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The State Standing at Attention in the Service of Religion
Whither Secularism?



665

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**A country run by
banks will
always be in debt**

**Healthcare run by
Big Pharma
will never cure disease**

**A state run by war
will never know
peace**

**A nation run by
media will never
know the truth**

THE RADICAL HUMANIST

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Articles and Features :

Why the Bihar Electoral Roll Revision Has Sparked Concerns about Disenfranchisement, Backdoor Entry for NRC

With the EC now asking for documentation proof not only of electors in the form of their birth or place of residence but also of their parents, fears of large scale exclusion are rife.



Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar with election commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu (Left) and Vivek Joshi (Right). Photo: ECI website

New Delhi: The Election Commission of India's (EC) move to conduct a "special intensive revision (SIR)" of the electoral rolls in poll-bound Bihar – requiring all existing voters, who were not on the rolls in 2003 to provide proof of their and their parents citizenship – has raised questions of practicality of the exercise just months ahead of the elections. It has also triggered concerns around mass disenfranchisement, exclusion and whether the poll body itself is being used to usher in the National Register for Citizens (NRC).

On Tuesday (June 24) the EC issued instructions for holding SIR in Bihar, stating that

the last such exercise was conducted in the state in 2003. The commission, in announcing the house-to-house verification exercise, said that it had been necessitated due to various reasons, among which was the inclusion of

"foreign illegal immigrants" in the electoral roll. "Various reasons such as rapid urbanisation,



Sravasti Dasgupta

frequent migration, young citizens becoming eligible to vote, non-reporting of deaths and inclusion of the names of foreign illegal immigrants have necessitated the conduct of an intensive revision so as to ensure integrity and preparation of error-free electoral rolls,” the EC said in its statement on June 24.

According to a 19-page letter to the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Bihar with the subject – ‘Special Intensive Revision w.r.t. 01.07.2025 as the qualifying date’ – the form for electors shows that those born before July 1, 1987 will have to prove their date and/or place of birth. Those born between July 1, 1987-December 2, 2004 will have to prove their date of birth and the date/place of birth of one of their parents. Those born after December 2, 2004 will on the other hand have to prove their date/place of birth as well as that of both their parents.

Bihar has around 7.73 crore voters. Crucially, the exercise which has already started on Wednesday (June 25) – a day after it was announced – will be completed in two months.

Booth level officers (BLOs) will be carrying out the door-to-door checks till July 26. The draft electoral roll will be published on August 1. Voters will have until September 1 to make claims and objections and the final electoral roll is set to be published on September 30.

The commission’s move comes amid allegations by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) that undocumented Bangladesh migrants have registered themselves as voters. The Congress too has levelled allegations of voter manipulation in Maharashtra assembly polls.

Presumption of citizenship for those registered before 2003

According to Paragraph 11 of the June 24 order, the EC said: “Since the last intensive revision in Bihar was undertaken in 2003, the EROs shall treat the electoral roll of 2003 with qualifying date of 01.01.2003 as probative evidence of eligibility, including presumption of citizenship unless they receive any other input

otherwise.”

“Since they are saying that the last such revision was conducted in 2003. So people who have registered before 2003 are presumed to be citizens whereas those who have registered later are not presumed to be citizens so their status is up in the air,” said Jagdeep S. Chhokar, founding member of election watchdog body, Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) to *The Wire*.

“All these elections they have voted in till 2024 Lok Sabha elections are they now of doubtful veracity? What has the commission been doing since 2004? For 21 years it has not done any intensive revisions. It is now saying that anybody whose vote was registered after 2003 is effectively de-registered. There is a process for deleting names in the electoral roll, with this order that process has been given a go-by. They have removed all those registered after 2003 without following the due process laid down by law, which as far as I see is illegal.”

In 2019, the Assam government published the NRC with the aim of separating Indian citizens from undocumented immigrants which required residents to prove that they or their ancestors had entered Assam before midnight on March 24, 1971. The final list showed however, that over 19 lakh people were left out.

“With NRC you had to prove your citizenship and now this is being done through the electoral rolls,” said Chhokar.

While the EC has published a list of documents that can be shown as proof, it has called the list ‘illustrative’ and not exhaustive. This raises questions about what other forms of proof will be accepted and whether the duration of the exercise is enough to get one’s documents in order.

“Citizenship provisions are there [in the order] and ECI is right in implementing it, but this law does not tell us about documents. [However,] the list of documents is illustrative, which is good. Presumption of citizenship of those whose names appear in 2003 rolls is also a good move,” said

Faizan Mustafa, Vice-Chancellor of Chanakya National Law University, Patna.

“The time available for this exercise is too short and people have not got sufficient notice to get their documents.”

According to former chief election commissioner N. Gopalaswami however, the move should not be seen as another bid to bring in the NRC.

“I don’t see any merit in this argument. The elections are meant for citizens of India not for any foreigner. If that is being verified in a proper manner and through proper efforts and with reliable documents, why take an objection?”

‘More dangerous than NRC’

West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee called the exercise “even more dangerous” than the NRC. Banerjee said that although the exercise began in Bihar, the real target was West Bengal which is due to go to the polls next year and where the BJP has accused the All India Trinamool Congress (TMC) government of harbouring illegal immigrants.

“Voters from rural Bengal will be erased, and replaced with names from Bihar, UP, Rajasthan, Haryana and other states,” she said on Thursday.

“If BJP thinks Indian democracy is a bonded labourer, they are mistaken. Students, villagers, migrant workers, common people who are not educated and also their parents, will be deprived. It is more than dangerous than even NRC,”

‘Devious and dubious idea’

In Bihar, opposition parties have opposed the SIR, with the Congress calling it a “devious and dubious idea in the disguise of a solution” that “carries a huge risk of wilful exclusion of voters using the power of the state machinery.”

The INDIA bloc in the state – which includes the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), Congress, Communist Party of India (Marxist) and Communist Party of India (Marxist-Lenninst) – addressed a joint press conference and said a delegation will visit the EC in the coming days.

“The Election Commission has announced a

special revision of the voter list in Bihar. This means that the fresh voter list that was published in February March – that whole voter list of Bihar including 8 crore Biharis – has been kept aside and a new list will be prepared,” said former Bihar deputy chief minister Tejashwi Yadav.

“The question that arises is why is this being done two months before the elections? Is it possible to prepare the voter list for 8 cr people within 25 days by going door to door? Not just this, the documents demanded are such that the poor may not even have them. Our delegation will approach the election commission regarding this. It is clear that Nitish Kumar (Bihar chief minister) and (Prime Minister Narendra) Modi are scared. They want the names of the poor to be removed from the voter list. They want to snatch the right to vote from the poor. In a democracy, the most important right given to the poor is to vote. Now Nitish ji and BJP want to snatch this right from the backbenchers of the society.”

It was Nitish Kumar himself who in 2019 had shunned any move to implement the NRC in Bihar. “*Kaahe ka NRC?*” (NRC what for?) *Bilkul laagu nahin hoga* (NRC, what for? Will not at all be implemented),” Nitish had said.

Neither Nitish nor his party Janata Dal (United) have yet responded to the EC’s ongoing exercise in Bihar.

Questions of exclusion, transparency, disenfranchisement

According to the EC’s June 24 press note, the exercise is being conducted to ensure “that the names of all eligible citizens are included in the Electoral Roll (ER) so as to enable them to exercise their franchise, no ineligible voter is included in the electoral rolls and also to introduce complete transparency in the process of addition or deletion of electors in the electoral rolls.”

Under the exercise, electoral registration officers (EROs) will print pre-filled enumeration forms for all existing electors and give them to the booth level officers (BLOs). These will be

distributed to existing electors through door-to-door visits. This form will also be available on the Election Commission website, which can be downloaded by an elector whose name is in the electoral roll.

This raises questions about access to such forms by those who are not computer literate, rural poor as well as migrant workers. According to the 2011 census, Bihar along with Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh have the highest “out migration”.

The Niti Aayog 2023 projections show about 88% Bihar population still resides in rural areas while its literacy rate at 61.8% is much lower than the national average of 73%.

“How will the migrant workers, who are not in Bihar get these forms and how many electors in rural Bihar will be computer-literate enough to download them, or will have the equipment to do so, or will have adequate supply of electricity to do so?” asked Chhokar.

With the EC now asking for documentation proof not only of electors in the form of their birth or place of residence but also of their parents, fears of large scale exclusion are rife.

“Whenever the Election Commission or the government gets into an exercise of demanding more documents to prove one is a citizen, in this case more than are even necessary, it leads to exclusions,” said transparency activist Anjali Bhardwaj associated with Satark Nagrik Sangathan and the National Campaign for Peoples’ Right to Information.

“There is a strong chance of large-scale exclusions which will essentially mean that people won’t be able to exercise their right to vote.”

“What is very clear is that the EC is demanding more and more information from voters and it is not even very clear why this kind of information is important. They are enrolled but now they are asking for other proof. How is this information necessary? There should be an explanation why more information is required. On the other hand, we are seeing that when it

comes to giving voters information they are not forthcoming – whether it is with regard to preserving CCTV footage, or through the central government itself amending Rule 93(2)(a) of the 1961 Conduct of Election Rules by which not all election-related documents would be available for inspection by the public,” she added.

Chhokar also pointed to the EC’s directions for the door to door verification exercise in which it states that all documents will be uploaded online “to ensure complete transparency” but adds that “these documents shall be accessible to authorised election officials only.” “How is there transparency then in this regard?” he asked.

‘Misplaced apprehensions’

On the other hand, former chief election commissioner Gopalaswami said that the EC’s move to start an SIR is welcome as it has not been done in the country in several years and door-to-door verification ensures that the electoral rolls are updated thoroughly.

“The exercise requires that the officials who go (door-to-door) carrying older electoral rolls to conduct the verification exercise. If somebody in the house is not there, they will verify and incorporate – they will not leave them out. Because the EC normally makes doubly and triply sure before making any deletions,” he said.

“As far as new enrolments are concerned, persons who are born after 2004 may have their parents around so it is easy [for them] to show [proof]. If there are people who don’t have documents, they have other ways to verify. This apprehension of exclusion is misplaced. In city areas on the other hand, even your neighbour may not know you. Electoral rolls need to be updated especially in the cities where a lot of inter-city and intra-city migration takes place.

“It is not that without door-to-door verification, electoral rolls will not be in proper order. But there may be more inclusions since people who leave and are not there may also not be excluded.”

Courtesy **The Wire**, 29 June 2025. 

A spectre over Bihar poll

Welcome to the most audacious attempt at mass disenfranchisement of Indian citizens. The nationwide Special Intensive Revision (SIR) announced by the Election Commission of India (ECI) — to be rolled out first in Bihar and then in the rest of the country — is exactly that. In effect this is, as critics have alleged, a move at votebandi, following notebandi (demonetisation) and deshbandi (lockdown). Dumb at best and diabolic at worst, this draconian policy shift could end up taking away the only right that crores of ordinary Indians have had — the right to vote.

Sounds alarmist? Over-the-top political rhetoric? Just take these three steps with me and then judge for yourself.

Step one: Let us set aside the common impression that the SIR ordered by the ECI is just an overdue and thorough re-examination of the existing electoral rolls (ER, commonly called “voters’ list”). Such an exercise was carried out in Bihar just six months ago. Lakhs of names were added and deleted, with no significant complaints from any quarter. What the ECI has just ordered is a de novo, fresh writing of the voters’ list, first in Bihar, then in other poll-bound states, to be followed by the rest of the country.

This step is unprecedented. In the garb of an older exercise called Intensive Revision, which was discontinued after 2003 following the computerisation of the ER, the ECI has unleashed something altogether new and disruptive. For the first time, the onus of being on the voters’ list has been shifted from the state to the citizen. Those who fail to submit fresh enumeration forms by July 25 will automatically be left out of the draft rolls. Worse, for the first time, every person would be required to provide documentary proof of their citizenship to qualify to be on the voters’ list. This is indeed the National Register of Citizens (NRC) through the back door.

Step two: Let us cut through a smokescreen created by ECI, namely that documentary proof will be required from a very small number. The ECI’s order is quite clear: Every voter will have to fill out the enumeration form with a



Yogendra Yadav

current photograph, signatures, some basic details, plus proof of citizenship. Those who had their names on the ER of 2003 (presuming the exact name and residence have not changed) have a shortcut. They can attach a copy of the page carrying their name in the ER-2003. That will be accepted as proof of their citizenship. The ECI has claimed that 4.96 crore people (63 per cent of those currently on the ER) will be able to take this shortcut, leaving less than 3 crore to prove their eligibility. Rahul Shastri (‘Voter verification drive in Bihar: too little time, too many hurdles’, Data Point, The Hindu, July 1, 2025) debunks this bizarre claim as the ECI did not take into account the number of deaths, migration and shifting of residence since 2003. He demonstrates that the correct figure is closer to 3.16 crore.

