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Formerly Dean, Faculty of Education,
Delhi University; Bhopal

Prof. K. M. Shrimali, Delhi
Formerly Dept. of History, Delhi
University

Dr. Anand Teltumbde, Goa
Writer & Civil Liberties Activist,
Senior Professor, Goa Institute of
Management

Prof. Zhatsu Terhujia, Nagaland
Formerly Dept. of Education, Patkai
Christain College, Dimapur

06/04/2020

AIFRTE STATEMENT

**Condemn the impending arrest of Prof. Anand Teltumbde and
to demand dropping of trumped up charges against him**

AIFRTE organised a virtual press conference on 6th April 2020 to register **its** strongest condemnation of the impending arrest of Prof. Anand Teltumbde, Member Presidium of AIFRTE and Senior Professor and Chair Big Data Analysis, Goa Institute of Management, on April 6, 2020. The Supreme Court had denied him anticipatory bail on the demand of the NIA although he had been fully co-operating with investigating agencies.

The video of the press-conference is available online and can be downloaded from this link - <https://we.tl/t-GXFScb9USG>

Notwithstanding the pandemic generated national lockdown, the activists and intellectuals associated with AIFRTE took up a vigorous public campaign in solidarity with Prof. Anand Teltumbde. Initiating the press-conference, AIFRTE Organising Secretary Dr Vikas Gupta informed that keeping in view the ongoing nationwide lockdown, a massive social media and online campaign has been initiated by AIFRTE in support of Prof Anand Teltumbde. This includes an online petition signed by more than 2000 persons including leading intellectuals; twitter messages shared by more than 15,000 persons including many celebrities; and a hunger strike by nearly 45 people in the country on 6th April (Annexure 2). On humanitarian grounds under covid-19 Pandemic, and given the questionable charges against him, AIFRTE has forwarded a petition signed by almost two thousand citizens to the President and the Chief justice of India to stop Prof. Teltumbde's arrest and further to drop the ill-conceived case against him while also appealing to the Prime Minister and the Central Home Minister to issue instructions to the concerned authorities accordingly. Several organisations from Punjab also expressed solidarity with Anand Teltumbde and Gautam Navlakha (Annexure 3).

The conference was addressed by Prof. Jagmohan Singh (Ludhiana, Punjab), Chairperson, AIFRTE; Prof. G. Haragopal (Telungana), Presidium Member of AIFRTE (in absentia, statement in Annexure 1); Prof. Madhu Prasad (Delhi University, Spokes Person, AIFRTE(in absentia, statement in Annexure 1); Prof. K. Chakradhar Rao (Hyderabad), Member, Presidium, AIFRTE; Prof. Anil Sadgopal (Bhopal/former Dean, Faculty of Education, DU), Member, Presidium, AIFRTE; Sh. Ramesh Patnaik (Guntur, Andhra Pradesh), Member, Presidium, AIFRTE; Prof. Nandita Narain (former President, DUTA and FedCUTA, Delhi); Prof. Ganesh Devy (Dharwad, Karnataka), President, Rashtra Sewa Dal (in absentia, statement in Annexure 1); Prof. Hanibabu MT (Delhi University); Prof. Chaman Lal (Delhi), Former Professor, JNU & Chairperson, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Study Group; Prof. Manoranjan Mohanty (Bhubaneswar), Former Professor, Delhi University and Council for Social Development; and others.

शिक्षा नहीं कोई कारोबार, है यह जनता का अधिकार

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The speakers highlighted that the state action against Anand Teltumbde and Gautam Navlakha is part of a larger pattern of state assault on the democratic rights and liberties of the people and on principles of equity and justice that lie at the very foundation of our republic. They underlined the need for all democratic and progressive forces to come together and welcomed their joint action in this campaign as a positive sign. They underlined that the case against Anand Teltumbde is not based on any information or documentation found in his possession. It relies only on reference to someone referred to as Anand in a letter found on the computer of Rona Wilson. The veracity of the documents found on the computer are themselves in doubt as experts have discovered the possibility of remote access to and planting of documents in the said computer. As such any documents sourced from this computer can hardly be treated as 'evidence'.

The panellists underlined that Prof. Teltumbde is not merely a member of the family of Dr B.R. Ambedkar but also a renowned academician and a leading civil liberties activist. His theoretical and senior managerial contribution to the development of the IT sector and the Oil and Gas sector [and] in India is widely recognized and he has received several prestigious awards for his writing and work in these areas.

