



India Civil Watch

Committed to upholding democratic rights in India

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EU PARLIAMENTARIANS ALARMED BY THE HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS IN INDIA

BHIMA KOREGAON / UAPA CASES CENTRAL TO THEIR CONCERNS

Expressing grave concern over the deteriorating human rights situation in India 21 European Union parliamentarians have written to Union Minister for Law and order (Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad), Ministers of State for Social Justice (Shri Jual Oram and Tribal Welfare (Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot), and to the NHRC late last week. In a strongly worded letter, the MEP's state that the relations between India and the EU are based on "shared values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law" and express deep concern "at the recent crackdowns on human rights defenders" and urge the government to "take urgent steps to change course."

Earlier, in September 2018, 9 EU parliamentarians had written to the European High Commission seeking suspension of EU agreements with India because of the deteriorating human rights situation.

Releasing the Feb 7th MEP's letter to the press, India Civil Watch (ICW) spokesperson Prof. Raja Swamy said, "The 21 EU parliamentarians have reminded us that a continued relationship between the EU and India depends upon sharing the values of democracy, human rights, and rule of law." ICW had recently released a Statement of Support for Dr. Anand Teltumbde, signed by over 700 international scholars. Dr. Teltumbde is one of the targets of what the MEPs have called "coordinated arrests."

What is remarkable and noteworthy about the MEP's letters is the detailed understanding of the ground reality in India that it exhibits. The letters document dates, places, targets and purported reasons for arrests and raids to make clear that the current attack on human rights defenders is not an aberration but a systematic and planned set of "arrests and judicial harassment, smearing, and intimidation". For instance, the letter traces the full history from June 2018 to the current moment of the Bhima Koregaon / UAPA arrests, fabricated evidence and profiles in brief all the Bhima Koregaon accused.

The letter urges the Indian government to “immediately end these practices” and restore a more enabling environment for the work of Human Rights Defenders.

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