That leaves an overwhelming majority (about 4.74 crore out of 7.9 crore on the current ER) who carry a high burden of proving their citizenship with the help of proofs of date and place of birth. They fall into three categories. Those above 38 years of age (born before July 1, 1987) who were too young then or for any other reason (mismatched names, shifting of residence due to marriage or otherwise) do not find their names in the ER-2003 will have to attach proof of their own date and place of birth. Those between 20 and 38 years of age (born between July 1, 1987, and December 2, 2004)

will have to attach two proofs: Their own and that of their mother or father. Finally, those between 18 and 20 years of age (born after December 2, 2004) will have to attach three proofs: Their own and that of both their mother and father. While the parents' name on ER-2003 would serve as a proof for them, the applicant will still have to attach his/her own proof of date and place of birth.

Step three: Let us face a stark truth — the kind of proof the ECI is demanding for this exercise simply does not exist with a majority of the people. And it is not their fault. The state never supplied them the papers it demands of them today. If you ask any ordinary household for identity papers, they would offer one of the following: Aadhaar, the ECI's photo identity card, ration card or MGNREGS job card. None of these would be accepted by the ECI to enrol someone as a voter.

Instead, the ECI has come up with an "indicative (though not exhaustive) list" of 11 documents that would be required. Shastri has investigated the availability of each of these documents in Bihar for the relevant period. Of these, six either do not apply in Bihar or are negligible in numbers. Four of those remaining have very little coverage: Birth certificate: 2.8 per cent; passport: 2.4 per cent; government service/pension ID: Less than 5 per cent; and caste certificate: About 16 per cent. That leaves the matriculation/education certificate (around 35 per cent for all adults and around 45 per cent for the relevant group of those aged between 20 and 40 years) as the only widely available and acceptable document from this list, which is also a requirement for most other documents. For all practical purposes, therefore, matriculation has become an informal requirement for being a citizen and a voter.

Shastri estimates that around 2.5 crore people (nearly one-third of the current adult population in Bihar) who are required to prove citizenship may not have any of these

documents. In reality, the number could be larger if you take routine operational failures (temporary absence, inability to do paperwork, failure to locate certificates, official goof-ups etc.) into account. Even if these are overestimates, and if the actual exclusion is around 1 crore, less than half of the robust empirical estimates, we are still looking at the largest exercise in denial of voting rights.

Now you decide: How is this not an exercise in mass disenfranchisement?

Creating discriminatory, though indirect, barriers of wealth and education is exactly how disenfranchisement of African Americans was practised in the southern US. In Bihar, as in the rest of India, the burden of exclusion based on educational qualifications would fall disproportionately on women, the poor and Dalit-Adivasi and Bahujan communities. This is against the letter and spirit of the Indian Constitution.

Now ask a further question: Why did the ECI suddenly announce this ridiculous timeline for SIR in Bihar? In the 30 days between June 25 and July 25, the Bihar government is to contact about 1 lakh booth-level officers (more than 20,000 are yet to be appointed), train them for SIR, get them to connect to lakhs of booth-level agents of all political parties, educate the public about this exercise, distribute enumeration forms to each household and help them with a copy of ER-2003. Not just that, they are also supposed to collect the completed form from each house (visit thrice if necessary), upload these to the internet, verify the certificates and give their recommendations. All within the month (of which a week has passed) when Bihar is in the midst of the monsoon and floods! So, unless the ECI has a magic wand, we should expect a withdrawal of this order, drastic changes in the list of documents allowed (as announced on June 30) or a postponement of the Bihar assembly elections.

(To be Contd....on Page - 11)

CAA, NRC and now SIR — Government is following a path that leads to disenfranchisement, exclusion

Those who lament that progressive values of secularism and socialism are foreign concepts are in fact using regressive foreign ideas and methods to carry forward their divisive communal agenda

M.A. Baby

The Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), the National Register of Citizens (NRC), and the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar seek to disenfranchise citizens, and change the nature of citizenship in India. Collectively, they carry echoes of the most disturbing episodes of 20th-century history and augur a dangerous, exclusionary path that independent India has consciously avoided thus far.

Two main perspectives exist regarding citizenship: Citizenship by birth (*jus soli*) and citizenship based on race and culture (*jus sanguinis*). Of these, the Indian Constitution upheld the modern perspective of citizenship by birth, after the discussions on citizenship that took place in the Constituent Assembly in August 1949. Even in those discussions, arguments were raised in favour of making religion the basis for citizenship. However, the Constituent Assembly rejected this argument and adopted the position that the granting citizenship based on religious identities does not befit a modern democratic society. Thus, Articles 5 to 11, which deal with the question of citizenship, were formulated, and Article 5(a) unequivocally stated that anyone born in the territory of India would be an Indian citizen.

With the CAA, religion is a factor in deciding Indian citizenship. The Sangh Parivar claims that the CAA will not affect existing citizens. However, the Union Home Minister stated both inside and outside Parliament,

“chronology samjhiye” — that is, to understand the chronology. What is that chronology? First the CAA, then the NRC; that’s the order. Those who are unable to produce proper documents will have to undergo verification based on the CAA criteria in order to be included in the NRC. How can one then say that the CAA will not affect existing citizens? During the preparation of the NRC, the citizenship of those who are unable to provide precise details, including the birthplace of their parents, will fall under the shadow of doubt.

We saw a clear picture of this when the NRC was implemented in Assam. Around 19 lakh people were excluded. Two-thirds of those excluded were women. Although the Sangh Parivar’s primary targets are religious minorities, even others — especially Adivasis, the poor and uneducated, transgender people — may not possess the requisite documents. Their citizenship, too, will come under question.

It is estimated that about 42 per cent of people in India do not have birth certificates. Crores of our brothers and sisters could cease to be Indian citizens for want of necessary documents. They will either be locked up in detention centres or become a populace devoid of civil rights. This is the dark reality that is staring us in the face.

The recent moves by the Election Commission of India (ECI) in the guise of the SIR of electoral rolls in Bihar suggest that a backdoor effort is underway to prepare the

NRC. The SIR process has raised concerns about the disenfranchisement of marginalised groups, especially minorities. This has to be seen as part of a broader pattern of using bureaucratic processes to exclude certain sections from political participation.

Against the backdrop of these developments, we need to recall that the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) drew inspiration from Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy during its formative years in the 1920s and 1930s. Balkrishna Shivram Moonje's — president of the Hindu Mahasabha and mentor of RSS founder K B Hedgewar — visit to Italian Prime Minister Benito Mussolini in 1931 was a pivotal moment in the cross-pollination of ideas between Italy and Hindu nationalist circles in India. In his diary, Moonje praised Mussolini's vision for the "military regeneration of Italy" and explicitly stated that "India and particularly Hindu India need some such institution for the military regeneration of the Hindus".

Inspired by what he saw, Moonje established the Central Hindu Military Education Society in 1935 and the Bhonsala Military School in Nashik in 1937, aiming to militarise "Hindu India". The RSS later adopted aspects of this model, with notable similarities in recruitment and organisational structure to the Opera Nazionale Balilla — the Italian fascist youth organisation. Moonje's efforts and admiration for Mussolini's methods have left a lasting impact on the organisational development of the RSS.

Early RSS leaders, including their second chief, M S Golwalkar, and ideologue Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, openly admired aspects of Adolf Hitler and Mussolini's regimes. They were especially influenced by the concept of "cultural nationalism" and the fascist model of organising society around a dominant ethnic or religious identity. Golwalkar's book *We or Our Nationhood Defined* (1939) explicitly

referenced admiration for Hitler's policies, arguing that India should be defined as a Hindu nation and that minorities should be treated similarly to how Nazis treated Jews. This book played a key role in shaping the RSS's ideology and tied the organisation to fascist thought. In his *Bunch of Thoughts*, Golwalkar described Muslims, Christians and communists as India's "internal threats".

Those who lament that progressive values of secularism and socialism are foreign concepts are in fact using regressive foreign ideas and methods to carry forward their divisive communal agenda. Soon after enacting the discriminatory Nuremberg Laws in 1935, Nazi Germany completely abolished all democratic rights and stopped conducting elections. Taken together, the CAA, NRC and SIR of electoral rolls in Bihar that are being implemented and deemed appropriate for present-day India are a disturbing portent.

The writer is general secretary of the CPI (M)

Courtesy **The Indian Express**, 10 July 2025. 🌈

Contd. from page - (9)

A spectre over Bihar poll

Finally, you may ask: If such a drastic change was needed, why did the Special Intensive Revision not feature among the 21 initiatives listed by the new CEC just last month and reported in the media on May 30? Why did the ECI not mention this grand proposal in its meeting with heads of various national parties held last month and over 4,000 consultations held all over the country just before that?

What changed the ECI's mind in just 25 days? A sudden phone call? Or chai pe charcha? In other words, who is the "sir" behind this SIR? 🌈

DEMOCRACY FOR THE FEW

Is Bihar being turned into a test case of disenfranchising people?

Subhash Gatade



India pledged to usher in a democracy with universal adult franchise

It was the late 1940s, when India, a newly independent nation, whose less than 10% population was then literate, embarked on this unique experiment, unheard of in those times.

The architects of Independence rejected all the Western prescriptions that openly said that ‘... *India had no democratic future*’ (Winston Churchill) or ‘*monarchical arrangement best suited the Asian people*’ (British Prime Minister Clement Attlee to Nehru, 1949), and (to quote a student of history) ‘*met the imperial argument on direct terms, firmly believing in the possibility of creating democratic citizens through democratic politics.*’ (India’s Founding Moment: The Constitution of a Most Surprising Democracy by Madhav Khosla)

What is worth emphasising is that all those great leaders who shaped a forward-looking Constitution were on the same page when it came to granting the right to vote. For

example, B.R Ambedkar, who was chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution, firmly believed that ‘*To limit the franchise, was to misunderstand the meaning of democracy...*’

None of them dithered over this provision despite knowing well that even the Western countries had not fully adopted universal adult franchise. Remember, Switzerland granted the right to vote to women only in 1971.

Much water has flown down the Ganges, the Jhelum, the Brahmaputra, the Godavari or the Kaveri.

A good 75 years after the adoption of the Constitution (1950), today we are faced with a challenge that at first looks unbelievable, the present ruling dispensation seems to have embarked on a journey in an exactly reverse direction.

The architects of Independence had committed themselves to inclusion, so that the

last wo/man on the street, participates fully in the nation-building process, develops stakes in this gargantuan exercise, whereas the emphasis of the present rulers seems to be on exclusion. Disallow people from even simple right to vote — who have voted in elections for decades — on a simple pretext that they do not have a piece of paper of identity, like a Class 10 certificate or birth certificates of their parents and declare them ‘non-citizens’. Impose the onerous task of proving that they are Indians on the citizens themselves.

This is the only message that can be drawn from the sudden announcement by the Election Commission of India (ECI) that it would undertake a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the voters of Bihar — an exercise unheard of in the ECI’s history — when it already finished the summary revision of the electoral rolls, a routine procedure by January 2025 and had already prepared the final electoral roll which, according to analysts, will lead effectively to disenfranchise “around 2 to 3 crore bonafide citizens of Bihar.”

The way the whole plan unfolded before the people made it crystal clear that it was a completely arbitrary decision that lacked transparency and practicality. The ECI did not even bother to take into confidence the Opposition parties, the key stakeholders in the whole process.

The question arises as to who suddenly decided this massive SIR close on the heels of the Assembly elections in Bihar, when all the preparations for it were already over?

How is it that the ECI, which is basically an enabling institution that facilitates voting rights of people, is suddenly given the mandate of deciding their citizenship as well, which is the Home Ministry’s job?

There are allegations that this exercise is nothing but backdoor implementation of the NRC - National Register of Citizens — a much

controversial exercise being done in Assam.

A state that already suffers from tremendous shortage of government staff in various departments, where four lakh posts are already lying vacant, when there has been no recruitment since the past two decades, the already burdened block level staff has been tasked to complete the exercise in less than a month.

As mandated by ECI, the around 8 crore citizens of Bihar will have to submit their forms with a fresh photograph and have been asked to submit either of the listed 11 documents to prove that they are bonafide citizens of the state, completely discounting the fact that a large section of the poor and illiterate people do not have any document either to tell their birthdates or their parents place of birth and date or any other paper.

The arbitrary nature of this decision can also be gauged from the fact that the ECI has declared that Aadhar card, which most of the citizens hold, or ration card or labour card cannot be used as proof of identity while submitting the documents.

It is crystal clear that this process is not about enabling citizens to join the process of electing their rulers as smoothly as it has been done till date, but putting the onus of proving citizenship on only them.

The elitist and highly casteist nature of these proposals can also be gleaned from the fact that

- One of the documents which would be valid for filling these fresh forms would be a passport. No doubt only a miniscule percentage of Bihar’s residents (2.4 %) hold a passport and a significant section of them belong to upper castes
- Two, this is the season when half of Bihar is flooded and communication itself is a big problem, how can the block level staff visit the houses of the

8 crore valid voters from Bihar twice to confirm that they exist?