AIFRTE firmly believes that the case filed against him under the draconian UAPA which allows for indefinite incarceration without trial, is motivated with the intention of silencing a significant critical voice against anti-democratic policies and practices of the government. This includes Prof. Teltumbde's stand against the NEP 2020 as it is against the core features of Indian Constitution including reservation and social justice. It is an outrageous attempt to harass a leading figure in the civil liberties movement although it claims to have 'discovered' his links with banned Maoist Organisations. This is even more shocking as Prof. Teltumbde is a consistent adherent to principles of non-violence and has at no point in his prominent role in the democratic movement in defence of civil liberties ever participated in, or given support to, violent or unlawful methods of struggle.

Today in the grip of the deadly Corona Virus pandemic, when governments are releasing convicts and under trials on parole because overcrowded prisons present a grave threat, it is appalling that an innocent person and one who is recognized as a significant contributor to the country's development should be denied anticipatory bail. Prof. Teltumbde is 68 years and a chronic asthmatic and hence is in the highest target category threatened with the Novel Corona virus.

Please visit the following web-page for further details about Prof. Teltumbde; the concocted Police Plot; AIFRTE's online petition at change.org in various languages; solidarity campaign as well as AIFRTE's appeals to the CJI and the President of India [etc].

<http://aifрте.in/i-stand-anand>

With thanks and regards.

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ANNEXURE 1 (Statements)

Prof G N Devy

I wish I was able to connect in time for the press conference today.

Since I am not able to do so, I would like to convey that I stand in complete solidarity with those who find it shocking that an eminent scholar of Dr. Anand Teltumbde's standing has been served the order 'to surrender'. These kind of orders are meant for anti-social elements and violent criminals. Dr. Teltumbade has distinguished himself by the brilliance of his acute analysis of social dynamics and social phenomena. In none of his public lectures he has promoted use of violence or socially divisive views. It is regrettable that false cases have been slapped on him and repressive legal provisions are being used to silence him.

I sincerely appeal the concerned authorities to see that course correction is made even at this stage in the matter taking into account his stature and contribution to India and he is allowed to continue his work and live a life of dignity as guaranteed in the Constitution.

Prof G Haragopal

Anand's impending arrest is the handiwork of the fascist forces. In fact, he was critical of Bhima Koregaon episode and also critical of maoist politics. Notwithstanding his intellectual and ideological position, he has been implicated because he is a powerful democratic voice on several social issues. He not only works on cutting edge issues in the most modern technology but also on deep political analysis. Having come from the social background that he does it is but natural that he dreams of an egalitarian equitable society. He wants history to move in a positive direction, that civilization should reach higher heights of a humane world. It is this powerful dream that is upsetting the powers that be. In this episode one of the most disappointing role is that of judiciary. It is time judiciary takes a serious note of the charges and examine the evidences. The state is trumping up a draconian law like UAPA where the individual could be detained for six months for no crime.

His role in AIFRTE movement has been very significant. He believed that equal educational opportunities to all sections of society will pave the way for deepening of democracy and in turn will contribute to transformation of the society. This understanding is based on his own rich life experience.

Although we are all fearing corona, we are equally fearing the Indian state. In fact, in times of crisis, societies and rulers should reflect philosophically. We don't find any traces of it. Indian democracy can be protected through collective striving of the people. Anands' episode provides an opportunity for a united struggle where all the democratic

forces, Dalit movement, tribal struggles, minority assertions OBC aspirations and larger middle class concerns should come together and generate anti-fascist counter so that we can save the constitution, democracy and future of India.

Prof. Madhu Prasad

The crisis facing the country today is grim not only healthwise but also politically as it has been since 2019 elections. PM in his speeches coined a phrase, 'urban naxal' to refer to so-called anti-nationals, i.e. those who struggle for the rights of the oppressed. Media and political groups pick this up to target and condemn civil rights activists. Security agencies state that there is no such category or crimes identified by this term and yet they too use it in their press comments. It can therefore be used against anyone without any evidence as a form of political abuse!

The events at Bhima Koregaon in Dec-Jan 2018 showed the great danger to people's struggles posed by this tactic. Right-wing hindutva leaders Bhide and Ekbote instigated violence by their supporters during the procession. They were arrested but released on bail immediately and are still out. But nine days later police claimed that inflammatory speeches made at the Elgaar Parishad by naxals led to the violence and they arrested several 'urban naxals' (lawyers, poets, professors, activists) under the Draconian UAPA to be imprisoned without trial for two years. Thus political critics and activists can be put away without any need for evidence

Anand Teltumbde is a victim of this conspiracy. Charged a year later for an event he did not even attend, he is now required to surrender and be incarcerated. The evidence against him is not recovered from his possession but is a letter on someone else's computer which mentions some 'Anand'! Experts have rejected even this, stating the computer has been accessed remotely and tampered with.

