

QUARTERLY

AMBEDKAR VISION

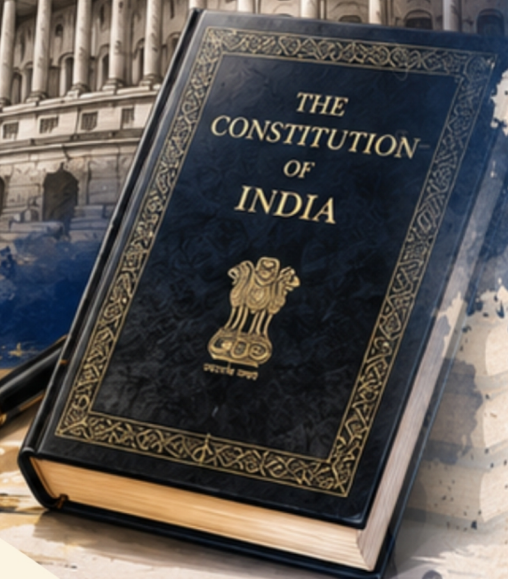
VOL: 09

ISSUE: 02

APR.-JUN. 2026

*"Educate,
Agitate,
Organize."*

– B. R. Ambedkar



Ambedkar Jayanti:

A Personal Tribute and
Retrospective Reflection

[pg.3]

From Cockroaches to 14.5 Million Followers

Dalit Youth's Satirical Uprising Outpaces
BJP on Instagram, Faces X Ban in India

[pg.1]



Ambedkar Society for South Asia

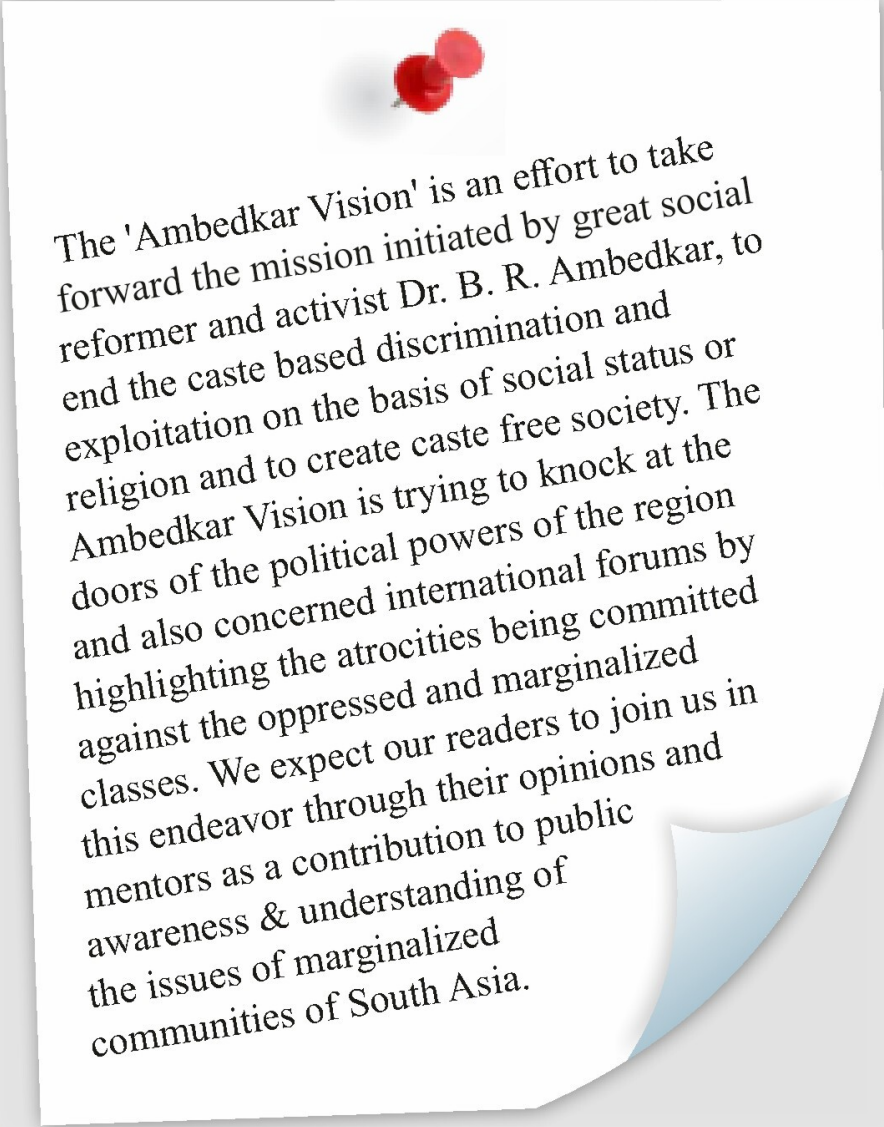
QUARTERLY AMBEDKAR VISION

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The 'Ambedkar Vision' is an effort to take forward the mission initiated by great social reformer and activist Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, to end the caste based discrimination and exploitation on the basis of social status or religion and to create caste free society. The Ambedkar Vision is trying to knock at the doors of the political powers of the region and also concerned international forums by highlighting the atrocities being committed against the oppressed and marginalized classes. We expect our readers to join us in this endeavor through their opinions and mentors as a contribution to public awareness & understanding of the issues of marginalized communities of South Asia.