- Three, all studies show that there is unusually large-scale migration from Bihar for employment.

As per Census 2011 data, there were an estimated 7.45 million migrants from Bihar across various states and Union territories. This represents 7.2% of Bihar's population at the time. A significant portion of these migrants, 22.65 lakh (30%), cited employment as the primary reason for their migration.

How can all these migrants suddenly return to Bihar just to fill the form, complete other formalities, leaving their temporary jobs suddenly?

As explained by knowledgeable people, the earlier massive exercise of revision of the electoral roll was undertaken in 2003 and had taken around a year for the Election Commission to finish.

This sudden move, aptly being termed as 'votebandi', has created a tremendous wave of anger among Opposition parties, civil society organisations and concerned citizens, who have resolved to undertake a peaceful mass movement so that this 'Tughlaqi firman' is quashed.

Looking at the fact that Bihar is a very poor state with a large section of population consisting of marginalised communities, trying to somehow make ends meet by working in the state or elsewhere, the biggest brunt of this SIR will be faced by only them.

A majority of the people, whose names will be deleted, will be from the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes or people from religious minorities, especially Muslims, and poor from various categories, who will find it next to impossible to fulfill the requirements set by the ECI. Unless and until this exercise is scrapped completely and elections to the Bihar Assembly are held on the already prepared electoral rolls in January 2025, lakhs of valid

voters would not only be deleted from the voters list but will have to make strenuous efforts to prove that they are citizens of this country, despite the fact that generations of them have lived in Bihar or worked as migrant labourers in parts of India.

Petitions have been filed in the highest courts challenging the decision and demanding Supreme Court's intervention in stalling this process which would "disenfranchise millions of citizens."

The latest revelation by *Reporters' Collective*, which has undertaken an investigation into the whole issue, brings to the fore many shocking details of the exercise and adds further opacity to the decision. [<https://www.reporters-collective.in/trc/bihar-electoral-roll-investigation>]

Titled '*The Disputed 7,80,22,933* Voters of Bihar*' (* from the electoral roll finalised in 2025), it tells us that how records clearly reveal:

[A] detailed review and updation of the Bihar state electoral roll was completed by January 2025. The roll was found to be robust. Officials were updating the roll well into June. Suddenly, the Election Commission of India called it faulty and junked it, ordering an unprecedented exercise to verify voters from scratch. Chaos has ensued.'

It begins with a story of one Tabrej Alam from Meghua village in East Champaran district of Bihar, who had submitted a form to the designated booth-level officer to delete Hussain Sheikh's name from the electoral roll as Hussain had passed away. [On June 11, 2024] and how by November, election commission officials verified Tabrej's identity and his claim and by January 2025, deleted Hussain's name from the voter list of Bihar.

According to the story, "now five months later, the same 37-year-old Tabrej was forced by the Election Commission of India to prove

with documentary evidence that he exists, is a citizen of India and resides regularly enough in his village to have the right to vote in the upcoming Bihar assembly elections.”

Anybody can see that with this ‘Tughlaqi firman’ of ECI, how there are millions of citizens in Bihar, like Tabrej, who may have voted in one or all of the last five general elections and five Assembly elections, but now have to present documentary evidence rather quickly to validate their right to vote. And, if they are unable to, they could stand as people of doubtful citizenship in the eyes of the law.

Bihar, termed as the ‘land of world’s first democracy’ will henceforth be remembered a test case of disenfranchising people and ushering in ‘Democracy for the Few’, an elite democracy.

People know well that this move will not remain limited to Bihar, it will be extended to the rest of India and would look like a very valid exercise from outside, but would enable the ECI to weed out citizens from the list arbitrarily and turn them into non-citizens on simple pretexts.

The silence of the ruling dispensation over this exercise is telling because this once again vindicates the Opposition charge that instead of a neutral body, the ECI, a highly respected autonomous body in India, has no qualms today in acting to benefit the ruling dispensation.

Since the past over a decade, we are conversant with the allegations by the Opposition about how various institutions of democracy, such as the ED, CBI, are getting further compromised and weaponised, right before our eyes, or the defanging of watchdog institutions, such as the Comptroller and Auditor General of India or CAG, already under scanner. The increasing assault on the independence of the press and judiciary is has also become a cause of concern. But, of late, the growing possibility of vitiating the electoral

process is increasingly being noted.

While the issue of the controversial electoral bonds— ruled as illegal by the Supreme Court, which provided tremendous benefit to the coffers of the ruling dispensation before the elections to Parliament — dogged the headlines prior to the elections to Parliament, since last few years, the Central Election Commissioner’s claim of impartiality has been debunked again and again. The way it played in settling intra-party disputes have also been challenged at various levels.

Till date the questions raised by the Opposition in Maharashtra regarding elections to the Legislative Assembly remained unanswered, leading to valid concerns being raised about ‘match fixing’ of sorts at the highest level.

“Voter rolls and CCTV footage are tools to be used to strengthen democracy, not ornaments to be locked up. The people of India have a right to be assured that no records have been or will be trashed”, wrote Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. He accused the ECI of “deleting evidence” when it was required to “provide answers” after the poll body instructed its officers to destroy CCTV, webcasting and video footage of the elections after 45 days.

Bihar, the ‘land of world’s first democracy’ also happens to be land of mass movements against unjust policies of the government since the days of anti-colonial struggles and it is sure that masses of Bihar will not take this ‘slow demise of democracy’ or its being turned into a ‘Democracy for the Few’ lying down.

Undoubtedly, the people will unite against this sinister move by the rulers to declare them doubtful citizens proving that they have learned lessons from the architects of Independence thoroughly, and are their true legatees.

[<https://www.newsclick.in/democracy-few>] 

How the judiciary paved the way for the current spate of slum demolitions in Delhi

A series of judgements by the Delhi High Court have curbed the safeguards offered to slum residents from demolitions by earlier judgements of the court.

Vineet Bhalla



Residents of the Madrasi camp slum in Delhi look on as their homes are bulldozed. | Kritika Pant

In the first week of June, hundreds of houses in Madrasi Camp, a slum cluster in Delhi's Jangpura neighbourhood, were demolished by the Delhi Development Authority. The demolition followed an order from the Delhi High Court, passed on July 8, 2024, in a public interest litigation by one Shabnam Burney.

The litigation had nothing to do with Madrasi Camp – its residents were not even a party to the case.

The original petition was filed against two private builders for alleged illegal construction in a completely different neighborhood of Delhi, Shaheen Bagh, several kilometers away from Jangpura. In a sweeping order, the High Court expanded the scope of the petition, directing authorities to remove all encroachments from the Yamuna floodplains, a move that suddenly put thousands of homes in slum clusters abutting the river, including those in Madrasi Camp, at risk of demolition.

“This is a classic case of the court passing an order without appreciating the legal protections available to slum dwellers,” argued Talha Abdul Rahman, an Advocate on Record at the Supreme Court who represented some of the residents in court. “The order was passed without even hearing the people whose lives it would upend.”

The demolition at Madrasi Camp is not an isolated incident. Over the last year, Delhi has witnessed a spate of evictions from slums, often carried out with little to no notice. According to legal experts, this has been enabled by a recent shift in the judiciary's approach, which has increasingly tolerated summary evictions and diluted the legal rights of the urban poor.

Safety net

For over a decade, slum dwellers in Delhi were protected by a robust legal framework. The foundation was laid by the Delhi High Court's landmark 2010 judgment in *Sudama Singh v Government of Delhi*. The court held that the right to housing is a fundamental right and that slum residents could not be treated as “secondary citizens”. It mandated “meaningful engagement” with residents before any eviction and directed the government to frame a comprehensive rehabilitation policy.

This led to the enactment of the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board Act in 2010 and the subsequent notification of the Delhi Slum & JJ

Rehabilitation and Relocation Policy in 2015. The policy laid down a clear three-pronged test for a slum to be eligible for rehabilitation: it must have come up before January 1, 2006; the individual shanties within it must have been built before January 1, 2015; and it must consist of at least 50 households.

The policy prioritised on-site rehabilitation – upgrading the slum where it stood or relocating residents within a five-kilometer radius to ensure their livelihoods and children’s education were not disrupted.

This framework was further cemented in 2019 by the Delhi High Court’s judgment in *Ajay Maken v Union of India*. The court explicitly warned authorities against viewing slum dwellers as “illegal encroachers” and laid down a detailed protocol for surveys and rehabilitation, making it clear that no demolition could occur without first completing this process.

U-turn

In 2022, however, the judiciary signalled a significant change of attitude when it came to slum dweller rights. In *Vaishali (Minor) v Union of India*, the Delhi High Court ruled that the 2015 rehabilitation policy was applicable only to the residents of 675 slum clusters identified in a list estimated to be three decades old, prepared by the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board.

“This judgment has been the turning point,” said Anupradha Singh, an advocate and co-founder of the Nyay Neeti Foundation, which provides legal aid to marginalised communities. “This list was prepared in the 1990s and has not even been notified. It is not mentioned in the 2015 policy or its parent Act.”

The 69th National Sample Survey Office report from 2012 identified 6,343 slums in Delhi.

By limiting the policy’s protection to just 10% of them, the High Court’s judgment made lakhs of slum residents vulnerable to eviction without rehabilitation.

“Welfare legislation must be interpreted in a liberal, inclusionary manner,” Singh said. “However, this judgment is based on apprehension and exclusion.”

This exclusionary approach has since been followed by the High Court in a series of cases in which the court has refused to provide relief to residents of demolished slums because of them not being part of the 675-cluster list. The Supreme Court upheld this decision in July 2023, further cementing the restrictive interpretation.



Bulldozers demolishing homes at the Madrasi camp in Delhi in June 2025. Credit: Kritika Pant

Protector to destroyer

The case of Madrasi Camp slum is another example of this new judicial approach that does not centre the fundamental rights of slum dwellers. The original public interest litigation in the Shabnam Burney case had nothing to do with the slum. Instead, it was a targeted petition against two builders in Shaheen Bagh.

“The court fell into error by expanding the scope of the petition to the whole of Delhi and passing a carte blanche order,” said Rahman. He contended that the order was passed in ignorance of the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board

Act and the National Capital Territory of Delhi Laws (Special Provisions) Second (Amendment) Act, which protect these slums.

Significantly, the High Court's order even bypassed the protection granted to the list of 675 slums in its own 2022 *Vaishali* order. Rahman pointed out that Madrasi camp was within that list.

The court's Shabnam Burney order effectively gave the executive a free pass to carry out demolitions of any slums it deems to be on "the Yamuna river bank, river bed and drains flowing into river Yamuna".

"The authorities are now using this court order as a shield to carry out demolitions," said Kamlesh Kumar Mishra, an advocate who has also represented slum dwellers. "They go to the ground and say, 'We are only following the court's directions.'"

Indeed, demolitions have been carried out in the Bhoomiheen camp in Kalkaji, Chander Shekhar Azad colony in Wazirpur, Shiv Basti in Patel Nagar and Sanjay Camp in Gokal Puri, even though all of them are part of the list of 675 protected slum list.

This trend, of the judiciary providing open sanction to the executive for demolitions, is what legal experts find most alarming. "The state wants to shun its responsibilities and put the burden on the court," said Harshit Anand, a Supreme Court advocate who has represented slum dwellers in eviction cases. "The court, in turn, is becoming more executive-minded than the executive itself."

Mishra described this as "windshield mentality". "A person travelling in a car would always see jhuggi dwellers, street vendors or the homeless as something which is dirtying their view and their roads," he explained. "The courts

are failing to see that the very people whose homes they are ordering to be demolished are the ones who are servicing the city."



Residents of Bengali Camp in Chhuriya Mohalla of Delhi's Tughlaqabad village sift through the rubble of their homes after they were demolished in April 2023. Credit: Sneha

Human cost

The consequences of these demolitions are devastating. Families who have lived in these areas for decades, with their livelihoods and social networks deeply embedded in the locality, are suddenly uprooted.

In the case of Madrasi Camp, residents are being offered rehabilitation in Narela, nearly 40 kilometres away. "Most of these people are daily wagers, domestic workers, drivers," said Rahman. "How can they travel 40 km every day for work? Their children go to nearby schools. Their entire lives will be disrupted."

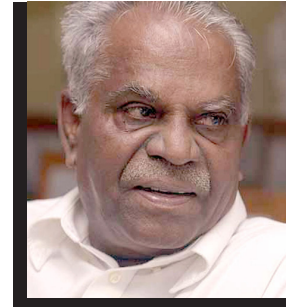
Even for those who are deemed eligible for rehabilitation, the process is fraught with uncertainty and hardship. They are often shifted to poorly constructed transit camps or relocated to flats in far-flung areas that lack basic amenities like schools, shops, and transport.

The courts, once seen as the last resort for the city's most vulnerable, now seem to be overlooking their plight. "There has been a shift in the judicial attitude," said Singh. "The courts are not inclined to grant relief. They see these people as illegal encroachers."

