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**16<sup>th</sup> December, 2019****STOP! The Police violence against students and those protesting the CAA!****PUCL Statement on Police Violence In Jamia Millia Islamia University,  
AMU, DU and other Universities**

PUCL strongly condemns the motivated, targeted and brutal attack by the CRPF and Delhi Police on students of Aligarh Muslim University and Jamia Millia Islamia University in Delhi yesterday, Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December, 2019 causing serious injuries to over 150 students including girls, and also arrest of scores of students and youngsters. By all media reports and eye witness accounts, the brutal charge of the police forces was unprovoked and unwarranted as the students were peacefully protesting against the Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 and the NRC.

The Vice Chancellor and the Proctor of Jamia Millia Islamia University have come on record that the Police forces entered into the University campus in the evening of 15<sup>th</sup> December, 2019 without either seeking permission from the University authorities or having been called by the University officials. In fact the police forces are reported to have entered into the Zakir Hussain Library inside JMI University and beat up any young person found there irrespective of whether they had participated in the earlier student protest or were scholars working inside the library. Many girl students have also reported that the police forces put off the lights in the girls hostels so that CC TV Cameras inside the campus will not be able to film and document the sexual harassment. The police forces are reported to have ransacked the hostels and the library, violently beating anyone they found causing severe injuries.

Today, 16.12.2019, media reports that students of Delhi University who protested against the violence unleashed against fellow students of AMU and Jamia Millia were once again beaten mercilessly by the Delhi Police.

Student protests against the CAA and NRC have been reported from across the country and aggressive police action has been reported in states with BJP ruled governments.

PUCL expresses its serious concern over the misuse of the law and legal machinery by the present Central Government to suppress and silence student's voices and stifle and crush the protests of ordinary citizens against the inequitable and communally discriminatory CAA and NRC. The abuse of police powers and violent use of force to crush dissent seen in the last 2 days in Delhi and other places is part of the growing trend of using brutal police powers to intimidate and stifle any protest to central government policies and if voices are indeed raised, then to crush them through physical, targeted police violence, false prosecution and violent reprisals.

PUCL also strongly condemns the reported statement of the Finance Minister, Ms. Nirmala Seetharaman, who is reported to have stated that we have to be "wary that the student protests are not hijacked by Jihadists, Maoists or separatists". The attempt of the

State to dub and link any citizen's protest as being Jihadist, Maoist or separatist is done with the aim to not only tarnish the image of the democratic protests but also act as a sinister warning to others to refrain from joining the protests or else they will face arrests as jihadists or terrorists themselves and get embroiled in anti-terrorist law cases.

It is a matter of great regret and is indeed unfortunate, that when mention was made before the Chief Justice's Bench of the Supreme Court today about the serious threat to life and liberty of students caused by unprovoked police violence against students committed inside the Jamia Millia Islamia University Campus, the Court chose to remark, "Let the rioting stop first ... We will determine the rights, but not in this atmosphere of riots ... the riots must be stopped" and posted the matter for hearing on Tuesday (17<sup>th</sup> December). It is distressing to note that even when a grave situation of serious threat to life and liberty of students and protestors existed caused by violent reprisals of the police acting in an unprovoked, brutal manner, the apex court instead of urging the police to act within the confines of law while dealing with the protests, chose to approach the issue as through it was the students who were indulging in riots and refused to intervene immediately.

PUCL is constrained to point out that such an approach of the SC of refraining from taking immediate action when complaint is made to the court of serious threat to life and liberty of citizens, allegedly being committed by the police and Security forces (as in the present case), seems to be part of the recent practice adopted by the apex Court; it is also in line with the Court's approach seen while dealing with complaints of massive state wide human rights violations committed by Security Forces and police in Kashmir, following the abrogation of Art. 370. PUCL would like to point out that in a situation where the state is the primary violator of human rights, delaying judicial intervention and failing to seek accountability from the State on the ground that the citizen is equally responsible for the conflict situation, unfairly tilts the scales of justice in favour of the state and is a distortion of the Constitutional order and rule of law. In a way of speaking, it also amount to an abdication by the apex court of its role as the protector of the citizen's fundamental rights to life, liberty and fundamental freedoms against an all powerful State.

The situation is fast spiraling out of control with a vengeful Central government clearly permitting the police forces to use their brute power to silence, crush and intimidate ordinary citizens from protesting against the Citizenship Amendment Act and the NRC. It is important that citizens across the country should raise their voices demanding the government to immediately stop police action against protestors, provide immediate medical aid to all injured students and drop all criminal cases filed against students of different universities. We also demand an unbiased, independent enquiry into the police action against students of Jamia Millia Islamia University, AMU, Delhi University and other Universities and criminal prosecutions against all policemen found to have violated the laws of the land.



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