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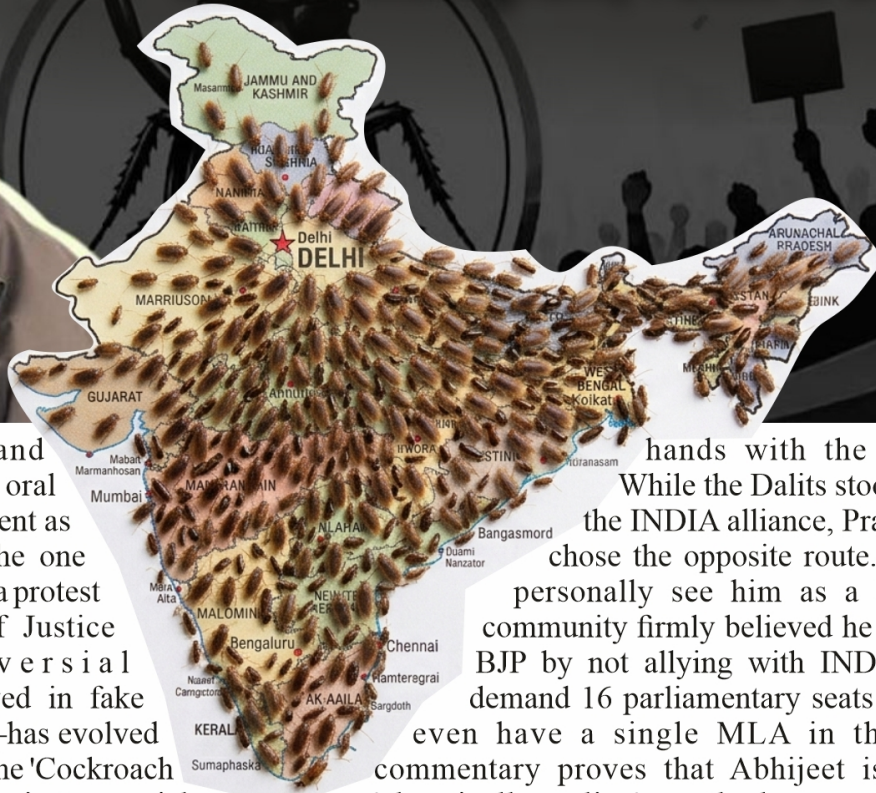
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from the Editor

Welcome to the latest edition of 'Ambedkar Vision'. A recent survey in Ontario, Canada, is a striking reminder that caste does not necessarily disappear when Indians or South Asians cross international borders. Among 128 respondents, around half reported caste discrimination in workplaces, educational institutions, housing or social settings, while nearly 69% said it had affected their mental health. The discrimination was often subtle—visible in friendships, marriages, employment, housing and religious gatherings. The message is uncomfortable but clear: migration can change geography, but it does not automatically dismantle social hierarchy. Scholar Suraj Yengde's observations across nearly 15 countries point in the same direction. Caste travels with people as an inherited social identity, adapting to new societies and surviving across generations. The emergence of Ambedkarite student groups and anti-caste initiatives abroad shows that younger generations are not simply accepting this inheritance; they are questioning it. But caste is not only a social attitude. It can determine where people live, what services they receive and what opportunities they get. A major neighbourhood-level study in India found significant segregation affecting Muslims and Scheduled Castes, with Muslim neighbourhoods facing poorer access to piped water and secondary schools, while Dalit neighbourhoods experienced greater infrastructure deficits. Such inequalities can remain invisible in district- or state-level statistics. Equality on paper, therefore, can coexist with inequality on the ground. The same contradiction appears in the demand for rights by Dalit Christians and Dalit Muslims. The Dalit Christian Manifesto 2026 argues that conversion does not erase caste and calls for equal constitutional protection, safeguards against caste violence, educational and economic opportunities and political representation. In Nepal, Dalit activists have similarly argued that a state apology for historical discrimination must be accompanied by legislation, budgets, reparations and representation. An apology without structural change cannot heal a structural wound. The experiences of minorities elsewhere in South Asia reinforce this lesson. In Bangladesh, the reported decline in the Hindu population share and allegations of large-scale property dispossession illustrate how insecurity and institutional discrimination can produce consequences lasting generations. Yet there are also examples of what opportunity can achieve. The success of Jeevan Rebari and Khem Chand Jandora, who qualified for Pakistan's Central Superior Services, demonstrates the transformative potential of access to education and public institutions. Perhaps the most striking recent example of youth asserting themselves is India's Cockroach Janta Party (CJP). What began in May 2026 as a satirical response to a controversial Supreme Court remark about “cockroaches” rapidly became a Gen Z protest movement. Its humor gave young people a language through which to express anger over unemployment, examination irregularities and the perceived failure of institutions. Within weeks, the movement moved from Instagram to the streets, with its first major protest at Delhi's Jantar Mantar on June 6 demanding the resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over examination controversies. The significance of CJP was not simply its extraordinary online popularity. It demonstrated that a generation often described as politically apathetic could mobilise rapidly when an issue touched its everyday anxieties. The movement continued through sit-ins and nationwide protests, eventually becoming a sustained campaign around examination integrity and youth rights. It showed young Indians that protest can produce political consequences. At the heart of these developments lies the continuing relevance of B.R. Ambedkar. His struggle was never merely about removing individual acts of discrimination; it was about dismantling a social order that made inequality appear natural. His description of caste society as a “multi-storeyed building without stairs” remains painfully relevant. This is why Ambedkar cannot be reduced to statues, anniversaries and speeches. His legacy demands difficult questions: Why does birth still influence opportunity? Why does caste survive across borders? Why can constitutional rights weaken at the neighbourhood and institutional level? And why must young people repeatedly take to the streets to demand rights that already exist in principle? Harmony without equality can preserve hierarchy. Representation without dignity can become tokenism. And constitutional promises without implementation remain promises. From caste in Canada to segregation in India, from Dalit rights in Nepal to minority representation in Pakistan and from the CJP's youth uprising to Ambedkar's unfinished struggle, one question connects them all: Can equality travel farther than caste? The answer will depend on whether today's generation merely inherits history—or has the courage to change it.

