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VOICE of SECULAR DEMOCRACY

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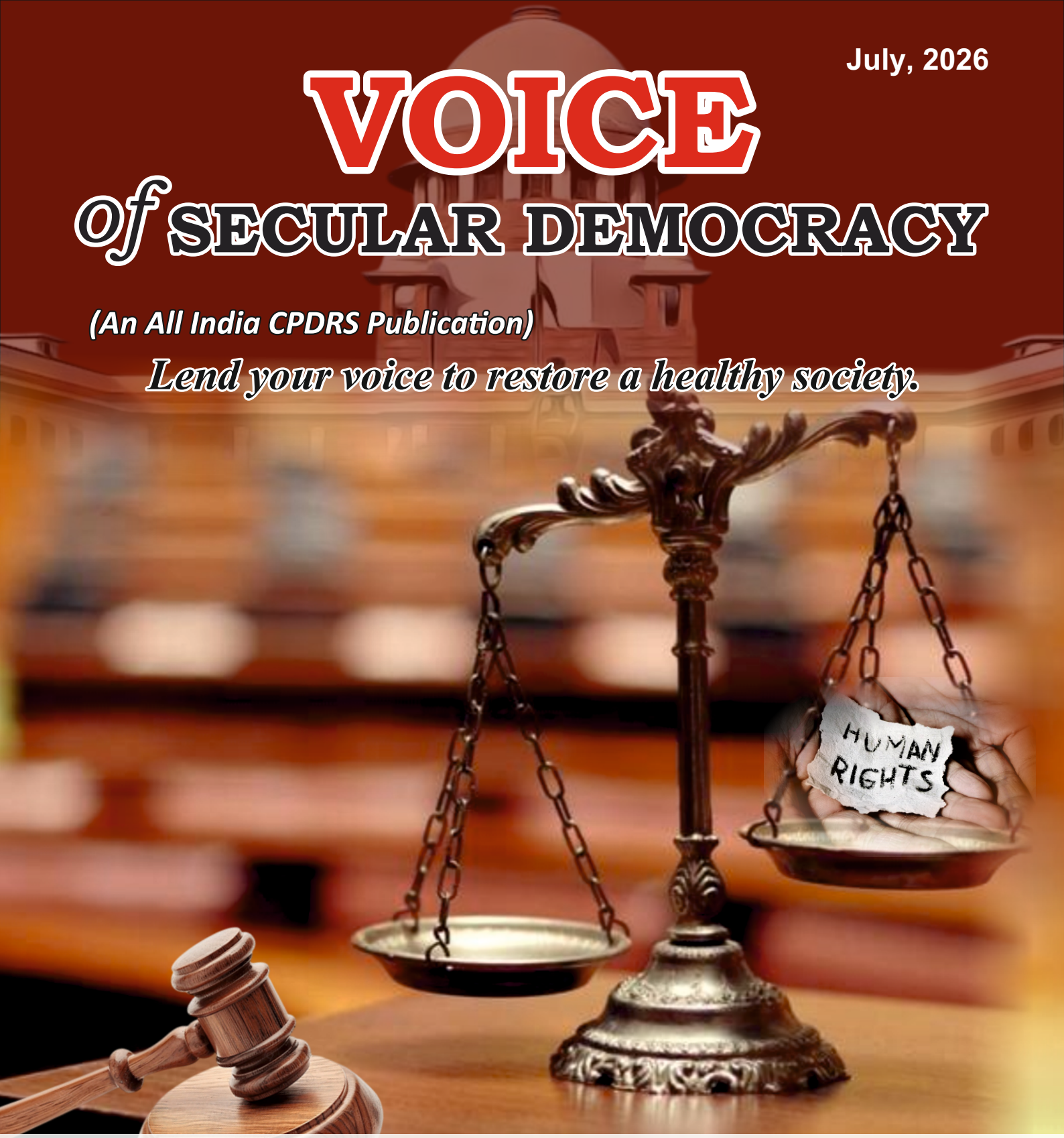

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Editorial.....

The Gap Between Narrative and Reality in "New India"

Across the country, a troubling pattern is emerging: corporate interests and administrative convenience are often placed above public welfare, democratic rights, and environmental protection. From civic failures and labour reforms to restrictions on dissent, attempts to communalize governmental bodies, the disenfranchisement of a vast number of eligible voters, and many recent developments raise important questions about the direction of governance and development across the country.

As India is half way through the year 2026, the promise of a "New India" appears increasingly disconnected from the realities faced by ordinary citizens. Across the country, a troubling pattern is emerging: corporate interests and administrative convenience are often placed above public welfare, democratic rights, and environmental protection. From civic failures and labour reforms to restrictions on dissent, attempts to communalize governmental bodies, the disenfranchisement of a vast number of eligible voters, and many recent developments raise important questions about the direction of governance and development across the country.

The tragedy in Bhagirathpura, Indore, is a stark example. In a city frequently praised for cleanliness, several citizens reportedly lost their lives due to sewage-contaminated drinking water. Investigations pointed to aging infrastructure and long-standing neglect. Access to safe drinking water is among the most basic responsibilities of any government. When such failures occur despite repeated claims of progress and development, they expose a serious gap between official narratives and lived realities. A similar pattern emerged in the devastating fire at the Birch by Romeo Lane nightclub in Goa. Reports indicated serious regulatory violations and questions regarding licensing and safety compliance. The incident highlighted how weak enforcement and administrative negligence can have fatal consequences. Development cannot be measured solely by investment figures or commercial growth; it must be judged by the safety, dignity, and well-being of the people.

Economic policy has also become a source of growing concern. The implementation of the Four Labour Codes and the continuing privatisation and dis-investment of public sector institutions have generated apprehension among workers and trade unions. Labour rights were secured through decades of collective struggle, and many fear that recent reforms weaken protections for workers while strengthening the position of employers. At the same time, the concentration of economic power in fewer hands raises concerns about growing inequality and the future role of public institutions in serving social needs. These anxieties are particularly visible among young people. Despite advances in education, many youth face unemployment, underemployment, and increasing economic insecurity. Allegations of examination irregularities and paper leaks have further deepened frustration. For a generation promised opportunity and progress, the reality often appears uncertain and discouraging.

Environmental concerns add another dimension to the crisis. The debate surrounding the Aravalli hills illustrates the conflict between ecological preservation and commercial exploitation. The Aravallis play a crucial role in maintaining ecological balance, protecting groundwater resources, and preventing desertification across large parts of northern India. Policies that weaken environmental safeguards in favour of short-term economic gains risk causing long-term damage that future generations will be forced to bear. Similarly, conflicts over land acquisition and resource extraction in tribal regions continue to raise questions about democratic participation and social justice. Many local communities and activists argue that constitutional protections, the Forest Rights Act, and the principle of Gram Sabha consent are frequently sidelined in the pursuit of corporate projects. Development that excludes the voices of those most affected cannot be considered genuinely democratic.

Policies that weaken environmental safeguards in favour of short-term economic gains risk causing long-term damage that future generations will be forced to bear.

Parallel to these socio-economic challenges is a deliberate push toward unilateral legal uniformity, most visibly demonstrated by the highly controversial Uniform Civil

Code (UCC) recently passed by several BJP-ruled states. This forced imposition deliberately ignores the objective socio-political realities of the subcontinent. It bears recall that due to definite socio-political reasons, though India politically evolved as a nation, it has remained socially and culturally disunited by religion, caste, language, race, and ethnicity, precisely because the fundamental task of the democratization of Indian society remains unfulfilled. As a result, social customs, marriage and inheritance laws, the observance of religious ceremonies, eating habits, and the ways of life of different communities have continued to remain rich and diverse.

Recognizing this intrinsic diversity, the framers of the Indian Constitution carefully refrained from adopting an enforced UCC. They wisely held that, at that point in time, hurriedly including such a crucial provision in the constitution without preparing the ground for cementing national unity and cohesion might prove to be a boomerang and defeat the very purpose of having such a law. Decades later, the 21st Law Commission, in a detailed consultation paper published in 2018, echoed this foundational wisdom, strongly opining that a UCC was "neither necessary nor desirable at this stage."

