

Delhi

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## **Revenge the Shape of things to come**

Indian citizens have just got a disturbing glimpse of how the state would deal with dissidents and human-rights defenders should Narendra Modi come to power nationally. Hardly had the ink dried on a magistrate's judgment exonerating Modi in the Zakia Jafri case, when the Gujarat police filed a First Information Report against Teesta Setalvad and other Citizens for Justice and Peace activists on patently trumped-up charges.

Eleven months ago, the police had dropped investigations into these very charges after CJP activists explained what they were working towards. The sudden filing of the FIR is evidently in anticipation of CPJ's decision to appeal against the Jafri case judgment. This follows Gujarat's well-established pattern of harassment of critics, the intention being to intimidate and silence them. Any attempt to prevent the early filing of an appeal will subvert the process of justice. Such intervention is contrary to the norms of our Constitution and speaks of an anti-democratic mindset.

Signed:

Romila Thapar, Professor Emerita of History, Jawaharlal Nehru University

Justice BN Srikrishna, former judge of the Supreme Court of India

Deepak Nayyar, distinguished economist, former Vice Chancellor, University of Delhi

Justice PB Sawant, former judge of the Supreme Court and chairman of the Press Council of India

Kuldip Nayar, senior columnist and author

Nirupam Sen, former Indian ambassador to the United Nations

Justice BG Kolse Patil, former judge of the Bombay High Court