

URGENT ACTION

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ARRESTED AFTER PROTEST

Eight university students and three members of a political party's student wing in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh have been in detention since 7 June. The students had participated in a protest against the Lucknow University and the state Chief Minister by carrying black flags and trying to block the state Chief Minister's convoy. A local court in Lucknow has denied them bail.

Eight Lucknow university students together with **Mahendra Yadav, Vineet Kumar Kushwah** and **Ashok Kumar Prabhat**, who are members of the Samajwadi Party Chatra Sabha student wing, were arrested and detained on 7 June. The students had participated in a protest against Lucknow University for what they claimed was wasteful expenditure of university funds, and the state Chief Minister's participation in an event organized by the university. The Samajwadi Party Chatra Sabha claims that the university's administration had refused to release funds for academic programmes, but funded a function to promote the newly-elected state government's divisive politics. Before the event, the students carried black flags while outside the university and tried to block the state Chief Minister's convoy.

The students are accused of offences including unlawful assembly, rioting, assault or criminal force against a public servant, and criminal intimidation. If found guilty, they could face up to three years in prison. On 10 June, a local court denied them bail, stating that the offences against them were of a serious nature. They have been remanded in judicial custody till 24 June.

Satwant Singh, Nitin Raj, Pooja Shukla, Anil Kumar Yadav, Ankit Kumar Singh, Rakesh Kumar, Madhurya Singh and **Apoorva Verma** have also been suspended by Lucknow University, where they are studying.

Please write immediately in English or Hindi or your own language urging authorities in Uttar Pradesh to:

- Immediately and unconditionally release all the arrested students, and drop all charges against them, as they are being detained solely for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly;
- Pending their release, ensure that students are protected from torture and other ill-treatment;
- Respect and protect the rights of all people in the state to freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 27 JULY 2017 TO:

Chief Minister

Yogi Adityanath

Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh

Room No.- 306, (Third Floor)

Lal Bahadur Shastri Bhawan, Lucknow

Uttar Pradesh- 226001

Fax: +91-522-2239234

Email: cmup@nic.in

Salutation: Dear Sir

Deputy Registrar (Law) and Nodal Officer, Focal Point for Human Rights Defenders, National Human Rights Commission.

Shri Srinivasa Kammath

Manav Adhikar Bhawan, Block-C,

GPO Complex, INA

New Delhi, India

Fax: +91-11-24651329

Email: dr1.nhrc@nic.in

Salutation: Dear Sir

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY MR YASHVARDHAN KUMAR SINHA, Office of the High Commissioner for India, India House Aldwych WC2B 4NA, 020 7836 8484, info.london@hclondon.in, www.hclondon.in, salutation: Your Excellency

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Freedom of expression in universities in India has come under increasing attack in recent years. In February 2016, three students at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi, were arrested on suspicion of sedition for allegedly chanting 'anti-India' slogans. In March 2016, students and faculty at the Hyderabad Central University were assaulted by police and arrested for protesting against the return of a vice-chancellor who they held responsible for the suicide of a young Dalit scholar. Several student-organized events relating to human rights issues have been cancelled by university authorities in recent months following threats and violence from the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad, a student group affiliated to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh a Hindu nationalist organization.

Name: Satwant Singh, Nitin Raj, Pooja Shukla, Anil Kumar Yadav, Ankit Kumar Singh, Rakesh Kumar, Madhurya Singh, Apoorva Verma, Mahendra Yadav, Vineet Kumar Kushwah and Ashok Kumar Prabhat

Gender m/f: Both

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