Yet, the current BJP governments, without paying heed to these genuine concerns and in utter disregard of the fragile social fabric, remain determined to impose the UCC, which critics view as nothing but a new version of the old Hindu Code Bill. Far from fostering unity, such an enforced UCC threatens to exacerbate existing divides, mutual hatred, distrust, and ill-will among communities. Furthermore, it risks jeopardizing the legitimate interests and aspirations of minority populations, more specifically of religious minorities who already find themselves deprived, harassed, and targeted under the current dispensations.

This legal overreach mirrors the shrinking space for political dialogue and critique. The recent controversy surrounding restrictions on the online presence of the so-called "Cockroach Janata Party" (CJP) has opened another important debate. The phenomenon, largely driven by students, youth, and social media users, emerged as a form of political satire and public commentary. Whatever one's opinion of its methods or messages, its popularity reflects a deeper reality: growing dissatisfaction among sections of the population, particularly the youth. Political satire has long served as a means through which citizens express frustration with those in power. Attempts to suppress such online platforms go against the spirit of the right to free expression and expose a failure to address the underlying cause. The popularity of the CJP is not the cause of public anger; it is a symptom of wider concerns over unemployment, rising costs, shrinking opportunities, and a sense that genuine grievances are not being adequately addressed.

The path forward lies in democratic engagement, public awareness, and collective action rooted in a clear understanding of social realities. Only then can public resentment be transformed into a constructive force for change.

India has witnessed similar waves of public resentment in the past. At various moments, people have rallied behind movements promising change and accountability. Yet many such movements ultimately failed to deliver lasting solutions, leaving deeper problems untouched. A healthy democracy must allow space for criticism, dissent, satire, and peaceful protest. It must protect civil liberties, ensure accountability, and remain responsive to the concerns of its citizens. Equally important is the defence of secular values and social harmony, which remain essential for preserving the democratic character of the republic.

The growing concerns voiced by workers, students, farmers, democratic rights activists, and ordinary citizens should not be dismissed as temporary dissatisfaction. They reflect deeper contradictions that require serious attention. The challenge before us is to examine the broader structures that generate recurring crises and inequalities. The path forward lies in democratic engagement, public awareness, and collective action rooted in a clear understanding of social realities. Only then can public resentment be transformed into a constructive force for change. A society that places human welfare above profit, democratic rights above administrative convenience, and public good above private gain remains both a necessity and an aspiration. The future of democracy depends on the ability of citizens to organise, question, and work towards that vision.

When "right-thinking people" choose silence, they unwittingly grant a license to injustice. In political and social mechanics, neutrality or passivity in the face of oppression invariably serves the status quo. A healthy society requires constant, active participation. We appeal to all the concerned citizens to realize that the true progress is the deliberate result of conscious individuals organizing, speaking, and acting in alignment with their principle

Census 2026
A Non-secular and Undemocratic Exercise

Any democratic census must be inclusive, voluntary, and safe. The current operational methodology through its technological and political framework is not following these principles. Transitioning to an entirely digital format via mobile applications and self-enumeration portals creates an institutional barrier. In a country with stark disparities in internet literacy and smartphone access, this format disproportionately risks undercounting rural tribal belts, migrant workers, and economically marginalized populations.

The ongoing 2026 census framework reinforces a rigid, state-sanctioned view of identity of India which is far from the actuality.

The Erosion of Secular Principles

A truly secular state treats all philosophical convictions—theistic, agnostic, and atheistic—with structural equality. By retaining only six pre-coded religious options like Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist and Jain, in this exercise of census there is systemic invisibility of Non-Believers and also the faiths of some communities. Despite repeated representations from rationalist associations, the state refuses to include a dedicated "No Religion" or "Atheist" checkbox. This forces millions of rationalists, agnostics, and humanists as well as communities following faiths other than the listed ones into statistical limbo, lumping them into the ambiguous "Religion Not Stated" or "Other" categories. It is a form of statistical erasure, misrepresenting a diverse, Indian society as universally religious one and particularly as a Hindu nation.

Collecting highly granular socio-economic, caste, and personal data on a centralized digital platform—without an airtight, independent data protection framework—poses severe privacy risks. Civil liberties groups warn that this data could be weaponized by using it for targeted profiling or demographic engineering.

The outright omission of a separate code for nature-worshipping indigenous communities such as the **Sarna** or Sarnaism which is the traditional, indigenous nature-worshipping religion of some tribal communities in central and eastern India, particularly among the Santhal, Oraon, Munda, and Ho tribes - forces these groups into mainstream categories. It will ultimately lead to the manufacture of majoritarian homogeneity overriding their true indigenous heritage.

From 1871 to 1931, under British census operations, though the imperialists used the divide and rule policy, the tribal faiths were officially acknowledged under categories like "Aboriginal" or "Animism." After 1947, these specific categories were removed. Tribal citizens were forced to write "Sarna" or "Tribal Religion" under a generic open text field labelled "Others". In the 2011 census, nearly 50 lakh (5 million) citizens proactively wrote "Sarna" in the "Others" column—outnumbering the officially recognized population of Jains at that time.

Now when the Union government dropped the generic "Others" column in recent years, Sarna followers are effectively forced to either select one of the six pre-coded institutional religions such as Hinduism or Christianity or risk being left uncounted under "Religion Not Stated." That is why Tribal organizations, supported by resolutions passed by state assemblies like Jharkhand and West Bengal, are demanding that a distinct Sarna Code (a dedicated checkbox) be added to the national census. For the community, this is not just a theological debate; it is a battle for cultural survival and constitutional rights. Without a distinct classification, their population metrics are diluted into other major religions, directly threatening their

specific indigenous identity, independent documentation, and the tailored welfare policies designated for Scheduled Tribes. Even regarding the Lingayats who constitute 17 % of the state population in Karnataka many community leaders and scholars advocate for Lingayat to be recognized as an independent, non-Vedic religion.

The Undemocratic Design

Any democratic census must be inclusive, voluntary, and safe. The current operational methodology through its technological and political framework is not following these principles. Transitioning to an entirely digital format via mobile applications and self-enumeration portals creates an institutional barrier. In a country with stark disparities in internet literacy and smartphone access, this format disproportionately risks undercounting rural tribal belts, migrant workers, and economically marginalized populations. Collecting highly granular socio-economic, caste, and personal data on a centralized digital platform—without an airtight, independent data protection framework—poses severe privacy risks. Civil liberties groups warn that this data could be weaponized by using it for targeted profiling or demographic engineering. Also linking these specific population metrics directly to the redrawing of electoral boundaries (delimitation) threatens the federal balance. It creates a democratic paradox where states that successfully implemented national population stabilization goals stand to lose parliamentary representation to regions with higher growth rates.

On one side the ruling dispensation is aiming at showing India as a Hindu majority nation and on the other side this caste wise census will increase social cleavage and lead to more and more caste identity and jeopardize secularisation of society.

There are many people who believe in rationalism and do not believe in any religion. To counter the structural biases and ensure an accurate socio-demographic record, citizens and civil society groups can adopt the following strategies: Exercise the Right to Text Entry. Do not let the enumerator default your household to a majoritarian religion based on your surname or cultural background. Assert your right to use the descriptive open-text field. Explicitly state "Atheist", "Agnostic", or "No Religion", and ensure the enumerator manually types this into the digital application. If utilizing the self-enumeration portal, bypass the six pre-coded checkboxes entirely. Seek out the option to type your philosophical identity manually into the open text box to ensure your particular belief is explicitly logged before submission. Ground-level civil rights organizations, rationalist forums, and tribal associations must lead localized census-awareness campaigns. Creating volunteer squads to assist marginalized, non-literate, or digitally excluded communities during enumeration helps prevent institutional bias and ensures their true identities are recorded. The current operational methodology compromises these principles through its technological and political framework.

The Centre for Protection of Democratic Rights and Secularism CPDRS urges its units across the nation to explain to the people how the present Census exercise will harm and develop a movement to make the census process a democratic and secular one. On one side the ruling dispensation is aiming at showing India as a Hindu majority nation and on the other side this caste wise census will increase social cleavage and lead to more and more caste identity and jeopardize secularisation of society.

