

# THE RADICAL HUMANIST



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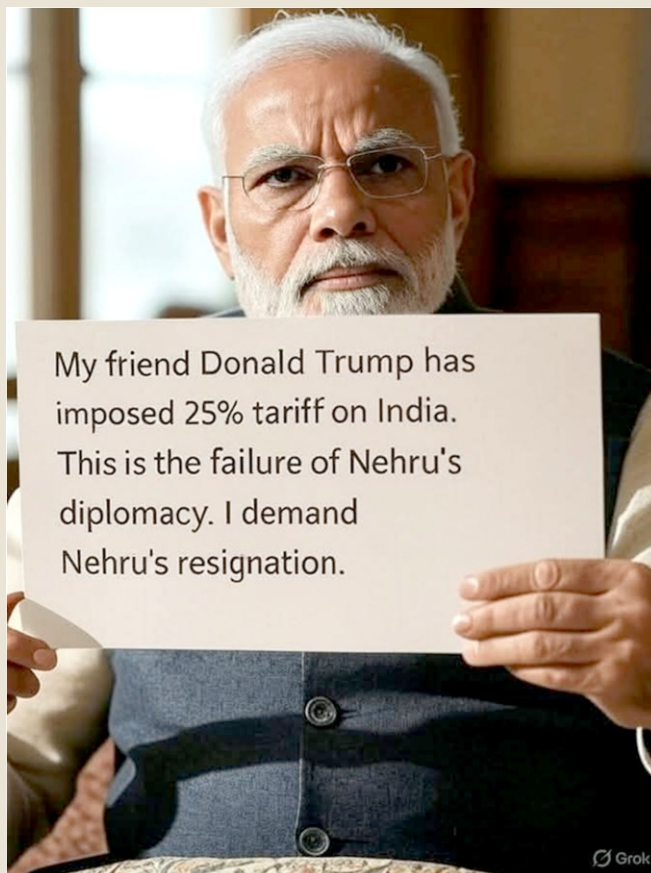
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## The Hypocrisy of Character Personified



666

# ગાંધીવાદ

(જ્ઞાન વિજ્ઞાનની  
પદ્ધતિથી મૂલ્યાંકન)



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અનુવાદ- બીપીન શ્રોફ

# THE RADICAL HUMANIST

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## Edge of disenfranchisement

**Yogendra Yadav, Rahul Shastri**

Here is a simple yet critical question for the ongoing SIR exercise: What proportion of Bihar's adult residents possess at least one of the 11 documents that the Election Commission of India (ECI) asks of them? This is a vital question as this would decide who can become a voter, first in Bihar and then in the rest of the country.

Finally, we have an official, if bizarre, response from the ECI, filed in the Supreme Court as a counter affidavit (ECI-CA). Believe it or not, the ECI submits that the total number of eligibility documents is approximately three times the 7.9 crore potential voters of Bihar.

What, pray, is the basis of this extraordinary claim? Fortunately, the ECI provides a statistical table (ECI-CA: pages 35-39) on each of these documents. While its conclusions are dubious, it does provide some official data otherwise not easily available in the public domain. Here we fact-check the claims made by the EC and revise the initial estimate offered by one of the authors. (Rahul Shastri, *The Hindu Data Point*, August 1, 2025)

The accompanying table analyses ECI-CA claims for each of the documents. Column 2 reports figures claimed by the ECI. Since it has not presented the figures as a proportion of the population, we have done so in brackets against each figure in per cent of the total potential voters. Column 3 presents the actual position based on publicly available statistics, including the ones used by ECI-CA. Figures in Column 3 are presented as the percentage of the eligible electorate of 18-40 years, since this is the segment of the potential electorate whose names may not figure in the Electoral Roll (ER) of 2003 and hence who may be required to submit one of these 11 documents.

The first category of the six documents does not need much comment as these are either

irrelevant or negligible, and in any case, they are not contested. The NRC does not apply to Bihar. Since the requirement for any I-card or document issued by the government, LIC or PSU is that it must have been issued prior to 1987, the ECI admits that it is virtually non-existent. Similarly, since the population of Scheduled Tribes in Bihar is merely 1.3 per cent and there were only 191 applications under the Forest Rights Act, this is negligible. The ECI data is a slight overestimate for government employees' I-cards, as they include pensioners who are not relevant to the 18-40 age group. As for passports, the ECI data may be a small overestimate, as it includes invalid passports of those who have passed away.

The figures quoted by the ECI for matriculation certificates are for irrelevant reference years (1980 to 2025) and need to be restricted to 2001-2023. Thus, our estimate of 2.06 crore is much less than the 2.91 crore claimed by the ECI. However, since the proportion of matriculation is higher among the relevant age group (18-40 years), our estimate of 43.3 per cent is higher than 36.8 per cent for the entire adult population used by the ECI or that of 14 per cent for the entire population used in some other estimates. This may go up a few points if CBSE and ICSE matriculates are added, but that may be balanced by discounting a significant number of permanent migrants in this category.

Let's now turn to the remaining five documents where the ECI-CA makes astronomical claims with scant basis. The claims for permanent residence certificates are in the same breath, titanic, self-contradictory and deluding. In the first sentence, the ECI-CA states, "Permanent residence certificate is not issued in Bihar". Therefore, the relevant number should be zero. Yet in the next sentence, it claims —

without citing any source — that 13.9 crore residence certificates have been issued in Bihar from 2011-25, a number which exceeds Bihar's population. The claim is untenable for another reason: Residence certificates issued in Bihar have a validity of one year, and hence every year, lakhs of people reapply for them.

On the caste certificate, similarly, the ECI makes indefensible claims on the basis of total certificates issued during 2011-25 and not the number of unique persons to whom they have been issued. A person can apply simultaneously for OBC certificate for the state as well as the central government. The latter is valid just for a year. Besides, as caste certificates are mainly used by those aspiring for higher studies or government jobs, there is no reason to believe that the proportion of 18-40 year olds with caste certificates will be half of those with matriculation. The India Household Development Survey II had estimated in 2011-12 that only 16 per cent households had someone with a caste certificate.

The ECI's claim on family registers makes a mountain out of a molehill. There is a valid but small number of 15.8 lakh individuals with Vanshawali certificates issued by the Panchayati Raj department (5.8 lakh in 18-40 age group). To this, the ECI adds 2 crore names contained in the Vikas Register 2.0 of the Bihar Mahadalit Vikas Mission, an internal administrative register to which no individual except government officials have access.

The ECI uses a grossly misleading method of counting all the birth certificates issued between 2001-24, whereas in the same paragraph, it concedes that those born after 2007 are not eligible to be on the electoral rolls of 2025. The correct figure is less than 2 per cent. NFHS-3 reported that just 2.8 per cent of births between 2001-05 had corresponding birth certificates; this proportion is bound to be much smaller for our cohort group (1985-2007), the majority of which was born before 2001.

In the house allotment certificate, the ECI adds

up 1.18 crore beneficiaries of the Pradhan Mantri Aawas Yojanas (Gramin and Urban) and the Indira Aawas Yojana. But these beneficiaries receive a sanction letter and not a house allotment certificate. They do not qualify for the "land/house allocation documents" required under SIR.

What then is the realistic overall number of persons who may have at least one of the 11 documents? We must remember that the figures given in the third column are not additive but overlapping; there is a negligible proportion of those who are government employees or have passports or have birth certificates but are not amongst the 43.3 per cent who are matriculates. Of those in the table who may not be matriculates are only the landless allotted land by the government (1.2 per cent) and those included in the family registers (1.2 per cent). Hence, the proportion of individuals in the 18-40 age group with eligibility documents is estimated to be around 45.7 per cent (43.3 per cent + 1.2 per cent + 1.2 per cent) plus some exceptions like a small proportion of those who possess caste certificates but are not matriculates. Let us round it off, on the upper end, to 50 per cent.

The conclusion is stark: If the ECI strictly adheres to its arbitrary decision of asking for one of the 11 documents specified in its ("indicative but not exhaustive") list, at least 50 per cent of those whose names do not figure in the Electoral Rolls of 2003 may face deletion from the voters' list. As per the latest estimate (based on unofficial data from two districts), the ECI has been able to locate less than one-third of the electors on the 2003 rolls. Thus, the remaining two-thirds, 4.8 crore, would be asked for documents. Unless the Supreme Court intervenes and the ECI is made to modify or relax this requirement, 2.4 crore of the 7.24 crore electors on the current Draft Electoral Rolls face a loss of voting rights. This would be the largest disenfranchisement ever recorded in the history of any electoral democracy.

Courtesy **The Indian Express**,  
12 August 2025. 

# ***‘How to steal an election?’:***

## **Rahul Gandhi claims 2024 Maharashtra polls ‘blueprint’ for rigging**

He warned that the “match-fixing” of Maharashtra would come to Bihar next, where the polls are due later this year, and then “anywhere” the BJP was losing elections.

Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Saturday alleged that the Maharashtra Assembly elections had been “rigged” to favour the BJP and warned that the “same tactics could be repeated” in the upcoming Bihar assembly polls. The Congress leader once again questioned the conduct of the 2024 Maharashtra polls, in what is arguably his most direct attack yet on the electoral process under the Modi government. In a post on X, Rahul shared his opinion piece published in a newspaper, writing “How to steal an election?”, describing the Maharashtra polls as “a blueprint for rigging democracy” and outlining, step by step, how he claims it was done. In his post, the LoP outlined what he claimed was a systematic five-step process used to manipulate the Maharashtra Assembly election results.

“My article shows how this happened, step by step,” he wrote in his post, before listing: “Step 1: Rig the panel for appointing the Election Commission; Step 2: Add fake voters to the roll; Step 3: Inflate voter turnout; Step 4: Target the bogus voting exactly where BJP needs to win; Step 5: Hide the evidence.”

He likened the alleged rigging to “match-fixing,” arguing that while “the side that cheats might win the game,” such actions “damage institutions and destroy public faith in the result.”

“It’s not hard to see why the BJP was so desperate in Maharashtra. But rigging is like match-fixing - the side that cheats might win the game but will damage institutions and destroy public faith in the result. All concerned

Indians must see the evidence. Judge for themselves. Demand answers,” the Lok Sabha LoP said.

Rahul warned that the “match-fixing” of Maharashtra would come to Bihar next, where the polls are due later this year, and then “anywhere” the BJP was losing elections.

“Match-fixed elections are a poison for any democracy,” he added.

Notably, the 2024 Maharashtra Assembly election delivered a sweeping victory for the BJP-led Mahayuti alliance, which secured 235 seats. The saffron party emerged as the single-largest party with 132 seats, while alliance partners Shiv Sena and the NCP won 57 and 41 seats respectively, consolidating Mahayuti’s dominance in the state. The opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) suffered a major blow, with the Congress securing just 16 seats, while its allies Shiv Sena (UBT) and the NCP (SP) won 20 and 10 seats respectively.

Following concerns raised by the Congress over voter turnout data, the Election Commission of India (ECI) issued a detailed clarification, explaining the aggregation process used during the election. In a letter to the Congress, the ECI had claimed the increase in reported turnout between 5 pm and 11:45 pm was part of standard aggregation procedures. It noted that any discrepancies between votes polled and votes counted were minor and without consequence. The poll body had also asserted that actual voter turnout figures could not be altered and said no such irregularities occurred in response to allegations of arbitrary additions or deletions in electoral rolls.

Courtesy **The Indian Express**, 07 Jun 2025. 

# Malegaon Blast Judgement: Crime and (No) Punishment

The long-awaited verdict on the Malegaon blast of 2008 was delivered by a special court in Mumbai. The judgement has acquitted all seven accused in the Malegaon blasts case, which came as a blow to the victims and celebrations to the Hindutva camp. Many were anticipating this type of verdict and it was no surprise to them as during the period of last 17 years the investigating agencies did change the track, particularly after 2014. The blast was carried by a group which used a motorcycle. The RDX used in the bomb blew up at a time when the gathering of Muslims was there and killed six people and injured over one hundred people. This happened in the month of Ramadan. Former BJP MP from Bhopal Pragya Singh Thakur, the serving army officer Lt. Colonel Prasad Shrikant Purohit, Retd Major Ramesh Upadhyay were among the seven accused who were named arrested.



Initially the Malegaon blasts case was with the Maharashtra Anti-terrorism squad. Later National Investigation Agency took it over in 2011. The court observed that there is a strong suspicion about the accused being involved but prosecution has not been able to prove it beyond doubt, so all the accused are acquitted. There was a strong appreciation of the judgment from Hindu Right, they also accused the Congress for setting the narrative for

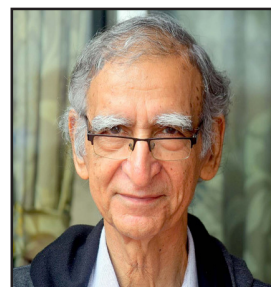
saffron terror the result of which was this accusation of various people from the right wing.

There are some points of the trajectory of investigation which need to be kept in

mind while making an opinion on this. Hemant Karkare, who investigated the case, began with the Motor Cycle of Sadhvi Pragya Thakur, an Ex ABVP-activist. The trail led to these accused and they were arrested.

One of the early blasts in the area was the one which happened in Nanded in April 2006. In the house of Rajkondawar, a bomb exploded. The reason was that in the house a bomb was being assembled and due to some mishandling, it exploded. The incident was investigated by a Citizens inquiry team under the leadership Ex Rashtra Seva Dal President, Dr. Suresh Khairnar. Two youths, Himanshu Panse (27) and Naresh Rajkondwar (26), died on the spot and three, Yogesh Deshpande (24), Maruti Wagh (23) and Gururaj Tuptewar (25), were badly injured. The flag of Bajrang Dal was flying over the house. At the site, fake beard and moustache and pajama Kurta were also seen.