Courtesy **Scroll.in.**, Jul 07, 2025. 🌈

JP Narayan and the Emergency Fallout: A Patriot Betrayed and His Legacy Condemned

Howsoever tall a man may be, he is fallible, and JP is the proof.



M.G. Devasahayam

*Jawaharlal Nehru
with Jayaprakash
Narayan. Photo:
nehrumemorial.nic.in*

Veteran journalist Harish Khare has been scathing in his condemnation of **Jayaprakash Narayan and his legacy**:

“Fifty years after Indira Gandhi imposed the Emergency, history is turning a harsher gaze not just on her authoritarian turn but on Jayaprakash Narayan’s fateful alliance with Sangh. Legitimised by JP’s mis-judgment, the RSS has wrecked India’s democracy, institutions and political culture... History has already dealt a rough hand to Indira Gandhi for embarking on a dangerous road 50 years ago; what she did during those dark days could be rolled back by the masses. History will deal an equally rough, if not rougher, hand to Jayaprakash Narayan for rehabilitating the RSS as a normal political force. Fifty years later, Indira Gandhi’s excesses pale in comparison to JP’s cardinal sin.”

This condemnation does not bear truth. As the “custodian of JP in Emergency Jail” in Chandigarh (1975) who had interacted intensely with him for about six months of the most adverse period of his life and later before he passed away

in ‘heart-broken-grief’, I am duty bound to tell the truth.

First, two quotes from JP:

“When, following Gandhiji’s murder, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) was under a shadow, there were many protestations made about its being entirely a cultural organisation. But apparently emboldened by the timidity of the secular forces, it has thrown its veil away and has emerged as the real force behind, and controller of, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh. The secular protestations of the Jana Sangh will never be taken seriously unless it cuts the bonds that tie it so firmly to the RSS machine. Nor can the RSS be treated as a cultural organisation as long as it remains the mentor and effective manipulator of a political party.” [1968: MG Devasahayam, *JP in Jail – An Uncensored Account* (Roli Books, Delhi, p. 206-207)]

“RSS identifies the Indian nation with Hindu Rashtra. Such identification is pregnant with national disintegration because members of other communities can never accept the position of

second-class citizens. Such a situation, therefore, has in it the seeds of perpetual conflict and ultimate disruption. RSS should 'give up the concept of Hindu Rashtra and adopt in its place Indian nationhood, which is a secular concept and embraces all communities living in India.' RSS should disband itself and merge with the youth and cultural organisations of the Janata Party and admit Muslims, Christians, and members of other communities." [1977: MG Devasahayam, Counterinterview]

These are two searing statements – one before the JP Movement commenced and the other after the Emergency when the Janata government was in power. They reflect JP's opinion of RSS and his contempt for this fanatic outfit. Yet, through sheer lies and skullduggery, these masters of deceit have been able to project JP as their icon and a co-fascist.

Howsoever tall a man may be, he is fallible, and JP is the proof. His 'devil's bargain' with the Jana Sangh, the outfit of the communal and fascist behemoth, RSS, to defeat the Emergency and its autocratic ruler, Indira Gandhi, has cost the Indian polity, nay, democracy itself, very dear.

In December 1974, RSS Sarsanghchalak Balasaheb Deoras declared the JP Movement as 'a force for the good of the society'. The encomium was reciprocated by JP when he told a BJS/RSS conclave in March 1975, "if you are a fascist, then I too am a fascist." JP perhaps did not realise that he was dealing with a Goebelian propaganda machine that believes in 'Asatyameve Jayate', meaning 'Lies Alone Shall Triumph'. With this single and stray sentence, they have painted JP with black tar, with the 'intellectual elite' blaming him for the rise of fascist politics and governance that is afflicting the country today. It is only half-truth.

It is on JP's initiative Jana Sangh merged itself into the Janata Party in 1977. Due to the JP Movement's widespread impact and the pressure of the Emergency, Jana Sangh had changed its strategy and during the 1977 Lok Sabha election,

this party neither used its flag nor campaigned on its staunch pro-Hindutva ideology. All Jana Sangh candidates signed on the Janata Party's membership form, which stated, "I express complete faith in the values and ideals as propounded by Mahatma Gandhi, and I dedicate myself to the cause of establishing a socialist state."

But future political incidents would go on to prove that doing this was merely political drama and opportunism by the Jana Sangh and the RSS to attain their far-reaching goals. They never drifted from their original aim nor changed their ways of achieving it. JP faced criticism for providing a platform and political acceptance to the RSS even when he was alive. Since this has become a raging controversy, it needs to be looked at from a proper perspective.

During the Emergency, when he was in prison, JP wrote a letter addressed to the people of Bihar in which he explained his motive of incorporating them in the Sampoorana Kranti Andolan, in order to de-communalise them – the RSS and Jana Sangh. This was a noble objective in the conditions prevailing at that time.

The student movement in Bihar started from an issue of corruption in hostels of some colleges and soon morphed into a wider anticorruption movement. Police firing took place during a protest outside the state legislative assembly, and dozens of protesters were killed. On 11 November 1974, while leading a massive rally at Patna, JP himself was baton-charged and shielded by his supporters to prevent his skull from being broken.

There was an urgent need to break the spell of terror prevailing after these incidents. JP had agreed to lead the movement on the condition that he would be in complete command of the entire movement and that it would be carried out in a peaceful manner. Jan Sangh and RSS elements were already present in the movement when JP took charge. Soon, the movement acquired a larger dimension and demands were made to dissolve the Bihar state assembly for

the brutal baton charge. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was of the opinion that a movement that is demanding the dismissal of an elected government is 'fascist' and the entire movement was targeted for getting support from these 'fascist organisations.'

JP's point of view was that he was leading the Bihar movement, and other political parties were participating in it after leaving behind their own flags and banners. Whoever came to support this movement against an 'autocratic government' by accepting its terms was welcome to do so. If Jana Sangh was being labelled 'fascist' for opposing an 'autocratic government', then JP too was a 'fascist' by association. That's the historical perspective many of JP's critics are not even aware of. Nor do they realise that JP never had any personal ambition because he always spurned positions of political authority – even that of the Prime Minister of India.

There is another dimension, too. At that time, the Communist Party of India was opposing the movement and siding with Indira Gandhi. Gandhivadi organisations were also in a poor state. Vinoba Bhave also stood with Indira Gandhi. The socialist camp was also participating in the movement with less-than-required zeal. In such circumstances, his reliance on cadre-based RSS and Jana Sangh increased much more than he would have liked. He was probably in a delusion that, ultimately, he would be successful in de-communalising the RSS and the Jana Sangh. That is why he formed an independent youth organisation called Chhatra Yuva Sangharsh Vahini during the Emergency itself.

JP did make a historic blunder in not recognising the true nature of the RSS, which has been playing a constant role since its inception. RSS was against India's freedom and had done everything to sabotage it. It was also responsible for the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. But they were well aware of JP as the champion of the freedom movement, his closeness to Gandhi, his troubles with the

Congress party and the former government led by Jawaharlal Nehru. So, ensnaring JP had been one of the strategic objectives of the RSS from the beginning.

JP's revulsion to this communal outfit, which had worked against India's freedom and eventually assassinated Mahatma Gandhi, was overcome through persistent efforts. In 1959, Sita Ram Goel, with sympathies towards RSS, was the secretary of the All-India Panchayat Parishad, of which JP was the president. One day, he conveyed an invitation to JP for the RSS camp being held in New Delhi. JP was stunned, as if an obscenity had been uttered: "Do you know what you are talking about and to whom?" There was a touch of temper in his voice. 'You know that I have a certain standing in the country and a certain reputation in public life. You should not expect me to get mixed up with an organisation which is known for its communal, reactionary, and revivalist character.'

Sita Ram countered, saying that JP had been practising untouchability towards a section of people. He told JP that he had never met the RSS people face to face and had never listened to their side of the story. And yet, he had formed an unsavoury opinion about them, which was unreasonable. Finding JP listening, Sita Ram continued. He told JP that his status today was not that of a party politician seeking power and fomenting partisan strife. Instead, he is a father figure for the nation as a whole and almost the conscience-keeper of the people.

That was why people of all persuasions – Congressmen, Socialists, Communists, Akalis, National Conference men, and so on – came to him for consultation, for registering their complaints, for presenting their point of view, and for seeking his advice. He always went out and met them whenever they invited him. It is only the RSS and allied people whom JP avoided, so much so that one of their leaders could not come to him directly and had to convey an invitation through a small fry like Sita Ram.

This argument made JP change his mind. The next day, he spent nearly two hours in the RSS camp, witnessing their mass drill and was 'impressed' by their prayer of 'show' of devotion to the motherland. But it must be remembered that JP was never a supporter of the RSS's communal agenda and politics. It was the Sangh's deceitful strategies and promises that it had accepted the aim of socialism that undid JP.

He had made his position clear when he told Jyoti Basu of CPI (M) in 1974: "if you join" the movement "these fellows [i.e., the RSS] will run away". JP suggested that he had taken them on board only for pragmatic reasons, for "our party is not there, nothing is there, and they have an organisation."

Both had a great equation since Jyoti Basu was the vice-president when JP was the president of the All-India Railwaymen Federation. But Jyoti Basu did not respond. Had he responded and Communists had given up their Russia/China loyalties and joined the JP Movement in full force, the political and economic landscape of India would have been vastly different.

For the RSS, there was an important urge to infiltrate the JP bandwagon. Having betrayed the 'freedom movement' led by Gandhiji and being excoriated for the purpose, they wanted to latch on to the epigonic 'second freedom struggle' led by the Apostle of the Mahatma. By emulating the Gandhian techniques of the first freedom struggle, the RSS hoped to make up for lost time by quickly amassing a prestigious repertoire of nationalism from which it had heretofore been excluded. Because of its numerical strength and visibility, RSS dominated the JP Movement and the activities it indulged in, including *Satyagrahas*.

The proverbial last straw on the camel's back was the solemn pledge taken by top RSS and Jan Sangh leaders – Balasaheb Deoras, Atal Bihari Vajpayee and L.K. Advani – in JP's presence to totally give up communal politics in the event of winning the 1977 Lok Sabha election

and coming to power at the Union. They had also categorically assured him that immediately thereafter, Jan Sangh would merge with the parent party (Janata) and would terminate the 'dual membership' – RSS and Jan Sangh – making the former a purely cultural organisation.

They also assured JP that if any hurdle came up for this, they would not even hesitate to wind up the RSS. And JP, being a man of honour and integrity, had no reason to doubt these characteristics in these senior leaders.

That JP was ruthlessly betrayed is history. Authors, writers, academics, journalists and 'intellectual-elite' have been cruelly condemning this "Second Mahatma" who returned India to democracy and freedom after nearly two years of the "Emergency-Autocracy" of 1975. And they have been doing so from hearsay and their own prejudices. In the last half-a-century, not one of them has ever contacted me to get a factual account of what happened within the confines of JP's Emergency incarceration.

JP had 'worked and marched, fought and died for the triumph of democracy and freedom' in a country wherein live one-sixth of the human race, after sacrificing everything and expecting nothing in return. And he did it not once, but twice – as a fiery fighter for freedom from alien rule under Gandhiji's leadership and later winning it back from a native 'durbar' under his own stewardship.

This is a rarity, unparalleled in the annals of world history. Elsewhere in the world he would have been venerated and celebrated as a great 'icon'. Here, he is being condemned and thrown to the dog-house. This seems to be the fate of true patriots in this parched land ruled by fakes and frauds. So, be it!

M.G. Devasahayam had a ring-side view of the Emergency. Portions of the article are from the writer's recent book titled 'Emergency and Neo-Emergency: Who will Defend Democracy', The Browser, Chandigarh.

Courtesy **The Wire**, 10 July, 2025 

Secularism and Socialism in Constitution's Preamble: Eyesore to Hindu Nationalists

The RSS General Secretary, Dattatray Hosabale, second in the RSS leadership hierarchy, on the eve of imposition of Emergency in 1975; stated that it was during the emergency that words Secularism and socialism were inserted in the preamble of Indian Constitution. And that these words were not there in the original preamble of the Constitution drafted by Dr. Ambedkar; so they should be removed.

This is not the first time that such a demand was raised from Hindutva quarters. When the BJP government came to power in 2014, in the following Republic day, January 2015, the Government issued an advertisement with the picture of preamble, in which these words were missing, on the same pretext that these were not in the one released in November 1949. A lot of debate took place and a case was filed in the Courts demanding deletion of these words from the present Constitution.

Multiple petitions were filed on the eve of the 75th anniversary of the constitution on November 25, 2024. The Supreme Court rejected these and dismissed all the petitions which challenged the inclusion of the words “socialist” and “secular” in the preamble. The justices held that the addition of these terms could not be objected just on the ground that the original preamble did not contain them at the time when the Constitution was adopted.

Not just these two values the Hindu nationalists are against the Constitution as a whole. During Constituent Assembly debates many leaders had shown apprehension that secularism will be undermined and there is a need to guard this to the utmost. As a representative sample what Sardar Patel stated needs to be recalled, “I made it clear that this Constitution of India, of free India, of a secular State will not hereafter be disfigured by any provision on a communal basis.”