"If mankind are brought into existence, and by nature formed to enjoy the comforts of society and the pleasure of an improved mind, they may be justified in opposing any system, religious, domestic or political, which is inimical to the happiness of society, or calculated to debase the human intellect."

– Raja Rammohan Roy

Special Intensive Revision - A Tool for Massive Voter Deletions and Disenfranchisement

A healthy democracy must allow space for criticism, dissent, satire, and peaceful protest. It must protect civil liberties, ensure accountability, and remain responsive to the concerns of its citizens. Equally important is the defence of secular values and social harmony, which remain essential for preserving the democratic character of the republic.

The implementation of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls has fundamentally subverted the mandate to ensure clean and comprehensive voter registration embedded within Article 324 of the Constitution. Under the pretext of "purifying" voter databases to eliminate duplicate, deceased, shifted and ineligible voters, the execution of this directive has morphed into a crisis of mass disenfranchisement.

The consequences of this exercise became glaringly apparent during Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in Bihar, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Puducherry, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and Lakshadweep. Rather than performing a routine civic cleanup, the ECI's high-speed, techno-centric revision stripped millions of eligible citizens of their primary constitutional right.

The Mechanics of Mass Disfranchisement: Illegitimate Deletions

The absolute scale of voter reduction emerging from the final rolls of SIR Phase-2 exposed deep systemic abnormalities. The electoral database shrank by an astonishing 10.2%, resulting in the net deletion of over 5.18 crore voters in this phase. In absolute terms, Uttar Pradesh recorded the highest net deletion of 2.04 crore voters. In West Bengal, the electoral roll shrank by a massive 91 lakh names, wiping out more than 10% of the state's total registered electorate. The ECI classified 27 lakhs of these deletions under an entirely new, heavily contested legal designation: "logical discrepancies" flagged by automated matching scripts. Tamil Nadu recorded the absolute highest volume of net deletions in the country, striking 74 lakh voters from the final lists. Entire residential blocks in urban hubs like Chennai found themselves completely excised due to rigid, automated "permanently shifted" classifications, despite many families having lived at the same addresses for over three decades. Independent investigations and civil society audits revealed an alarming reality: a massive portion of these deletions were entirely illegitimate.

A Hectic and Flawed Verification Protocol

Historically, a thorough intensive revision of electoral rolls required months of meticulous ground-level coordination, thorough documentation, and sequential cross-verification. The ECI, on the other hand, forced the bureaucratic apparatus to reach nearly impossible levels of data correctness in a matter of weeks, compressing the intensive revision window into an unreasonably short time frame.

To expedite this overwhelming workload, the ECI introduced controversial operational shortcuts, instructing field staff not to collect physical supporting documents during the initial door-to-door enumeration phase. The lack of a strict documentary audit trail transformed physical verification into a subjective guessing game. Furthermore, when the finalized draft rolls were published, the window provided for citizens to file claims, objections, or seek corrections was painfully narrow. For daily wage labourers, migrant workers, and rural populations who could not afford to sacrifice working hours to navigate complex bureaucratic channels, this accelerated window made rectification practically impossible.

Unfair Methods and Algorithmic Bias

Beyond the systemic exhaustion of field personnel, the SIR framework was marred by deeply unfair, technically flawed methodologies that disproportionately affected marginalized populations. A primary contributor to this issue was the over-reliance on automated "de-duplication" software and poorly calibrated translation tools. Minor phonetic variations, discrepancies arising from localized regional spelling differences, and variations in translating names from regional languages to English were treated as definitive "logical discrepancies" or "fraudulent dual registrations."

The ECI's automated scripts flagged older, multi-generational households as mathematical anomalies. And the entire burden of proof is shifted on to the individual voter. More concerning still were the persistent allegations of targeted demographic manipulation. Data

journalists and civil rights organizations pointed out that voter deletions were highly concentrated in pockets populated by Religious minorities, Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs). The sudden absence of names belonging to long-term residents, including retired public servants, paramilitary veterans, and indigenous community leaders, strongly indicated that the deletion drive was weaponized as a tool of strategic voter suppression. By altering the local demographic balance through calculated administrative omissions, the revision directly influenced competitive electoral outcomes.

Rather than performing a routine civic clean-up, the ECI's high-speed, techno-centric revision stripped millions of eligible citizens of their primary constitutional right.

Disenfranchisement of Prominent Citizens and Field Personnel

The systemic flaws of the algorithmic cleanup became glaringly obvious when the data filters began ensnaring highly decorated veterans, renowned intellectuals, and the very administrative workers tasked with executing the revision itself.

In one of the most high-profile instances of algorithmic overreach, Indian Nobel Laureate and world-renowned economist Amartya Sen was flagged by the automated software. Dr. Sen was among those whose data was caught in the administrative net, requiring high-level corrections to validate his standing on the registry. Former Lok Sabha MP from Jayanagar Lok Sabha constituency and former Group-A medical officer, Tarun Mandal was excluded from the electoral rolls. Wing Commander Mohammad Shamim Akhtar—a former Indian Air Force officer and who previously held a diplomatic passport—found his name completely missing from the rolls. A 62-year-old retired veteran of India's Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Senarul Haque, who had spent 35 years in high-security conflict zones and had personally spent decades managing security on election duty, was denied his own right to vote. The flawed, frantic execution of the SIR was perfectly illustrated by the case of Jaber Ali, a 36-year-old field worker in Murshidabad. Ali was an official specifically contracted to execute the door-to-door physical verification, working grueling 12-hour shifts checking documents and uploading records for over 700 local households. When the final registries were published, not only were many of the citizens he had personally verified missing from the rolls, but his own name and the names of his brothers had been deleted. In another structural breakdown, Himani Roy, a 55-year-old government schoolteacher in Howrah district, discovered her name was missing from the voter registry when she checked the final roll. When she approached local election authorities, they had no clear explanation for her removal. Ironically, while her status as an eligible voter had been deleted by the automated system, the administrative system still had her designated to serve as an active polling officer to oversee voting operations on the day of Election.

People must resist this systemic slaughter of democracy

The fallout of the Special Intensive Revision has inflicted lasting damage on the integrity of the Indian electoral system. By deploying rushed verification timelines, faulty technological filters, and exclusionary field practices, the Special Intensive Revision effectively transformed a mechanism meant to protect the franchise into a barrier against it. As the ECI expands these intensive revision protocols into subsequent phases nationwide, the lessons of Phase-2 serve as a stark warning. In the face of this blatant "administrative rigging," the judiciary's response has been woefully inadequate. The recent Supreme Court judgment endorsing the SIR process is a profound dereliction of constitutional duty.

Beyond the systemic exhaustion of field personnel, the SIR framework was marred by deeply unfair, technically flawed methodologies that disproportionately affected marginalized populations.

The SIR is not a routine electoral revision; it is a manufactured catastrophe. The ruling establishment has relentlessly peddled the hoax of mass "illegal infiltration" to justify this persecution and consolidate a communal vote bank, yet empirical evidence from these exercises exposes this as a fabrication. Depriving genuine citizens of their franchise through procedural trickery and data manipulation is a subversion of the constitutional mandate. The citizens of India must not remain silent onlookers but must rise to resist this systemic slaughter of democracy.

Attacks on Minorities in India

Global human rights organizations too have reported a severe deterioration in conditions for India's Muslim and Christian minority since 2014, detailing sharp increases in hate speech, targeted physical violence, state-level punitive demolitions, and discriminatory legislation.

Hate inspired violence against minorities has become increasingly common across India particularly in the last decade. The audacity with which it is conducted suggests a complete absence of fear of consequences. These hate crimes range from lynching and mob violence to violence inflicted by vigilantes, sexual assault and even outright murder. Muslims, Christians and Dalits have borne the brunt of a large chunk of this violence. The trigger is either suspected consumption of beef or even the whiff of an interfaith or inter-caste relationship. Masjids and churches have been vandalised, prayer meetings disrupted, and religious congregations harassed across the country, often with little accountability. These incidents are not isolated aberrations. They form part of a systematic pattern of communal aggression that challenges India's foundational commitment to pluralism.

