active and condemning the activities of the Akhila Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad( AVBP). The Ambedkar Student Association (ASA) group had demonstrated protest on the execution of Yakoob Memon by displaying placards ds "Oka Yakoob nu champithe prati intinundi oka yakoob pudathadu" on 31.07.15. After seeing these placards, Susheel Kumar strongly opposed and condemned the activities of Ambedkar Student Association group with an impression that Ambedkar Student Association is supporting terrorism in the campus and posted comments on his Facebook account as "All Ambedkar Student Association are Goons". Subsequently on intervening night of 3/ 4.08.2015 the ASA students went to the Hostel of Susheel Kumar and called him by knocking the door and demanded him to withdraw the comments made against Ambedkar Student Association and also pressurized him to give a written apology. Since a large group of ASA students was pressuring, Susheel kumar wrote an apology letter to them and posted on his Facebook page as he was withdrawing the words made

Ambedkar Student Association

  
Attestor

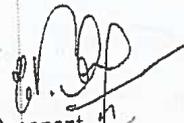
  
Deponent  
Commissioner of Police

On this there was an altercation between them as a result of which Susheel kumar sustained injuries and he went to Archana Hospital by informing his brother. Susheel Kumar alleged in his statement that the accused criminally trespassed into his room and dragged him out, beaten with hands & feet and abused. Gave fist blow on his abdominal part and stomach, threatened him that they will burn him etc.

5. I humbly state and submit that during the course of investigation, the Police recorded the detailed statements of Sri. Susheel Kumar, his brother Vishnu, his mother Smt. Nandanam Vinaya Karnakar (petitioner here in), and some others i.e. S.Dilip Singh (Duty Security officer), K.Venkateshwarlu (University Security), Ramesh (driver of the University security vehicle), Anand (room mate of victim Susheel Kumar) and Dr. P.Chenna Reddy, Doctor Archana hospital (who treated the victim Susheel Kumar) and collected the Medical certificate in which the Medical officer opined that the injuries sustained by the son of the petitioner herein are 'Simple'. The investigating officer also seized the apology letter which was written by Mr. Susheel Kumar on 04.08.2015. The allegation to the contra is denied.

6. I humbly state and submit that the Medical officer Dr.Chenna Reddy of Archana hospital Madeenaguda, Hyderabad who treated the injured issued a Medical Certificate on 12.08.15 stating that the injuries sustained by Susheel Kumar (son of the petitioner) during the incident were "SIMPLE" in nature but during the

  
Attestor

  
Deponent

course of treatment it was revealed that Susheel Kumar was suffering from *Appendicitis* and was operated for that. He also stated that during the examination it came to know that *Appendicitis* is not due to the result or any assault and it is coincidental that existing ailment was diagnosed and treated when Susheel kumar got admitted.

7. I humbly state and submit that fair and impartial investigation is going on. Some more evidence is required to be collected to establish the offence. No arrest has been made in this case so far. Basing on the investigation, notices will be sent to the alleged accused as expeditiously as possible.

8. I humbly submit that the allegation of the petitioner that the respondent police was hand in glove with the attackers is baseless, false and denied. The allegation that the respondent police and the Security establishment are part of the gang who are threatening everyone is also baseless, false and denied.

fake  
charges  
of murder

9. I humbly state and submit that, after the incident special vigilance was kept on the activities of student organizations. On the same day the i.e. on 04.08.2015 the ACP Madhapur immediate supervisory officer visited the place of incident and guided the investigation officer. Subsequently the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Madhapur Zone and Addl. Deputy Commissioner of Police, Madhapur Zone had conducted a meeting with the University authorities and also the Student Organizations and explained the consequences and also action being taken against the erring students as per law.

10. It is pertinent to import that the students were advised to maintain peace in the University and be cautious in the social media and with college student organizations. They were informed of about the consequences of involving in criminal cases.

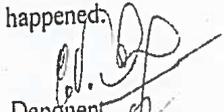
11. It is also pertinent to note that students expressed the lack of stringent process and university authority inaction during such incidents. In pursuance of invitation of University Authorities on 18.08.2015, I have attended freshers meet and briefed about the strict action taken during out break of peace.

12. It is submitted that in the allegation of the petitioner that she came to know that her son dialed 100 and also informed SI of police Gachibowli Mr. Naveen, then in presence of the two constables her son was beaten up & handed over to the attackers. Infact, on receipt of information the Sub inspector of police Mr.Naveen informed to the night patrolling duty incharge Mr.S.Ramu (HC 1472) of Gachibowli police station on the instructions of S.I. Naveen Kumar the said Ramu HC 1472 along with two police constables immediately reached the spot. But no such alleged incident whatsoever has happened in their presence. Hence the allegation of petitioner is absolutely false, baseless and the same is denied.

