**Rihanna and Thunberg vs RSS**

**[Adeela Naureen and Umar Waqar](https://nation.com.pk/Columnist/adeela-naureen-and-umar-waqar)**

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After pop singer Rihanna made waves on February 2 by tweeting on the farmers’ protests in Delhi, there has been an outpouring of support from the international community for Indian farmers’ protests against the three agricultural laws passed by the fascist regime of Modi.

The campaign has now gone international and has been resonated by opinion makers, politicians and global celebrities like Meena Harris (niece of US Vice President Kamala Harris), Greta Thunberg, Mia Khalifa, John Cusack and Amanda Cerny. Claudia Webbe, a UK Member of Parliament supported the farmers by stating that ‘our government should immediately cease sale of weapons including water cannons, tear gas & baton charges, which could be used against Farmers in India, the right to peacefully protest is a human right’.

Immediate response came from RSS troll party chief of Bollywood Ms Kangana Ranaut, who wrote: “No one is talking about it because they are not farmers, they are terrorists who are trying to divide India, so that China can take over our vulnerable broken nation and make it a Chinese colony much like USA. Sit down you fool, we are not selling our nation like you dummies.”

[India's unwillingness to bring peace in occupied Kashmir](https://nation.com.pk/13-Feb-2021/india-s-unwillingness-to-bring-peace-in-occupied-kashmir)

Prashant Bhushan, an eminent lawyer and liberal activist tweeted, ‘Shockingly perverse! Uttarakhand police says that passports won’t be issued to people who post on social media against the Govt! Bihar govt says that protestors will not be given govt jobs! The BJP wants not merely a Hindu Rashtra, but a police state like in Nazi Germany’.

Past three days have witnessed a twitter storm within and outside India where RSS troll Army used all arrows at its disposal in maligning the celebrities by a sleaze campaign, the argument from BJP and RSS is simple, farmers are terrorists and that West should keep its nose out of Indian internal issues—don’t mind Modi doing it for the Trump campaign by stating ‘Ab ki baar Trump Sarkar.’

A more formal response came from the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) who prodded its trolls in Bollywood and the sports arena to launch a counter offensive against global celebrities. MEA thinks that there are vested international groups, who are conspiring against India to destabilise it. RSS head honchos thought of pitching their celebrities against a celebrity, the RSS team joining this counter offensive include big names like Amit Shah, Dr S Jaishankar, Anurag Srivastava, Nirmala Sitharaman, Akshay Kumar, Sachin Tendulkar, Suneel Shetty, Karan Johar, Suresh Raina, Ekta Kapoor and even Lata Mangeshkar.

[Lahore-Sialkot motorway closed due to dense fog](https://nation.com.pk/13-Feb-2021/lahore-sialkot-motorway-closed-owing-to-dense-fog)

We have tried to follow the debate in Indian media to feel the mood about the whole affair and found that people of conscience are raising voice against the knee jerk reaction by the Modi government. Some important conversations are posted below to discern the mood.

Vishnu Som’s programme ‘Left, Right and Centre’ on NDTV analysed the pushback by the Indian government and raised the question of using Bollywood celebrities. Should the government respond to global celebrities? Aatish Taseer feels that there is monumental distrust against the Modi government and the farmers, the fearful Modi cabal is actually lashing out at those who are raising a voice for farmers, while trying to brush the real issue under the carpet. Right from the word go, the Modi government was demonising the farmers as Khalistanis. Aatish Taseer also alluded that ‘frog marching’ the government sponsored cabal out to defend the government agenda is totally disingenuous, a terrified Modi government was actually forcing celebrities because Rihanna tweeted in support of farmers.

[Rajab moon not sighted in Pakistan: Ruet-e-Hilal Committee](https://nation.com.pk/12-Feb-2021/rajab-moon-not-sighted-in-pakistan-ruet-e-hilal-committee)

NDTV’s Saurubh Shukla had to march 13 kms on foot to report from the Singhu border. He reported that barbed wire fences, concrete barricades and makeshift barriers of buses were put in place at Ghazipur on the Delhi-Uttar Pradesh border—to virtually imprison farmers protesting the agriculture laws—similar measures are being rolled out at Singhu on the Delhi-Haryana border.

Delhi Police are digging up vast stretches of NH-44 to build rows of barbed wires set in concrete, and are setting up strips of sharpened nails and iron rods in the middle of the road—those pieces that have not been dug up—to stop farmers and their tractors from entering the national capital. Kulwant Singh Sandhu, a farmer leader, told news agency PTI, “The protest sites are looking like international borders. It is as if we have come from Pakistan. On one hand, they (the government) want us to talk, and on the other hand they are doing everything to de-link us (from the city),”

[IHC rejects petition against appointment of Justice Saeed as Broadsheet probe committee's head](https://nation.com.pk/12-Feb-2021/ihc-rejects-petition-against-appointment-of-justice-saeed-as-broadsheet-probe-committee-s-head)

KC Singh, a former diplomat, stated that almost the entire North West India is up in arms in support of farmers, so Modi cannot just brush it under the carpet. This is a foolish way to deal with international public opinion. Suhasini Haidar feels that the MEA statement was self-contradictory and doled out to celebrities to defend against a few individuals and that the Modi regime thinks India sovereignty is threatened by a tweet; why does the Modi government think that there is always an international conspiracy, whether it be CAA, NRC or abrogation of Article 370 in Kashmir?

What Modi’s fascist regime has not realised is the fact that such an idiotic response has a snowballing effect as people of conscience will always support the oppressed communities, especially when a fascist regime conducts a brazen assault on their rights. The Indian government has not appreciated that farmers have been protesting from June 2020 in Punjab and Haryana and their siege of Delhi has now entered the third month. Modi has been trying to build an environment of fear to discourage farmers by assembling RSS goons under the protection and with sponsorship of police and intelligence agencies; some of these groups even resorted to stage managed assault on the Red Fort and pelted stones on peaceful farmers at Singhu, Tikri and UP’s border with Delhi.

[Covid-19 deaths mount amid Europe's vaccine push](https://nation.com.pk/12-Feb-2021/covid-19-deaths-mount-amid-europe-s-vaccine-push)

Indian digital magazine, Scroll.in suggests that by pitching Lata vs Rihanna, Narendra Modi is playing the wrong score. Lata Mangeshkar, Sachin Tendulkar and Akshay Kumar have little influence with the global audiences that the pop star and Greta Thunberg reach. As anyone who has sung in a choir well knows, a key factor enhancing the power of massed voices is the dynamics: a good conductor knows when to keep the singers soft and when exactly to raise them up fortississimo to a stirring crescendo. By ranging playback singer Lata Mangeshkar against the global pop star Rihanna in its propaganda battle against India’s protesting farmers, the Modi government has hit a painfully discordant note.

Another major factor which has affected decision making by Modi in not accommodating farmers’ demand is the fear of this movement giving fillip to other communities like Muslims, Nagas, Dravidians, Christians and Dalits. If Modi, the macho man, succumbs to the pressure of 20 million Sikhs, what will happen if 200 million Muslims or 220 million Dalits awaken and start demanding their rights?

We will end the article by stating a breaking news from Times Now, ‘Delhi Police is to file an FIR against Greta Thunberg over tweets on farmers’ protests’. The absurdity of the Modi regime has crossed all limits.