Global human rights organizations too have reported a severe deterioration in conditions for India's Muslim and Christian minority since 2014, detailing sharp increases in hate speech, targeted physical violence, state-level punitive demolitions, and discriminatory legislation. Key dimensions of this violence and persecution include:

Hate Speech & Political Rhetoric: Monitors, including Human Rights Watch, have recorded significant spikes in anti-minority rhetoric by high-ranking politicians. Between 2014 and 2018, the use of divisive language by prominent figures increased by almost 500%.

"Cow Vigilantism": Hindu nationalist "cow protection" mobs have frequently assaulted Muslims over unverified claims of beef consumption or cattle slaughter.

Communal Riots & Clashes: Major outbreaks of communal violence have targeted Muslim neighbourhoods, such as the 2020 Delhi riots followed by clashes at Jehangirpuri during April, 2022 and the 2023 Nuh clashes in Haryana, resulting in significant loss of life, injuries, and property destruction.

State Actions & Bulldozer Justice: In BJP-governed states like Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, local authorities have unlawfully demolished Muslim-owned homes and properties without due process, using it as a form of collective punishment following protests or communal disputes.

Institutional & Legal Pressure: The Amnesty International global report points to the weaponization of anti-terror and sedition laws (such as the UAPA) to target Muslim activists, journalists, and students, resulting in long-term pre-trial detentions.

Victims of cow vigilantism are predominantly backward caste Muslims i.e people from communities traditionally engaged in animal husbandry, dairy farming and meat supply. Cases examined include Mohd. Akhlaq who was killed on suspicion of consuming beef, Alimuddin Ansari who was mercilessly beaten to death on a busy road in Ramgarh town in Jharkhand and Pehlu Khan, a dairy farmer who was lynched by a mob in Alwar in Rajasthan on suspicion of being a cattle smuggler. Muslims have also been targeted for reasons not related to cow vigilantism. These include cases like that of 16 year old Junaid who was stabbed to death on a Delhi-Mathura train and Pune techie Mohsin Shaikh who was allegedly killed by members of a right wing extremist group for allegedly circulating derogatory pictures of Shivaji and Bal Thackeray on social media.

According to the United Christian Forum (UCF), documented incidents of violence against Christians rose from 127 in 2014 to 834 in 2024 — an increase of over 550 per cent in a decade. The Evangelical Fellowship of India's Religious Liberty Commission (EFIRLC), in its March 2025 annual report, recorded 840 incidents in 2024, compared to 601 in 2023 and 147 in 2014. Its 2025 report documented 747 verified incidents, noting the actual figure is likely higher due to underreporting in rural and tribal areas.

Recent Incidents

Christmas 2025 was particularly marked by reported incidents, prompting the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India on December 23 to state that the attacks “seriously undermined India's constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion.” In Madhya Pradesh's Jabalpur, a widely shared video showed Anju Bhargava — identified as a local BJP official — entering a church on Christmas Day and assaulting Safalta Kartik, a visually impaired woman at a prayer service. In Chhattisgarh's Kanker district, a dispute over a Christian burial escalated between December 15–18 into serious mob violence, where mob

exhumed buried Christian body: churches were set on fire, homes destroyed, and a prayer hall vandalised. In Delhi's Lajpat Nagar, men allegedly linked to the Bajrang Dal confronted women and children wearing Santa Claus caps, forcing them to leave. In Raipur, a mob demolished a twenty-year-old church in March 2025.

Allegations of Complicity by the Police

On some occasions the Police failed to provide security to people whose lives were at risk despite being specifically made aware of the threat and pleas for help from the aggrieved parties. It also alleges that in some cases the police colluded actively with the perpetrators.

Close inspection of individual cases, however, throws up a rather sinister pattern of violence. In a majority of the cases, the primary perpetrators of the hate crime are private gangs which instigate and invite onlookers to participate in the violence.

Sometimes murders were not even recorded by the police who instead filed cross complaints against the victims and their families. In some cases named accused have not been arrested, in some others the accused are out on bail. Most cases are yet to reach the trial stage due to slow or shoddy investigation, delays in filing charge-sheets and threat or harassment of complainants and witnesses.

Close inspection of individual cases, however, throws up a rather sinister pattern of violence. In a majority of the cases, the primary perpetrators of the hate crime are private gangs which instigate and invite onlookers to participate in the violence. The crime is committed with impunity in full public view and many perpetrators even take pictures and record videos of themselves engaging in the act of violence. Sometimes they even share it proudly on social media and messaging platforms.

Government support to Cow 'Protectors'

Some states have given incentives and rewards to so called cow protectors. The Gauseva and Gauchar Vikas Board of Gujarat offers cash rewards to those who report cases of cattle being transported or sold for slaughter. The reward is given for each FIR filed.

Haryana has created a Gau Raksha Ayog for proper implementation of laws related to prohibition of slaughter and/or cruelty to cows. The Haryana Government has also set up a 24 hour helpline for people to report cases of cow slaughter and smuggling.

When there was a clamp down on what the government insisted were illegal slaughter houses and meat shops in Uttar Pradesh, there were instances where members of right wing religious organizations and cow protection groups aiding the police in shutting down such establishments.

This collusion and collaboration between vigilantes, anti-minority groups and state authorities appears to legitimize violence and hate crimes.

Polarisation, Impunity, and the Law

Anti-conversion legislation — enacted in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and other states — has been widely criticised by constitutional scholars and the National Commission for Minorities as instruments of harassment. Pastors conducting ordinary prayer meetings have been arrested on unsubstantiated complaints. Meanwhile, social media has enabled the rapid dissemination of inflammatory misinformation about mass conversions and "foreign-funded churches," outpacing both fact-checking and law enforcement.

The Way Forward

India has demonstrated, across centuries, a remarkable capacity for interfaith coexistence. Sufi shrines visited by Hindus, churches built on land donated by Hindu kings, temples and mosques standing side by side — these are historical facts, which gave rise to the concept of 'Sarva Dharam Sambhaav'. The European Renaissance, however, gave birth to the idea of 'Secularism' which treats religion as one's personal matter and separates it from politics and public affairs. For solving the problems of acute unemployment, poverty, hunger, illiteracy & healthcare our country needs to build up a strong united peoples' movement which cannot be built up through fratricidal communal blood-baths but through building up a united democratic and secular movement, which is the need of the hour.

"This mental attitude (communalism) chokes the very spirit of nationalism. We have to root out this attitude else our country will be sweet only in dreams." (Editorial in Jagaran, August 29, 1932)

- Munshi Premchand

On the Failure of Judiciary in Protecting Human Rights and It's Aftermath

Recently the Chief Justice of India Surya Kant stirred a controversy by comparing the unemployed youth to cockroach. No doubt such unsavoury remarks does not go well with status of chief justice. Chief justice is not a person, he represents the highest judicial office. His remarks are construed as the opinion of the supreme court. Not without surprise the millions of youths have burst out in protest identifying themselves as COCKROACHES. Memes, jokes, humour, bantering and what not on the supreme court and the Chief Justice have been poured in generous quantity in social media. Seeing this outburst of people, the panic-stricken central government was reminded of Gen-Z revolt in Bangladesh and Nepal and has banned the twitter account of Cockroach Janatha Party adding fuel to the fire!

Common masses think that when the legislature fails to deliver justice, the courts being free from political interference will deliver justice. Hence, they carry the hope on judiciary as a final resort. But what has been the experience of common masses with the Supreme Court? It is a huge let down.

But the mute question is why such a insensitive remark by Chief Justice? Why have the youth of this country reacted so vociferously and in such huge numbers? Why is the government so panic stricken and has banned Cockroach Janatha Party? The underlying socio-political reasons are quite deep.

Our constitution mandates that the state machinery consisting of Police, Military, administration and judiciary should function independently with each having clear and well-defined area of functioning and with relative independence. Needless to say, the entire system was conceived to serve the common peoples interest.

Given this general background, when we look at the present condition of society, we see that the aspirations of the people are being betrayed by the ruling political parties of various hues and colours without any compunction. The worst problem among many others is unemployment being faced by crores of youth who are termed as Gen-Z (pronounced as GENZEE). Deep frustration and anger against the social system which is responsible for it has set in ready to burst out at a slightest provocation. And that provocation has come in the form of irresponsible statement of the Chief Justice of India! Hence the bewildering protest by Gen -Z which has caught the ruling class by surprise.