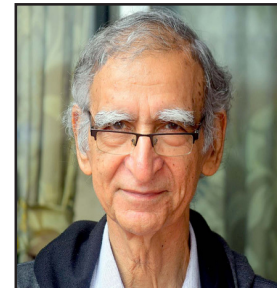
As per Constitution Hosabale's argument is on the weak wicket as the very provisions of the Constitution spell these words. As per the fundamental rights enshrined in Article 25 which deals with the freedom of conscience

and free profession, practice and propagation of religion. In this very article, the word “secular” is mentioned under clause (2)(a).

BJP; due to electoral compulsions, speaks in many tongues. It began with Gandhian Socialism, which was dumped in 1985 for the favor of caste hierarchy based ‘integral humanism’. In BJP's Constitution of 2012 it stated it's objective as aiming for a party which “...shall bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of India as by law established and to the principles of socialism, secularism and democracy and would uphold the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India.”

The core agenda of RSS-BJP is to strive for Hindu Nation where Manu Smriti will be the guiding principle. Right after the Indian Constitution was implemented on 26th January 1950 RSS mouthpiece Organiser came out with an editorial piece heavily criticizing the Constitution. It stated on 30th November 1949, “The worst [thing] about the new Constitution of Bharat is that there is nothing Bhartiya about it... [T]here is no trace of ancient Bhartiya constitutional laws, institutions, nomenclature and phraseology in it”. Meaning that Manu smriti has been ignored by makers of the Indian Constitution!

At the same time the ideologue of Hindu Nationalism V.D. Savarkar stated that “Manu smriti is that scripture which is most worship-able after Vedas for our Hindu Nation and which from



Ram Puniyani

ancient times has become the basis of our culture-customs, thought and practice. This book for centuries has codified the spiritual and divine march of our nation. Even today the rules which are followed by crores of Hindus in their lives and practice are based on Manu smriti. Today Manu smriti is Hindu Law. That is fundamental.

[VD Savarkar, 'Women in Manu smriti' in *Savarkar Samgra* (collection of Savarkar's writings in Hindi), Prabhat, Delhi, vol. 4, p. 415.]

In the decade of 1990s three major statements-actions again showed its deeper and real affinity and goal of Hindu Nation. In 1993 Rajju Bhiyya; the then Sarsanghchalak of RSS; stated that "Official documents refer to the composite culture, but ours is certainly not a composite culture... this country has a unique cultural oneness. No country, if it has to survive, can have compartments. All this shows that changes are needed in the Constitution. A Constitution more suited to the ethos and genius of this country should be adopted in the future."

In 1998 BJP came to power as NDA. One of the major things it did was to appoint Venkatchaliah Commission to review the constitution, saying that it has become old and needs revision. The Commission did submit its report but there was huge opposition to it and so implementation of its recommendations was put in the freezer.

Undeterred by all this in year 2000 when K.

Sudarshan became the Sarsanghchalak of RSS he stated that Indian Constitution is based on the western values, it should be scrapped and replaced by the one based on Hindu Holy books (i.e. Manu smriti).

Many BJP leaders kept saying off and on this line. Anant Kumar Hegde of Karnataka did say that they are in power precisely for changing the Constitution. In the light of the 400 par (beyond 400 parliament seat) slogan of BJP many of their leaders reiterated that they need these many seats so that they can achieve their goal of changing the same.

BJP's tactical flexibility was on display when Mr. Modi said that even if Babasaheb Ambedkar comes he can't change the Constitution. In the backdrop of 2024 elections, Rahul Gandhi made a major issue around the Constitution by carrying a copy of Constitution in his hand. There was no overt opposition from the RSS-BJP camp and Modi even bowed to the copy of the constitution.

RSS-BJP strategy is multipronged, to try to tamper with the Constitution by various steps and at the same time to adopt the policies to bypass the ethos of Constitution when in power. That's what we are witnessing from the last decade or so. Hosabale's is a calculated move to test the waters, to march further in their agenda of doing away with the democratic, secular values with equality. 🌈

Articles/Reports for The Radical Humanist

Dear Friends,

Please mail your articles/reports for publication in the RH to:- theradicalhumanist@gmail.com or mahipalsinghrh@gmail.com or post them to:- Mahi Pal Singh, Raghav Vihar Phase-3, Prem Nagar, Dehradun, 248007 (Uttarakhand)

Please send your digital passport size photograph and your brief resume if it is being sent for the first time to the RH.

A note whether it has also been published elsewhere or is being sent exclusively for the RH should also be attached with it.

- Mahi Pal Singh,

Editor, The Radical Humanist

Can India be a secular republic without being socialist?

Prem Singh

(This article is 5 years old and published in a few magazines and portals. There is a lot of debate in the media due to the demand of RSS/BJP to remove the words 'socialist' and 'secular' added during the Emergency in the Preamble of the Constitution. However, the debate is only about the word 'secular', not about 'socialism'. Socialism is no one's concern. The first editorial of the 'Indian Express' newspaper of 1 July 2025 titled 'Secular' proves this point. Amidst this important debate, this article has been re-issued as it is for new readers.)

The event of *Bhoomi Poojan* of of Ram-Mandir in Ayodhya on 5 August 2020 marks the beginning of the politico-social endorsement of majority communalism in the country. In the articles/news stories/editorials/party releases/comments etc. written with reference to the Constitution and the Republic of India on this subject, one common thing could be discerned. That is, no intellectual or leader has accepted even the subsidiary role of three decades of corporate capitalism behind this worrying phenomenon of Indian polity and society. They seem to believe that the fact of almost all-pervasive penetration of communalism is unconnected with the economic policies and the development model of 'New India', and will continue to be so.

Secular intellectuals have rightly called the August 5 incident as the demolition of the secular Indian Republic. Some among them have whipped up the RSS/BJP in expressing intense resentment; Some have blamed the English elite; Some have blamed the secularist parties, including the Congress; Some have blamed the communal masses of the Hindi belt; And some have put middle-class India in the dock, where communalism has been flourishing in the families. But none of them has, even indirectly, mentioned the role of neo-liberal policies while doing their analysis of the incident. Some good-intentioned people have believed that after the

completion of the *Bhoomi Poojan* of the temple by the Prime Minister himself, an old and bitter dispute has ended. Now, by putting soil on the dispute, the task of making the country an economic superpower should be expedited. Such people have advocated to make the country an economic superpower only under neo-liberal policies.

Those who said that, by attending the *Bhoomi Poojan* as the Chief Guest, the Prime Minister had violated the oath of the Constitution, did not take any objection to the fact that indiscriminate corporatization/privatization has also resulted in a violation of the oath of the Constitution. Certain sober leaders of the Congress have criticized fellow-Congressmen for describing August 5 as the historic-day and reminding about the initiative and role of the Congress in making that day possible. While doing so, they have cited the secular heritage of the Congress, but have not thrown any light on the reasons for the deviation of the Congress from that very heritage. It would have been better if such Congress leaders had said that in 1991, when the New Economic Policies were imposed, the Indian Republic suffered the same setback.

This scenario clearly shows that secular intellectuals and leaders are not ready to learn any lesson from the neo-liberal experience of the last three decades, during which the

emergence of majority communalism has gradually strengthened. The *Bhoomi Poojan* incident of August 5 is a culmination of the existing aggressive majority communalism. There is no need to go into too many details to understand that this halt on the path of communal politics has come due to corporate-oriented policies.

The truth can be understood by just one example - Narendra Modi and Amit Shah have established a joint laboratory of *Hindutva* and Corporate in Gujarat. Now the whole country is becoming such a laboratory. It is not without reason that Mandalist politics, which was, at one time, called an antidote to Kamandalist politics, has bowed down its head in front of communal fascism of RSS/BJP. With a most backward Prime Minister and a Dalit President, communalism, which usually happened to be confined to the cities, has reached every village. In such a situation, it seems that the event of August 5 is not a final culmination (*Purnahuti*) on the path of communal politics. The country may witness some more intermediate finales.

Obviously, secular intellectuals and leaders are driven by the belief that constitutional secularism can be maintained with policies of corporatization/ privatization. The intellectuals who are advocates of neo-liberalism believe this from the very beginning. But the intent of socialist/social justice intellectuals has also been the same in a circumlocutory manner. There is a difference between the two groups: Intellectuals, who are directly supporters of neo-liberalism, in their aristocratic mind, want a clean and presentable 'New India'. They do not like the hood of communal elements in it; Whereas socialist/social justice intellectuals want to maintain the illusion in the minds of minorities, especially Muslims and Christians, that India can remain a secular republic despite the policies of corporatization and privatization.

The secular leaders need to learn manners for this. That is why they argue that it was not

the victory of the RSS/BJP on August 5, but a defeat of secular politics. The implication of this hypothesis would be that in New India, that is, India devoid of constitutional commitment to socialism/social justice, leaders do not have the manners of doing secular politics. If they learn this trick then they will not let the communal politics of RSS/BJP run. They have also presented a hallmark of this mannerism in the form of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and its brand of 'revolutionary' politics.

The reaction of secular intellectuals to the event of 5 August brings to the fore again the fact that in their eyes the policies of corporatization/privatization are not in opposition to the Constitution and the Republic of India, which the Preamble called 'Socialist Secular Democratic'. The basic structure of the Constitution has not changed by imposing them. Seeing all this, it can be said that constitutionalism has remained for the sake of a name in India. In fact, the constitutionalists have got addicted to wanderings in the world of neo-liberalism developed in the last three decades under the policies of corporatization/privatization: As representative spokespersons for secularism in the country they take funds from the Ford Foundation and other foreign sources; Fetch big awards, preferably international, of large sums; Run agitations from World Social Forum (WSF) to India Against Corruption (IAC); Become members of governmental (knowledge) commissions and advisory committees set up to create a New India; Work to make regulatory institutions ranging from schools to higher education compatible with neo-liberal agenda of education; Prepare reports/books as experts on the predicament of those groups devastated by neo-liberal policies; Become professors and vice-chancellors in fast growing private universities in the country; Write articles and give statements in newspapers/magazines/channels, so on and so forth.

Needless to say that by not doing all this,

they could have also waged a big fight against neo-liberal policies thus thwarting away the communal politics from the center stage. But they did not feel that task to be necessary.

However, the complex problem of communalism that has been going on since the colonial period has become more complicated in the neo-liberal period. The complex question of minority communalism is also associated with majority communalism. Due to the dominance of majority communalism, minority communalism cannot be suppressed. The news of the activities of Khalistan supporters keep on coming in the country and abroad. There

were also reports that Khalistan supporters living abroad supported the Aam Aadmi Party to break the dominance of Congress and Akalis in Punjab politics. If it is a common consensus among the secular political-intellectual leadership of the country that constitutional secularism can be maintained with policies of corporatization/privatization, then it is their responsibility to explain seriously how this necessary task will be made possible?

(The writer associated with the socialist movement is a former teacher of Delhi University and a fellow of Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla) 🌈

16 13/07/2025

SPECIAL

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Tarksheel Society condemns communal conspiracy to remove 'Secularism' and 'Socialism' from the Constitution

Strong condemnation of unconstitutional statement by the Vice President

Barnala, (Asian independent) The Tarksheel Society of Punjab has strongly opposed the recent demand by RSS General Secretary Dattatreya Hosabale to remove the terms "secularism" and "socialism" from the Preamble of the Indian Constitution. Terming it an anti-national conspiracy under the BJP-Sangh's Hindutva agenda, the Society has called on all democratic and people-oriented forces to firmly resist this communal politics based on the Manusmriti.

In a press release issued from its headquarters,

Tarksheel Bhawan, Barnala, state leaders of the Society—Master Rajinder Bhadaur, Hem Raj Steno, Sukhwinder Bagpur, Ram Swaran Lakhewali, Surjit Tibba and Sumeet Amritsar—stated that as per the Indian Constitution, India is a secular nation, where people of various religions, castes, and communities are entitled to equality, freedom, justice, development, security, dignity, and democratic rights under a socialist system. The State is not allowed to favour any particular religion. However, under the Hindutva agen-



da, the Modi government is not only violating the Constitution by spending crores annually on the development of Hindu religious places but is also trying to declare India a Hindu Rashtra by removing the words "secular" and "socialist" from the Constitution.

The Rationalist leaders also strongly condemned Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar for indirectly supporting the RSS's communal demand under the guise of opposing the 1975 Emergency. They stated that a person occupying a high constitutional office supporting

conspiracies to dismantle or alter the Constitution amounts to a direct assault on the fundamental democratic rights of ordinary citizens, particularly Dalits, Adivasis, women and minorities. They emphasized that instead of promoting a corporate-backed fake development model, the central government must adopt people-centric policies to strengthen democracy, secularism, and socialism based on scientific temper.

