



JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY TEACHER'S ASSOCIATION

Oct 26, 2016

JNUTA's Statement and Appeal

JNUTA is deeply concerned about the continued absence of Najeeb Ahmad, a student of M.Sc. Biotechnology, who was last reported as seen on JNU campus on 15 October 2016. On behalf of the teachers of the university, JNUTA expresses its deepest sympathy and solidarity with Najeeb's family, and share in their anxiety and despair at the fact that even after eleven days of Najeeb's disappearance, neither the police nor the JNU authorities have been able to provide any credible leads to his whereabouts.

The JNUTA has repeatedly requested the university to immediately set up a channel for the dissemination of any information related to the progress in this matter. The very least the JNU administration can do at this juncture is to issue a press release detailing all the steps it has taken thus far in facilitating the search for Najeeb, including its own efforts as well as its communications to the police and other authorities, and thereafter issue daily bulletins on the developments in the search. This willingness to share information with the JNU community and particularly Najeeb's distraught and anxious mother and family is absolutely imperative, both as a measure of ensuring accountability as well as to prevent the circulation of unfounded rumours.

A delegation of JNUTA met the Lt. Governor of Delhi, Shri Najeeb Jung, on 25 October 2016 to raise the concerns of the JNU community and inquire about the actions taken by Delhi police to find the missing student. The Lt. Governor told the delegation that he has been seeking report from the police on a daily basis and has instructed them to look at various places including in neighbouring states. He also agreed to our request that the police should inform JNUTA on a regular basis about any progress in this matter.

We are aware that Najeeb Ahmad's continued absence can be a result of different possible scenarios. Privileging one or the other speculation is not prudent, as this may lead the search astray. We, therefore, appeal to all campus constituents and members of the public in general to supply the police and the JNU authorities with any substantive information they may have with regards to Najeeb's whereabouts.

While the culpability of different students in creating this tense and unfortunate situation in Mahi-Mandavi hostel on the night of 14 October can only become known after a fair and impartial enquiry, an acknowledgment of an asymmetrical violence should not lead to a further division along religious lines. There is need for a strengthened resolve to combat the politics that gives rise to such polarization in the first place.

The students, staff and teachers of JNU have built a culture of debate and dialogue across lines of religious communities, caste, gender and regions among others. This culture has been built in the face of great challenges. Our response to the present crisis must be to reassure all those who have been made insecure by it, particularly all minorities and socially disadvantaged sections, that the whole JNU community stands with them and for their security, and that it will continue to combat communal and other divisions with the bonds of mutual respect and secularism.

JNUTA is deeply grieved by the tragic death of one of our students, Shri R. Philemon Chiru, who was pursuing his Ph.D in West Asian Studies, SIS. Our deepest condolences to Chiru's family whose tragedy is beyond expression and the loss is irreparable.

Sd/-
Prof. Ajay Patnaik
President, JNUTA

Sd/-
Dr. Bikramaditya Choudhary
Secretary, JNUTA