Around this time some explosions also took place in Parbhani, Panvel and Jalna. In case of Malegaon 2008 blast as Karkare was doing meticulous investigation and arresting the accused, the ally of BJP, the united Shiv Sena Chief Bal Thackeray in his paper Saamana wrote that, 'we spit on Karkare' for his anti-Hindu activity. Lal Krishna Advani, the then leader of opposition said that the accused are



**Ram Puniyani**

being tortured.

In the 26/11 2008 Mumbai terror attack, Hemant Karkare was killed, after which Narendra Modi who was then Chief Minister of Gujarat rushed to Mumbai with a cheque of one Crore to Karkare's widow, who politely declined to accept it. Same Modi had called Karkare as doing things against national interests as he had arrested Pragya Thakur and company, now Karkare started being presented as a martyr after he was killed. As he was investigating this; due to such comments coming from different Hindutva quarters, he went to Julio Ribbeiro, his peer, an upright professional. Mr. Ribeiro appreciated his forthright work and asked him to continue his work in a professional manner.

After the tragic death of Karkare, Pragya Thakur had her own version of the story. Applauded by leaders of the BJP who surrounded her during a press-conference..., Thakur described Karkare as "anti-national" and "dharamvirudh" (anti-religion). "You won't believe but I said, 'tera sarvanash hoga' [You will be destroyed]," she said. "Just after sawa mahina [one and a quarter months], terrorists killed him."

In the other cases of terror blasts (Ajmer, Mecca Masjid and Samjhauta Express) Swami Aseemanand was arrested. After his arrest he confessed to his crimes in front of a metropolitan Magistrate. The confession was voluntary and was recorded under Section 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code before Metropolitan Magistrate at Tis Hazari courts on December 18. Swami's statement was recorded after 48 hours of judicial custody, to ensure that no sort of pressure or intimidation is working on the mind of the confessor. In this statement he confessed that he and other Hindu activists were involved in bombings at Muslim religious places because they wanted to answer every Islamist terror act with "a bomb for bomb" policy.

A bit later he retracted the statement saying that this was given under coercion. It came as a lot of surprise as one knows that the statements given in front of police authorities can be under pressure or coercion but in front of a judge it is another matter. His 48 hours judicial custody was a time enough to consider all aspects of the issues involved. It seems more of a turning around, an afterthought to protect his associates and the parent organization. Swami, after accepting the legal assistance; retracted the statement.

These confessions were published in Caravan and a lot of turmoil was created. Immediately Swami went on to retract the content of the interviews he gave to the reporter of Caravan. The reporter and the editor of Magazine have stood by their version and have also released the parts of the audio tapes to authenticate the interview's contents. This Caravan story not only reconfirmed most of what Swami had confessed in the Court but added other dimensions also. Caravan report points out (The Believer: Swami Aseemanand's radical service to the Sangh, by LEENA GITA REGHUNATH | 1 February 2014, Caravan Magazine, <http://www.caravanmagazine.in/reportage/believer>).

The other major verdict in recent times was that related to train blasts in Mumbai. In this the Muslim accused were released, declared non guilty and the Government immediately appealed against judgement. In the Nanded judgement case there is a wide celebration in the right-wing camp and no talk of appealing against it by the Government. Interestingly just before the date of judgement Home Minister Amit Shah declared that a Hindu can never be a terrorist, thereby associating terrorism to religion. He deliberately forgot Godse (Mahatma's Killer), Dhanu (Rajiv Gandhi's killer) and so many other terrorists whose religion is Hindu. But surely terrorism has nothing to do with any religion. 🌈

# If Hindus Can't Be Terrorists, Was Godse Not a Hindu?

Badri Raina

*The ideological position that Hindus cannot be terrorists falls flat in the face of several other historical examples.*



Malegaon blast accused Sadhvi Pragya Thakur. Photo: PTI

On July 21, the Bombay high court acquitted all 12 men accused in the Bombay pressure cooker blasts of 2006. All the accused were Muslims. Within two days of that verdict, the Maharashtra government chose to appeal to the Supreme Court against the acquittal of the twelve men – saying that that the judgement could impact other Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) cases. The top court passed a partial stay on the Bombay high court verdict.

Some ten days later, an NIA court acquitted Lt.Colonel Purohit and Sadhvi Pragya Thakur in the 2008 Malegaon blast case, in which seven people were killed and over a hundred wounded.

Within hours, a spokesperson of the Bharatiya Janata Party held a press briefing, hailing the Bombay high court verdict and lambasting the Congress for floating the notion of "saffron terror."

Clearly, where the verdict in the matter of the 2006 blasts was looked upon by the BJP as a temporary event, reversible by the Supreme

Court, the other verdict pertaining to the Malegaon blasts is sought to be stamped with finality.

The reason for this discordance is not a legal one, since a legal argument cannot uphold the view that one verdict is medial and the other final because such a view may suit an interested party. The reason lies in the ideological position that Hindus cannot be terrorists and that it is Islam alone that is prone to such shenanigans.

Thus, we must understand that Nathu Ram Godse was not a Hindu; that the LTTE in Sri Lanka, who invented the suicide bomber, were not Hindus; that Maoists, whom the right wing never tires of calling terrorists, are not Hindus; that Sikhs, whom Hindutva ideologues consider Hindus, could not be terrorists even if the Khalistan movement saw rampant terrorism.

Not to mention that many freedom fighters during the colonial rule, several of whom were Hindus, engaged in violent activities against the British and were called terrorists by the colonial oppressors.

( To be Contd.....on Page -20)

# Accused to acquitted, but their trial isn't over

Himanshi Dhawan

*19 years on, 12 men have been freed in the 2006 train blasts case. Sunday Times examines how harsh anti-terror laws upend lives, even after a 'not guilty' verdict*



In Sept 2012, when Mohammad Irfan Gaus was arrested by the Maharashtra ATS in the Nanded arms haul case, he ran a modest inverter battery business and had been married for just six months. It took him seven years to get bail and nine to be acquitted by a special National Investigation Agency court in June 2021. Ironically, the three men found guilty in the Nanded arms case were sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment. In the eyes of the law, the difference between the innocent and the guilty was just a year.

The years of incarceration have left Gaus, now 36 years old and currently unemployed, broke and broken. "We were never rich, but the earnings of my small business were enough for us to get by. After the arrest, my family spent all the savings, sold their belongings, and borrowed from relatives to fight the court case," he says.

For those who fight for years to clear their names, even a 'not guilty' verdict can't erase the trauma they endure. As Gaus says, "I have been cleared of all charges but *who waqtto wapas aane wala nahi hai* (the time I have lost will not come back)".

That lost time won't return either for the 12 men acquitted this week in the 2006 Mumbai train blasts case after a punishing legal battle that stretched over 19 years. The Bombay HC order has been challenged in the Supreme Court but their verdict has once again spotlighted how those accused under stringent anti-terror laws – such as the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), and Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) – often spend years behind bars, battling ill health, prejudice, financial hardships before justice is finally served. Some die waiting for it.

Manisha Sethi, academic and author of 'Kafkaland: Law, Prejudice and Counterterrorism in India', says that in effect, these laws work as preventive detention. "Used to criminalise certain communities, these laws don't just feed on prejudice but also fuel it", she says. The impact goes beyond prison time: families are left to deal with stigma, loss of income, and long-term social fallout that can push entire families into poverty. Take Faheem Ansari, who was acquitted in the 26/11 terror attack case after a decade. In Feb this year, he

was forced to move the Bombay HC seeking a police clearance certificate so that he could drive an auto rickshaw for a living. Despite the acquittal, the certificate was being denied because he had once been accused of having links to a terrorist group.

The sole earning member of his family, Gaus has been unable to find a job or restart his business since his release. “No one wants to give me a loan or have anything to do with me. Neighbours and friends keep their distance.”

Lawyer and Indian Civil Liberties Union (ICLU) founder Anas Tanwir says that just like the recent acquittals in the 2006 Mumbai train blast case, court have acquitted several of the accused in some high-profile terror cases in the past – including the Sabarmati Express case and Akshardham temple blast case of 2002 – citing serious loopholes in police investigations. “Time and time again, the state has failed to prove its case due to flawed probes that lay the blame on Muslim youth while the real perpetrators continue to be at large. There must be accountability at the very least.” While the National Crime Records Bureau reported a 17.9% increase in UAPA cases in 2022 compared to the previous years, govt data showed that conviction rate stood at just 18% in UAPA cases in 2022, down from 27% in 2018.

Rights activists say that anti-terror laws are distinct from others because the burden of proof shifts to the accused, Tanwir says, “Bail in anti-terror laws has been made difficult but the burden should be on the police to establish a strong case before arresting people.”

In March 2021, as many as 122 people were acquitted by a chief judicial magistrate court in Surat which found no evidence to link them with the banned outfit Students’ Islamic Movement of India (SIMI). They had been arrested under UAPA 19 years earlier. Among them was Mohammad Ahmed Hai, a professor of economics and business studies, who had travelled from Jodhpur to Surat to attend a three-

day seminar on Muslim education. Hai did get bail after 14 months but had to spend the next decade not just appearing before the local police station every week, but travelling to Surat – over 700 km – for the court hearings every fortnight. “There were many people with me in prison who were also innocent. My father passed away in 2002, grieving for me. When you suffer like this, words like ‘human rights violations’ and ‘dignity of life’ appear meaningless,” he says.

Former Delhi University professor, GN Saibaba, who was also charged under UAPA and imprisoned for a decade, passed away just a few months after he was acquitted in 2024. His wife Vasantha says that the long incarceration, denial of medical care and solitary confinement left him with a paralysed left arm and multiple chronic conditions that took a severe toll. “Laws like UAPA are used to torture human rights activists. Such laws should be abolished,” she says.

Sethi says standards of investigation need to improve. “Prejudice has become part of the investigation and even worse, it’s accepted as such,” she says.

Former Supreme Court judge Justice Madan Lokur says that the Bombay blast acquittals call for not just a serious rethink, but action. “We have to speed up the justice delivery system. Cases cannot remain pending for decades. For future cases, we have to ensure scientific investigations, and use of forensics within a reasonable period of time.” He also called for the introduction of accountability jurisprudence.

Last week, the Supreme Court advised the legislature to consider a law that would compensate victims of long periods of incarceration, but for now, those wrongfully jailed must file a tort or civil suit to claim any damages from the state. “After such a long trial period, who will want to go back to court,” asks Tanvir.

Courtesy **The Times of India**, Jul 26, 2025. 

# Report on the terrorist incidents in Nanded on April 6, 2006, and in Nagpur on June 1, 2006

**Dr. Suresh Khairnar**

Friends, this report is from 19 years ago, and I have managed to retrieve it with great difficulty today. This is because, after Union Home Minister Amit Shah stated in the Lok Sabha on July 31 that all accused in the Malegaon bomb blast case were released due to lack of evidence and remarked that no Hindu can be a terrorist, and a similar statement was made by Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, I, with the help of some colleagues, prepared a report investigating the terrorist incidents in Nanded on April 6, 2006, and in Nagpur on June 1, 2006. I am presenting this report to all readers, leaving it to your discretion, with a humble request that you all decide how the problem of terrorism can be resolved.

## **The true culprits**

A bomb blast unearths a bomb-manufacturing centre at the home of a prominent RSS activist in Nanded, Maharashtra. A fact-finding report by the Secular Citizen's Forum and PUCL, Nagpur On Thursday, April 6, a powerful explosion took place in the middle class Patbandhare Nagar locality of Taroda gram panchayat in Nanded at the residence of LG Rajkondwar, a retired executive engineer of the irrigation department. The explosion was so severe that people in a two-kilometre vicinity came out of their homes fearing an earthquake.

Two youth, Himanshu Panse (27) and Naresh Rajkondwar (26), died on the spot and three, Yogesh Deshpande (24), Maruti Wagh (23) and Gururaj Tuptewar (25), were badly injured. The body of one of the deceased, Himanshu Panse, was blown into pieces while another, Naresh Rajkondwar, had a massive hole in his chest. Only the concrete structure of the house was left intact, everything else in the house was destroyed.

To the utter disbelief of residents, the police said that one of those killed in the blast used to sell 'crackers' during Diwali, he had stored them in his bedroom, and since he was alone at home he had invited his friends over... One of them threw a cigarette, the 'crackers' caught fire and blasted in a single explosion without leaving a single piece of paper or other remnants of the 'crackers' at the site!

Nanded's police superintendent, Fattesinh Patil repeatedly narrated this story before the media and categorically denied the chances of any bomb or terrorist activity. Some newspapers however raised doubts about it.

In the meantime it became clear beyond any doubt that the killed and injured youth were activists of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), Bajrang Dal and RSS. Leaders of these outfits visited the hospitals to see the injured and issued condolence statements; they said that the men were active workers of their organisations and their deaths were a great loss to them. They participated in the funerals of the dead. Later, prant sanghchhalak of the RSS, Anna Gosavi confessed that the accused were affiliated to the RSS.

## **Bomb-making centre**

The next day when along with the SP and other senior police officials, press reporters, a few politicians and many from the general public the police was searching the house, it found a live IED (Improvised Explosive Device) bomb. The same day, special inspector general of police, Suryapratap Gupta called a press conference and declared that it was really a bomb blast. The youth were trying to fabricate the pipe bomb and due to erroneous handling of a remote control device the explosion took place.

The police carried out raids on the residences

of the other killed and injured youth. During the raids a diary was found that reportedly contained bomb fabrication techniques. Reportedly, police also found fake beards and moustaches. They were probably meant to mislead the police that the bombs were being made and exploded by people of a particular community. (This is significant in view of the fact that there had been tension between Muslims and Sikhs in Nanded in the weeks preceding the accidental blast.) It was also found that one of the injured, Maruti Wagh, had earlier tried to set a Navratri mandap ablaze with the same intention of creating communal tension.