*false charge*

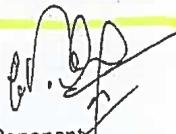
13. It is also important to note that I have issued instructions to the Asst.Commissioner of Police, Madhapur Division to monitor the investigation into the said case from time to time till its completion and to report the same and also arrange patrolling at Hyderabad Central University Campus. At present the situation is under control. No untoward incidents have happened.

  
Attestor  
Inspector of Police  
Madhapur P. S.

  
Deponent  
Inspector of Police

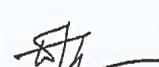
A close watch is being maintained by the Police to prevent any untoward incidents at the Hyderabad Central University by arranging police patrolling frequently. The contentions contra are untrue and here by denied. The allegations contra are untenable. The petitioner is not entitled to grant any relief. There are no merits whatsoever warranting the interference of this Hon'ble Court under Art.226 of the Constitution of India. The writ petition is liable to be dismissed.

For the reasons stated above, it is, therefore, prayed that this Hon'ble Court, may be pleased to dismiss the writ petition and to pass such other order or orders as this Hon'ble Court may deem fit and proper in the circumstances of the case.

  
Deponent  
Commissioner of Police  
Cyberabad  
Commissioner of Police  
CYBERABAD.

Solemnly and sincerely affirm  
This the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of October, 2015  
and signed his name in my presence  
at Hyderabad

Before me

  
Attestor  
Inspector of Police  
Madhapur P. S.  
Cyberabad

7/10/15 11:00 AM  
01/10/15 11:00 AM



UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD

Office of the Registrar  
Date: 16.12.2015

UH/REG/2015/9198

ORDER

**Subject:** Implementation of the EC Resolution under Item No EC:167:2015:10(c) on the incident that took place past midnight of 3.8.2015.

- References:**
1. Final report of the Proctorial Board dt.31.8.2015
  2. Order No.UH/REG/2015/5788 dt.8.9.2015
  3. Order No.UH/REG/2015/5789 dt.8.9.2015
  4. Order No.UH/REG/2015/5823 dt. 11.9.2015.
  5. Order No.UH/REG/2015/5961 dt. 15.9.2015
  6. Report of the EC Sub-Committee dt.24.11.2015
  7. EC Resolution No.EC:167:2015:10(c) dt.27.11.2015.
  8. Vice Chancellor's approval dt.15.12.2015.

In compliance with the Resolution of the Executive Council of the University under Item No. EC:167:2015:10(c) on the incident that occurred past the midnight of 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 2015 on the campus of the University, it has been decided:

- (i) Not to allow the following students to stay in hostels at the University till they complete their respective courses/programmes at the University:
- (1) Mr.Dontha Prashanth (13SEPH14), Ph.D, Economics.
  - (2) Mr.Chakravarthi Rohith Vemula (14SKPK01), Ph.D. Science, Technology and Society Studies.
  - (3) Mr.Pedapudi Vijay Kumar (13SPPH03), Ph.D Political Science,
  - (4) Mr.Sheshaiah Chemudugunta (14SIPH04), Ph.D, Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy,
  - (5) Mr. Velpula Sunkanna (former student of Ph.D in the Dept. of Philosophy).
- (ii) The above students are permitted to be seen only in the respective Schools/Departments/Centres, the Library and academic seminars/conferences/workshops of their subject. They are not permitted to participate in the Students' Union Elections, enter the hostels, administration building and other common places in groups.

(iii) Violation of (ii) above, will attract punishment recommended by the Proctorial Board.

The above decision is subject to the verdict of the Hon'ble High Court in W.P.No.28073 of 2015 and the case registered in the Gachibowli Police Station vide FIR No.296/2015 under Sections 448,341,506, 323 read with Section 147 IPC.

*[Signature]*  
REGISTRAR (i/c)

To  
The Students concerned (through their respective Deans of Schools/Heads of Departments/Centres).

Copy to:

1. Chairperson, Proctorial Board.
2. Dean, Students' Welfare.
3. Chief Warden.
4. Controller of Examinations.
5. Finance Officer.
6. Dean, School of Social Sciences.
7. Dean, School of Economics.
8. Dean, School of Humanities.
9. Head, Department of Political Science.
10. Head, Department of Philosophy.
11. Head, Centre for Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy.
12. Head, Centre for Knowledge, Culture and Innovation Studies.
13. Librarian, IGI-IL.
14. Assistant Registrar (F&S).
15. Deputy Registrar (Security).
16. PS to VC.