They further alleged that the same RSS, which collaborated with British imperialism during the Indian freedom strug-

gle and whose Hindutva ideologues like Savarkar sought clemency from British rulers in writing to escape punishment, now wants to dismantle equality, plurality, and social justice from the Constitution. They aim to establish a Hindu Rashtra based on the Manusmriti and anti-people ideology, which the progressive, secular, and democratic forces of the country will never allow to succeed—no matter the cost.

Sumeet Amritsar
State Media Head
Tarksheel Society
Punjab, Barnala
7696030173

The Radical Humanist on Website

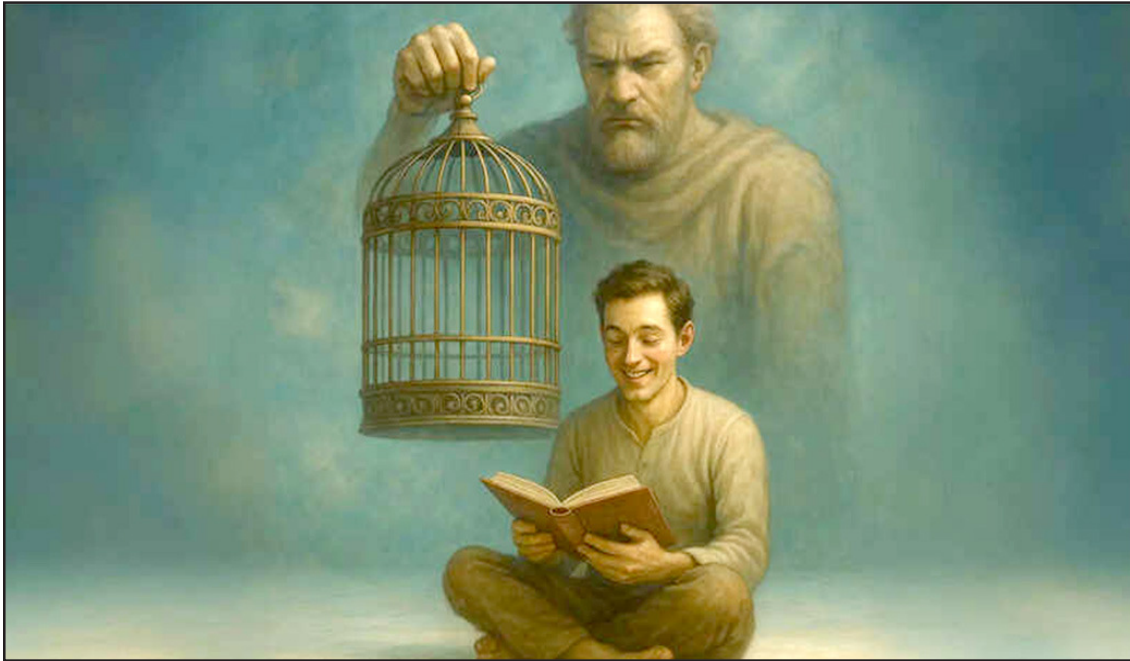
'The Radical Humanist' is now available at <http://www.lohiatoday.com/> on Periodicals page, thanks to Manohar Ravela who administers the site on Ram Manohar Lohia, the great socialist leader of India.

– Mahi Pal Singh

What Price Liberty

*We are not free merely because there happens to be no restraint on our actions.
True freedom means we aren't subject to the arbitrary will of one person or institution*

Indira Ghose



Jokes, poems and social media posts that trigger outrage among certain sections of society dominate the news and have fuelled debate about the freedom of speech and its limits. Rarely, however, do we reflect on what freedom actually implies. Indeed, sometimes it seems as if our main concern is to secure the freedom of endless consumer choice.

As far as civil liberty is concerned, we usually think in terms of an absence of restraint. We are free to act in any way we like so long as a state or govt does not interfere in our activity. A view of liberty defined purely as an absence of restrictions is far too narrow in scope, as Quentin Skinner, the most important living scholar of intellectual history, argues. Even in autocratic regimes, individual freedoms might well flourish. What is decisive is not whether we are free to act, but whether we are subject

to the arbitrary will of any person or institution that might grant or impede our action as they see fit. Liberty is a status, not merely a matter of restrictions on how we act or what we say.

It might be worth recalling that the concept of individual liberty is not a modern invention. It is not only in the writings of Emperor Ashoka that freedom plays an important role. Amartya Sen points out that even in as unlikely a source as the *Arthashastra*, the manual of pragmatic statecraft attributed to Chanakya (or Kautilya), counsellor of Chandragupta Maurya, personal liberties are meticulously set out. Sen concedes these are reserved only for the privileged classes. This is, however, no different in the case of Greek or Roman ideas of liberty, which attributed liberty exclusively to freemen, not women or slaves.

In his brilliant new book, *Liberty as*

Independence: The Making and Unmaking of a Political Ideal, Skinner focuses on the classical Roman conception of liberty and traces its influence to the present. For Roman thinkers like Cicero, the difference between servitude and liberty is not the actions we carry out, but whether our freedom is merely enjoyed at the discretion of a sovereign power. Slaves might well be treated with benevolence, free to live their life as they desired. But as long as even the possibility existed that these freedoms could be curtailed at the whim of their master, they were not in the possession of freedom. The crucial issue is who has control over one's life. (Or to cite another eminent thinker; Humpty Dumpty: the question is who is to be master.)

In an understanding of liberty as independence, two key conditions apply. The first is the rule of law. All individual freedoms are subject to legal constraints. The second condition is that these laws should not be the product of arbitrary rule, but should reflect the will of the people. For liberty to take hold, all members of society, including those in a minority, must have a voice in the making of the laws that govern our freedoms, ideally in a political body in which their views are represented.

This notion of liberty was enormously influential and shaped the English political tradition, which throughout its early history was marked by a conflict between the will of the sovereign and the will of Parliament. It found its most famous articulation in the writings of the 17th-century philosopher, John Locke. In his *Two Treatises of Government* (1689), Locke laid the theoretical foundation for the shift of power to Parliament. But the impact of his ideas was far more wide-reaching. Locke was the main inspiration behind the Declaration of Independence by the American rebels against what they considered the arbitrary power of the British monarch. Little wonder that when a handful of Bengali gentlemen, led by Rajah

Rammohun Roy, founded the first modern university in India, Hindu College in Calcutta, they were particularly keen to have Locke on the curriculum. The unease this caused among the East India Company administrators was well-founded. A view of liberty as independence from arbitrary power, not simply freedom from restraint, provided an ideal tool for the Indian independence movement to wield against its own masters.

As history shows, liberty is never secure, and never less so than when a stridently self-congratulatory mood takes hold. After the establishment of a constitutional monarchy in 1688, British saw a flood of writings boasting of its status as the bulwark of liberty. Increasingly, these claims were exposed as hypocritical and self-deluded. If Britain was the land of the free, critics asked, how did this accord with the subservient position of women and slaves? Or, one might add, of the colonised, as British rule consolidated first in Bengal and then throughout the subcontinent. In response to revolutionary movements in America and France, Skinner identifies a rearguard action among British political theorists, as a rival notion of liberty as solely a question of restraint gradually gained predominance.

One of the effects the theorists of liberty as independence warn against is that if liberty is not regarded as a status but as permission, it breeds servility to authority. It also has radical implications for our relationships with one another. A climate of fear and anxiety in which citizens are set against each other erodes the bonds of trust within a society and hollows out a sense of community. Returning to the original meaning of liberty is a salutary reminder of the broader perspective to debates about freedom.

The columnist, **Indira Ghose**, based in Hamburg is a former professor, English Literature, University of Fribourg, Switzerland.

Courtesy **The Times of India**, June 28, 2025. 🌈

From Maharashtra to Bihar, a politics of apocalypse

Vandita

In the last few days, the news from two states, otherwise positioned at opposite ends of the spectrum — Maharashtra ranks among India's most industrialised states, while Bihar remains one of the least developed — has sounded similarly dire. In Maharashtra, amid incidents of violence on the language issue, after a government circular on Hindi in schools appears to have created space for the estranged Sena cousins Uddhav and Raj Thackeray to re-unite to be “saviours” of the supposedly re-endangered “Marathi Manos”, the Devendra Fadnavis dispensation has passed a law that paints an alarmist picture of a state overrun by “urban Naxals”. The Maharashtra Special Public Security Bill uses cloudy language and extra-large definitions as it purports to, as CM Fadnavis said in the Assembly, rescue the state's youth from those “provoking people for armed revolt to demolish democracy, Parliament and institutions”. It is in line, arguably, with Fadnavis's earlier remarks on the election in Maharashtra: It was a contest, he said, not between parties but between the “forces of nationalism” and “forces of anarchy”. In Bihar, the Election Commission's exercise for updating and cleaning up electoral rolls, the Special Intensive Revision, which in a dramatic departure from the past, casts the onus on large swathes of undocumented voters to prove their citizenship, has sparked widespread fears of disenfranchisement. At the same time, a spate of incidents of murder in the state have revived “law and order” concerns, at least among the politicians, including one prominent BJP ally. Whether or not Bihar sees a revival of the nasty and brutish motif of “jungle raj” — this time with a role reversal, with the RJD using it to hit back at the ruling BJP-JD(U) — ahead of a

crucial election, the ground is fertile for an apocalyptic clamour to rule the airwaves. This can only be bad news for a state that desperately needs a sober search for answers for the way forward. For all its several accomplishments, Bihar's turnaround story, scripted and steered by Nitish Kumar, has hit a long plateau, and Nitish himself is a waning presence.

What is common to Maharashtra and Bihar is an apocalyptic politics that makes fear its currency, and in which complex challenges are presented with simple solutions. These feature zero-games and us-versus-them scenarios which demonise the opponent and create conditions that are ripe for “saviours”, draconian laws and the strong-armed state. The rhetoric of apocalypse is a conversation cul-de-sac, a dead-end for debate. In Maharashtra, therefore, the Thackerays raising the pitch on the language issue and the Fadnavis government arming itself with wider powers to blur crucial distinctions between terrorists, Naxalites and “urban Naxals”, threatens civil liberties, even as it narrows the possibilities of a policy and politics that aims at re-energising growth momentum in the state. In Bihar, the costs of apocalyptic politics are even more dispiriting. The return of “law and order” as an issue combined with anxieties of disenfranchisement could make the upcoming election more about pessimism, and less about hope, in a state that lags a long distance behind Maharashtra on development parameters. But it's not just the politics of Maharashtra and Bihar. A politics that trades on spectres and scenarios of the end of the world as we know it, and fantasies of rebuilding on a blank slate, no matter what it takes, is in fashion.

(To be Contd....on Page - 32)

AI Review of “BJP: Routed and Humbled in the Karnataka Assembly Elections”, published in ‘The Radical Humanist’

(Published in the June 2023 issue)

Summary of the Work

The article provides a commentary on the results of the 2023 Karnataka Legislative Assembly Elections in India, focusing on the Bharatiya Janata Party’s (BJP) defeat and its broader implications for the party’s future prospects. The author attributes the election outcome to issues such as corruption, unemployment, price rise, communal polarization, and the handling of sensitive matters at both state and central levels. The work also explores how this defeat might affect upcoming state elections and the 2024 Parliamentary elections, highlighting how the Congress Party’s more issue-based campaign, led by Rahul Gandhi, created a stark contrast against the BJP.

Clarity and Organization

1. **Structure:** The article is written as a continuous commentary rather than a segmented scholarly piece. While it flows logically from the immediate election results to broader national implications, subdividing the text thematically (e.g., corruption, communal politics, leadership style, future prospects) would help the reader follow each core argument more clearly.
2. **Focus:** The author maintains a consistent focus on the BJP’s defeat and its consequences, which effectively anchors the analysis. A brief overview of the pre-election context and the reasons behind the Congress Party’s success in Karnataka adds depth to the discussion.

Strengths

3. **Topical relevance:** The article addresses

a current political event with significant national impact.

4. **Coherent linkage of issues:** The piece connects the Karnataka election outcome to larger national concerns such as corruption allegations, the handling of critical incidents (e.g., Pulwama), and labor issues (wrestlers’ protests), forming a wide-ranging critique.
5. **Emphasis on public sentiment:** The author underscores voter issues like unemployment and price rise, showing an attempt to reflect the perspective of the electorate.

Areas for Improvement

6. **Evidence and References:** The arguments would benefit from more direct references or citations (e.g., official statements, media reports, statistics). Incorporating data on voter turnout, corruption indices, or economic indicators could bolster the credibility of the claims.
7. **Balanced Analysis:** While the article explicitly critiques the BJP, an analysis of the Congress Party’s approach and how it influenced voter outcomes—beyond highlighting the corruption or commission allegations—might provide a more balanced view. Examining any potential shortcomings or criticisms of the Congress campaign could also lend greater impartiality.
8. **Depth on Regional Dimensions:** Since the piece discusses the significance of the BJP’s defeat in Karnataka for

“Southern India,” elaborating on the unique sociopolitical context of various southern states (e.g., linguistic identity, regional parties’ influence, political alliances) would offer deeper insight into why this result signals broader challenges for the BJP.