From "Cockroaches" to 14.5 Million Followers: Dalit Youth's Satirical Uprising Outpaces BJP on Instagram, Faces X Ban in India



Rarely in India's judicial and political history has a single oral remark triggered a mass movement as explosive and widespread as the one unfolding today. What started as a protest against Supreme Court Chief Justice Surya Kant's controversial remark—labeling youth involved in fake degree cases as "cockroaches"—has evolved into a formidable digital force. The 'Cockroach Janta Party' (CJP) is no longer just a social media trend; it has become a nightmare for the political establishment, marked by two historic turning points.

First, the mastermind behind the movement, Abhijeet Dipke—a Public Relations Master's student at Boston University—has openly revealed his social background, proudly identifying as a Dalit.

Second, the movement has shattered every conceivable social media record within a mere four days, prompting swift retaliatory action from the government, which has successfully lobbied to have the party's official X (formerly Twitter) account withheld in India. Initially presenting himself with a dose of self-deprecating humor as a "lazy and unemployed" youth, CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke's social background provides a sharp ideological edge to this movement. His political acumen and understanding of Dalit discourse are not overnight developments. In an X post dated June 6, 2024, Abhijeet openly discussed his identity and offered a piercing critique of Dalit politics in Maharashtra. Criticizing Prakash Ambedkar's political strategy regarding the INDIA bloc post-Lok Sabha elections, Abhijeet wrote:

"Prakash Ambedkar's ego cost him heavily. Being from the Dalit community, I personally saw how unhappy the Dalits in Maharashtra were regarding his refusal to join

hands with the INDIA block. While the Dalits stood firmly behind the INDIA alliance, Prakash Ambedkar chose the opposite route. Though I don't personally see him as a BJP agent, the community firmly believed he was helping the BJP by not allying with INDIA. You cannot demand 16 parliamentary seats when you don't even have a single MLA in the state." This commentary proves that Abhijeet is not merely a 'chronically online' youth, but a politically astute observer who understands the pulse of the Bahujan community. Political analysts note that the Chief Justice's "cockroach" remark is being interpreted not just as 'anti-youth,' but as a glaring reflection of the system's deep-rooted insensitivity toward historically marginalized communities. When those at the apex of power liken the youth to pests, it exposes a feudal and casteist mindset that has historically treated the oppressed as subhuman.

14.5 Million Followers in 4 Days: Eclipsing the BJP's Digital Empire

The sheer ground-level and digital might of this movement is evident in its unprecedented growth on Instagram—a feat that takes traditional political parties decades to achieve. According to the latest data, the CJP's Instagram following has surged from an already staggering 10.5 million to over 14.5 million (1.45 crore). With these record-breaking numbers, the CJP has left the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)—which claims to be the world's largest political party—in the dust regarding Instagram reach. Currently, the BJP's official Instagram handle hovers around 8.7 million followers, putting the satirical CJP millions of followers ahead.



Digital experts point to Instagram's algorithm as the catalyst. The CJP's short-form videos—blending biting satire, youthful angst, demands for employment and direct attacks on systemic flaws—garnered tens of millions of views right out of the gate. The youth found an instant, visceral connection with the content. The numbers speak for themselves:

48 Hours: 550,000 followers

72 Hours (Day 3): 6.2 million followers

96 Hours (Day 4): 14.5+ million followers

Furthermore, over 600,000 youth have formally registered for membership via the CJP's official website.