On April 11, special IG police, Suryapratap Gupta disclosed that a bomb-manufacturing centre (bomb nirmiti kendra) had been operational at Rajkondwar's house. He said this centre had been functioning for quite some time. He said one of the injured had categorically confessed to having made many such bombs earlier. Gupta said he was waiting for the recovery of the others injured, as they could disclose useful information about the centre.

The police suspect that previous blasts that took place on the eve of jumma prayers in the masjids of Parbhani (April 25, 2003, injured 25) and neighbouring Purna and Jalna (August 21, 2004, injured 18) were initiated from this centre itself.

#### **Role of the police**

The role of the police in the entire episode is surprising and depicts the bias and one-sidedness of the forces. It first fabricated a ridiculous story that nobody would ever believe. The big question is why an officer of the rank of superintendent of police so bluntly tried to misguide the media and the public. It was only after a live bomb was found that special IG, Gupta declared that it was a bomb blast.

The charges against the accused are trivial when compared to the gravity of the offence. First, they were booked under sections 286, 304(A), 337 and 338 of the IPC. Later, section

120(B) was also added. Although the IG has declared that the accused were running a permanent bomb-manufacturing centre in the city, nobody was booked under MCOCA. The people arrested comprise those who were injured and their relatives and friends. So far the police have been unable to arrest the people who financed and backed the bomb-manufacturing centre.

It is beyond any doubt that the accused were, till their death, actively working for the RSS and Bajrang Dal, and leaders of the said organisations were on close terms with the accused. This implies that they could not have been ignorant of a permanent bomb-manufacturing centre being operated from the home of one of their active workers who is now dead. Despite this clear indication, the police have not taken any action against the said organisations and their leaders. It has raised serious questions about not only the working and efficiency of the police but also the integrity and professionalism of the officials concerned.

#### **Role of political organisations**

Even after the police detected a live bomb in the presence of several media persons and the general public, the Shiv Sena continued to maintain that it was not a bomb blast at all. It was only a 'cracker' blast! The BJP MP from Nanded, DB Patil issued threats to the police day and night. The political pressure that he exerted on the administration is among the major factors responsible for the slow movement and inaction of the police. How great an irony it is that at a time when BJP leaders were engaged in a 'Suraksha Yatra' their own MP came out as the biggest supporter of bomb manufacturers and exploders.

The role of the Congress has also been dubious. No minister has visited the place so far. Even the minister from the city, Ashok Chawan, seems to have forgotten his hometown. Some party corporators have demanded that action be taken under MCOCA

but even they could only submit their memorandum to the IG-police. The CPM demanded the invoking of MCOCA, ordering of a CBI enquiry and identifying the all-India network that supported the bomb-manufacturing centre at Nanded.

### **Role of the media**

The mainstream media indulged in criminal negligence. People even suspect a nexus here. The media overlooked the existence of a bomb-manufacturing centre as if it was a purely local incident with no news value outside Nanded. No leading English newspaper has given the event any coverage. The same is the case with the electronic media, which has either totally ignored the story or given it negligible late coverage. Local residents have even called up several news channels and written letters to newspapers. But as of now the mainstream media seems determined to conceal these events from people outside the Marathwada region.

### **What should be done?**

1. Immediate restructuring of the trial by invoking MCOCA against the accused. Not invoking MCOCA will create serious suspicions about the intentions of the police. It will strengthen the perception that MCOCA and other stringent laws are not meant to check terrorism or organised crimes but exist only to harass the minority community and to settle scores.
2. Raiding the suspected organisations and arresting their leaders and finding out the nationwide support base and network of the Nanded centre. A centre of that magnitude, involving such hi-tech bomb-making technology, could not function in isolation.
3. Enquiring into the existence of other such centres throughout the country.
4. Conducting fresh enquiries into other earlier terrorist acts, especially in

Maharashtra, to find out whether they were part of a communal conspiracy.

5. A CBI enquiry becomes necessary in the backdrop of the utter failure of the state police and intelligence in locating the bomb centre before the accidental blast.
6. Pressurising media organisations to print and broadcast details of the events so as to make the people of India aware of the real terrorists.

### **May 3, 2006**

(The above is based on the report of a fact-finding team comprising Dr Suresh Khairnar, Ahmad Kadar and Arvind Ghosh, Secular Citizen's Forum & PUCL, Nagpur.)

### **Fact Finding Report on the June 01, 2006 - Attack on RSS Head Quarters**

**Introduction:** The nation awoke on June 01, 2006 hearing the shocking news of an attempted attack on the RSS headquarters building. It was a respite that the news of police foiling the attempt too came along.

The news of attempted attack on the Head Quarters of the RSS reportedly by 'Fidayeen', Pak based terrorist group, sent a spine chilling fear in the minds of millions of peace loving people in the country. We all know very well, the potential of such a happening to ignite a trail of tragic clashes among the communities. The peace loving masses heaved a sigh of relief as the leaders of every community promptly condemned the heinous act and appealed to the masses to maintain peace, and peace did prevail.

In the next twenty four hours quite a lot of information, almost all the information pertain to the attackers had been published obviously supplied by the police department to the media. The narrative of the whole encounter as reported on June 02, 2006, in stead of clearing the mystery of the attackers, unfortunately confounded the citizens all the more. The reports were conflicting and leaving innumerable questions on ground zero situation unanswered.

The foiled attempt and the appreciable

tranquility maintained by the masses were a great relief. However the deadly weapon and ammunition with which the 'fidayeen' (as told by the Commissioner of Police) appeared, and the ease with which the police claim to have liquidated them, suggested that the Police team had a 'cake walk' over the deadly terrorists.

The very next day a section of the media aired their doubt over the whole happening (as reported by the Police Commissioner), most of them quoting wide sections of the national community, including senior leaders.

The peace loving social activists and campaigners for communal harmony based in Nagpur were at first relieved by the success of the police over terrorist. However the confounding report appeared in the media and the doubts aired by masses and leaders prompted them to read between the lines. Particularly, the 'Islamic' terrorist attempting to attack RSS Head Quarters has a larger implication. It has the potential to push the nation into a communal strife. Such a thing should not be allowed to happen in any manner, orchestrated by any group. The confounding report of the 'encounter' therefore requires an honest study.

The above stated social organizations, hence constituted a Fact Finding Team comprised of the above mentioned activists. The team is headed by Mr B G Kolse Patil, retired Judge of Mumbai High Court, and Convened by Dr Suresh Khairnar, a renowned social thinker.

The team visited the site of the encounter, spoke to the people residing in the vicinity. The team also visited the RSS Head Quarters and met Mr Shirish Wate, the HQ incharge. The team went to Government Medical College to meet the Doctors who carried out the postmortem. Dr Dhavane, who was present gave elementary information and declined to give any detail. The team spoke to Dr Vibhawari Dani, Dean, Govt Medical Hospital and College. The Dean also declined to talk over the postmortem report. It was a classified document,

she said. The team repeatedly sought an appointment with the Commissioner of Police. The CP too declined to meet the team. On the contrary the CP asked the respectable members their credentials, who funded the team, what international connection does the team have and similar questions, with apparent intention to intimidate the team from their earnest effort to help the society to know the truth.

**Incident:** as reported by Mr S P S Yadav, the Commissioner of Police, Nagpur

The Special squad of the City police who were on high alert following specific input from intelligence agency spotted a white Ambassador car moving in a suspicious manner in Lakdi Pul in Mahal area and started tailing it. Two cars, a Tata Sumo and a Qualis were used in the operation. The tailing cars were unmarked and all police personnel in it were wearing plain clothes.

When the ambassador car with red beacon atop moved towards RSS Head Quarters, one for the constables in the Tata Sumo casually asked the young occupants about their intentions. Rattled by the enquiry the militants opened fire on the police vehicle even as they tried to get away. In the process they dashed into the barricade near the eastern side of the RSS HQ. The alert cops led by PSI Rajendra Tiwari, PSI Arvind Saraf and PSI JA More replied to the Gunfire. It was their bulletproof jackets that saved police personnel. The terrorists also threw a hand grenade on the police party. But it failed to explode. They threw the grenade without pulling out the pin.

The gun battle lasted about 20 minutes in which the militants fired 76 rounds while the cops retaliated with 63 rounds. The terrorists had three AK-M automatic weapons, 12 hand grenades and 5.6 Kgs of highly explosive materials with them. They also had three spare magazines for their fire arms each carrying 30 rounds. They had hundred and twenty rounds each, said Mr. S.P.S. Yadav

Mr. Yadav also reported to have said, looking at their preparation and determination to storm RSS HQ at any cost despite heavy police deployment, indicates that it was a 'fidayeen' attack. Refusing to divulge the exact identity of the three militants, who were in the age group of 20-22 years, Mr Yadav described them as 'Islamic militants.' At this point of time, he added, it is too premature to associate them with any outfit.

### **The Media Report**

As per the details received from the police a white Ambassador car MH 20-8979 with a red beacon and three persons on board dressed as police sub-inspectors, was first spotted by the patrolling police party at the central avenue some time before the incident. The car was heading towards Badkas Chowk. As it emerged from Chitaroli, two police vehicles, a Tata Sumo carrying two PSI and five constables and a Toyota Qualis with 5 PSI got suspicious about the car. The police vehicles hastened the chase of the suspicious ambassador car. At Badkas chowk the ambassador car took a left turn towards Junta chowk and again turned right towards the Sangh building from the Lakdipul side. Presuming the car might have gone towards Ayachit mandir the police stopped the chase for a while. However when the police jeep came back to the same place during their routine patrol, they noticed the same car in a small alley between Lakdipul and Gajanand Mandir towards the eastern gate of the RSS Head Quarters. The Police vans then closed in on the ambassador car. However, without paying heed to the police patrol the car tried to force its way through the temporary barricade erected 50 meters before the main entrance of the RSS HQ.

At this juncture the PSI Tiwari intercepted the ambassador car and enquired as to where it was heading. Instantly thereafter the two ultras who were seated on the rear seats came out of the car with a grenade in their left hand and

AK56 rifle in the right hand. One of them lobbed the grenade at the police, but since the pin was not fully removed it failed to explode. Seeing this the ultras opened indiscriminate fire at the police party. In the melee PSI Saraf who just alighted from the police vehicle got hit at his abdomen. However, since he was wearing a bullet proof vest the bullet did not pierce his body.

Soon after this police force and the ultras started exchanging fire in which two of the three militants were killed on the spot. The driver of the car then tried to flee towards the Bhauji Daftari School. However he could not escape the bullets from the police and he too was killed on the spot. The entire shoot out went on for just around 15 minutes between 4.00 and 4.15 AM. The police then informed the control room and the commissioner of Police about the shoot out. The senior police officers immediately reached the spot and shifted the three ultras to the government medical college where they were declared brought dead. The members of Dautkani family along with other neighbours woke up at the sound of the firing and one of his family members opened the door of their house to peep outside. However alert cops told the family members to shut the door and remain inside the house only. It was to prevent the terrorist from taking shelter in the Dautkani house and taking them as hostages. The operation was carried out by the city police successfully without any loss of life other than that of the militants.

The press reported on the 2nd June that, all the three terrorists are said to be Pak nationals. Two of them hailed from Lahore and the third from Gujrangwala. The police had seized from the place a diary which contained email address in Urdu, a few phone numbers of Lohare and Gujrangwala. Rs 45,000 and maps of the city were recovered from the terrorist. The names of three terrorists are said to be Afsal Ahmed Bhat, Bailal Ahmed Bhat and Mohammed

Usman Habib.

Loksatta (Indian Express Group) Nagpur Marathi edition, dated June 03 2006 carried an article containing the following detail. 'Normally the attacks by the terrorists are preplanned meticulously and they seldom fail in their attempt. This being the public opinion, the recent futile attempt by the terrorist on RSS building and the success gained by the police in thwarting the attempt creates suspicion in public mind as well as among RSS people and their rivals. Though normally terrorists claim the responsibility of the attack, no terrorist group has claimed any responsibility to this attempt. Therefore the question arises, whether they were hardcore Islamic terrorist or just any other new comers. According to police statement, threat of attack on RSS head quarters loomed large for the last one year and there was security cordon around the building. Yet the attackers seemed to have no idea of any of them, neither did they seem to know the roads leading to RSS building. And no map of the building and its surrounding could be found with them. During the whole encounter with the police the terrorists got only one chance to lob a grenade and that too did not explode. Not a single policeman was injured by the bullets of the attackers, put a question mark on the ability of the terrorists. The attackers could bring a car load of guns and bullets, hand grenades, powerful explosives like RDX from places thousands of kilometers away without being detected or checked by any police or civic authorities, is a matter of surprise even in the RSS circle. The RSS which usually take such attack on them seriously and go for nationwide protest, unusually kept extraordinary silence and the morning Shaka at the Head Quarters went on with more people attending it. It was a surprise even among the cadres of RSS. This also has created among their functionaries doubt over the bona fide of the attackers. However, they speak in a low voice.

Mahanayak, a Marathi newspaper from

Mumbai, published a title page news from its special correspondent from Nagpur, with the caption: "Mahanayak's Special Story on the Attack on RSS Head Quarters." The news goes like this: There is a talk among the Nagpur police that, of the 11 police who conducted the encounter, 6 police did not even know how to handle a carbine. Some of them were under demotion on account of departmental disciplinary action, and they were given this 'chance' to prove their 'worthiness.' Sources close to the police circle say, none of the eleven cops had special Commando training. The authorities punished two of them, for they extorted from a 'gutka' merchant a huge amount (Rs 3.5 lakhs) five months ago, in the Panchpoli police station area. At the orders of the CP they were shifted to another 'punishment' section. Police inner circle is surprised at the composition of the squad for most of them do not know to handle guns properly. The reporter gives details of many indisciplines of the eleven police personals and wonders how and on what basis they were selected for Special Squad to handle such an important assignment in the RSS HQ.

