

SAVE DELHI UNIVERSITY

Join Struggle for Equity, Access and Quality in Higher Education

The Government makes tall claims about improving the quality of Higher Education to give our nation's youth a competitive Global Advantage. Its dishonesty is displayed in Delhi University where more than 4000 teaching positions (50%) are lying vacant for years.

A whole generation of young and qualified teachers is being forced to teach in ad-hoc and guest capacity without any hope of permanent appointments. These teachers are denied most of the basic employee rights. They are often uprooted from the colleges they teach in and forced to move in search of jobs in other colleges. Instead of ensuring permanent appointments, the Government sees contractual short-term appointments in teaching as the way forward!

As a result, students are not allowed to benefit from the constant presence of their young teachers. The semester system has proved to be a disaster for teachers and students alike. Teaching-time has been squeezed into 3 months per semester. The joy of learning has disappeared. There is no flexibility in the system to allow weaker students time to catch up or gradually develop an interest in their subject. Students are over-burdened with two sets of exams a year. There is no time for cultural activities and sports. A University once renowned for its academic and cultural accomplishments is now struggling to breathe. Absurd experimentation in evaluation methods has led to inflated marks and unreliable results which have been reported in the media. The credibility of Delhi University results is at stake!

Every year, colleges are hiking their fees in the name of development costs. With the rising cost of living, students from poorer families and small-towns are beginning to find Higher Education forbiddingly expensive. Many are dropping out due to family and financial pressures. Their repeated pleas for moderation in fees are falling on deaf ears. The Government and University Administration remain unmoved. The Vice-Chancellor arbitrarily imposes unpopular decisions on students and teachers. He refuses to listen to the collective grievances of teachers, students and karamcharis. He disregards elected representatives in the Academic and Executive Councils, the DUTA, DUCKU and

DUSU. He is running the University through diktats and Emergency Powers.

The Government's Policy of Reservations for SCs, STs and other backward castes is not being implemented. Students have been deprived of 'Special Chance' and 'Revaluation' in the recent past. Due to sustained agitations by DUTA and DUSU, these facilities have been temporarily revived. There is a shameful absence of administrative accountability and sensitive leadership.

Instead of intervening on behalf of teachers and students, the Government is tacitly supporting the wrongdoings of the VC and University Administration. Its own policies are adversely affecting students and teachers. Academic subjects are being sacrificed to the Global Market. Instead of producing scholars and leaders in every discipline, the Government is interested in churning out millions of graduates with limited skills. As the emphasis on diluted Foundation Courses in the proposed 4-year UG programme suggests, the aims of University education are being confused with those of School-education. The restructuring of education in Delhi University is being done in an arbitrary 'trial and error' manner, and students and teachers are being used as guinea-pigs for dangerous experiments in the guise of 'reforms.' In the name of Private-Public Partnerships, the Govt is transferring the nation's resources into private hands.

There is no alternative but to fight the policies of the MHRD and the University Administration through joint and broad-based struggles. Sustained Agitations, Joint Protest Marches and Demonstrations are the need of the hour, as is the effort to raise public awareness on the plight of students and teachers in Delhi University. The public must demand the Government's accountability. Delhi University must not be allowed to be destroyed. It belongs to the people of India. It is not a Private Enterprise meant for profit-making. It must be allowed to fulfill its responsibility of empowering all sections of society through critical and socially useful knowledge. It has an important role to play in nation-building. Join the Struggle of its Teachers, Students and Karamcharis.

Save DU!

Protest March to MHRD

Thursday, 21st March 2013

Assemble outside Zakir Husain College (near Ram Lila Ground) at 11.30 am

Issued by the Delhi University Teachers' Association (DUTA)