State Panic? CJP's X Account Withheld in India

As the Cockroach Janta Party's digital footprint began posing a legitimate challenge to mainstream political narratives, the oppressive arm of the establishment swung into action. Abhijeet Dipke confirmed that in response to a "Legal Demand" from the Indian government, the official CJP account on X (Twitter) has been completely withheld in India. Just before the ban, the handle had rapidly amassed over 200,000 followers. X generally restricts accounts when it receives a "valid and properly scoped request" from an authorized government entity. History dictates that whenever a movement threatens to spiral out of the establishment's control, censorship follows. However, despite the X ban, the CJP's Instagram account remains fully active, continuing to broadcast to its 14.5 million followers. The youth have dubbed this digital censorship a "sign of fear." In a statement published on their website, the CJP declared:

"We were fully aware that there would be attempts to destroy us and paint us as anti-social elements. But we want to make it absolutely clear that the CJP firmly believes in the Constitution of India and will always work to protect its values." Constitutional Decorum and

a 5-Point Manifesto: The Serious Message Behind the Satire. Political parties would be making a grave error if they dismiss the CJP as a mere 'funny trend.' The party's manifesto targets the most glaring loopholes and hypocrisies in India's democratic system through five core demands:

1. Judicial Impartiality: No Chief Justice shall be eligible for a Rajya Sabha seat or any other government post post-retirement.

2. Protection of Voting Rights: If a legitimate vote is deleted in any state, the Chief Election Commissioner will be held accountable and arrested under the UAPA.

3. Genuine Women's Reservation: Implementation of a direct 50% reservation for women in Parliament (without increasing the total number of seats) and a mandated 50% reservation in the Cabinet.

4. Restoration of Free Media: Cancellation of broadcasting licenses for media houses owned by massive corporate conglomerates (such as Ambani and Adani) to clear the stage for

independent journalism.

5. Strict Anti-Defection: Any MLA or MP who switches parties post-election will face an absolute 20-year ban from contesting elections or holding any public office.

The Convergence of Gen Z and Bahun Consciousness

India's youth, particularly Gen Z, is navigating an era of unprecedented crisis. This is a generation scarred by the educational collapse during the COVID-19 pandemic, suffocated by shrinking employment opportunities and repeatedly betrayed by government exam paper leaks. In this volatile climate, channeling the outrage sparked by a Supreme Court remark into a highly organized, politically charged movement—driven by a Dalit youth using humor, satire and digital activism—signals a major shift in the future of Indian politics. If nothing else, the government's swift digital censorship proves one thing: the "Cockroach Army" has successfully sent shockwaves through the corridors of power.



Source: The Mooknayak

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— B. R. Ambedkar

Ambedkar Jayanti:

A Personal Tribute and
Retrospective Reflection

Dr Suresh Khairnar

On the birth anniversary of B. R. Ambedkar, I offer this personal reflection shaped by years of engagement, observation and travel.

This is not merely a tribute, but an attempt to revisit the life, ideas and warnings of Babasaheb as I have understood them.

Many people continue to believe that Babasaheb borrowed the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity from the French Revolution. In my understanding, this is not correct. These values came to him through the life and teachings of the Buddha.

When Babasaheb was a young boy, barely 10 or 11, a scholar named Krishna Rao Keluskar, a friend of his father, gifted him a biography of the Buddha at a felicitation organised by his community. That book, as I see it, gave a historic direction to his life.

Even before this, as a child, Babasaheb showed an extraordinary capacity to question. After reading the Ramayana and Mahabharata, he expressed his discomfort with the injustices embedded in them—whether it was the humiliation of Karna, the cutting of Eklavya's thumb, or the treatment of Sita and Shambuka.

To me, this early moral clarity explains the path he later chose.

Born into an “untouchable” caste, Babasaheb did not encounter discrimination as an abstraction but as a daily reality.

From being made to sit outside the classroom as a child in Satara to being denied basic dignity even after returning from England with a doctorate, these experiences left a deep imprint.

His inability to find housing in Baroda and his eventual resignation from service are not just incidents—they reveal the depth of social exclusion. I see his struggles in the 1920s and 1930s as foundational to modern India.

The Mahad Satyagraha of 1927, asserting the right of untouchables to draw water from a public tank, was not a small reformist step but a direct challenge to the social order.

Similarly, the long and ultimately unsuccessful struggle for entry into the Kalaram temple in Nashik exposed the rigid resistance of orthodox forces.

By 1935, at Yeola, Babasaheb's frustration had reached a decisive point. His declaration—though born a Hindu, he would not die one—was not rhetorical.

Alongside it, he posed eleven fundamental questions to Hindu society about equality, humanity and fraternity. In my view, these questions remain unanswered even today.

The period between that declaration and his conversion in 1956 is also telling. Organizations like the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, founded in 1925, had decades to respond meaningfully to his critique.

I have often asked: did they engage with his questions in any substantive way?

On 14 October 1956, at Nagpur, Babasaheb embraced Buddhism along with lakhs of followers. I see this not only as a personal spiritual decision but as a collective social transformation—a rejection of caste hierarchy and an embrace of an egalitarian ethic rooted in the teachings of the Buddha.