#### **Observations**

1. When the police had prior information about possible attack on RSS Head Quarters and the police were prepared, as stated by the Commissioner of Police (CP), to handle possible attack, why did they allow the attackers to go close to the RSS HQ? Why did the Police not stop them at first sight?
2. We hear from the residents, that the police had a kind of rehearsal to the 'encounter' few days back on the same spot. Police even fired on air on the occasion, they claim. And when the actual encounter took place, these residents said, they first thought that it was yet another demonstration. Why did the police take a demo few days ago?

3. The CP has said, “when the ambassador car with red beacon atop moved towards RSS HQ, one of the constables in the Tata Sumo casually asked the young occupants about their intentions. Rattled by the inquiry the militants opened fire on the police vehicle even as they tried to get away.” For the constable to ask casually, either he must have brought his car (the police vehicle) side by side to the terrorist vehicle or he (the constable) came by foot close to terrorist vehicle (and asked them). In either case the constable must have been exposed to the terrorist attack at close quarter. How did the constable escape unhurt? The narration of the incident doesn’t have any detail to clarify this.
4. There is no eyewitness to the whole happening. The encounter took place according to the police at
  4. 15 AM. The bodies of the assailants were removed even before the press reporters (who were the first people other than the Police), reached the spot, close to 5.00 AM. Why this hurry?
  5. Day one media report says, Deputy Commissioner Mr Prabhat Kumar was in the patrolling team and he smelled foul and started tailing it in their unmarked blue Tata Sumo. Why did the CP not bring him (Mr P Kumar) in his (CP) narration of the encounter? Why did CP hide the DCP?
  6. Another report says that the patrolling police that tailed the ambassador at one point “presumed the car might have gone towards Ayachit mandir the police stopped the chase for a while. However when the police jeep came back to the same place during their routine patrol, they noticed the same car in a small alley between Lakdipul and Gajanand Mandir towards the eastern gate of the RSS Head Quarters. As the point where the police missed the ambassador car and the place where they saw them again are the same small alley, do the police mean to say that the attackers were waiting over there until then?
7. It is said that the attackers’ car tried to force its way through the barricade. The said barricade was installed a couple of weeks before June 01 2006, in the aftermath of weapon seizure from antisocial elements in the State. When the attackers came where were the sentries posted at the barricade? They must have been the first one to stop the terrorists or get attacked by the terrorists. Where were they?
8. The exchange of fire took place for twenty minutes, it was reported. Can anyone explain how the police disabled the terrorists from using the dozen hand grenades and the 360 rounds of bullets?
9. That the terrorists had 12 hand grenade, 360 rounds of bullets, 5.6 Kgs of highly explosive material which was later stated to be RDX, and they battled for twenty minutes ‘hopelessly’ not using any of them, is a narration that fails to convince common sense.
10. It was reported that the police recovered from the terrorists’ vehicle a sealed case containing 12 hand grenades. The terrorists coming on a deadly mission carrying their munitions in sealed cases does not comply the logic of terrorist attack. They did not even open them when they were fighting for 20 minutes in a losing battle makes the narration all the more unconvincing.
11. That the terrorists, reported to be ‘fidayeen’ who chose to travel on white ambassador car with red beacon atop, not knowing what is the official protocol but chose to wear PSI dress, does not

- comply with the statement of the CP that the terrorists were a trained fidayeen.
12. The reported information that the police recovered wet underwear and soaked bathing soap from the white ambassador car suggests that they could not have been 'terrorists' on a mission involving their very life.
  13. The police declared them as 'Islamic' terrorist and Pak based 'fidayeen'. The stated seizure of a diary containing all their names and their own telephone numbers sounds farce. Usually we do not write our own telephone numbers in our diary. Terrorists of deadly mission carrying a diary with their own identities when they were on an attack, do not appeal common sense.
  14. Even if the police had found a diary belonging to the attackers, how did they decipher the code names and codified messages in so short a time that in less than 10 hours the CP could reveal their identity as 'Islamic' terrorist and 'fidayeen'? (the history of terrorist attack tells clearly that the terrorist do not carry written documents. If they have to write any they choose to write in codes and false names.)
  15. What authentication did the police possess to finally declare them as Muslim and bury them according to Islamic rituals? What was the hurry to bury the dead bodies of the terrorists without establishing their identity?
  16. Few holes on the walls (opposite to Bharat Mahila Vidyalay) are, said by the CID official present at the site, as bullet marks. Two of the six marks found to be marks of bullets fired from right across, at 90 degree. One bullet mark, as marked by the police on the Bharat Mahila Vidyalay wall too clearly indicates that the bullet was fired at 90 degree. Were the police and their vehicle come side by side the terrorists? It was amusing, that the police officer present at the time of the team's visit to the spot, told that bullet fired by police present down the lane, from behind the terrorist vehicle possibly took an aerial curve and hit the wall at 90 degree.
  17. There is hardly any mark of terrorist bullets on the other side, except on Police vehicle.
  18. The blue Tata Sumo vehicle that was tailing behind the terrorist vehicle had six bullet marks. Two of them at least apparently pistol bullet marks. The police report did not mention terrorists having used pistols. How did pistol bullet mark appear on the police vehicle?
  19. The terrorists were reported to have fired from AK-M automatic guns. The bullet marks on the blue Tata Sumo of the police bear bullet marks that are all single shot marks. There is no series of bullet marks (which is expected of if the opponent was using an automatic gun) that raises the doubt over nature of exchange of fire.
  20. One bullet hole was found (in the police blue Tata Sumo vehicle) on the right side front door from inside. The point of hit was almost at the hip of the driver. Had the driver been on his seat he must have been hit. There was no report. It is clear that the driver was not in the seat at the time of firing. We found bullet marks on the same police vehicle hit from three angles on the left side of the vehicle. Three bullets were 45 degree from behind, two bullets 90 degree on the left and one bullet 130 degree further that hit just below the front windshield. The question is, if the vehicle is not on the move during the attack, (as the bullet did not hit the driver), then how did the bullet

mark appear from three angles? This question assumes significance as it was not possible for the terrorists to move to such wide range and fire from all three angles, for, they were caught in their vehicle that was trapped in a narrow alley and they were immobilized.

21. Mr. S.P.S. Yadav, Commissioner of Police is reported to have said, "Looking at their preparation and determination to storm RSS HQ at any cost despite heavy police deployment, indicates that it was a 'fidayeen' attack." This conclusion of the CP amounts to be hasty in his decision; or the terrorists were in his hand prior to the encounter, for him to know about them in detail.
22. On the site of the encounter was parked a white Maruti Omni car at the premises of Mr Jopat, the compound wall being fenced by barbed wire. As the house is the first one in the lane (in front of which raised the barricade) and the attackers are in side the lane, if the police wanted to target the attackers, they should have gone some where behind this Maruti Omni car. When there was over 140 rounds of fire, there is not a single

bullet mark on the vehicle. This creates strong doubts over the nature of reported encounter.

#### **Proposal:**

The above raised scores of doubts arise in the mind of every citizen who looks at the whole happening without any bias. The team wanted simple clarifications for these doubts, from the Commissioner of police, Nagpur and approached him continuously for five days. That the CP persistently declined to meet the team and answer these simple strait queries, reveal his unwillingness / inability to face these fair queries. It also suggests that he chose to hide certain facts from the masses.

All these confounding happenings lead the team to question the veracity of the Commissioner of Police's narration of the encounter. The 'Cock and Bull' story of the encounter thus compels the team to infer that the encounter appears to be fake and requires, at the interest of the nation society, a fair probing. The team therefore, calls upon the Central government to appoint a Judicial Enquiry Committee headed by retired Judge of the Supreme Court and probe the whole episode.

**Dr. Suresh Khairnar** is Ex-President of Rashtra Seva Dal. 

### **If Hindus Can't Be Terrorists...**

**Contd. from page - (9)**

As for the Malegaon blast case, it might be instructive to listen to what prosecutor Rohini Salián has confided to *The Indian Express*. Salián revealed how after change of government at the centre in 2014, an NIA officer asked to meet her, explicitly not to be told on the phone, and instructed her that as per advice from above, she was to go soft on the Malegaon case.

She has underlined how all the evidence previously gathered under Article 164 (given before a magistrate as admissible evidence) was set aside by the new NIA investigators, and revamped evidence adduced.

Salián said that the high court verdict acquitting Colonel Purohit and Sadhvi Pragya was one she had "expected." It remains to be seen if the government will think it right to appeal the Malegaon verdict in the Supreme Court with similar swiftness that it had displayed after the Bombay blast verdict.

**Badri Raina** taught at Delhi University.

Courtesy **The Wire**, 01/Aug/2025 

# India has to stand up to Trump

*Resisting the US might cause short-term pain,  
but not doing so will hurt India's national interests*

Shyam Saran



**US President Donald Trump**

Donald Trump was supposed to be good for India in his second presidency, and many rooted for him during the US presidential elections. He has turned out to be a nightmare. Trump has not only unleashed a trade war, but is also deploying commercial instruments for geopolitical ends. He has bluntly declared that trade will now be used to compel countries to bend to the US's will. Resistance will invite penalties. Trump is not only targeting India on its trade surplus and alleged high tariffs but threatening penalties on our pursuing relations with Russia, with Iran and our membership of the BRICS plus. We cannot treat his actions as only driven by trade. These actions threaten India's core interests, its ability to follow a policy of strategic autonomy, which every government, irrespective of its political colour, has remained wedded to since Independence. We have enjoyed international credibility and respect precisely for our adherence to this policy and our willingness to go it alone, if necessary, to uphold our national interest. We should not treat the current disruption in India-US relations as just a trade dispute. It is much more than that. What

he has inflicted on India is of a piece with his 50 per cent tariff on Brazil for the indictment of its former President Jair Bolsonaro through a legal process.

It would be interesting to see whether he will slap similar tariffs and penalties on China for continuing to buy Russian oil or for supporting Palestine. Or for continuing to trade with Iran, including its large purchases of Iranian oil. If he ducks that, in the case of China, it would be apparent that Trump's reluctance to confront China is more because Beijing refuses to be bullied. China's exposure to the US market is much greater than India's. India-US trade volume in goods and services in 2024-25 was \$186 billion, and this represents just over 10 per cent of our total external trade volume. US-China trade in goods was worth \$582.4 billion in 2024, according to the US Trade Representative's office, with US exports at \$143.5 billion and imports from China at \$438.9 billion. If the size of the trade surplus a country has with the US and access to the Chinese market are factors, then China should be Trump's number one target. But he has

backed down in the face of Chinese restrictions on rare metals and magnets, which are critical to the US high-tech and defence sectors. While China knows it will be seriously hit by high US tariffs and sanctions, it is willing to suffer the pain because, being a bully itself, it is aware of the downside to submitting to bullying by others.

#### **What are the options open to India?**

The first order of business is to recognise that under Trump, India-US relations are becoming progressively adversarial. Submitting to his exaggerated demands, which are now political as well as economic, would severely undermine India's national interests. We cannot give any country a veto over which countries India should or should not partner with. While we should continue to remain engaged in trade negotiations and aim for a deal which brings mutual and not one-sided benefits, we should firmly reject diktats on how India should run its foreign policy.

Two, the very strong Indo-US cooperation that has been built up in the past two decades in intelligence cooperation, defence hardware supply and co-production and high technology cooperation, is still largely untouched. These are most valuable to India and should not be negatively impacted by any action on the Indian side.

Three, there may be analysts of the Realist School who advise submission to Trump's bullying tactics so as to assuage his ego and win peace. This would be damaging in the long run. Bullies treat each act of submission as a cause for demanding even greater obeisance the next time around. Do we want to be caught up in this attrition process? Resisting now and suffering some pain will avoid much greater pain in the future.

Four, we seem to underestimate our staying power. As a much weaker country, economically and militarily, India was ready to stand alone when its vital interests were threatened. In 1968, it refused to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) despite immense pressure from

the then superpowers, the US and the Soviet Union. We refused to adhere to a blatantly discriminatory Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban treaty in 1995 despite being a lone holdout. In climate change negotiations, we held our ground that the Rio Convention provisions must be upheld until we ourselves resiled from our principled position and accepted the Paris Climate agreement in 2015, which we now see observed more in the breach by its then apostolic champions. This experience should alert us to the danger of acquiescing to unfair and discriminatory bargains.

India has always been regarded with respect for its courage to stand up for its convictions. Most developing countries still take their cue from India. We carry credibility with them. This provides India with a significant diplomatic ballast. We should recognise and value this asset, which is undermined if we keep talking about being at the high table and consorting with top global leaders. India should never sacrifice its material interests for the symbolic status of being at the high table.

There will certainly be pain in resisting Trump, but we should be prepared to endure it. The people of India have in the past and will in the future be ready to accept sacrifice in the national interest and support a leader who makes that appeal. It is estimated that India's GDP growth will suffer a reduction of 2 percentage points from Trump's tariff tantrum. This is a small price to pay for upholding India's larger interests.

India is to host the Quad summit later this year with a Trump visit. If the US backs out from the meeting, that will imply that Indian assumptions about the Quad being an anchor of Washington's Indo-Pacific strategy may also have to be revised. One is aware that other Quad partners are seriously considering such a possibility.

*The writer is a former foreign secretary.*

Courtesy **The Indian Express**,  
Aug 4, 2025. 