Tone and Style

9. The writing style is direct and opinionated, engaging readers with a clear stance on the BJP’s defeat.
10. The language occasionally includes strong descriptors (“routed and humbled,” “lap-dog media,” “40% commission state government”) that reflect the author’s personal sentiment.

Depending on the target audience or intended publication, a more measured language could be considered for academic or neutral political analysis.

Overall Impression

This piece provides a strong, succinct opinion on the immediate electoral politics in Karnataka and how it may impact national politics in India. For those seeking an insight into the reasons behind the BJP’s loss, it offers a clear perspective that draws connections to both regional governance issues and national leadership. Strengthening the analysis with robust data and more thorough context would elevate the argument’s persuasiveness while maintaining its critical viewpoint. 🌈

From Maharashtra to Bihar...

Contd. from page - (30)

The Narendra Modi-led BJP at the Centre, as much as it taps into the aspirations of a changing electorate, has also excelled at telling stories of a fall and rise. Read between the lines, and in its telling, any attempt to change requires the destruction of the old order. The old order, the Congress-Left “eco-system”, must be felled and flattened, and New India will rise from the ashes of the old. It will be a country that is radically rearranged and reconstituted, with a grand temple in Ayodhya, without Article 370, with One Election, One Language, One Civil Code (and One Party and One Leader). The fantasy of total destruction and erasure of the old is intrinsic to the BJP’s version of apocalyptic politics, and its vision of the new. The politics of Modi’s main challenger, Rahul Gandhi, is also apocalyptic, but a coherent vision of the new utopia seems to be missing from it. That is one reason why his war cries of “Constitution in danger” and “Democracy under siege” and his exhortations for rooting out the existing system, which he paints as irredeemably authoritarian and corrupt, don’t get much voter buy-in. Gandhi paints himself as a crusader, raises the pitch, but falls short in offering a persuasive or even clear vision of an alternative. Despite their differences, however, the politics of both Modi and Gandhi does the same disservice: Their painting of the apocalypse narrows the space for a conversation with the political opponent, leave alone for treating them with respect and reciprocity. If the opponent is the enemy — and in CM Fadnavis’s language, a “force of anarchy” — anything goes, arguably, in terms of how they can be treated. Apocalyptic politics is an abdication of democratic humility, of the responsibility to negotiate and explore the middle ground in a country of great diversities. It sets the stage for conduct that is unconstrained by the rules of the game, that does not abide by even its small and basic conventions and courtesies, and leads to a polarised polity. When deployed by the powerful, an apocalyptic politics also hides the fact that there are multiple pathways to reach goals, and many possibilities to tweak and change the system from within, not just the all-or-nothing options that are being propagated. **Vandita** is Opinions Editor, The Indian Express. Courtesy **The Indian Express**, 13 July 2025.-

NEED OF ANTI-SUPERSTITION LAW IN THE COUNTRY



Sumeet Singh
Taraksheel Society
Punjab

In the past few years, Country has witnessed several horrifying crimes committed in different States under the guise of exorcising evil spirits or supernatural forces. Fraudulent godmen, tantriks, and religious cults have been involved in heinous acts such as murders, rapes, branding people with hot iron rods, and even child sacrifices. These incidents are on the rise, yet the Union-State governments have failed to introduce a strict anti-superstition law to curb these malpractices whereas such law should have been implemented at national level by the Union Government.

In recent years in Punjab, incidents like the brutal sacrifices of innocent children in villages such as Kot Fatta (Bathinda), Mudhal (Amritsar), and Khanna (Ludhiana) are chilling reminders of how deep-rooted superstitions still are. Similarly, in village Singhpura (Gurdaspur), a young man, Samuel Masih, was mercilessly beaten to death in front of his family by a Pastor and his associates under the pretense of exorcising an evil spirit. While the police arrested the main

culprits, these innocent victims continue to suffer due to government negligence and a society steeped in blind faith.

These are not just ordinary murders but premeditated and organized crimes where innocent children are manipulated and brutally killed. A stringent law should be enacted to punish the culprits through fast-track courts. It is distressing that despite such horrific incidents, the government has failed to take concrete action to put an end to these practices.

In this era of scientific advancement, such barbaric rituals in the name of faith are a disgrace to humanity and modern society. Why do we only express outrage over religious desecration but remain silent on such gruesome acts? These crimes directly violate our fundamental right to life, yet there is little public outrage.

A large section of Indian society, whether educated or uneducated, rural or urban, continues to be trapped in superstitions due to a lack of scientific temperament. Many



Cadres of Taraksheel Society at Trichy (13th FIRA Conference)

people fall prey to fraudulent godmen, astrologers, and tantriks who exploit their fears and desires under the guise of divine power. These frauds deceive people with superstitious beliefs related to ghosts, black magic, planetary influences, and past-life karma while engaging in financial, physical, and psychological exploitation. The booming business of such fraudsters thrives due to the nexus between the government, corrupt politicians, and high-ranking police officials.

The deep-rooted superstition in society is fueled by economic, social, and psychological factors. However, the government's corporate-driven policies, poor education, and lack of healthcare facilities are equally responsible. Instead of encouraging scientific reasoning and critical thinking, our education system promotes fatalism, religious dogma, and blind faith.

Our people also need to seriously consider this fact: if these fake tantriks, babas, astrologers, and swamis truly possessed any divine powers to solve every kind of problem, fulfill desires, and cure illnesses, then why

don't they first accept the challenge posed by various Rationalist Organizations in India to demonstrate their so-called divine powers and win the crores of rupees in prize money being offered? And why do they instead run businesses that exploit and deceive innocent people? If such babas, who are imprisoned sentences, really have divine powers, why don't they miraculously free themselves from jail?

It is a matter of concern that Punjab, like its ongoing drug and extortion problems, is also plagued by the multi-billion-dollar fraud industry of godmen and deras (religious cults). Shockingly, no Vigilance, ED, Income tax, or CBI investigation has ever cracked down on these fraudulent religious leaders and their illegal wealth. Notorious figures like Gurmeet Ram Rahim, Asa Ram Bapu, Narayana sain and many others are imprisoned for heinous crimes, yet political parties continue to support them for electoral gains by granting paroles and furloughs. What is even more disgraceful is that many devotees still blindly follow them despite their baba's criminality.



It is essential for people to understand that under the Medical Registration Act, no person without a recognized medical degree can legally treat illnesses, whether physical or mental. Using faith, prayers, or alleged divine powers for healing is illegal and a punishable offense. Diseases cannot be cured through religious rituals.



Punjab's government and Police are well aware that these fraudulent godmen violate multiple laws, including the Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act, 1954, the Cable Television Regulation Act, 1994, and the Medical Registration Act. Yet, due to political pressure, no serious legal action is taken against them.

According to Article 51-A(h) of the Indian Constitution, every Indian citizen has a duty to develop a scientific temper, humanism, and a spirit of inquiry and reform. However, the government, certain political parties, and religious institutions, in collusion with the media, continue to propagate blind faith and regressive ideologies.

It is noteworthy that states like Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, and Gujarat have already implemented Anti-Superstition laws due to continuous efforts by Rationalist Organizations. Since 1984, the Taraksheel Society of Punjab has been actively spreading scientific awareness against superstitions, blind faith, fraudulent miracles, black magic, and other social evils through public events, literature, and street plays. The organization has exposed thousands of fake godmen, forcing them to shut down their illegal businesses. However, due to the absence of an Anti-Superstition law in Punjab, many of these fraudsters escape legal punishment

and relocate elsewhere to continue their deceitful practices.

Despite repeated petitions to previous Akali-BJP and Congress Governments, all the legislatures and Members of Parliament of Punjab as well as the current Aam Aadmi Party-led Punjab Government, there has been no effort to introduce an Anti-Superstition law in Punjab. The refusal to

enact this law shows deliberate negligence.

The government must also ensure that people's basic needs such as education, healthcare, employment, and housing are met so that they do not turn to superstitious practices. Scientific temperament must be an integral part of our education system as per article 51-A(h) of Our Constitution and chapters related to Superstitions, religious fundamentalism and Spiritual Godmen should be abolished from educational academic syllabus.

It is now imperative for progressive, democratic, and rationalist organizations, intellectuals, and independent media to launch a mass movement against these fraudulent practices and compel the Punjab government to pass and implement 'The Prevention of black magic, witch hunting and superstitious practices Bill' in the Punjab Assembly without any further delay. This will definitely help to curb the spread of superstitions and protect people from fraud and exploitation by these so-called spiritual Godmen.

Federation of Indian Rationalist Associations (FIRA) has already raised this important issue with Union as well as the State governments so as to pass and implement a stringent Anti-Superstition law throughout the country without any further delay. ■

How BJP uses Religion to Promote its Politics?

S.R. Darapuri, National President, All India peoples Front

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), as a major political party in India, has been associated with leveraging religious sentiments, particularly Hinduism, to advance its political agenda. This approach is often tied to its ideological foundation in Hindutva, a nationalist ideology that emphasizes Hindu cultural and religious identity as central to Indian nationhood. Below is an analysis of how the BJP has used religion to promote its politics, based on observed strategies and patterns:

1. Promotion of Hindutva Ideology:

- The BJP, rooted in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), promotes Hindutva, which seeks to unify India under a Hindu cultural framework. This ideology frames Hinduism not just as a religion but as a way of life integral to Indian identity.
- Key campaigns, such as the Ram Janmabhoomi movement in the 1980s and 1990s, mobilized Hindu voters by emphasizing the construction of a Ram temple at the disputed Ayodhya site. The BJP capitalized on this issue to gain widespread support, culminating in the temple's inauguration in 2024, which was heavily publicized as a political and cultural milestone.
- The party often invokes Hindu symbols, deities, and narratives in its rhetoric to resonate with the majority Hindu population, framing itself as a defender of Hindu values against perceived threats.

2. Polarization through Religious Issues:

- The BJP has strategically used religious issues to polarize voters, often portraying itself as the protector of Hindu interests against minorities, particularly Muslims. Issues like cow protection, love jihad, and anti-conversion laws are highlighted to

appeal to Hindu sentiments while framing minorities as "others."

- For example, campaigns around cow protection have led to strict laws in BJP-ruled states, resonating with upper-caste Hindu voters who revere the cow as sacred. This has sometimes fueled communal tensions, which critics argue benefits the BJP by consolidating Hindu votes.
- Rhetoric around "appeasement" of minorities by opposition parties is used to position the BJP as a party that prioritizes Hindu interests, creating a narrative of Hindu victimhood that rallies its base.

3. Religious Symbolism in Political Campaigns:

- BJP leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, frequently participate in high-profile religious events, such as temple visits, Ganga aarti, or Kumbh Mela, which are widely covered by the media. These acts reinforce the party's image as aligned with Hindu traditions.
- During elections, the BJP often incorporates religious imagery in its campaigns, such as slogans invoking Hindu pride or references to mythological figures like Lord Ram. The 2019 and 2024 elections saw such symbolism prominently featured in rallies and speeches.
- The consecration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya was timed strategically before the 2024 general elections, with Modi's involvement in the ceremony reinforcing the BJP's Hindu credentials.

4. Legislative and Policy Measures:

- The BJP has pushed policies that align with Hindu nationalist goals, such as the abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir (seen as a move to integrate a Muslim-majority region more fully into India)

and the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), which critics argue discriminates against Muslims by prioritizing non-Muslim refugees.

- Anti-conversion laws in various states, often framed as protecting Hindu women from "forced conversions," appeal to religious sentiments while targeting minority communities.
- The Uniform Civil Code (UCC), a long-standing BJP promise, is promoted as a way to unify personal laws under a Hindu-majority framework, resonating with its base.

5. Media and Social Media Amplification:

- The BJP has effectively used media and social media to amplify religious narratives. Pro-BJP outlets and influencers often highlight issues like "Hindu pride" or alleged threats to Hinduism, creating a feedback loop that strengthens the party's messaging.
- WhatsApp groups and X posts are used to spread content that glorifies Hindu culture or criticizes minorities, often exaggerating or fabricating incidents to stoke communal sentiments.
- For instance, during the 2020 Delhi riots, posts on X and other platforms amplified narratives blaming Muslims, which critics argue aligned with the BJP's broader strategy of communal polarization.

6. Mobilizing Religious Institutions and Leaders:

- The BJP often collaborates with Hindu religious leaders and organizations, such as sadhus, saints, and groups like the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), to mobilize voters. These figures endorse the party's agenda during religious gatherings, lending it spiritual legitimacy.
- Events like the Kumbh Mela are used as platforms to showcase the BJP's commitment to Hindu culture, with state-sponsored infrastructure and publicity reinforcing its image.