History, however, carries its own ironies. Barely two months later, on 6 December 1956, Babasaheb passed away. And on the same date in 1992, the demolition of the Babri Masjid took place—an event that, to my mind, symbolises the continuing tensions within Indian society. In reflecting on Babasaheb,

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Agitate,
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B. R. Ambedkar



*“I measure the
progress of a community,
by the degree of progress
which women achieved.”*

— B. R. Ambedkar

Source: Counter Currents

Ontario survey reveals invisible caste bias in South Asian communities across Canada



Aashi Samith



A decade after US-based Equality Labs released its first survey on caste discrimination in the United States, an Ambedkarite group in Canada has released the findings of a similar survey in that country, which shows that people of South Asian heritage—the majority of them Indians—practise discrimination against people of lowered castes and Dalits.

The South Asian Dalit Adivasi Network (SADAN) and researchers from four Canadian universities conducted the community-oriented survey and released the Caste Experiences in Ontario Survey report to coincide with Dalit History Month, which is observed in April and Ambedkar Jayanti, which falls on April 14.

The survey received responses from 128 people, the majority of whom—85%—traced their roots to India, while the remaining had ancestry in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. 61% of the respondents were caste marginalised and 38% self-identified as Dalit or caste-oppressed.

The respondents also professed different faiths—Hinduism, Buddhism, Ravidassia, Dalit and Adivasi practices. The majority of respondents spoke Hindi (70%), while 37% spoke Punjabi and 27% Tamil.

Over 40% of respondents said they were discriminated against at the workplace and educational institutions. Discrimination also spilled over into social relationships such as friendships and marital alliances, as well as at places of worship and cultural gatherings.

The report was authored by Kavya Harshita Jidugu, Harshita Yalamarty, Vijay Puli, Jatin, Chinnaiah Jangam and Sailaja Krishnamurti. Kavya is a PhD candidate at Queen's University. Harshita is an assistant professor

and Canada Research Chair in gender and migration (Tier 2) at Toronto Metropolitan University. Vijay Puli is a founder and executive director of SADAN. Jatin is a PhD scholar and co-founder of the Forum for Anti-Caste Activism at the University of Toronto. Chinnaiah is an associate professor at Carleton University of Toronto and co-founder of SADAN. Sailaja is an associate professor and HoD of gender studies at Queen's University. Kavya, who was a lead researcher in the project team, said in a press release: “The courage it took for community members to come forward and speak about caste-based discrimination is both powerful and essential to addressing casteism in Canada and we are grateful for the community's leadership.”

Subtle biases

The report noted that South Asians formed the largest visible minority in Canada and while researchers had studied South Asians in terms of a diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) framework, social relations within South Asians had not received much attention. The survey asked 38 questions divided into four sections: demographic information, personal experiences of caste discrimination, discrimination in the community and personal reflections. Participants were also allowed to record their views on certain questions. Many respondents talked about caste discrimination being less overt compared to India. However, as one respondent put it, “subtle biases persist, making it harder at times to feel fully included or accepted.

This has somewhat affected my sense of belonging, particularly within diaspora circles where caste consciousness continues to influence social relationships.”



One respondent spoke of Brahmins wearing a sacred thread in public places such as swimming pools as an example of practices that “don't directly attack anyone but quietly establish superiority in society”. “On the surface, this appears to be a religious practice, but it actually serves as a way of signalling to others that they are superior to other Hindus... it's an assertion of religious and caste superiority”. Around 50% of the participants—of which 92% were from caste marginalised backgrounds—have experienced caste-based discrimination in their workplaces, educational institutions, while purchasing or renting homes and in other social settings. More than half of these respondents said they had been subjected to discrimination more than once. Around 69% of respondents said that caste discrimination has impacted their mental health.

How casteism affects life in Canada

Casteism at the workplace included interviewers asking job aspirants for their caste because they couldn't identify the candidate's caste from their last name and paying lower wages to Dalits than others for the same work. More than 50% interviewees said that caste discrimination has prevented them from progressing in their career. Several people spoke of being asked about their caste by roommates or neighbours, encountering rental listings that specified acceptable caste backgrounds and housing being denied at the last minute when the tenant's caste was identified. One respondent stated that “(my) upper caste roommate called me impure because I was eating meat (sic).”

Many respondents described being bullied for their skin colour or meat diet in school. Students reportedly also face bias from their faculty during their vivas, assignments, or exams. A respondent noted the lack of diversity within university systems that work in the South Asian context, where there is “virtually no Dalit, Bahujan, Adivasi representation either at faculty-level or even in terms of the curriculum...”

Many respondents spoke of how they were excluded or segregated in social settings, particularly religious gatherings. One respondent said, “The so-called upper caste people don't prefer to mingle with Dalits ... they won't be invited in family puja, ceremonies, even if invited, they will have separate area to eat (sic).” One person spoke of how their family tried to ensure that their wedding was performed and “in contact” with only people from their caste (dominant). “Although this consideration was ultimately removed by me and my partner, we saw the initial hesitation (sic).”