# Hallucinating Technology and Contemporary Capitalism

Radhika Jagtap

*Every day is a new day in the discourse surrounding Artificial Intelligence and its present and future potential. Given our fascinations of treating machines with human metaphors and equipping humans with more super-human capabilities, the relationship between the machine, technology and humans becomes an underlining agenda of most futuristic debates. Are these debates placed within a matrix of awareness about social relations; whether these debates acknowledge the existing global class divide; and are these discussions open to an alternative critic of scheme of capitalist surroundings of AI- are some questions that this article would like to explore.*

In the chapter discussing *Machine and Modern Industry* in *The Capital* (Marx 1976:492–639) and the section in *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* on *Relative Surplus Value* (Marx 2007: 8-61), we find Karl Marx's positionings on the advent of machines as technology and the redefining of relationship between labour and capital. If one looks at Artificial Intelligence (AI hereafter) as an ever-evolving technology that, in the words of Marx, are products of human industry; natural material transformed into organs of the human will over nature (Marx 1857) - we may get on to understanding the material reality of the contemporary global knowledge on technology, humans and intelligent machines. This reading puts AI's critical history, discursive mysticism around it, disparities generated by it and impact on human solidarities in perspective.

## **AI in Critical History of Machines and Technology**

The material history of technology can be read through the notes and writings of Marx where a detailed discussion on capital, machines and technology unfolds. Technology, as per Marx's understanding, reveals the active relation of humans to nature, and is "the direct process of the production of their life, and thereby it also lays bare the process of the production of the social relations of their life, and of the mental

conceptions that flow from those relations" (Marx, 2007: 71). A critical turn to history of technology reflects that each machine at each phase of human and industrial evolution is materially produced is not produced in isolation but from ideas, which are also a product of labour of some sort. Technology is evidence that capitalism is not a "natural state of being" for humans. "Artificial intelligence" was articulated as a term by computer scientist John McCarthy, way back in the 1950s for differentiating machines performing tasks typically associated with human brain from "cybernetics"- the science of communications and automatic control systems in both machines and living things (Engster&Moore 2020). But is AI really a replica of human intelligence- a suggestive question also asked by Jerry Kaplan in his book on the same subject (Kaplan 2016).

"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" as writes Marx and Friedrich Engels in *The Communist Manifesto*- So has the history of Artificial Intelligence (hereafter AI) been right from *AI Winter* to *AI Boom*, a history of class struggle and continues to be so. An abstraction of AI from its material history benefits its capitalist reality.

However, AI also illustrates how, ideally, technology is not benign, but its evolution

emerges out of the prevailing ideas of that time. It also represents the advancement of society from primitive to complex tools of production.

### **Labour Time, Surplus Value and Workers Fate**

The direct effect on workers' condition caused by AI could be what Marx writes on machines as reducing the necessary labour time and converting it into surplus labour time. The machine is only productive as it seems. It doesn't produce more or any better goods. AI, like other technologies, promises quickness and rapid shrinking of time required to perform the labour, making it look like a means of easing the workers' efforts. However, "by an increase in the productivity of labour, we mean an alteration in the labour process of such a kind as to shorten the labour-time socially necessary for the production of a commodity, and to endow a given quantity of labour with the power of producing a greater quantity of use-value," (Marx 1976: 431) writes Marx. This has been referred to as "relative surplus" which creates a picture of job being done faster and in an over-productive way (Marx 1976: 429). Surplus produced due to AI could lead to exploitation and over-exhaustion of workers and employees, while receiving the same amount of wage. As Marx warns, technology and machines could also lead to repetition and uniform activity, which further makes the job boring, stupid, monotonous causing the workers to become an "alienated labour power" (Ibid). Harry Braverman, a Marxist economist, argues that automation and technology do not necessarily replace human labour, but instead transform the nature of work and make it more directly subject to the control of capital. It will be a subject of inquiry if labour laws and jurisprudences across the world have thought about the need for change in frameworks already with the overpowering advent of AI. If we also look at the variety of labour that goes behind as well as the labour that uses AI, we see a collective labour

being affected due to the generation of surplus value- this can be explained if we look at the various processes and resources that go into the creation, training, data feeding, "caring", etc. Last year, a BBC report featured a freelancer platform Upwork's survey of 2,500 knowledge workers in the US, UK, Australia and Canada, where 77% of employees in the survey said AI tools have decreased their productivity and added to their workload. And 47% of employees using AI in the survey say they have no idea how to achieve the productivity gains their employers expect. 61% believe that using AI at work will increase their chances of experiencing burnout (La Cousta 2024).

While the worker's condition is one issue, the recent upsurge of AI generated content in *Studio Ghibli* style art reflected a different problem- the over-dilution and disrespect of the labour and art. The effort that must have gone into the hand-drawn animation art makes the technology hold an ableist take on the very idea of work and creation. Pervasive use of AI for generating creative outcomes like art, music and literature produces the same effect of trivialising labour of art as is done by conspiracy theorists' claim to the hard work of the slave workers that the *Pyramids of Giza* were created by with extraterrestrial technologies. AI in this way and as a technology, facilitates the global capitalist function of compression of time, space and labour, by dilution of the value of labour. Besides art, it could also be producing alienation of various other domains of human intelligence like academia- the mass production of research articles bearing unprocessed data and meaningless information.

### **AI Mysticism and Techno- Fetishism**

Marx stresses that it's the humans who make modes of production, so they're not beyond human reach to control or change. Although we continue to give an audience to the "AI Havoc" and dystopian discourse surrounding AI, how it will replace and take over humans and how we

should be worried about AI robots dominating us, every day, there is some amount of deconstructing of some of the inherent contradictions and mysticisms that could be used.

Commodity fetishism is a concept introduced by Marx that describes how economic value is perceived as inherent to commodities, rather than arising from the labour that produced them. In a capitalist society, commodities appear to consumers as if by magic, masking the real social relations of production that created them (Marx 1976: 165). This phenomenon highlights the disconnect between the production process and the perceived value of goods in the marketplace. While commodity fetishism is how the market masks labour relations, “techno fetishism” is how AI and the discourse around its complex algorithms mask human decisions, social relations and biases. Most developed AI tools are owned by global trans-capitalist MNC giants. The AI related phenomena called “hallucinations” (Salvagno, Taccone, & Gerli 2023: 180) demonstrate a truth about machines- that they objectify human processes and knowledge, and when used for the purposes of capital, alienate those whose data the model was trained from.

What is marketized as a potentially conscious and intangible force is really the product of labour relations and disparity between technology corporations in the Global North and data annotators in the Global South. Techno-fetishism also justifies the intense race between the MNCs for innovation in the area and it is highly driven by profits and power and lesser about alleviation of humanity. Cut-throat competition is defended by inevitability. University curriculums, academic conference agendas, policy discussions, social media and political languages- all are currently dominated by AI and its mysteries. While some concerns

regarding AI and data privacy, consent, deepfakes and other things are important, the mysticism of “there is no alternative” to AI needs to be understood with its capitalist background. The lines between science and commercial innovation get blurred when it comes to AI. The AI Havoc of making people lose their jobs by replacing them is real too. But Marx explains how giant machines as instruments of labour quickly become competitors to workers and become, in many ways, powerful tools for suppressing periodic revolts, strikes and mutinies against the autocracy of capitalism.

One may also encounter “legal fetishism” while looking at the language and reality of AI regulations and legal frameworks or their propositions. Marxist legal theorist Evgeny Pashukanis developed the concept of legal fetishism in his seminal work, *The General Theory of Law and Marxism* (1924) in which he argues that legal fetishism mirrors commodity fetishism. Pashukanis’ analysis remains a powerful tool for understanding how law obscures and legitimizes capitalist exploitation. The stakeholders in AI innovations and other aspects are progressing much ahead and beyond nation-state borders for law and policy to intervene effectively. The legal subjects and beneficiaries of such regulatory frameworks are designed to encounter each other in legal abstraction as free and equal, connected by the norms of the law. However, abstraction of rights has ideological implications. The legal system constitutes private subjects as free and equal (only) in appearance and subject only to the categories of the law, but they act based on a legally assumed free will and not based on their actual material interests.

### **AI and Global Disparities**

AI infrastructure is heavily dependent on resources. Recently, United Nations’ International Telecommunications Unit reported

that the top global tech companies saw an average 150% increase in operational carbon emissions from 2020 to 2023, fuelled by AI and data centre investments that boosted worldwide electricity consumption. This comes right after the recent breakthroughs in AI and the demand for digital services like cloud computing. As per the UN agency, rapid innovations and intense competition to invent is driving up energy consumption and global emissions, with there being no current standards or legislative requirements for companies to disclose their AI emissions or energy consumption. Data centers used 415 terawatt-hours (TWh) of electricity, accounting for 1.5% of global power demand, as per International Energy Agency, who also suggests that if data center demand keeps rising at this rate, it could reach 945 TWh by 2030, exceeding Japan's yearly electricity use (ITU & WBA 2025).

There exists some amount of material challenge for the countries in the global south for being active players in the AI progress wave. Currently all major AI tech companies are located and established in the global north. In absence of an obligatory and normative framework to ensure technology transfer in the domain of AI, developing countries are only left with the possibilities of either heavily investing and inviting investment in AI development or developing indigenous AI and data centres. Presently, the global south relies mostly on the big tech giants to provide access to emerging AI technology through state collaborations and private sector joint ventures. Another statistical contention depicting the AI disparity between two worlds is as ITU also reports that in Africa, only 40% of the population uses the internet, while the figure for least developed and landlocked developing countries stands at 36%. This situation, among other existential realities, is promoting of an "AI Haves and AI Have nots" disparity. This calls for a wider call for "AI Democracy".

### **AI and Solidarities**

As long as disparities continue and AI ownership belongs to the bourgeoisie, AI usage will remain far from bringing material change in the collective human condition of all people. Currently, AI is providing infrastructure to various populist, deep state utilities like mass surveillance, border patrolling and psychological warfare. There is also a possibility that some of the AI data feeding, and algorithm categorisations could be lodging inherent biases, bigotries and prejudices. The basis could range from racism, misogyny, ablism, or even homophobic. If the Marxist understanding that workers create modes of production and they do not exist in isolation were to be taken as relevant, the need for ensuring progressive and unbiased AI becomes relevant. Going back to techno-fetishism, it is rather a paradox that most information and processes, including the conversations surrounding "AI Explainability" are made to be available, except its inherent ideology. As the lines between technological progress and commercial innovation blur, it is significant to note that technology absent with its governing ideology would never be emancipatory or sympathizing. A Fordist-mass production styled progress of AI overemphasises on fragmented and homogenising individualism and apolitical discourse of "evolution of humankind".

AI could rather be a force of solidarity in many ways- by elevating human rights of the marginalised and people in need of empathy. In a research paper, AI Fairness advocate Timnit Gebru raised ethical concerns about large-scale language AI models designed to comprehend and replicate human language (Gebru 2020). Gebru's study argued that companies like Google, in their haste to develop larger and more advanced language models, were neglecting to consider the embedded biases—biases that might reinforce existing inequalities instead of addressing them.

AI poses a global and economic paradox. Although it could be the most powerful instrument for reducing labour-time, it does suffer a dialectical inversion. On the other hand, British Mathematician Alan Turing was quite clear too, that we as humans ascribe intelligence to machines and that we display our own weaknesses in doing so (Turing 1950: 434). In this article, we tried to trace AI's capitalist realities by primarily reading it as machine and technology. Global elite and private owners are rapidly innovating, developing and expanding this intangible machine and keeping it in vogue to save it from its deteriorations, weaknesses and contradictions. However, even these weaknesses and contradictions are not inherent essentially in AI but arise from capitalism itself.

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**- Mahi Pal Singh,**

Editor, The Radical Humanist

## **Legal Article :**

# **Madras HC Calls For Action Against Media Channels That Profit From ‘Slanderous Campaign’ Against Judiciary**

**Sanjeev Sirohi**

It is entirely and indubitably in the fitness of things that while striking the right chord at the right time, the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court while hearing a contempt plea against an Advocate Vanchinathan for seriously accusing Hon’ble Mr Justice GR Swaminathan of caste and communal bias in a most learned, laudable, landmark, logical and latest judgment titled *Dr D Vetrichelvan Vs The Tamil University & Ors* in W.A(MD)No.510 of 2023 and C.M.P(MD)No.5219 of 2023 that was pronounced recently as on 28.07.2025 has most pragmatically ruled that the time has come to regulate the level of discourse on social media. I am completely aghast, bewildered and still really finding hard to comprehend that how come a Justice of the eminence and tall stature of level of Hon’ble Mr Justice GR Swaminathan with an impeccable reputation and unblemished track record has been needlessly dragged into an unseemly controversy and am truly honoured to read some of his most enlightening judgments and even write my unflattering views on some of them because to differ with a judgment is one thing but to raise imputation on the character of a Judge without any credible proof is an entirely different ball-game altogether and must be strongly desisted and it is in one’s own best interest and so also of society and nation to refrain from doing so maliciously. Of course, it is very rightly pointed out in this progressive judgment that Judges take oath to perform their judicial duties not only without favour but also without fear.

By any reckoning, it is also very rightly,

robustly, remarkably and rationally held by the Madurai Division Bench that initiating communal campaigns against Judges on social media could ultimately undermine the judicial system. It also merits just no reiteration that this most praiseworthy judgment also very commendably, courageously and convincingly calls for strict action against media channels that openly profit from their ‘slanderous campaign’ against judiciary without any strong proof as what they tend to do is most dangerous for our democratic system where if people start losing faith in the judicial system, then that will ostensibly mark the beginning of downfall of our democratic system which will palpably be most perilous for our long-term national interests for which there definitely has to be zero tolerance. No denying or disputing it!