Who is Anand Teltumbde? He is a distinguished IIM Ahmedabad alumnus, a leading contributor to development of IT sector, and highest level managerial contributor to oil and gas sector. He has been awarded for his academic work and is currently Senior Professor and Chair Big Data Analysis at Goa Institute of Management. He is a leading civil liberties activist and a member of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's family. His commitment to democratic and peaceful methods of critique and struggle are well known.

Yet he is today threatened with arrest. That too when at age 68 with chronic asthma he is in the highest target category of the Carona virus which is rapidly growing in India.

We therefore appeal to the President and the Chief Justice that on both grounds of justice and on humanitarian grounds, he should absolutely not be arrested or harassed any further.

Annexure 2

The following activists informed that they were on hunger strike today from morning 9 am to evening 5 pm

1. Prof Jagmohan Singh, Chairperson, AIFRTE
2. Vikas Gupta Delhi, Org Sec. AIFRTE
3. Ramesh Patnaik, APSEC
4. Bhagwat Swaroop, Delhi, AIFRTE
5. NV Ramanaiah, Gesec. DTF-AP
6. K.Narahari ,president, DTF-AP
7. P.krishnaiah, honour president, DTF-AP

8. G.Madhu ,Secretary, DTF-AP
9. B.Bhanumathi, vice-president, DTF-AP
10. K.Ratnam yesepu, secretary DTF-AP
11. N.Srinivas secretary, DTF-AP
12. MD.Mujahar bhasha ,, vice-president, DTF-AP
13. K.Thrinadh Rao, state councillor, DTF-AP
14. GThimmappa gen.sec. dtf kurnool dist AP
15. P.Sesha Bramham, president west godavari dist, AP
16. K.Sai prasad state councillor visakha Patnam .DTF-AP
17. Lalitha subbarao visakha Patnam DTF-AP
18. A.Srinivasareddy,Dist President Karimnagar DTF-AP
19. K. Subbareddy (APTF)
20. A.Sadasiva Rao (APTF)
21. K. Venkateswara Rao (APTF)
22. G. Hrudayaraju (APTF)
23. J.C.Raju , Dist General Secretary Vijayanagaran Dist, APTF
24. K. Narasimha Rao, Dist General Secretary, Guntur, APTF
25. T. Dastagiri , State Secretary APTF
26. Gouse Lajam, State Council Member, APTF
27. K.V.V. Satyanarayana Dist General Secretary, East Godavari Dist APTF
28. U.Md.Raffiq , Dist General Secretary, Ananthapuram Dist, APTF
29. R.Krishna , State Secretary APTF
30. D. Eswar Rao Dist General Secretary, Vijayanagaram, APTF
31. Madhu, Denkada Mandal General Secretary APTF
32. V.Appalaraju, Gurla Mandal President APTF
33. T. Nagaraju, Dist General Secretary, Krishna Dist APTF
34. A.Narsimha Reddy,TS SEC
35. Dheeraj, Jammu
36. Ram Murti Sharma, Una Himachal Pradesh
37. Narbhinder Singh, Punjab
38. Navneet, Chhatra ekta manch, haryana
39. Sumit Aazad, Chhatra ekta manch, Haryana
40. Anwar, Hansi, Hisar, Progressive students front-Haryana
41. Bindu Ram, Vijay Nagar (Delhi), Bhagat Singh Chatra Ekta Manch (BCEM)
42. Sangeeta, Khoda Colony (Noida), Bhagat Singh Chatra Ekta Manch (BCEM)
43. Kamayani Swami,NAPM, Bihar
44. Shripad Bhatt, Karnataka
45. Prasad V, VASS, Kerala

ANNEXURE 3

Organisations from Punjab Who Communicated solidarity with Anand Teltumbde and Gautam Navlakha

1. Association For Democratic Rights (Punjab)
2. Desh Bhagat Yadgar Committee, Jalandhar
3. Punajb Lok Sabhiachar Manch, Punjab
4. Manavwadi Rachna Manch, Punjab (Regd)
5. Green Hant Virodhi Manch, Punjab
6. Sahitak ate Sabhiachar Manch, Phulkari (Regd)
7. Punjab Student Unions