The report notes that some forward caste parents tell their wards not to speak to their marginalised caste peers. Dalit Muslim respondents drew connections between casteism and Islamophobia in both Canada and India. “I have witnessed behaviours that are exclusionary,

oppressive, racist and sexist towards Christians, Dalits, Muslims and other groups,” said a respondent. Another spoke of being called slurs and names and “even untouchability at times. Not willing to share food with us. Or not wanting to marry us.” One queer and Dalit woman talked about being unable to trust an Indian in Canada for fear of being ill-treated. “I have always been scared to seek friendships with other Indians in Canada for fear of judgement and discrimination. I miss having cultural ties here, but I haven't been able to trust any Indian immigrant with my personal life in my four years of living in Canada.” While just about half of all respondents had had personal experience of discrimination, two-thirds of all respondents had witnessed caste discrimination being practised against others. About 64% of all respondents also agreed that caste affects social interactions and relationships among South Asians in Canada. Similarly, over 80% of all respondents believed that casteism affected educational and employment opportunities for South Asians in Canada.

In a rare instance, some respondents acknowledged their caste privilege and its impact on their lives. One respondent said, “My last name indicates my high caste status which means I get automatic respect that I did not really earn. It's like I am a part of a club that I have no idea about but others do and somehow think I am more deserving.” Another person mentioned that they had asked their mother what ‘Jatt’ means—Jatt is a landowning caste in parts of north India. “She explained that it wasn't important here and that there are specific teachings in Sikhi that make it so caste should not dictate who we hang out with or not. I also learned that my elders were taught to be very proud to be jatt... so there are contradictions galore,” the person said.

The way forward

The survey report recommended that the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) and provincial human rights commissions should recognise caste as a distinct category of discrimination. Further, it urged governments, public sector institutions and services, labour unions and private sector employers to address caste-based discrimination in hiring and formulate anti-discrimination policies. It also suggested that the Canadian government's Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) should recognise caste as grounds for discrimination and conduct caste awareness training for decision makers. It urged educational institutions to incorporate caste awareness in curricula, policy and programming.

Further, it recommended that Statistics Canada, the national statistical office, develop a strategy for the voluntary collection of data about caste amongst South Asians in Canada.

Source: The News Minute

Delay in Krishna Temple reconstruction irks Hindu community in Rawalpindi

Aamir Yasin



Reconstruction work on Krishna Temple in the garrison city, the only place of worship for the Hindu community in the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad, has yet to be completed despite the passage of the last 10 months, preventing the community from holding mass gatherings on Diwali and Holi.

However, Punjab Minister for Minority Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora paid a detailed visit to Rawalpindi and directed that the temple's reconstruction be completed as soon as possible.

According to the temple management, the total cost of the project is Rs40 million.

The temple was handed over to the Evacuee Trust Property Board on June 12, 2025 and work began in July.

The reconstruction includes halls, rooms, washrooms and other parts of the building. At present, the puja room and veranda are intact, while the rest of the temple is under construction.

Members of the Hindu community said that due to the ongoing work, many avoided visiting the temple, particularly on Tuesdays, which is a prayer day.

They said most people have been offering puja (prayers) at home.

The provincial minister reviewed the repair and renovation work in detail and officials briefed him on the ongoing construction.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Arora said that there would be no compromise on the speed and quality of work.

“The Constitution of Pakistan protects the rights of minorities. Followers of all religions in the country enjoy religious freedom,” he said.

The minister directed that the repair and renovation work be completed at the earliest.

Later, he visited Haveli Sajjan Singh, where officials briefed him on ongoing development work.

Speaking there, Mr Arora said that, in line with the chief minister's vision, beautification and preservation of historical religious places were underway.

“Sajjan Singh Haveli is a symbol of historical heritage. Protection of religious historical buildings is being ensured,” he said.

The provincial minister also visited the Maharishi Guru Om Balmik Temple, where members of the Hindu community informed him about the need for development work. He directed the authorities to address the issues.

When contacted, Pakistan Hindu Sikh Social Welfare Council President Sardar Heera Lal said the Hindu community thanked the provincial government for the temple's reconstruction and urged early completion of the project.

Source: Dawn



Anti-Christian violence 'normalized, systemic' in Indian states

Michael Gonsalves

A fact-finding team of prominent rights activists and journalists has warned that constitutional guarantees of freedom of conscience, religious liberty and equal citizenship were facing unprecedented challenges in India. The People's Tribunal on Violence Against Christians in India, in a statement issued on June 2, said: "When institutions entrusted with protecting constitutional rights fail to act, discrimination becomes normalized and systemic."

The statement was issued after a public hearing held in the national capital, New Delhi, which marked the culmination of a wider investigation that included field visits and public hearings by the tribunal members in Chhattisgarh in central India and Odisha in eastern India in April-May this year.

"The tribunal met hundreds of individuals from affected communities, particularly among Adivasi and Dalit Christians, documenting incidents of violence, social boycott, displacement and denial of constitutional rights," its member John Dayal, a veteran journalist and activist, told UCA News on June 2.

The other members of the tribunal included human rights advocate Harsh Mandar, historian Tanika Sarkar, senior journalist Pamela Philipose and activist Vidya Dinkar.

"Survivors alleged instances where police failed to protect victims, delayed investigations, registered cases against those who had been attacked, or encouraged informal settlements rather than legal action," the statement said.

