

January 8, 2020

Bill Blair  
Member of Parliament for Scarborough Southwest  
2263 Kingston Rd. Scarborough, Ontario M1N 1T8

Dear Bill Blair,

RE: Release of human rights defender Fr Stan Swamy, a Jesuit priest in India who has been unjustly detained for his work with Indigenous people against mining.

I write to you as a future constituent who is majorly concerned with the unjust arrest of Fr Stan Swamy, a Jesuit priest in India who was taken into custody by the National Investigation Agency of India for alleged Maoist links.

Fr Stan Swamy is a human rights activist who has helped India's poor and marginalized communities, including its Indigenous and Adivasis people. He has helped in many ways, so I will mention just a few. He has filed a public interest litigation in court to advocate for the release of 3000 young people who were wrongly branded as Maoists. He's hiked to tiny remote villages to inform the marginalized communities of how mines, dams, and towns were being built on their land with no compensation or consent. Not to mention he has also written many articles fighting against big corporations who use the land of these tribe people without their authorization. This is all while he dealt with deteriorating health, including a battle with cancer.

He was arrested October 8, 2020, for allegedly being linked to Maoists, a terrorist group in India who claim to fight for communism and better rights for the rural and tribal people. The 83-year-old was reportedly involved with this group in 2017 at an event in Bhima Koregaon-Elgar Parishad that ended in violence and tragically left many injured and one woman dead.

Fr Stan Swamy denies ever being to Bhima Koregaon and rejects any notion that he was involved with the Maoist group. Before his arrest, Swamy said that there had been detectives questioning him for five days in July. They had supposedly taken some video extracts from his computer that attempted to prove his links with Maoists. However, Fr Stan denied these allegations saying the detectives placed these clips on his computer without his knowledge. He hoped that the judges would listen to him and "human sense would prevail". This was sadly not the case, but this doesn't mean the fight for his justice is over- in reality it is just beginning.

For further information, please refer to the link provided below and please do not hesitate to contact me so we can further discuss how to help with this injustice.

<https://www.canadianjesuitsinternational.ca/provincials-letter-on-the-arrest-of-fr-stan-swamy-sj-a-n-83-year-old-jesuit-in-india/>

CONTACT: Alyssa Cordeiro

Phone:

Email:

I sent the letter above to my MP, Bill Blair, about the injustice surrounding the arrest of Father Stan Swamy in India. Unfortunately, I did not get a response, however I still hope the letter made an impact on my classmates, and spread Fr. Swamy's message so that he receives the help he deserves.