Common masses think that when the legislature fails to deliver justice, the courts being free from political interference will deliver justice. Hence, they carry the hope on judiciary as a final resort. But what has been the experience of common masses with the supreme court? It is a huge let down. Sample these few cases.

- Repeated leakage of papers of competitive exams- There was a petition in SC against conduction of NEET exam for various reasons. The SC just brushed aside all the objections without any convincing answers.

- Ramajanma Bhoomi case- none was held responsible for the crime of demolishing Babri mosque. The entire basis of the case which claimed thousands of lives was fake. SC became a laughing stock in the eyes of intelligentsia across the globe, severely damaging its reputation

- Justice Loya Murder Case- Who killed Justice Loya? None was held responsible! If this is the fate of justice to a brother judge what is it that a common man can hope for?

- There are fifty-five million cases pending in Indian courts! When will justice be delivered?

- Araavali range case- SC gave judgement in favour of gradual and progressive destruction of environmentally sensitive range by the corporates. Only after the people protested the judgement was reversed which severely dented the image of the SC.

- Special Intensive Revision- The less said the better. Lakhs if not crores of citizens were denied the right to vote and the SC gave a blanket approval for it!

These are some of the cases out of many, which showcase abject failure of SC to protect and uphold the interest of common people. Added to this is the compromise on the judicial propriety of the judges. It is expected that a judicial officer (Judge) should never succumb to power or pelf while in service or even after retirement. What we see today is that a large number of judges are accepting political appointments post retirement, casting doubts on

the impartiality of the judgement which they delivered while in service. Justice Ranjan Gogoi who became a Rajya Sabha member post retirement and justice Sathashivam who became Governor of a state are the few latest examples.

When we consider all these phenomena, a clear trend is sure to emerge. In the present stage of acute economic crisis and monopolistic state of economy, the independence of different arms of state machinery does not exist anymore. The judiciary is bevoming subservient to executive and facilitating the interests of the corporate houses much to the detriment of interest of common masses. Hence the utterances of the Chief Justice is not accidental. It is the expression of the sentiment of the ruling establishment going against peoples interest. Had it been otherwise his statement would have been more sympathetic towards unemployed youths.

With concentration of capital in the hands of a few corporates and state machinery working for such corporates by trampling the voices of dissent coupled with being anti-minority and displaying religious fanaticism, it reminds us of the state of Germany during Hitler's dictatorial regime. As history has taught us if such an eventuality emerges then there will be total destruction of free flow of thoughts. Debates discussions, dissention which are so essential for a democracy to flourish, disappear! Citizens become by standers watching the society go hayward helplessly! A time has come for every socially conscious citizen to ponder over it and seek answers.

With concentration of capital in the hands of a few corporates and state machinery working for such corporates by trampling the voices of dissent coupled with anti minoritiesm, religious fanaticism, does it not remind us of the state of Germany during Hitler s dictatorial regime? As history has taught us if such an eventuality emerges then there will be total destruction of free flow of thoughts. Debates discussions, dissention which are so essential for a democracy to flourish, disappear! Citizens become by standers watching the society go hayward helplessly! A time has come for every socially conscious citizen to ponder over it and seek answers. Situation demands that the common people be alerted about this danger through mass movements and every available means of propaganda. Whether we will shoulder this historic responsibility or not! it is for us to decide now or never!

"The diffusion of 'constitutional morality', not merely among the majority of any community, but throughout the whole, is the indispensable condition of a government at once free and peaceable."

- George Grote (British Historian)

"Patriotism cannot be our final spiritual shelter; my refuge is humanity. I will not buy glass for the price of diamonds, and I will never allow patriotism to triumph over humanity as long as I live."

- Rabindranath Tagore

"Impartiality is the soul of the judiciary, independence is the lifeblood of the judiciary. Without independence, impartiality cannot thrive."

- Justice S. Muralidhar
(referencing the Madras Bar Association case)

Democracy and Secularism at Stake in West Bengal

Notwithstanding protest movements against such an unconstitutional move, they proceeded with their plan and arbitrarily deleted more than five crores of names from the Electoral Roll across several states which went for elections.. In several states including Bengal several millions of voters were categorised under "Logical Discrepancy," citing errors in names, addresses, etc.

The BJP has eventually succeeded in seizing the Legislative Assembly of West Bengal. They had been desperate to take possession of West Bengal governance and, for decades, were failing to achieve their goal only because their politics had been turned down time and again due to the long history of the democratic spirit of West Bengal, fostered by a series of Left and democratic movements. After consolidating power in most states, they set their sights on West Bengal. To achieve this objective across the country, they systematically employed one unfair and undemocratic measure after another.

Their first significant move was to alter the procedure for appointing the Election Commission of India (ECI). Earlier there was a three member committee comprising the Prime minister, Supreme court chief justice and leader of the opposition which looked into appointment of the ECI. But the Modi government replaced the Chief justice of the apex court by a cabinet minister so that the PM and the union minister who constitute majority of two among the three member committee can always have a final word on such appointments. By making these changes they established complete control over the appointment process and installed their Yes-Men at the top of the country's electoral machinery.

So, flying on the wings of Hindutva, fully supported by the ECI and with the help of the judgement of Hon'ble Supreme Court on the issue, the BJP smoothly alighted on the throne of the state.

The second and most devastating measure was the imposition of SIR (Special Intensive Revision) of the Electoral Roll. Notwithstanding protest movements against such an unconstitutional move, they proceeded with their plan and arbitrarily deleted more than five crores of names from the Electoral Roll across several states which went for elections.. In several states including Bengal several millions of voters were categorised under "Logical Discrepancy," citing errors in names, addresses, etc. Even after submitting legal papers, a large part of those bewildered citizens were marked "Under Adjudication" Overall more than 90 lakhs of voters were kept outside the electoral rolls. Still then the ECI declared the General Election to the W.B. Legislative Assembly, 2026 which is nothing but "annihilation of democracy."

Not only that, when SIR was being carried out, more than two hundred people, including a number of BLOs, died due to excessive tension. Nobody was held accountable for the loss of so many lives. No one was there to answer the question as to why such a short span of time was allotted for SIR exercise particularly in a state having around eight crore voters. To perform this task properly in less than five months time is next to impossible. Still then the ECI went ahead with elections. This raised a serious doubt regarding the political motivation of the ECI itself. Further it also a matter of grave concern that the Hon'ble Supreme Court was guilty of being a complicit partner of the ECI in disenfranchisement of voters.

Further during the elections, BJP leaders carried out an intense campaign on a fictious narrative that 'there is a large scale infiltration in Bengal and it is a threat to the national security'. By falsely declaring that 1.5 to 2 crores of infiltrators had crossed over to the state they tried to divide voters on communal lines and consolidate their vote bank.

It is true that people were not happy with the earlier government led by TMC. The rampant corruption, undemocratic attitude and hooliganism of the TMC Government created grievances among a large section of people, especially people residing in urban areas. The BJP utilized this situation to their advantage. The Prime Minister, the Home Minister, the Defence Minister, and the Chief Ministers of 18 states stationed themselves in W.B. for days together brushing aside their responsibilities as the representatives of the Union

government. They addressed innumerable gatherings every day. They delivered hate speeches, caused immeasurable social pollution and polarised society on religious lines on a serious dimension.

So, flying on the wings of Hindutva, fully supported by the ECI and with the help of the judgement of Hon'ble Supreme Court on the issue, the BJP smoothly alighted on the throne of the state.

As soon as it became clear on 4th May, 2026, that the BJP had got majority in West Bengal, post-poll violence all over West Bengal began to flare up. BJP-sheltered hooligans unleashed attacks on innocent people as well as on the people representing opposition parties. Apart from vandalizing and burning houses, they demolished statues, murdered a number of people, and plundered many shops and houses. Not only no effective measures were taken by the administration to stop such anti-social activities but they are alleged to have maintained conspicuous silence allowing these anti-social elements have a field day.

