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## **COSTISA demands quashing of fabricated FIR against Prof. Anand Teltumbde!**

Under the pretext of the Bhima-Koregaon incident, eminent academician and human rights activist Prof. Anand Teltumbde is facing an imminent threat of arrest as an 'Urban Maoist' in the vilest post-independence plot by the state. An appeal to quash the FIR with all preposterous charges against him by the Pune Police was rejected on 14 January by the Supreme Court. [For a detailed account on the charges against him: <http://bit.ly/chargesonanand>]. He has been given four weeks to seek pre-arrest bail from the competent court. Until now Prof. Teltumbde felt confident that whatever charges the Police levied could be proved as criminal fabrication once they landed before the court. However, now the case has reached a crucial point where all his beliefs on the judiciary stand shattered.

Prof. Teltumbde has been known as a renowned management professional and a scholar. He graduated as a Mechanical Engineer from VNIT Nagpur and pursued a degree in Management from IIM Ahmedabad. He did his doctorate in Cybernetics and has held responsible positions in the corporate sector such as Executive Director of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. and Managing Director & CEO of Petronet India Ltd. Even while being in the corporate sector, he published over 20 research papers in prestigious journals. Later, he was invited to serve as a Professor in IIT Kharagpur, where he taught business management courses for more than five years before joining GIM. Currently, he heads the Big Data Analytics programme of GIM and has launched a post-graduation course this year, the first of its kind in the country.

With all his engagements in his professional life, he always has stood beside the struggles of the marginalized. He has been vocal about the education sector which adversely affected by the neoliberal policies adopted by successive governments. By closing down primary schools, severely cutting funds in higher education institutes, encouraging private investments on education, funding private institutes by tax-payers' money, forcing institutes to generate their own funds through fee hikes or corporate funded research etc., the ruling dispensation has continually tried to push forth their monstrous neoliberal agenda of liberalisation and privatisation. These incidents are not be treated as stray incidents, rather they aim towards dissociating the marginalized masses from the fruits of education. These issues of national concern have been constantly brought to the fore by activists and students under the banner of AIFRTE. Prof. Anand Teltumbde has been a guiding force behind this nationwide movement to save the education sector in India.

Prof. Teltumbde is one of the most important public intellectuals. His books on Ambedkar's Mahad Satyagraha, the Khairlanji massacre, and, most recently, Republic of Caste are vital and indispensable reading. His analysis of contemporary socio-economic and political issues in regular column like "Margin Speak" of EPW and other magazines and journals have always shown direction to the grassroot progressive-democratic activists nationwide.

Neither in his professional work nor in his voluminous writings or selfless activism there is an iota of unlawful. Rather, his entire academic career and corporate career of nearly four decades has been without a single blemish and exemplar of integrity of highest degree. To arrest him is to try and silence a powerful and unique Dalit voice with an unimpeachable intellectual track record.

As a social responsibility of the patriotic, progressive and democratic students, intellectuals, activists and individuals should unite and stand beside Prof. Teltumbde demanding quashing of all police actions against him. This is not only to lend him and his family strength to endure this torture but also to give a message to the fascist rulers that there are people in India who say NO to them. With a view to this, COSTISA appeals all to take up the endeavour to organise solidarity gatherings in academic campuses, create signature campaigns, issue statements, write articles, and whatever method deems fit so as to create a visible public outrage against this vilest plot and to support Dr. Anand Teltumbde.

## **Coordination of Science and Technology Institutes' Student Associations (COSTISA)**

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