Mr. Dontha Prashanth  
(through: Dean, School of Economics).

To Dr G Sankar "actor"  
to handover this actor  
to Mr Prashanth

BK  
16/12/15

*[Signature]*  
16/12/15  
DEAN  
SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS  
UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD  
Hyderabad-500 046. (INDIA)

Received on  
18/12/15

18<sup>th</sup> Dec, 2011

Annex 12

To  
The Vice Chancellor,  
University of Hyderabad.

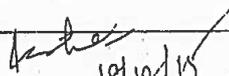
Sub: Solution for Dalit problem

Sir,

First, let me praise your dedicated take on the self-respect movements of Dalits in HCU Campus. When an ABVP president got questioned about his derogatory remarks on Dalits, your kind personal inter into the issue is historic and exemplary. ~~10~~ 5 Da students are "Socially boycotted" from ~~sp~~ Campus spaces. Donald Trump will be a lilliput in front of By seeing your commitment, I am tempted to give two suggestions as a token of ~~set~~ banality.

- ① Please serve 10mg of Sodium Azide to all the Dalit students at the time of admission. With dire to use when they feel like reading Ambedkar.
- ② Supply a ~~safe~~ nice rope to the rooms of all Dalit students from your companion, the great Chief Warden.

As we, the Scholars, PhD students have

  
18/12/11

... already passed that stage and already members  
of Dalit Self-respect movement unfortunately,  
we here are left with no easy exit it seems  
Hence, I request your highness to make  
preparations for the facility "EUTHANASIA"  
for students like me. And I wish you and  
the Campus rest in peace forever.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

V.R. Ch

[Venula R Chakravarti]

148PK01.

**UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD**

Office of the Registrar  
Personnel-I Section  
Dated: 13/06/2016

No. UH/P-I/ID No.1996/2016/ 1617

**ORDER**

WHEREAS a case against Dr. Tathagata Sengupta, (ID.No.1996), Assistant Professor, School of Mathematics and Statistics in respect of a criminal offence is under investigation.

2. AND WHEREAS the said Dr. Sengupta was detained in custody on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2016 for a period exceeding forty-eight hours.
3. NOW, THEREFORE, in compliance with the resolution of the Executive Council dated 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2016, the said Dr. Tathagata Sengupta is deemed to have been suspended with effect from the date of detention, i.e. the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of March, 2016 in terms of sub-rule (2) of Rule 10 of the Central Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1965, and shall remain under suspension until further orders.

  
Vice Chancellor

Copy to:

1. Dr. Tathagata Sengupta, Assistant Professor, School of Mathematics and Statistics, University of Hyderabad. Orders regarding subsistence allowance admissible to him during the period of his suspension shall be issued separately.
2. The Dean, School of Mathematics and Statistics.
3. The Finance Officer.
4. The Assistant Registrar (Pay Bills).

*Confidential*

**UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD**

Office of the Registrar  
Personnel-I Section  
Dated: 13/06/2016

No. UH/P-I/ID No.1334/2016/ 1616

**MEMORANDUM**

It was reported that Dr. Tathagata Sengupta, ID.No.1996, Assistant Professor, School of Mathematics and Statistics was arrested by the police on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2016.

2. In accordance with the provisions of the Ministry of Home Affairs' Letter No.39/59/54-Estt.(A) dt.25.02.1955 under the CCS (Conduct) Rules, 1964, it shall be the duty of an employee, who was arrested for any reason, to intimate the fact of his arrest and the circumstances connected therewith to his official superior promptly, even though he might have subsequently been released on bail. Failure to so inform will be regarded as suppression of material information and will render him liable to disciplinary action on this ground alone, apart from the action that may be called for on the outcome of the police case against him.
3. In compliance with the resolution of the Executive Council dt.6<sup>th</sup> June, 2016, Dr. Tathagata Sengupta is called to explain why disciplinary action should not be initiated against him in terms of the CCS (CCA) Rules, 1965 for not reporting the fact of his arrest by the police in accordance with the above-mentioned provision, within 10 days from the date of receipt of this Memorandum.

  
Vice Chancellor

To

Dr. Tathagata Sengupta, Assistant Professor  
School of Mathematics and Statistics  
University of Hyderabad.

Copy to:

The Dean, School of Mathematics and Statistics.

**Doc. 30:** Show cause notice issued to Prof. Tathagata Sengupta