When the new government took over immediately lakhs of vendors were thrown out from their places on the pretext of clearing the footpaths. They were poor people. Being unemployed many had set up small stalls in foot paths and were earning a meagre income. No amount of entreaty on the part of these helpless unemployed people could save them. They were driven out as dirty garbage. At Dumdum Junction, where they apprehended people's resistance, they carried out "Operation Bulldozer" at midnight. The poor people who had been denied any job were now deprived of their right to earn their livelihood even All these were done in the name of law and order! Hundreds of thousands of families, along with the future of their children, were shattered under the debris. This is how the BJP has established its rule soon after coming to power.

Further, this government has issued a circular making it a punishable offense to criticise the government or even to comment in social media or mass media on any criticism against the government. Journalists are also not allowed to enter the Legislative Assembly House. Thus the government is out to throttle the voice of government employees, semi-government employees, teachers and professors and destroy democracy!

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At the same time, gangs of RSS activists are moving from door to door intimidating Hindu families who, according to the RSS, are not observing religious practices properly and who do not harbour Hindutva mindset. Breaking into the private affairs of innocent citizens, they are asking embarrassing questions, and those having marital relations with anyone belonging to the Muslim community, they order these innocent people to leave the area forever. They are determined to destroy the unity of the common people and bring about changes in the democratic spirit of West Bengal.

Bypassing the judiciary, the police are instructed to pick up the so-called infiltrators and push them into Bangladesh. Every day, a number of Muslim citizens are victimized. They are detained in the "Holding Centres" set up unlawfully by the administration and, in the darkness of night, forced to cross the border. A large number of young and old people are compelled to spend days and nights under the open sky in "NO MAN'S LAND" in indescribable misery and anguish, as Bangladesh naturally refuses to accept them. Yet the Human Rights Commission remains a silent spectator!

This all-out attack on democracy and secularism would seriously damage the age-old bond of love and respect among the people of West Bengal irrespective of caste and creed apart from strangling the fundamental rights of people to express opinions without fear. Freedom of thought, freedom of reasoning, and questioning those in power are regarded as sedition.

Amidst these developments there is also a silver lining which gives a ray of hope. People in the state are not taking things lying down.Common people are getting organized and conducting movements to restore their fundamental rights. Human rights activists should also rise up to the occasion. The urgent task is to overcome this dangerous trend in our state and protect human rights and secularism for the sake of human civilization.

US Threat to Invade Socialist Cuba

Since the triumph of the Cuban Revolution under Fidel Castro in 1959, Cuba has occupied a unique place in global politics. Situated merely ninety miles from the United States, the island became a symbol of antiimperialist resistance and socialist assertion in the Western Hemisphere.

The design of the United States to attack socialist Cuba exposes the belligerent face of the crises-ridden capitalist-imperialist world order today. The recent developments— ranging from the indictment related to the 1996 aircraft incident, heightened surveillance flights near Cuban territory, aggressive rhetoric from Washington, and renewed threats of military action, are not isolated diplomatic postures. Rather, they represent a continuation of the long-standing imperialist hostility of the United States towards socialist Cuba, a nation that has resisted capitalist domination for more than six decades.

It is therefore not surprising that the United States has consistently sought to isolate, destabilize, and overthrow the Cuban state. The decades-long economic blockade, covert operations, assassination attempts, diplomatic pressure, and military threats have all formed part of a broader strategy to crush a socialist alternative in the region.

Since the triumph of the Cuban Revolution under Fidel Castro in 1959, Cuba has occupied a unique place in global politics. Situated merely ninety miles from the United States, the island became a symbol of anti-imperialist resistance and socialist assertion in the Western Hemisphere. The revolution shattered the old neo-colonial order in which Cuba functioned effectively as an economic appendage of American monopoly capital, dominated by US corporations, mafia-controlled tourism, and comprador political elites. The success of the revolution fundamentally challenged Washington's strategic and ideological hegemony in Latin America.

It is therefore not surprising that the United States has consistently sought to isolate, destabilize, and overthrow the Cuban state. The decades-long economic blockade, covert operations, assassination attempts, diplomatic pressure, and military threats have all formed part of a broader strategy to crush a socialist alternative in the region. The present tensions must be understood in this historical background.

Recent reports indicate an intensification of US military and political pressure on Cuba. The release by Cuba's Civil Defence of "The Family Guide for Protection Against Military Aggression" reflects the seriousness with which Havana views the threat of possible military intervention. Cuba's defense doctrine, popularly known as the "War of All People," is rooted in the principle that the entire population must participate in resisting imperialist invasion through militias, guerrilla warfare, and civil defence networks. This doctrine itself is a reflection of Cuba's revolutionary history and the persistent danger posed by US aggression.

The aggressive posture of Washington also reveals the changing dynamics of global imperialism. In the post-Soviet period and collapse of the socialist camp, US imperialism had hoped for its economic dominance through the WTO regime and the neo-liberal policies. Countries refusing to submit to the neoliberal global order have repeatedly faced sanctions, destabilization, proxy wars, and direct military interventions. From Iraq, Libya, Venezuela to Iran, this pattern remains consistent: sovereign nations resisting imperialist dictates become targets of economic strangulation and military intimidation. The insoluble global market crisis due to abysmally low purchasing power of the peoples all over the world, has prompted the governments of the capitalist-imperialist countries to militarize their economies. Such economies can survive only through wars and terrorism, through production and sale of military hardware.

Contemporary wars are, therefore, not fought for democracy or human rights, as imperialist propaganda claims, but for strategic control, resource domination, and maintenance of geopolitical supremacy.

As a result of the devastating impact of the

US embargo, Cuba today faces severe economic difficulties, including fuel shortages, blackouts. These hardships are themselves products of imperialist policy. Economic warfare has become one of the principal instruments through which powerful capitalist states seek regime change without formal declarations of war. Sanctions are designed not merely to weaken governments but to create social misery, political instability, and psychological exhaustion of the population.

Wars and military threats are inseparable from the material interests of monopoly capitalism. Under imperialism, military power becomes a mechanism for protecting capitalist interests globally. Contemporary wars are, therefore, not fought for democracy or human rights, as imperialist propaganda claims, but for strategic control, resource domination, and maintenance of geopolitical supremacy.

The human cost of war and militarism is immense. Beyond the immediate destruction of life and infrastructure, wars devastate societies for generations. Education systems collapse, healthcare networks disintegrate, hunger and migration intensify, and psychological trauma becomes widespread. Modern warfare produces not only physical casualties but also deep social and emotional wounds. The experience of "shell shock" during the First World War, now understood as severe psychological trauma, illustrated how war destroys human beings internally as much as externally. Today, civilians, displaced populations, and soldiers alike continue to suffer from anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress across conflict zones created by imperialist interventions.

The threat against Cuba must also be viewed in relation to the broader militarization of international politics. The same imperialist logic that drives confrontation with Iran, hostility toward Venezuela, and military expansion across different regions also fuels aggression toward Cuba. The capitalist ruling classes require perpetual enemies to justify military expenditure, strategic alliances, and domestic repression. War industries, arms corporations, and geopolitical elites benefit enormously from instability and militarism.

At the same time, Cuba's resilience continues to symbolize the enduring capacity of oppressed peoples to resist imperial domination. Despite immense economic hardship and international isolation, the Cuban people have preserved significant achievements in healthcare, education, and social welfare. Their continued resistance demonstrates that imperialist power, however enormous, is not invincible.

The slogan reportedly echoing across Cuba — "Aqui no se rinde nadie" ("No one surrenders here") — captures the revolutionary spirit that has sustained the island through decades of blockade and hostility. Yet resistance cannot remain confined to Cuba alone. The present global situation underscores the urgent necessity for a coordinated international anti-imperialist and anti-war peace movement.

In the absence of a powerful socialist bloc capable of counterbalancing imperialist aggression, militarism has intensified worldwide. The weakening of organized socialist forces internationally has emboldened imperialist powers to pursue interventions with increasing impunity. Consequently, peace-loving people, workers' organizations, democratic movements, and progressive forces across the world must unite against the politics of war and domination.