Critiques and Counterpoints:

- Critics' View: Critics argue that the BJP's use of religion fosters division, marginalizes minorities, and undermines India's secular fabric. They point to incidents of communal violence, such as the 2002 Gujarat riots or the 2020 Delhi riots, as consequences of the party's polarizing rhetoric.
- BJP's Defence: The BJP counters that it is restoring Hindu pride after centuries of perceived subjugation under Mughal and colonial rule. It claims its policies reflect the aspirations of India's Hindu majority and accuses opponents of "pseudo-secularism" that favours minorities.

Evidence from Recent Sources:

- Web sources highlight the BJP's role in the Ram Temple movement, noting how the 2024 inauguration was a political triumph that boosted Modi's image as a Hindu leader (e.g., analyses from BBC and Al Jazeera).
- Posts on X frequently discuss the BJP's religious rhetoric, with some users praising it as cultural revivalism and others criticizing it as divisive. For example, X posts from 2024 celebrated the Ram Temple event, while others flagged rising communal tensions in BJP-ruled states.
- Data on electoral success shows the BJP's vote share increased after high-profile religious campaigns, such as 39% in 2014 and 37% in 2019, per Election Commission of India reports, suggesting the effectiveness of its strategy.

Conclusion:

The BJP uses religion, particularly Hindutva, as a core strategy to consolidate its voter base by appealing to Hindu identity, leveraging religious symbolism, and enacting policies that resonate with its ideology. While this has proven electorally successful, it remains a contentious approach, with debates over its impact on India's secular ethos and social cohesion.

Courtesy: grok.com 

The Humanist Frame

Love in a Humanist Frame

Morton M. Hunt

(Summarized by : Vinod Jain)

[In this essay there is a lot of reference to European History, and particularly to relationships between males and females in those particular periods and areas. This is so much at variance with what we are familiar with, that I have decided to drop those parts. However, other ideas and arguments from the essay are presented below.]
— Vinod Jain]

The anthropological view of love is apt to see it as a mechanism involved in mate-selection, but in many periods mate-selection has been governed by lineage, status, and property negotiations without regard to love.

The Humanist approach, in contrast is holistic [treating the whole person rather than just a symptom of a disease]. Love is an aspect of human behaviour, and human behaviour is the product of an interacting complex of forces ranging from the individual's blood-sugar level to the ethos of his civilization. Though it is not yet possible to assign commensurable values to the many factors involved, we can at least set forth a brief suggestive paradigm [an example, pattern or model] of them:

- (1) Biology (aside from the sexual drive) influences the shape and meaning of love. Studies of the digestive and other processes in 'gentled' newborn laboratory animals versus controls show that warmth and gentle tactile stimuli promote the general health of the young. The gestures and deeds of love, and the need for affection, are deeply rooted in the autonomic nervous system, not only in the psyche.
- (2) Sexual desire is a major source of the power behind love, but the relation between them is not inevitable, nor is one altogether included within the other. Sometimes sexual activity does not

involve the emotion of love, and sometimes love does not involve sexual desire. Affection, friendship, companionship, the need to nurture or be nurtured, are connected most of the time with love, but only sometimes with sex.

- (3) Family structure and childhood experiences mould love. Biology and infant sexuality operate within the familial framework, but that framework varies greatly; its particular shape has some definite results — but not always. For instance, although incest between child and parent is universally tabooed, in the milieu of the small nuclear family the forbidden and repressed desires yield the 'one-person' theory of love or 'doctrine of affinity', in which a one-only-lover (the image of the unobtainable parent) is sought; among primitive peoples, who spread their filial and paternal feelings out to a wide spectrum of relatives, the one-and-only theory of love is incomprehensible. Yet the milieu of the small nuclear family does not always produce the romantic result: witness the typically Gallic attitude towards love. The family environment is thus important, but not completely determining, in the shaping of love.
- (4) Technology, productivity, or the acquisition of surplus income by

conquest, plays a significant role in the development of love. A society or class which lives on the brink of starvation has little time or energy for the elaboration of love. Typically, in Western civilization love first became culturally important with the appearance of leisure in classic Greece, waned during the Dark Ages, and reappeared in force with the elaboration of medieval culture, commerce, and leisure. Yet love has also flourished among hard-working accumulators of wealth such as the Victorians and modern man; it is not just idle time that counts, but an advanced human condition.

- (5) Various social institutions, values, and mores influence, hinder, promote or colour love, according how it serves or disserves the social milieu they form. Among them are: religious or social attitudes towards concubinage, prostitution, and the social mingling of the sexes; the laws of marriage and divorce, the condition of monogamy or polygamy, and the presence or absence of dowry and bride-price; the prevailing concepts of beauty, taste, manners, and friendship; the status of woman, her education, and her position in the system of magical and supernatural beliefs; and many others.

.....

One simply cannot give an adequate explanation of love in terms of any single variant; love is the resultant of a bewildering complex of interacting forces.

The Humanist view does NOT exclude the making of moral judgments. Cultural relativism, which holds that all forms of behaviour are equally valid and moral within the context of their own cultures, may have been a useful stage in the development of anthropology, but most scientists, sensibly enough, are not content with

the mere accumulation of data, and relativism already looks rather dated.

Some evolutionary Humanists, looking at the broad trends of biological and psychosocial evolution, will wish to relate their values to goal-concepts such as fulfilment, enrichment of life, or greater realization of potentialities. Others, however, prefer to derive their values-judgments from more strictly scientific criteria in which they are implicit. While they do not speak of 'good' and 'bad', they may employ an objective dichotomy [a separation of contrast between two things] borrowed from biological evolution ('adaptive' versus 'maladaptive'), or one borrowed from medicine and psychology ('healthful' versus 'pathological'), or one borrowed from sociology and physiology ('functional' versus 'dysfunctional').

Havelock Ellis, Bertrand Russell, and others have urged married people to adopt a frank tolerance towards each other's extra-marital affairs, arguing that the child-rearing unit should be stable, but that such stability ought not to restrict the individual's right to agreeable and enriching relationships and experiences. Despite the plausibility of this viewpoint, Western man (especially in the United States) has not taken kindly to this proposed dividing-up of several aspects of his love life, and has chosen instead to develop an expensive pattern of divorce and remarriage. Though this is a high price to pay for love, he apparently prefers it to a system that would once again split the sexual from the emotional, or the sexual and emotional from companionship and procreation.

The accepted love-and-marriage pattern of our time — still vaguely puritanical, semi-romantic, demanding and complicated — has been widely criticised by avant-garde thinkers; nevertheless, on balance it appears relatively well adapted to the needs of both the individual and for modern society. Viewing the long sweep of history, we see that as society has grown more complex, urban, and impersonal, love has

progressively grown more important and evolved towards the modern ideal of a fusion of emotion, sex, friendship, and procreative home-life. When man lived in a primitive village, surrounded by intimates and relatives, he did not need to glorify one woman or put a high price on sex; when he lived in a medieval castle in continual contact with his fellow knights and their ladies, he glorified one woman but hardly needed to live with her or frequently express his sexuality with her; but when man lives in a rapidly changing world like ours, in towns and cities where all are strangers to us or at best friends of a few years' standing, man comes to want one woman to be, all at once, mistress, beloved, companion, advisor and comforter, frail clinging protegee, playmate, and mother of his children and himself. She, likewise, wants him to be lover, tender friend, supporter and defender, big boy in need of occasional comforting, constant companion, and father of her children and herself.

The modern bourgeois ideology of love must be admitted to be reasonably functional. For the individual, it is a major source of many kinds of security, reassurance, and affection, as well as the major source of more basic satisfactions; for society, it is the principal cement holding the family together in an era when almost all of the ancient economic and productive functions—formerly the source of the family's inner strength—have been transferred to factories, schools, social agencies and the government. Indeed, wherever industrialism is remaking older cultures today, love seems to be moving in this direction. In the Moslem world, in the South Pacific, in Africa, in Latin America, in Japan, the trend is unmistakable; women and love are moving in the general direction they have taken during the past several centuries in Northern Europe and America.

This is not to say that the present love-pattern of Western Europe is ideal. By almost any kind of measurement, it seems to be transitional and undergoing major change, though to what the

transition is leading is far from certain. As to the functionalism of present-day love, the Humanist can see room for a good deal of improvement. In some countries, and in some of the United States, the religious and civil laws of marriage and divorce are still such as to make the dissolution of unhappy or unfulfilling marriages extremely difficult and costly; more than that, the need to lie under oath, in order to win a divorce on false grounds, is a disfunction to areas of social value other than those of love itself.

The trend towards earlier marriage and the increase of the life-span now make it routine for bride and groom to expect to spend fifty years with each other, barring separation or divorce; but it is not so sure an expectation that they will retain sensitive emotional reactions, warm friendship, or sensuous delight in each other all that while, or even a major part of that while. But the answer here is not at all clear. The advocates of extra-marital freedom may be urging a cure for one ill at the cost of producing a number of new ills. No doubt a more generous and less restrictive attitude on the part of husbands and wives alike would permit marriages to continue even though one or both partners had had outside love affairs, but whether this more permissible attitude could really be brought about is uncertain.

Or at least not until society itself provides some new and yet-undiscovered mechanism to embody the values now forced upon love, and to meet the needs it now satisfies. Conceivably some future social order may provide us, on a rational and orderly basis, with emotional reassurance and security, the satisfaction of our sexual drives, the fulfilment of our yearning for companionship and fellowship, and the yearly requirements of our social order for young. If so, love may become once again, as in the past, a frolic and amusement, rather than an earnest and demanding business. I suspect that that time is a long way off.

(To be continued.....) 🌈

Thug Life Raju Z. Moray

When thugs issue threats
Prevent a film's release
They know in this atmosphere
No one will ask them to cease
When cops obey the mobs
Which politicians wish to please

The only hope is the Court..

When a milord takes sides
Cuts the aggrieved to size
Says wrongdoers are right
Petitioner should apologise
Does not bother with the law
Fans fires to sensationalize

To whom does one report?

Mercifully Supreme Milords
Have risen to the occasion
Follow rule of law they say
Suppress inflamed emotion
Courts can't remain helpless
In the face of mounting tension

Initiate action and file report

Increasingly this is happening
Extra judicial methods prevail
The aggrieved seeking Justice
Cannot effective reliefs avail
Milords too easily succumb
Their constitutional duties fail

Glad we still have Apex support.



Raju Z. Moray practices law in Mumbai. For more than 30 years, he has been a contributor of articles and poems to publications of the Lawyers Collective. He is the author of several books including Court Jester (2017), The Locked Down Lawyer (2020) and Tales of Law & Laughter. His new book *DYC: For Better or Verse*, circumscribing the former CJI's legacy, is now available. 🌈

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Sanjay Bansode elected as the 4th Executive President of Maharashtra Andhshraddha Nirmulan Samiti (MANS)

After Martyr Dr. Narendra Dabholakar (upto 2010), Avinash Patil (2010 to 2022) and Madhav Bawage (2022 to 2025), now Sanjay Bansode has been declared elected as the Executive President of MANS (for June 2025 to May 2028), in the Triennial Elections held in May 2025. Names of the successful candidates for the posts of Five State Principal



Sanjay Bansode

Secretaries, Seven General Secretaries, and several Executive Secretaries of various Departments of MANS were also declared elected during the State Level Executive Committee Meeting (Extended) held at Shahada from 30th May to 1st June 2025.

This election was carried out as per the laid down process and practice of electing the Office Bearers by adopting Democratic – Consensual approach, as introduced by Late Dr. Narendra Dabholakar, long back.

Sanjay Bansode has started working for MANS three decades ago as an ordinary Activist. He had a long association with Dr. Dabholakar till 20th August 2013, when Dr. Dabholakar was brutally murdered by the right-wing extremists. He has held various posts at Branch, District and State Level and has worked hard in accordance with the Five Principles (Panch Sootri)

of MANS. Prior to being elected as the Executive President, he was State Principal Secretary of MANS. Madhav Bawage is the seniormost activist of MANS and has worked with Dr. Dabholakar right from the establishment of MANS. Both Bansode and Bawage, new President assured the activists that they will make every effort to expand the work of MANS, so that the exploitative superstitions are abolished and a society with scientific temperament is created. 🌈

Readers' Comments

Hearty congratulations for the cover page; wonderful satire. (**The Radical Humanist**, July 2025)

S.N. Shukla

Dear Sir,

I was overwhelmed on reading Mr. P. A. S. Prasad's article in the June 2025 issue on Mr. M. N. Roy. What a person he was! Having so many qualities like inner strength, calmness, wisdom to face challenges with grace, composure and detachment.

My father late Mr. Ramesh Korde used to tell me about Roy. He had met him in Dehradun twice. He also met Ellen Roy.

Yes, there is no person like Roy and his wife Ellen. He definitely stands tall.

My humble tribute to this greatest of all persons, Roy.

Thanks and Regards
Sudhesh Korde

India salutes its brave son who defended the nation with valour and laid down his life in the line of duty 🙏🇮🇳



Shaheed Abdul Hamid who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty on 1st July 1965

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**“When dicatorship is a fact,
revolution becomes
a right. And sometimes,
laughter is the first blow.”**

– Victor Hugo



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