At the very outset, this brief, brilliant, bold and balanced judgment authored by the Division Bench of Madras High Court comprising of Hon’ble Mr Justice GR Swaminathan and Hon’ble Mr Justice K Rajasekar sets the ball in motion by first and foremost putting forth in para 1 that, “The above writ appeal was listed before us on 23.07.2025. In the cause list, the name of Thiru.S.Vanchinathan was printed as one of the counsel. He was, however, not present. Thiru.S.Vanchinathan claims to be an activist. He has given several interviews to various YouTube Channels. He has been alleging that one of us (G.R.S,J) is exhibiting caste bias. A Judge has to hear and dispose of a matter with a free mind. Since the name of Thiru.S.Vanchinathan was in the cause list as

counsel, it did disturb our judicial thought process. We really wanted to know if Thiru.S.Vanchinathan continued to suspect the judicial integrity of one of us (G.R.S,J.). We therefore directed him to be present in person on 24.07.2025 at 01.15 P.M.”

As it turned out, the Division Bench then enunciates in para 2 disclosing briefly that, “On 24.07.2025, Thiru.S.Vanchinathan appeared before us. When we posed a direct question to him whether he stood by his imputation of caste bias on the part of one of us (G.R.S,J.) in the discharge of his judicial duties, he declined to answer the question. Instead, he demanded that we should serve the questionnaire in writing. We, therefore, directed the Registry to issue pre-cognizance notice to him.”

Lamentably, the Division Bench is at pains to lay bare in para 4 that, “During the intervening weekend, a hall meeting was organized on 26.07.2025. It was followed by a press conference. Justice D.Hariparanthaman, former Judge of this Court, addressed the gathering and the media. Justice K.Chandru, another former Judge of this Court, published a statement on his behalf and on behalf of a few other retired Judges questioning the process adopted by this bench. It is interesting to note that one of those judges made it clear that he had not authorised the issuance of the statement. It is for Justice K.Chandru to explain this. Be that as it may, we have to record our dismay as to how such interference with judicial process can be made. Several assumptions which have no factual basis have been made. We characterize their approach as most unfortunate.”

For sake of clarity, the Division Bench then also clarifies in para 5 observing briefly and bluntly that, “It appears that Thiru.S.Vanchinathan has sent a written complaint last month against one of us (G.R.S, J.) to the Hon’ble Chief Justice of India. Thiru.S.Vanchinathan and his ilk had without any basis have assumed that issuance of the pre-

cognizance notice is a fall out of the aforesaid complaint. Nowhere in our earlier order dated 24.07.2025, there is any reference to the alleged complaint said to have been sent by Thiru.S.Vanchinathan to the Hon’ble Chief Justice of India. We make it clear that the present proceedings have nothing to do with the said complaint. We issued the notice only because of the persistent campaign being conducted by Thiru.S.Vanchinathan in the social media against one of us (G.R.S,J.) attributing improper motives in judicial functioning.”

Most damningly, we see that the Division Bench then plainly and so also starkly lays bare in para 6 revealing and stating very clearly that, “Secondly, we had not till this moment, initiated any contempt action against Thiru. S.Vanchinathan. That Thiru.S.Vanchinathan has been slandering one of us (G.R.S,J.) is beyond dispute. In his presence, the video recording of one of his interviews was played in the open court. The interview bears the title “G.R.Swaminathan [hjp ghrk;”. This interview was telecast by Arakalagam Channel on 23.05.2025. Thiru.S.Vanchinathan referring to a court proceeding of a bench comprising (GRSJ & Justice V.Lakshminarayanan) remarked that Thiru.P.S.Raman, Advocate General was spared because he is a brahmin and that Thiru.Wilson, Senior Counsel was targeted because he is not a brahmin. In the very same interview, allegation of religious bias was also made. This interview is only a sample. There are scores of such YouTube videos. There is a saying in Tamil “xU ghid Nrhw;Wf;F xU Nrhw gjk;”. It is because of such scandalizing campaign carried out by Thiru.S.Vanchinathan in social media that the present pre-cognizance notice was sent. We wanted to comply with the principles of natural justice even before making a reference to the Hon’ble Chief Justice in this regard. Our intention was to close the matter if Thiru.S.Vanchinathan had indicated change of heart.”

It is worth noting that the Division Bench notes in para 7 that, “Thiru.S.Vanchinathan does not have any such intention. But he had been cleverly advised. He therefore declined to take any stand before us. His written reply is completely silent on the query raised in the pre-cognizance notice. Thiru.S.Vanchinathan probably knows that if he repeats his slander before this Court either in person or in writing, consequences will follow. This speaks for the courage of the man. A person who proclaims himself as an activist must stand by his statement and be ready to take the consequences. He should not evade. When his own interview was played and his attention was pointedly drawn to certain parts of it, he kept on mumbling that it must be given to him in writing.”

Most significantly, most forthrightly, most remarkably, most touchingly and so also most sagaciously, the Division Bench encapsulates in para 8 what constitutes the cornerstone and heartbeat of this notable judgment postulating precisely that, “Judicial independence is a basic feature of the Constitution. We Judges have taken oath to discharge our judicial duties not only without favour but also without fear. When a Judge disposes of a matter, the lawyer before him neither wins nor loses. It is the case that is won or lost. Lawyers and Judges belong to one large family. They are members of the legal community. When a Judge sits on the dias, he discharges his judicial duties as per his conscience and by strictly adhering to the judicial oath. He cannot be seen as carrying on his caste or religious labels while on the bench. If someone continues to have such a perception, he obviously has jaundiced eyes. The legal system provides for remedies and recourse has to be taken to them by persons aggrieved by individual decisions. Without doing so, launching communal campaigns on the social media would eventually weaken the system itself. Time has come to regulate the level of discourse in the

social media. In the name of freedom of speech and expression, one cannot condone acts of contempt. The channels which rake in monies by such slanderous campaigns will have to be taken head on. Lawyers who make such statements are guilty of professional misconduct. There is something called laxman rekha which if crossed must invite peril. Thiru.S.Vanchinathan has mobilized a group of lawyers and retired Judges to rush to his rescue. They have also passed reckless comments without waiting for today’s outcome. Gratuitous appeals and advice have poured forth. We ignore them with the contempt which they deserve.”

It would be instructive to note that the Division Bench notes in para 9 that, “It is relevant to note that Thiru.S.Vanchinathan was suspended by the Bar Council of India on the ground that his conduct was unbecoming of an advocate. Though he was expected to improve his conduct after revocation of the suspension, it appears that he has not changed his ways. He continues to slander judiciary. The social media is replete with his videos. It is one thing to criticise judgments but entirely another to cast aspersions on judges. The Hon’ble Division Bench of the Kerala High Court very recently convicted and sentenced a contemnor in Cont Case Crl No.3 of 2024 (Suo motu, High Court of Kerala v. P.K.Suresh Kumar) for attributing ideological bias to certain Judges of the Kerala High Court. Paras 36, 41 and 43 of the said order read as follows:

“36.In *Het Ram Beniwal v. Raghuv eer Singh*, the Apex Court stated in unequivocal terms that though every citizen has a fundamental right to speech, guaranteed under Article 19 of the Constitution of India, the contempt of court is one of the restrictions on such right. If a calculated effort is made to undermine the judiciary, the courts are required to exercise their jurisdiction to punish the offender for committing contempt. In that view

of the matter, the respondent cannot seek refuge under Article 19 of the Constitution of India, as casting scurrilous and objectionable remarks against Judges, and attributing improper motives to those discharging judicial functions, amounts to criminal contempt and falls outside the protective ambit of free speech.

41. In Halsbury's Laws of England (4th Edn., Vol. 9, para 27, p. 21), it is stated that scurrilous abuse or personal attacks on a judge or court amount to punishable contempt. The objective is not to shield individual judges from criticism but to protect public confidence in the administration of justice, which would be undermined if judicial authority is brought into disrepute. While fair, temperate, and good-faith criticism is permissible, allegations of partiality, bias, or improper motives strike at the very heart of judicial integrity and are treated with particular seriousness.

43. In *Dr. D.C. Saxena v. Hon'ble The Chief Justice of India*, the Apex Court held that imputations of bias, corruption, or partiality to a judge amount to scandalising the court and constitute criminal contempt. Even a tendency to lower the authority of the court or obstruct the administration of justice is sufficient. The focus is not on proving intent or mens rea but on the effect of the act—whether it tends to diminish public confidence in the judiciary. The Apex Court emphasised that action for contempt is not to vindicate the judge's personal dignity but to uphold the majesty and independence of the judicial institution. Scandalising the court, whether through defamatory posts, reckless allegations, or vilification, taints the very fountain of justice and must be sternly dealt with."

It is worth paying unrelenting attention that the Division Bench while citing relevant case law points out in para 10 that, "The Hon'ble Supreme Court in *Vijay Kurle*, In re, (2021) 13 SCC 616 observed as follows:

"58. There can be no manner of doubt that

any citizen of the country can criticise the judgments delivered by any court including this Court. However, no party has the right to attribute motives to a Judge or to question the bona fides of the Judge or to raise questions with regard to the competence of the Judge. Judges are part and parcel of the justice delivery system. By and large, Judges are reluctant to take action under contempt laws when a personal attack is made on them. However, when there is a concerted attack by members of the Bar who profess to be the members of an organisation having a large following, then the court cannot shut its eyes to the slanderous and scandalous allegations made. If such allegations which have not only been communicated to the President of India and the Chief Justice of India, but also widely circulated on social media are permitted to remain unchallenged then the public will lose faith not only in those particular Judges but also in the entire justice delivery system and this definitely affects the majesty of law."

The conduct of Thiru.S.Vanchinathan has to be judged in the light of the above principles. Thiru.S.Vanchinathan in his reply dated 28.07.2025 has submitted that it is the Hon'ble Chief Justice of the Madras High Court who can take a call in the matter. We also have no doubt on this score."

Adding more to it, the Division Bench further also clarifies in para 11 stating that, "We need to make one more clarification. Sun News has carried a ridiculously false and absurd news item. It made it appear as if in response to the public statement made by Senior lawyers and retired judges, we have chosen to transfer the case to the file of the Hon'ble Chief Justice. We have already clarified our stand with regard to the public statements. We are aware of the procedural rules and our order will be in consonance with the same. Our course of action cannot be governed by public statements."

( To be Contd....on Page -34)

# **The Humanist Frame**

## **The Shells of Society**

(Summarized by : **Vinod Jain**)

**William Holford**

From art historians, and from structural engineers, and from making measured drawings of historic buildings, that a work of art can be analysed into component and calculable elements: but the process does not work in reverse.

Biologists have also realized ‘.....that living beings, however perfect their spontaneity, were always decomposable into an endless chain of closed mechanisms. From this they thought they could deduce a principle of universal materialism. But they overlooked the essential difference between a natural whole and the elements into which it is analysed.’ {Quoted from ‘The Phenomenon of Man’ by Teilhard de Chardin }.

The making of architectural plans is, in fact, a gathering together of strands into a new stems with a character of its own, which may later proliferate and ramify (form parts that branch out) in the manner of a biological tree. Collective experience is re-born in an individual personality and emerges as a cultural enrichment; diverse and complex requirements are given formal unity in a building; and thus society grows another of its innumerable shells. Soon it will be material for the historian and the anthropologist. It may even be the subject of a preservation campaign. But by that time new shells will be evolving.

The arts have an even greater capacity than the sciences and technologies to rejuvenate themselves at their earlier sources of inspiration. In drawing and in sculpture, for example, something expressed or evolved thousands of years before the invention of writing can register with a modern artist and quicken his senses. Good painters today have an instinctive understanding of the primitive. The architectural

use of the word ‘renaissance’ refers to the rebirth in Western Europe in the early fifteenth century of a system of ‘Orders’ in common use more than a thousand years before. The correspondence that is established is, of course, on the emotional and not the technical plane. What is flashed across the intervening centuries is the stimulus of beauty and pleasure, the sense of continuity and the knowledge that the mundane facts of life, animal and human forms, landscape and seascape, and the proportions of structures can be transformed by real perception into significant and moving works of art.

In the USSR the prestige value of public architecture and in the USA the prestige value of business architecture, are both high. In Finland and Brazil — one of the smallest and one of the largest countries in the world — architecture is not only strongly progressive but an integral part of national life and achievement. In many under-developed countries, on the other hand, the over-rapid spread of mechanisation and mass- production has produced urban deserts in which architecture cannot flourish at all; and the same description could be applied to the fast-grown suburbs of cities such as Calcutta and Sydney and Chicago. In many countries of Western Europe and of the British Commonwealth, there is now an architectural lull. And during this lull many eyes are turned upon the past —on the primitive and the classical past, on the Middle Ages, on the Age of Humanism in Italy. In England they turn to the eighteenth century, to the Romantic Movement and the Picturesque Movement, to the preservation of the past for the sake of its history.

Historians have also examined the aspirations and incentives that produced such building forms as the Cistercian foundations and the republican city of Venice, and have noted the organization by which individual dwelling units were built up into self-regulated communities, the parts being proportionately related to the whole. They have studied the walled city of Peking, the temple-mountain of Angkor Wat and other Hindu and Buddhist temples, and explained something of their symbolic and hierarchical character. They have looked at architecture in the age of the Italian academies, when art and science and philosophy were a manifestly related system of ideas, and Renaissance Humanism was a guiding concept. They have told us something of the mind of Leonardo da Vinci, and Michelangelo, and Wren. They have assessed the leasehold system. Of the ground landlords of the eighteenth century in London, the Roman methods of Napoleon I, and the plastic surgery of Napoleon III and Baron Haussmann in Paris. — In all this, the importance of “IDEAS” is paramount. These ideas originally emerged at a specific time and place, often in association with a set of religious beliefs or social customs; but it is remarkable how quickly they spread across regional frontiers and how they were adapted to new circumstances.