It further raised concerns that judicial and legislative

developments in recent decades had often failed to provide adequate protection to vulnerable minorities in India. Mander said the incidents documented before the tribunal could not be dismissed as isolated acts of prejudice or spontaneous expressions of hostility. "Rather, they revealed a systematic pattern of exclusion that threatened the constitutional promise of equal citizenship and eroded fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the Indian Constitution," he said.

Sarkar warned against the normalization of majoritarian intolerance and the shrinking space for religious freedom and democratic citizenship. The tribunal also screened a documentary on the growing violence against Christians in Madhya Pradesh state in central India.

Produced by Karwan-e-Mohabbat (Caravan of Love), a people's campaign to uphold the universal values of the constitution, it was filmed during the fact-finding mission in May across six districts — Jhabua, Burhanpur, Indore, Dhar, Khandwa and Sehore.

The film documents first-hand accounts of attacks on churches and prayer meetings, intimidation of pastors and worshippers, arrests under anti-conversion laws, social ostracization, denial of burial rights and the pervasive climate of fear affecting Christian communities.

Evidence presented before the panel "detailed the alleged role of Hindutva organizations as well as the response of political leaders, police and judicial institutions," the statement noted.

Source: UCA News



Dalit activists demand state apology and reparations for historical discrimination



Dalit and human rights activists have stated that the state must offer a formal apology along with reparations to the Dalit community.

The government's 100-point agenda for governance reform includes a commitment to 'formally acknowledge the injustices, discrimination and deprivation of opportunities faced by Dalits and historically excluded communities due to state, societal and policy structures and to announce reform-oriented programs within 15 days, including a formal apology from the state, to lay the foundation for social justice, inclusive rehabilitation and historical reconciliation.'

An interaction program was held today at the NGO Federation with Dalit and human rights activists regarding this issue. During the discussion, activist Dr. Drona Rasaili cited examples from countries like South Africa and Australia, where states have apologized to marginalized communities to restore their dignity, but noted that this alone would not solve the problems faced by Nepal's Dalit community.

He expressed that while there has been pressure to include a provision for a state apology in the constitution, it has not been practically implemented. He stated that while the current government's announcement to apologize is positive, it is not sufficient. He said, "If the state has systematically excluded the community through policy, it must apologize with reparations."

Former Secretary of the Government of Nepal, Dr. Man Bahadur Bishwakarma, suggested that the government should focus on introducing integrated legislation for the Dalit community. He further stated that the rights of the

Dalit community enshrined in Articles 24 and 40 of the Constitution must be fully implemented through legislation and the state should introduce clear policies and budgets to increase the scope of reparations for the Dalit community, which has been subjected to discrimination for centuries.

"The current government appears more flexible and cordial toward the Dalit community than in the past, but the state must demonstrate a sense of responsibility for result-oriented transformation, not just through sentiment," he said.

Similarly, Dalit activist Motilal Nepali mentioned that while the Constitution of Nepal envisions equality and the end of untouchability, there has been no practical transformation. He said, "The wounds of the Dalits are deep; an apology alone will not heal them."

JB Bishwakarma, President of the Dalit NGO Federation (DNF), emphasized that just as the state previously used policies and laws to deprive the Dalit community of access to resources, the government must now introduce an action plan to provide reparations through similar legislative and policy measures.

Jivan Tiruwa, a representative of the Dalit GenZ Alliance, stated that at a time when Dalits are still not free from the evil practice of untouchability, a national awareness program is necessary to eradicate it.

Activist Rita Pariyar emphasized the need to ensure Dalit rights in proportional political representation. The Dalit civil society concluded that they would collect the suggestions discussed during the interaction and submit a memorandum to the government.

Source: Ratopati



Ambedkar and the quest for India's spiritual heritage

Harish S Wankhede

B R Ambedkar's engagement with the figure of the Buddha transcends conventional spiritual admiration and enters the realm of social and political transformation. By converting to Buddhism, Ambedkar did not simply seek a new deity; instead, he identified a historical rupture, imagining that the vehicle for social emancipation is hidden in the Indian past. He imagined the Buddhist era as the 'Golden Age' of egalitarianism that predated the consolidation of Brahmanical hegemony.

This move was a strategic reclamation of history, positioning Dalits not as mere outcasts within the Hindu fold, but as the rightful inheritors of a robust civilisation that stood in direct opposition to the Brahmanical caste order.

With this attempt, Ambedkar demonstrated that in the past, Dalits inherited distinct social locations, intellectual traditions and ethical prospects. Ambedkar's Navayana Buddhism has witnessed a discursive engagement across impressive socio-religious traditions from the past that offered Dalits an alternative cultural site to explore their spiritual quests.

The Ravidassia movement in Punjab, the Adi-Dravida assertion in Tamil Nadu and the Matua Mahasangha in Bengal embarked on a similar historical evocation of India's past to showcase that Dalits represent alternative civilisational and spiritual identities. Ambedkar's revival of Buddhism has highlighted that the nuanced cultural and spiritual traditions of marginalised social groups promote the values of equality, dignity and social justice and reject their dehumanised social location.

