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## More than 150 Scientists Appeal to Citizens

An atmosphere in which scientists, activists and rationalists are hounded, harassed, intimidated, censored, jailed, or worse, murdered, is not the future our country deserves.  
Indian Cultural Forum

03 Apr 2019



Tejal Kanitkar, one of the undersigned. | Image Courtesy: Youtube

The upcoming election is a crucial one. It asks for a re-affirmation of the most fundamental guarantees our Constitution gives us: equal rights to faith or lack thereof; culture; language; association; personal liberty and freedom of expression. These rights, even as they accrue to each of us individually, can only exist if they accrue to *all* Indian citizens — without partiality or discrimination.

To defend these rights, we must reject those who lynch or assault people, those who discriminate against people because of religion, caste, gender, language or region. Again, we must reject those who encourage such practices. We cannot endorse a politics that divides us, creates fears, and marginalises a large fraction of our society — women, dalits, adivasis, religious minorities, the persons with disabilities or the poor. Diversity is our democracy's greatest strength; discrimination and non-inclusivity strike at its very foundation.

An atmosphere in which scientists, activists and rationalists are hounded, harassed, intimidated, censored, jailed, or worse, murdered, is not the future our country deserves. It is not the future we want to give our youth.

We want them to awaken to a country that sees science as a means of democratic empowerment through sceptical, open-minded questioning, rather than just a commercial enterprise. We must put an end to the denigration of rational, evidence-based public discourse; only then can we create better resources and opportunities for jobs, education and research.

We appeal to all citizens to vote wisely, weighing arguments and evidence critically. We appeal to all citizens to remember our constitutional commitment to scientific temper. We appeal to you to vote against inequality, intimidation, discrimination, and unreason. These are inimical to the values of our Constitution, whose promise is best reflected in Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore's famous words:

**"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high**

**Where knowledge is free**

**Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls**

**Where words come out from the depth of truth**

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection

**Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way**

Into the dreary desert sand of dead habit

Where the mind is led forward by thee

Into ever-widening thought and action

**Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake."**

1	A. Mani	53	Geetha Venkataraman	105	Ramesh Awasthi
2	Aaloka Kanhere	54	Gyan Prakash	106	Ramkumar Sambasivan
3	Abha Dev Habib	55	Harita Raval	107	Ramya T. N. C.
4	Abhijit Majumder	56	Harjinder (Laltu) Singh	108	Riddhi Shah
5	Adish Dani	57	Imrana Qadeer	109	Rohini Karandikar
6	Ajit M. Srivastava	58	J. G. Krishnayya	110	Rohini Muthuswami
7	Akash Gautam	59	Jagat K Roy	111	Rupali Gangopadhyay
8	Amala Bhawe	60	Jayashree Ramadas	112	Sabyasachi Chatterjee
9	Amit Apte	61	Jayashree Sen Gupta	113	Saman Habib
10	Amit Bhaya	62	Joby Joseph	114	Samriddhi Sankar Ray
11	Amit Misra	63	Jyotishman Bhowmick	115	Samudrala Gourinath
12	Amitabh Joshi	64	Jyotsna Dhawan	116	Saroj Ghaskadbi
13	Amitabha Bandyopadhyay	65	Kapil Paranjape	117	Satyajit Mayor
14	Amites Dasgupta	66	Karthikeyan Vasudevan	118	Satyajit Rath

15	Aniket Sule	67	Kartik Shanker	119	Shailaja Sopory
16	Anindita Bhadra	68	Kumarjit Saha	120	Shanta Laishram
17	Anirban Mukherjee	69	L. S. Shashidhara	121	Shivprasad Patil
18	Ankan Paul	70	Madan Rao	122	Shobha Madan
19	Anna George	71	Madhavi Reddy	123	Shraddha Kumbhojkar
20	Anup Padmanabhan	72	Madhulika Srivastava	124	Shubhi Parolia
21	Argha Banerjee	73	Manisha Gupte	125	Sitabhra Sinha
22	Arjun Guha	74	Mayank Vahia	126	Smita Krishnan
23	Arnab Bhattacharya	75	Mayurika Lahiri	127	Sorab Dalal
24	Asha Gopinathan	76	Medha S. Rajadhyaksha	128	Spenta Wadia
25	Atindra N. Pal	77	Mercy J Raman	129	Srikanth Sastry
26	Aurnab Ghose	78	Mihir Arjunwadkar	130	Sriram Ramaswamy
27	Avinash Dhar	79	Mohan Rao	131	Subhadip Ghosh
28	Ayalvadi Ganesh	80	Mrinal K Ghosh	132	Subhadip Mitra
29	Ayan Banerjee	81	Mugdha Karnik	133	Subhash C. Lakhotia
30	Bidisa Das	82	Mundur V. N. Murthy	134	Suchitra Gopinath
31	Chayanika Shah	83	Nandita Narain	135	Sudeshna Sinha
32	Chetana Sachidanandan	84	Naresh Dadhich	136	Sudipto Muhuri
33	Chinmayee Mishra	85	Nisha Biswas	137	Sugata Ray
34	Chinmoy Chatterjee	86	Niti Kumar	138	Sugra Chunawala
35	Debabrata Ghosh	87	Nixon Abraham	139	Sumeet Agarwal
36	Debashis Ghoshal	88	Pallavi Vibhuti	140	Sumilan Banerjee
37	Debashis Mukherjee	89	Partho Sarothi Ray	141	Surendra Ghaskadbi
38	Debashish Goswami	90	Prabhakar Rajagopal	142	Swapan Chakrabarti
39	Deepak Barua	91	Prabir Purkayastha	143	Tapan Ghosh
40	Deepika Choubey	92	Pradip Dasgupta	144	Tapan Saha
41	Devaki Kelkar	93	Pradipta Bandyopadhyay	145	Tejal Kanitkar
42	Dibyendu Nandi	94	Prajval Shastri	146	Tushar Vaidya
43	Dinesh Abrol	95	Prakash Burte	147	V. S. Sunder
44	Dinu Chandran	96	Pranay Goel	148	Vidita Vaidya
45	Dipshikha Chakravorty	97	Prasad Subramanian	149	Vijay Chandru
46	Dipti Jadhav	98	R. Ramanujam	150	Vineeta Bal
47	Divya Oberoi	99	Raghav Rajan	151	Vivek Borkar
48	Gagandeep Kang	100	Raghunath Chelakkot	152	Vivek Monteiro
49	Gaiti Hasan	101	Rahul Roy		
50	Gauhar Raza	102	Rahul Siddharthan		
51	Gautam Menon	103	Rajiva Raman		
52	Geeta Mahashabde	104	Rama Govindarajan		