Lasting peace today cannot coexist with imperialism. So long as monopoly capitalism dominates the global order, wars, occupations, sanctions, and military threats will continue to recur. The struggle against war is, therefore, inseparable from the struggle against imperialism itself. The defence of Cuba today is not merely a question of defending one nation; it is part of the broader struggle of oppressed peoples against exploitation, domination, and the violent logic of global capitalism.

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CPDRS Activities Across the Nation - A Synopsis

ANDHRA PRADESH

On December 28, 2025, Poura Chaitanya Vedika (PCV) held a roundtable meeting at the Gandhi Bomma Center in Visakhapatnam, presided over by Prof. Kolavennu Chand, to oppose the S.I.R. After the meeting a memorandum is submitted to the District Collector. On February 1, 2026, PCV organized a civic summit titled "Protection of Human Rights - Challenges Before Us" in Kurnool. Featuring keynote addresses by Dr. Parakala Prabhakar and CPDRS General Secretary Prof. K. Sridhar, and presided over by Senior Advocate K. Omkar, the summit passed a resolution against the S.I.R., Memorandum submitted to the Collector on February 2.

Protests against the US and Israel War on Iran

PCV organized widespread anti-war demonstrations across the state. Visakhapatnam hosted a public protest on March 5 led by S. Govindarajulu and C.H. Pramila, followed by an April 19 cultural event featuring anti-war poetry and songs, in presence of Prof. Chand and Dr. N. Chandrasekhar. On March 22, Tirupati organizations united under the slogan "No War - We Want Peace," with active participation from key PCV leadership, including Mr. Raghava and Mr. Vaka Prasad. On March 23, PCV Secretary M. Tejovathi and K. Omkar led a candlelight vigil at Kondareddy Buruju in Kurnool, demanding an immediate halt to the conflict.

Literary Programs

The Tirupati PCV committee actively promoted local literature and civic consciousness in early 2026. Key events included the February 1 release of Raghava's interview compilation, Questioning Voices, and the March 1 launch of Dr. Gitanjali's writings. The committee also hosted a regional poetry competition challenging the "silence of intellectuals on societal injustices," which attracted over 70 entries across the Telugu states and concluded with an April 5 award ceremony



People gathering at Civic Summit in Kurnool



Dr. Parakala Prabhakar addressing the civic summit in Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh

DELHI

Prof. Sridhar addressed the activists meeting in Kidwai Bhavan, New Delhi on March 30th. Prof. Sridhar criticized the demolitions of houses and shops in Shalimar mart in the name of road widening. He spoke on the attacks on democratic rights and secularism throught the country and told how CPDRS is raising its voice in different states through different activities. 30 advocates and CPDRS activists participated in the meeting.

In Delhi a committee is formed in the name of “Basti bachav abhiyan” to fight against the demotion of housed and shops. CPDRS is a part of the committee and actively participating in the protest programs.



GUJARAT

CPDRS, Gujarat unit organised a Citizen's meeting with other civil liberty organisations on the occasion of Anti Emergency Day on 25th June.



Prakash N. Shah addressing the Citizen’s Meeting on Anti Emergency Day on 25th June

8 Law students of Gujarat Law Society (GLS) University took internship under Ahmedabad Women's Action Group (AWAG) and CPDRS.

HARYANA

A meeting of the Center for Protection of Democratic Rights and Secularism (CPDRS) was held in Dharamshala at Sonipat, Haryana. This assembly strongly condemned, in the harshest terms, the heinous act of vandalizing and reducing to rubble the statues of the great revolutionaries of the freedom struggle—Shaheed Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqulla Khan, and Thakur Roshan Singh—who went to the gallows fighting against British imperialism. The incident took place in



Prof. Sridhar addressing the meeting held at Sonipat, Haryana

Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh, on the night of March 23rd. It is highly significant that March 23rd marks the martyrdom day of Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, and Sukhdev. While the entire nation was collectively remembering and paying tribute to these revolutionary icons, anti-social elements insulted our martyrs by desecrating their statues. The meeting expressed deep anger and demanded immediate re-installation of the statues of the martyrs at the very same site with full dignity. It also demanded arrest of perpetrators of this crime along with thorough and deep investigation to uncover the larger conspiracy behind this heinous crime.

KARNATAKA

The Karnataka State Unit of CPDRS conducted several activities in the past six months and has been successful in reaching common masses, particularly the students in considerable numbers through some of the activities reported below.



Meeting at Bengaluru - Prof. Sridhar addressing the CPDRS activists

A seminar was held in Rani Saraladevi Degree College in Bellary city, Bellary district, in the month of March on the ongoing war between USA and Iran. It was attended by about 150 students and about a dozen staff members. The participants appreciated our stand-on- war and have promised to take part in our future activities. On this occasion our bulletin was also sold.

A webinar on the war between USA and Iran was conducted in the month of May. About eighty people attended this webinar. This webinar was addressed by Dr. Aditya Sondhi, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India. A considerable number of law students attended this webinar.

On 21st of April 2026 a meeting consisting of new contacts and district unit members was organised in Bangalore. Prof. Sridhar, our General Secretary, addressed the meeting. All the participants got inspiration after listening to Prof. Sridhar and willing to work towards protecting democratic rights and secularism.

ALWAR (RAJASTHAN)

In response to the growing nationwide repression against human rights' activists and the systemic suppression of dissent, the Alwar District Committee of the Centre for Protection of Democratic Rights and Secularism (CPDRS) has started conducting activities and discussions to spread the call of CPDRS. Getting inspired by the work of CPDRS, few persons



District convention of CPDRS, held at Alwar Rajasthan being addressed by Mr. Pran Sharma, All India Vice President of CPDRS

are coming forward to take up activities to save democratic rights and secularism. They also decided to regularly commemorate the birth and death anniversaries of freedom fighters, martyrs, and iconic literary figures. A group of human rights activists will participate in the upcoming CPDRS Delhi State Convention, scheduled for Sunday, July 19, 2026, at Delhi.

CPDRS conducted a convention was organized at Panchsheel Buddha Vihar, under the chairmanship of Mr. Chet Ram on May 10, 2026, at Alwar (Rajasthan). In his opening address, Mr. Shaukat Ali briefly discussed the need and objectives of CPDRS today. Mr. Ramswarup Saini presented the main resolution, expressing concern about the degradation of the country's economic, political, social, and cultural condition, curtailment of civil rights, and attacks on the autonomy of democratic institutions. A pledge was made to protect secularism and democratic values. Adv. Mr. Ashok Sharma, spoke in support of the main resolution. A proposal on SIR was presented by Prof. S.S. Bhati. The proposal on the Aravalli Range of hills was presented by Mr. Govind Singh which was supported by Mr. Virendra Krantikari and Mr. H.K. Khare. Mr. Hari Singh Meena, also spoke at the meeting. Mr. Pran Sharma, one of the Vice Presidents, All India CPDRS, and the main speaker on the occasion, discussed in detail the history, objectives and methodology of CPDRS. He appealed to the newly elected committee to get to the root of the problem and raise their voice of protest by organizing civil society in Alwar and throughout the state of Rajasthan. A new Alwar District Committee of CPDRS was elected with Mr. Chetram Jatav as President, Mr. Shaukat Ali and Mr. Surendra Saini as vice presidents and Mr. Ramswaroop Saini as the Secretary.

TELANGANA

CPDRS Telangana chapter representatives gave a



Memorandum being submitted to the Chief Electoral Officer

memorandum to the chief electoral officer, Telangana, urging him not to implement Special Intensive Revision of voter rolls. Along with Prof. Sk Jani Basha, the state in charge of CPDRS, Sri Teja, Mr. K Praddep Kumar and Mr. Mohammad Asif met the CEO and gave the memorandum.

CPDRS Telangana conducted a meeting on Special Intensice Revision of voter lists in Hyderabad on February 24th. Prof. K Sridhar, All India General Secretary of CPDRS spoke on the motive behind the SIR. 25 persons from different professions attended the meeting and listened to Prof Sridhar attentively.



Prof. K Sridhar addressing the meeting on SIR in Hyderabad

ODISA

Between November 2025 and May 2026, the Centre for Protection of Democratic Rights and Secularism (CPDRS), Odisha, consistently defended civil liberties, marginalized communities, and workers' rights through fact-finding missions, legal action, and grassroots advocacy.