The historians have also recorded the results of periods of social disorder when planning, rational layout, and standards of design all suffered a partial eclipse. There were periods that produced slums and rural wastes, when Disraeli described prosperous England as ‘The Two Nations’, and when a sort of economic and social schizophrenia developed in all the industrialized cities and countries of the world.

The fact has now to be faced that mediocre and imaginative designs have become acceptable to a majority of people in the industrially more highly developed countries, not as a modest second-best to those of acknowledged merit, but for their own sakes, as if no better existed.

The twentieth century has inherited a legacy of formlessness, in every sense of the word. A decline in visual perception among the many has served to set apart as ‘aesthetes’ or ‘highbrows’ the few who have seriously cultivated it. There is an obvious formlessness, also, in the urban pattern almost everywhere, between one town and another.

Humanist values in architecture and landscape have a great deal to do with proportion, not only in the Greek sense and as defined by the Humanists of the Renaissance, but also in the modern sense of the relationship between the individual intelligence and the collective and therefore more permanent framework of ideas.

Quality in design has always come largely from interest and variety of detail within the major unity of the design as a whole. What has occurred recently has been a considerable extension of the area over which that major unity is possible and comprehensible. In this matter the humanities are not as advanced as is science, which has already become global; but they are part of the same thought-system. Architecture and town planning are being carried on to greater comprehensiveness by a revolt against the monotony of thoughtless standardization.

The development of land and the building of new settlements is no longer a natural or a self-regulating process. The population explosion alone has completely altered that situation. Urban growth also puts a premium on undeveloped land. The larger the cities grow the greater is the need for the countryside and the wild places.

The comprehensive approach, which would include an appreciation of ALL the human values which planning aims to achieve, and which would use biology and the social sciences as well as engineering and the physical sciences, has not yet been adopted on a national scale. It has been applied in the past to individual institutions and estates, and is now being

pursued in certain administrative areas, watershed and regions such as the Tennessee Valley. ...This is useful and necessary, up to a point; but it would be far more useful if it were done against a background of Humanist values which included the non-material and non-quantifiable ones with the material and quantifiable.

The essential preliminary to the creation of truly Humanist values in architecture and landscape is the organization of knowledge about the physical background itself and its conservation. The land of a small country like Britain is like a keyboard on which all manner of urban and rural compositions have been played—formal themes such as those of Westminster or Edinburgh or Bath, Picturesque and classical landscape pieces, the functional patterns of industry, and the accompaniment of small houses and gardens.

The next advances in architecture are likely to result, not merely from the invention of new structural techniques, but from better definitions of the psychological and social needs which structure and shelter are intended to satisfy. Symbolic and fantastic architectural forms have long influenced human behaviour, and being long-lived in comparison with human beings, many of

them influence us still. But far more questions are now being asked about individual and social behaviour in relation to buildings before they are designed. The requirements of temperature and lighting, of sound diffusion and insulation, are calculated in advance; time and motion studies are made, models are constructed, and the psychological effects of enclosures—more particularly of movement from one kind of space to another—are analysed from historical examples, both in buildings and in towns.

Significant architecture represents style as well as form. The spark of imagination that gives it life comes from a continuous search for a true and full expression of human capacities and human awareness, both of the external universe and of the world of ideas. Beauty of design cannot be created to order, or by effort alone; yet it is closely related to certain kinds of order, particularly mathematical theory, and often results from a passionate identification on the part of its designer with some of the simplest of human needs — shelter, security, social companionship, and the pleasure that comes from seeing the inventions of the mind of man against the background of nature. 🌈

(To be continued.....)

## Madras Hc Calls For Action...

Contd. from page - (31)

Finally, the Division Bench then rightly draws the curtains of this most creditworthy judgment by directing and holding in para 12 of this notable judgment that, “We, therefore, direct the Registry to place the papers before the Hon’ble Chief Justice of the Madras High Court and it is for the Hon’ble Chief Justice to take such action as His Lordship deems fit and appropriate.”

In conclusion, we thus see that the Division Bench of the Madras High Court has very rightly called for action and so also complete zero tolerance against such media channels that so unscrupulously just for the sake of increase in viewership tend to unduly sensationalize even the slightest whisper that emanates against any judge or judiciary and profit extremely from such slanderous campaigns against judges and judiciary without caring for how seriously the unflinching faith of the people gets irretrievably damaged due to their most condemnable acts! It merits also just no reiteration that the Division Bench has also very commendably, convincingly and credibly left the ball of decision making in the court of the Hon’ble Chief Justice to take the most appropriate requisite action as is considered to be necessary and urgently needed in this regard! Absolutely right! 🌈

## **Book Review :**

# **Justice Cornered We Were Judges Not J.OS's**

*(By: Sujata Kohli, Notionpress.com, 2025, softcover, unillustrated, pp 544, Rs. 580.)*

**Dipavali Debroy**

The role of judges is most important in shaping the course of society. But it is frequently fraught with pressures, personal and political.

The course of human history would have been different if Pilate had judged Jesus Christ differently, rising above the political pressures of the Roman Empire.

Justice often gets 'cornered' by various forces and judges reduced to mere officials in a vast mindless machinery.

This issue has been treated most effectively in this book by Sujata Kohli, former Principal District and Sessions Judge, with decades of experience in civil and criminal law, and service in various judicial capacities. An advocate, an arbitrator, a writer with two books to her credit, she tells us the story of her progression which is at once shocking and inspiring.

Can advocates and judges have such a rough road to tread? What then is the fate of the common man who resorts to them in order to seek redress from life's injustices? But going through what the author has chronicled, the reader is also impressed and inspired. If she could fight so hard and so long, can't the reader do the same? For, Sujata Kohli comes across as a human creature just like any of us, a young girl crying, shouting, depending on family members in times of stress, and going on to rediscover herself in driving, visiting the hills as well as wielding a weapon mightier than the sword.

The book reflects the precise style of lawyers and judges, effective but not effusive. There are indeed an intimidating number of chapters. 115 chapters, apart from the Prologue, Epilogue, Introduction and Acknowledgement. But each chapter makes a specific point on merit.

Chapters 1 and 2 introduce Sujata Kohli as a 24-year girl with no legal background or Godfather in the profession (p 25) entering the Tis Hazai Court. She got some space in the verandah with its makeshift arrangement of wooden tables and chairs, where lawyers would change their briefcases to the tables each time they were required to leave for the courtrooms (pp 31-33). By Chapter 4, she started getting cases and was appointed as Legal Aid Counsel for quite a few cases of distressed women and poor men (p 37). However, by Chapter 18, she had invoked the wrath of the Delhi Bar Association, Her seat – the table and chair – was gone one day and even her small bag of personal belongings (pp 87-88). On 5 August 1994, the Secretary of the Bar Association commented “*Kal ki aayi chhokri humse sawal karti hai*” and pulled her by the arm from the bench upon which she was sitting (pp 95-96, Chapter 20). She was made to stand below a tree in the parking lot of Tis Hazari and held captive by the sweepers of the Bar Association (pp 108-109, Chapter 22). But, encouraged by just a few, Sujata Kohli did not sit at home nursing her grievance. She printed a pamphlet and distributed it among Bar Members at large, appealing against dictatorial and autocratic forces (pp 112-113, Chapter 23). Her Human Rights however continued to be violated; even the common facilities of Lawyers' Complex were not made available to her (pp 123-125, Chapter 26). Even using a washroom became a favour (p 127, Chapter 27). In her struggle, Sujata Kohli acknowledges the support of her family and fellow workers, however few they were. She cries, screams and shows herself as a vulnerable yet intrepid person. She is natural

in her joy when, at the end of a long walk to Court no. 296, she at last finds the glimmer of justice at the end of a tunnel (p 161, Chapter 34). In 1998, after four years of struggle, she was restored to her seat and her signboard (pp 200-201, Chapter 44). With time her practice grew and so did her confidence.

In 2000, a competitive examination for selection to Delhi Higher Judicial Service was notified. After topping the written test and appearing for a long interview, Sujata Kohli was selected to the Delhi Higher Judicial Services. “I moved on feeling quite proud. My family was equally proud (p 223, Chapter 53). But she was asked by many if, being so articulate and independent as an advocate, she would be able to ‘toe the line’ of the High Court (p 224, Chapter 54). She began to find the atmosphere suffocating and the response to her interaction with District Judge lukewarm. The term ‘Judicial Officers’ (coinage unknown) was being so routinely used in High Court circulars, that District Judges, she felt, had stopped regarding themselves as Judges in their own right (pp 227-228, Chapter 55).

Her first posting, in 2022, was in the Motor Accident Claims Tribunal at Tis Hazari. But she was faced with manipulations in the form of being given inefficient stenographers on the pretext of their being female and so considered more appropriate for a female judge. This slowed down her performance and created the impression that she could not cope with (supposedly) the simplest of posting (pp 234-237, Chapter 56). Further, she discovered that she had been allotted Court no. 152 which no one of her batch-mates had wanted to take because a Magistrate had once hanged himself from its ceiling fan. In addition, she was asked to appear before the senior-most Judges of the High Court upon 32 complaints (pp 240-241, Chapter 57). Apart from the ‘trauma’ that this brought to Sujata Kohli, she had to submit my replies in just one day, and not trusting her stenos, decided to write down all her replies by hand (p 242). This, Sujata calls

‘motivated’, by fellow lawyers opposing a stand that she had taken, namely, that she would not release the Award money mechanically but ensure that it went into the right hands (p 244, Chapter 57). In course of time, appeals against the orders passed by her came up before a particular bench and were disposed off with to some other ‘competent Court’ and the High Court remarked that she was “anti Bar” (pp 256-7, Chapter 61). Sujata Kohli felt that her sincere hard work was being cast aside as of no value. She felt her life was ‘lonely’, and there was a ‘consistent campaign’ being built up against her by lawyers that was influencing High Court Judges. But nothing came out of the 32 complaints and she was allowed to continue in the service as well as confirmed and regularized after the Probation period (p 258-259, Chapter 62). Meanwhile her practice had wound up, her clients had gone, and here sphere was now limited to her courtroom. “I was not free to go out and help somebody being inflicted with trouble, be it even in the corridor next to my courtroom (p 262, Chapter 63). But she learnt to find satisfaction in whatever role she was assigned, especially in the response of the motor accident claimants themselves (p 263, Ch 63). It was demoralizing for her to see her efforts go unrecognized and even discredited, but she ‘continued on my way, undeterred’” (p 263). By 2006, her father had passed away and her mother seriously ill. No lawyer in seriously in the Delhi Bar Association was willing to appear for her in Court in the old Criminal case she had filed so long ago and which had almost been standing still. She had to stand up for herself as she had always been doing (Chapters 64-65). But the concerned High Court Judge diluted the severity of the case, as Sujata Kohli puts it. The accused could only be tried for 341 IPC and 323 IPC, not sections like IPC 354. This is when Sujata Kohli started “getting tired”, especially with her mother on continued dialysis (p 275). She felt one after another ill fate befalling her as she faced a succession of dates almost

entirely by herself (pp 278-283). She withdrew her complaint, stating that she was doing so because “when I had not got justice for 12 long years, I did not expect to get it for another 12 too” (p 284, Chapter 67). Later the judge concerned from whose court Sujata Kohli had withdrawn her complaint, meeting her on an informal occasion, mentioned to her that in his personal opinion, she should have taken the case to its logical conclusion (p 285).

Many of us, belonging to the general public, know what a traumatic experience it is to go the courts again and again, year after year, spending money, energy and our trust in the legal system. What is shocking is that here a member of it is going through the same experience. This should be demoralizing to the entire institution of law and order in India.

However Sujata Kohli was not finished by the system. She has shown resilience as well as faith in it by continuing with it, as the later chapters 68-115 show. In *The End Game*, she writes, “Throughout I have been a fighter. (But) What remains and what comes out is even worse than

the original grievance, on the basis of which, such petitions are filed. A complainant starts feeling as if he or she were the accused, while the accused persons roam around scot free. It’s the matters which hang here, not the accused.” (p 536).

Sujata Kohli goes on to enjoy her practice and her travels in the hills which bring her a sense of freedom. In the Epilogue, she leaves her readers with a message of hope.

“As I look back, I see not just the struggles but also the victories – small yet significant. The courage to speak up, the reliance to continue, and the refusal to bow down to power are victories in themselves.

“The fight for justice does not end here. It continues in every courtroom, in every lawyer who chooses integrity over convenience, and in every individual who refuses to be silenced” (p 539). In October 2024 the Supreme Court of India replaced the age-old blindfolded Lady of Justice by Nyaya Devi. Her eyes hold tears as well as sparks of righteous indignation, as this book published in 2025 reveals. 🌈

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## **Book Release :**

# **Prof Raojibhai Patel's book on Critical Evaluation of Gandhisim Published on July 13<sup>th</sup> 2025.**

### **(Part 1: The Modern World vs. Gandhism)**

Gandhiji's life, ideals, and the experiments based on them are easy to understand. However, Gandhisim seems to have completely ignored the progress that humanity has made since the 15th century, starting with the Renaissance and the Age of Enlightenment, and continuing up to 1920 (the year Gandhiji became active in the Indian independence movement).

Gandhiji also wisely overlooked the achievements that humanity made over these five centuries. Instead of worshipping nature, people began solving problems with a human-centered, rational, and scientific approach, excluding God, religion, and their agents.

The French Revolution was a rebellion against social systems based on monarchy, theocracy, and feudalism. As Rousseau, the ideological force behind the revolution, famously said, "Man is born free, but everywhere he is in chains." Centered on human values like **freedom**, **equality**, and **fraternity**, the revolution created parliamentary democracy, the supremacy of citizens (not social groups or castes), and a market economy. It built a modern culture and institutions based on human-centered values, in contrast to the ten-thousand-year-old agricultural culture.

- In 1781, America adopted a constitution and passed the Bill of Rights, which established a complete separation of church and state.
- In 1861, President Lincoln, guided by the value that "all men are created equal," fought the Civil War to abolish slavery and grant constitutional rights to all African American citizens, paying the ultimate price with his life.

This period was also marked by great scientific

and philosophical leaps:

- **Galileo Galilei (1564–1642)**, a French astronomer, is considered the father of modern astronomy.
- **Nicolaus Copernicus (1473–1543)**, a Polish astronomer, formulated a model of the universe with the Sun at its center.
- **Giordano Bruno (1548–1600)** was burned at the stake for his ideas that challenged biblical doctrine.
- **Sir Isaac Newton (1643–1727)**, a British physicist and astronomer, was a cornerstone of the Age of Enlightenment and the father of the scientific revolution. He was a lifelong supporter of the British Royal Society.
- **Edward Jenner (1749–1823)**, an English physician, discovered the world's first vaccine for smallpox.
- **René Descartes (1596–1650)**, a French philosopher, scientist, and mathematician, is considered the founder of modern philosophy. He famously stated, "I think, therefore I am."
- **John Locke (1632–1704)** and **David Hume (1711–1776)** were philosophers who concluded that knowledge is solely the result of sensory experience. They argued that the brain's thinking power and decisions are a result of sensory messages and that the mind ceases to function when the senses die.
- **Immanuel Kant (1724–1804)**, a German philosopher, proved in his book *Critique of Pure Reason* that truth based on 'rational reason' is a combination of both sensory experience

and the mind's ability to find the cause of everything. According to Kant, the true identity of any object is based on human rational reason, not on how the human mind perceives it.

- **Charles Darwin (1809–1882)** wrote *On the Origin of Species* in 1848, and the materialist philosopher **Karl Marx (1818–1883)** published *The Communist Manifesto* in the same year. Their research discovered the laws of biological and social change, effectively supplanting the concept of God and making humanity the new creator of nature and social management.

Based on the knowledge that the Earth is round, **Christopher Columbus (1451–1506)** of Genoa, Italy, sailed west in 1492 in search of India, discovering the Caribbean and America instead. **Vasco da Gama (1460–1524)**, a Portuguese explorer, sailed around Africa to reach India, where he eventually died in the city of Kochi.

How could Gandhiji have overlooked the fact

that from the 16th century to 1920, European countries, including England, were engaged in economic enrichment by capturing and enslaving countries and islands around the world? By 1920, the British Union Jack was flying over more than 33% of the globe.

After World War I (1914–1920), the British rulers decided to facilitate local industrialists in colonies like India to establish modern industrial companies to produce goods that would be useful in the war. Immediately after 1920, industrial policy decisions were made to create a framework for India to become a modern industrial country. Britain was interested in Ahmedabad becoming the “Manchester of India” so that it would no longer need to import fabrics from its own country or Japan. However, Gandhi’s Sabarmati Ashram and his principle of trusteeship did not allow mill owners in Ahmedabad to establish their own mills or give workers a stake in the management. Adam Smith, the father of capitalism, had already established that the creation of capital is the result of accumulated labor.

## (Part 2: Gandhiji’s *Hind Swaraj*)

The following excerpts are from Gandhiji’s Gujarati book *Hind Swaraj*, written in 1908 on a steamer from England to South Africa. They offer a strong critique of the Western world and its “modernity.”

1. Gandhiji refused requests to change the content, stating: “This book strongly criticizes modern reforms... My convictions expressed in it are stronger today than ever... I have not found any reason to change the ideas expressed in this book... If India renounces ‘modern reforms,’ then it will benefit only her...” He adds that he regrets that “non-violence” is not practiced as passionately as it is described.
2. He describes the British Parliament as “barren” and a “whore” because it “has

not done a single good thing on its own” and “lives with the cabinet that appoints it.”

3. He claims that if India imitates England, it will be ruined, and that “Europe Improvement is a bad thing.”
4. He calls modernity a “disease,” arguing that physical happiness is not a sign of improvement. He contrasts old and new ways of life, such as using steam engines for farming instead of manual labor, and questions if the increased number of books and factories is an improvement.
5. He believes that modernity has enslaved people with the lure of money and pleasure, creating new pains that doctors then try to cure.

- He calls this a “bad-reform” that has spread in Europe, making people “half-mad.”
6. He states that Hinduism refers to such reforms as the “Kali Yuga.”
  7. He compares modernity to “mice that eat away at the skin,” arguing that traditional superstitions are preferable.
  8. He blames railways, lawyers, and doctors for making India poor and says that railways spread arrogance and make people forget God.
  9. He accuses lawyers of enslaving India and strengthening British rule by teaching “immorality.”
  10. He claims that hospitals are the “roots of sin” and that teaching Western medicine is a way of strengthening slavery.
  11. He distinguishes between Indian and Western reform, stating that Indian reform strengthens morality with God’s blessings, while Western reform strengthens immorality without God.
  12. Despite his strong criticisms, he states that his ultimate aim is “to achieve parliamentary-style Swaraj as desired by the people of India.”

### Part 3: An Evaluation of Gandhism by Prof. Raojibhai Patel

In this section, we will evaluate the book *Gandhism*, published by us on behalf of Prof. Raojibhai Patel, using a scientific method. The first two parts of this article serve as a foundation for understanding the logical arguments presented by Prof. Raojibhai.

1. **Part 1:** We discussed the contributions of thinkers, scientists, and revolutionaries from the 14th and 15th centuries who cultivated a human-centric approach to understanding the physical reality of nature and its laws. This led to the creation of a modern society based on human-centered values, replacing a God-centric system.
2. **Part 2:** We presented Gandhiji’s critique of this “modernity” as a “disease,” and his views on railways, lawyers, and doctors as the cause of India’s impoverishment.

In his book, *Gandhism – An Evaluation of the Method of Knowledge*, Prof. Raojibhai Patel systematically evaluates Gandhian thought using a scientific approach. He discusses key issues, such as:

- The nature of “Gandhian truth,” and whether truth is absolute or relative.
- The difference between subjective truth

and evidence-based truth.

- How to verify truth received from intuition or an “inner voice.”
- The conflict between truth created by birth and karma versus truth discovered through the biological struggle of evolution.
- The concepts of national unity for religious equality, mysticism, revelation, the caste system, and the “disembodied soul.”

Prof. Raojibhai provides a systematic answer to each of these points. He also discusses his intellectual disagreements and agreements with other thinkers, such as Mohit Sen, Prof. Diwakar, A. B. Shah, Partha N. Mukherjee, and Prof. Pantham Thomas. He ultimately presents his own thesis based on the knowledge, science, and modern trends of the 20th and 21st centuries.

The intellectual discussion of Gandhian thought and its implementation is ongoing worldwide, and Prof. Raojibhai’s work provides a crucial evaluation based on logic, science, and modern trends.

To obtain a copy of the book, please contact Girishbhai Sundhiya at 9426663821. 🌈

# ***Bills to oust arrested PM, CMs trigger chaos in Lok Sabha***

**Editor's Pick, The Hindu**

On Wednesday (August 20, 2025), the second last day of Monsoon session of Parliament, Union Home Minister Amit Shah

are arrested and detained in custody for 30 consecutive days on allegation of committing an offence punishable with imprisonment for



five years or more, shall be removed from office by the 31st day by the President, Chief Minister (in case of State Ministers), Governor (for Chief Ministers) and Lieutenant-Governor (for Chief Minister in Union Territories). They could be subsequently reappointed on release from custody, the Bills add.

introduced three Bills allowing the removal of elected representatives arrested on serious criminal charges and held in custody without bail for more than 30 days. The session has already been marred by Opposition protests demanding a discussion on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise in Bihar.

As the Bills were introduced, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Congress leader K.C. Venugopal engaged in a sharp spat over Mr. Shah's 2010 arrest while he was Home Minister of Gujarat.

The Constitution (130th Amendment) Bill, 2025, The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2025 and The Government of Union Territories (Amendment) Bill, 2025, say that the Prime Minister, Chief Ministers, Ministers of States and Union Territories who

During the tabling, Trinamool Congress (TMC) MPs escalated their protest by tearing copies of the proposed legislation in front of Mr. Shah's seat, resulting in a brief jostle between Opposition and ruling party MPs. The BJP members, including Union Ministers Kiren Rijiju and Ravneet Singh Bittu, stepped in to shield Mr. Shah, while the TMC accused the Ministers of "pushing and shoving" women MPs.

Opposition MPs said the Bills were "unconstitutional and anti-federal". A resolution was passed by a voice vote to refer them to a Joint Committee of Parliament, mandated to submit its report by the Winter Session.

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi later said the Bills would take the country back to "medieval times when the King could remove anybody at will".

Courtesy **The Hindu**, 21 August 2025. 🌈

## **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**

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# Results flipped after SC orders recount in sarpanch election

**The Hindu Bureau**

NEW DELHI

The sarpanch election of Buana Lakhu village at Panipat in Haryana took an unexpected turn recently after the votes were recounted on the Supreme Court premises following the court's order.

The recount done under video surveillance in the Supreme Court turned the election result on its head. Mohit Kumar, who had been declared defeated in the previous result and later approached the apex court, won by a good margin.

The controversy began in November 2022 when Mr. Kumar's rival candidate, Kuldeep Singh, was declared the winner in the polls.

An Additional Civil Judge-cum-Election Tribunal in Panipat ordered a recount in April 2025.

However, the Punjab and Haryana High Court set aside the Tribunal's order in July, prompting Mr. Kumar to approach the Supreme Court.

On July 31, a three-judge Bench headed by Justice Surya Kant passed a unique order, calling for the EVMs used in all the booths during the sarpanch polls.

The Bench directed the Secretary General of the Supreme Court to nominate a Registrar to recount the votes on August 6.

It had asked the two candidates, their authorised agents and their lawyers to be present at the recount.



*Prof Raajibhai Patel's book on Critical Evaluation of Gandhisim Released on July 13<sup>th</sup> 2025*

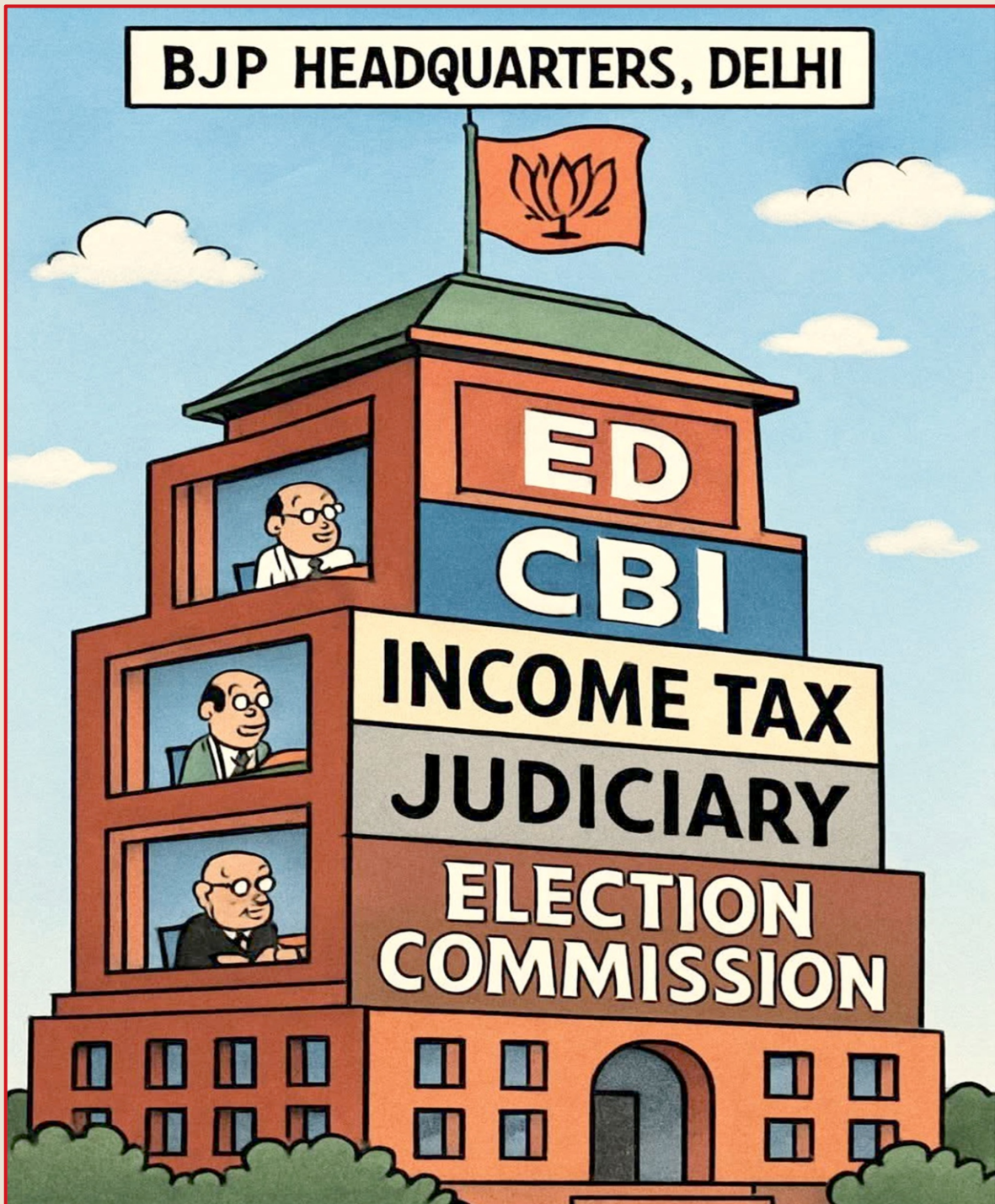
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