Anti-Displacement and Environmental Defense

CPDRS spearheaded the defense of agrarian communities resisting the Jindal-POSCO mega steel project in Keonjhar. Following the arbitrary November 2025 arrest of movement leader Benudhar Sardar, a CPDRS delegation petitioned the state DGP in December. As police coercion intensified — marked by a February 2026 baton charge against tribal women attending Gram Sabhas—CPDRS pursued legal action against the April 2026 unlawful arrest of Prakash Mallick, citing a direct violation of a High Court anticipatory bail order. Simultaneously, CPDRS supported anti-bauxite mining resistance in Sijimali. CPDRS condemned the state's interception of Medha Patkar on World Environment Day 2025, protested the April 2026 imposition of Section 144, and demanded the withdrawal of cases against 22 local activists, including Lingaraj Azad.

Custodial Justice and Labor Rights

Following the alleged custodial death of tribal youth Purna Kalar in Dabugam, CPDRS demanded a formal judicial inquiry and ₹20 Lakhs in compensation. CPDRS also intervened in severe workplace negligence fatalities—at the Board of Revenue, a Nadalpur septic tank, and Shailabala Women's College—seeking identical compensation and strict safety enforcement. CPDRS also contested the arbitrary profiling of 400 construction workers suspected of being undocumented foreign nationals.

Civil Liberties and Organized Programs

CPDRS actively condemned the invocation of ESMA against striking OMSA doctors and criticized the national suspension of FDTL safety rules for pilots. To build civic awareness, CPDRS organized a public seminar at Gandhi Bhawan on human rights and hosted digital legal panels on navigating the new criminal codes. Moving forward, CPDRS resolves to expand legal aid and strengthen strategic ties with the National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM).

UTTAR PRADESH

Shri Kunche Shridhar General Secretary of All India CPDRS held an interactive session with advocates and other people at Moradabad on 28-03-2026. Shri Pran Sharma All India Vice - President of CPDRS was also present on this ocassion. A good



number of advocates and other intellectuals participated in this intraction. The interaction was a living one. The discussion was conducted by Amit Saxena. At the end of discussion it was decided to hold a regional convention of Western up in near future.

CPDRS Activities in West Bengal

January to May 2026

- CPDRS sent a fact-finding team to Canning Police Station to inquire into an alleged custodial murder. CPDRS also sent letters to the National Human Rights Commission and the State Human Rights Commission demanding action against the police officials involved in the incident.

- On 1 January 2026, a book stall was organized by CPDRS at the Bankura District Book Fair.
- CPDRS sent representatives to the state conference of another human rights organization, APDR, held at Serampore, Hooghly, on 3 January 2026.
- CPDRS organized protest rallies at different places across the state against the imperialist attack by the United States on Venezuela on 4 January 2026.
- CPDRS submitted a deputation to the Chief Medical Officer of Health, Medinipur, demanding the urgent recruitment of medical officers at Medinipur Central Correctional Home on 6 January 2026.
- From 5–11 January 2026, a book stall was organized by CPDRS at the Murshidabad District Book Fair.
- CPDRS observed the birth anniversary of the great freedom fighter Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on 23 January 2026.



Professor K. Sridhar is addressing the delegate session of CPDRS 5th state conference of West Bengal on 8 February 2026



Newly elected President of CPDRS West Bengal state committee senior advocate Shubhrangshu Chaki is addressing the same.

- CPDRS organized a meeting at Arambagh, Hooghly district, on 25 January 2026 to ensure the success of the 5th State Conference.
- CPDRS sent a fact-finding team to Nazirabad, Narendrapur, South 24 Parganas, regarding a fire incident at a storehouse in which several people lost their lives tragically. CPDRS submitted a deputation to Narendrapur Police Station demanding stringent action against those responsible for the incident.



CPDRS members are addressing the gathering of deleted voters to initiate a movement and form a committee.

- CPDRS participated in a convention supporting the movement of ASHA workers at Kolkata Press Club on 30 January 2026.
- The successful 5th State Conference of CPDRS was organized at Medinipur town, West Bengal, on 7–8 February 2026, in the presence of the All India General Secretary.
- CPDRS organized a protest meeting against SIR on 12 February 2026 at Choa Hut, Murshidabad district.
- CPDRS observed International Mother Language Day on 21 February 2026.
- CPDRS organized a protest meeting against SIR at Sealdah Station on 10 March 2026.
- CPDRS sent a fact-finding team to Maheshtala, South 24 Parganas, regarding atrocities against a minor girl. CPDRS submitted a deputation to Maheshtala Police Station demanding stringent action against the culprits involved.
- CPDRS organized review meetings of the 5th State Conference in different districts of West Bengal throughout February and March 2026.
- CPDRS organized a seminar on secularism at Jalpaiguri on 8 March 2026.
- CPDRS organized a protest meeting and submitted a deputation to the District Magistrate against SIR at Murshidabad on 9 March 2026.
- On International Women's Day (8 March 2026), CPDRS organized a meeting at Budge Budge, South 24 Parganas.
- CPDRS organized a protest meeting and submitted a deputation to the District Magistrate against SIR at Cooch Behar on 10 March 2026.
- CPDRS organized a protest meeting against SIR in West Medinipur on 20 March 2026.
- CPDRS organized a protest meeting against SIR at Malda on 22 March 2026.

- CPDRS observed the Martyrs' Day of Bhagat Singh on 23 March 2026.
- CPDRS sent a letter to the Chief Justice of India on 31 March 2026 regarding logical discrepancies in the SIR process in West Bengal.
- CPDRS organized a protest meeting and submitted a deputation to representatives of the Election Commission against SIR at Jalpaiguri on 8 April 2026.
- CPDRS organized camps in different parts of the state to help people fill up forms related to the SIR process.
- CPDRS observed the birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore on 9 May 2026.
- During this period, CPDRS issued statements:
  - condemning the murder of Bengali labourers in Odisha,
  - supporting the justified movement of ASHA workers across the state,
  - protesting against the harassment of social worker Amir Chand of Nadia district,
  - opposing the imperialist attack of the United States on Iran,
  - protesting against the deletion of names from voter lists in the name of SIR,
  - condemning post-poll violence in West Bengal, and
  - protesting against the unethical arrest of Garga Chatterjee, Secretary of Bangla Pokkho.
- During this period, the CPDRS West Bengal State Committee published booklets and reports on:
  - SIR,
  - communal violence in Murshidabad, and
  - People's Rights Conference issue.



Citizens' Convention in Kolkata on 20 June to protest against the disenfranchisement of legitimate citizens in the name of SIR, the illegal eviction of street vendors, and state-sponsored human rights violations across the state."

Dear Friends,

For long, the **CENTRE FOR PROTECTION OF DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS & SECULARISM (CPDRS)** has stood at the forefront of the struggle for a **JUST AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETY**, built on the principles of **DEMOCRACY, SECULARISM**, and the **CAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS**.

We are proud to publish the **VOICE OF SECULAR DEMOCRACY** as the second online bulletin of CPDRS—our new digital home. We are committed to providing dispassionate, objective analysis in pursuit of our **CORE MISSION**.

In today's times where casteism, communalism, and other divisive tendencies are vitiating the social atmosphere—and where the law is often **SKEWED TOWARD THE POWERS THAT BE** rather than the common citizen—we believe it is **MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER** to provide a platform for **PROPAGATING TRUTH** and **CREATING AWARENESS**. Our goal is to voice the legitimate concerns of marginalized and affected people to build a BETTER SOCIETY.

Our mission is not only to inform, but to **INSPIRE ACTION** guided by proper knowledge so as to **ACT CORRECTLY** to ensure a **BETTER TOMORROW** for every citizen.

The ability to **EXPRESS ONE'S MIND** and **SEEK JUSTICE** is fundamental to any healthy society. Being **WELL INFORMED** is the larger part of fighting for human rights. The **CPDRS** attempts to play a crucial role in raising a voice against **HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSE** and in **SAFEGUARDING SECULARISM** in our country.

JOIN US, LEND YOUR SUPPORT, AND STRENGTHEN THIS MOVEMENT FOR JUSTICE!

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