Today, while the dominant Hindutva political assertion

attempts to assimilate Dalits into a hyper-nationalist narrative, these movements emerge as an ideological resistance. The Dalit religious and cultural outfits have continued to assert that the Dalit identity is not a mere subset of the Hindu identity, but that they represent a distinct historical legacy and philosophical agency. Navayana Buddhism suggested that the utility of such a robust cultural past in modern times will complement the new ideals enshrined in the constitution.

Furthermore, these emancipatory ideas would assist in building an impressive cultural resistance against the hegemonic Hindutva project of assimilation.

Before Ambedkar announced the mass conversion, the Matua Mahasangha shared a similar objective and opted to define the presence of the untouchables outside the Hindu fold. Rooted in the teachings of Harichand Thakur, this movement built a collective identity through independent rituals and community organisation, asserting a spiritual lineage and contesting the Brahmanical framework. It disturbed and challenged the Brahmin elite authority in religious rituals and promoted the ex-untouchables as equal inheritors of spiritual solace.

Similarly, the Ravidassia Movement of Punjab institutionalised Guru Ravidass's hymns and reinterpreted the Amritbani scripture to establish a sovereign spiritual counter-space (called Begampura) against the Hindu caste order.

This was an assertive proclamation to introduce their separate spiritual and cultural path, independent of the exploitative caste hierarchies.

Source: Deccan Herald

Property Dispossession and the Exodus of Hindus in Bangladesh

On February 17, 2026, Bangladesh assumed a new leadership. Tarique Rahman was sworn in as the prime minister after the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) secured a landslide electoral victory.

Rahman's ascension sparks hope among Bangladesh's minority Hindu community, which faced relentless attacks during the interim regime that began in August 2024. After the Awami League, a political party considered more secular than its rivals, was banned from contesting the 2026 elections, the BNP quickly stepped in to fill the void with its pledge to protect minorities.

However, the party's past treatment of minority communities continues to be a source of controversy. In 1977, the BNP's founder, Ziaur Rahman, was responsible for removing the word "secularism" from the Constitution and party members have repeatedly been associated with violence against the country's Hindu minority. Despite the BNP's less-than-ideal record on secularism and minority protection, Hindus voted overwhelmingly for the party as the only viable alternative after the Awami League.

While Rahman has promised to restore law and order and guarantee equal rights for all religious groups, he has so far remained silent on the painful legacy of property seizures targeting primarily Hindus — a historical injustice that remains unresolved. The institutional entrenchment of the Vested Property Act — a longstanding legislation widely criticized as discriminatory for enabling the confiscation of Hindu-owned property — has been cited by rights groups and researchers as a key factor behind the dramatic decline of Bangladesh's Hindu population share.

The demographic decline and land loss of Hindus in Bangladesh

According to the first census of 1951, conducted after the creation of Pakistan in 1947, Hindus in East Pakistan, also known as East Bengal (present-day Bangladesh), accounted for at least 22% of the population. However, Bangladesh's 2022 national census shows that the Hindu population share has fallen to below 8%. The proportion of Christians, Buddhists and other religious minorities has not experienced a similar decline over the same period.

Referring to the demographic contraction of the Hindu population, renowned Bangladeshi economist Professor Abul Barkat issued a stark warning in 2016 stating that "no Hindus will be left in Bangladesh after 30 years."

Barkat's studies reveal that a large-scale outmigration of Hindus took place, with 11.3 million fleeing from Bangladesh between 1964 and 2013. This translates to an average of 632 Hindus leaving the country each day and 230,612 every year. Barkat's findings highlight that decades of land grabbing by the government under the Enemy Property Act during the Pakistan regime and the Vested Property Act have resulted in a staggering 60% of Bangladeshi Hindus becoming landless.

Estimates show that between 1965 and 2006, 1.2 million Hindus lost a total of 2.6 million acres of land and other assets. In 2005, the US Department of State published that approximately 2.5 million acres of land were grabbed from Hindus and nearly all the 10 million Hindus in the country were affected. In 2009, Bangladesh's Daily Star reported that the Hindu community had lost as much as 45% of their landholdings.

In monetary terms, the total loss of land and movable assets incurred by Hindus exceeded \$12 billion — roughly 88% of Bangladesh's GDP in 2000.

The legal machinery behind the eviction of Hindus

The Vested and Non-Resident Property (Administration) Act of 1974 (VPA), or the Vested Property Act of Bangladesh, has a history marked by institutionalized marginalization and dispossession of the country's minority communities, particularly the Hindus. Critics have called it a draconian tool for systematic land expropriation and for stripping Hindu families of their homes and possessions.

The Vested Property Act traces its origins to discriminatory laws enacted in Pakistan after the 1947 Partition, when communal violence forced millions of Hindus from both West and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) to seek refuge in India.



The following year, the East Bengal (Emergency) Requisition of Property Act empowered the government to acquire property for state purposes.

Although intended for administrative needs in the newly formed province of East Bengal (East Pakistan), minority rights experts say it was widely used to seize property belonging to religious minorities, particularly Hindus who had left Pakistan.

The law later evolved into the East Bengal Evacuees (Administration of Immovable Property) Act, authorizing the state to take over property belonging to “evacuees,” largely Hindus who had fled to India temporarily amid the communal violence. Their assets were declared “abandoned” and seized without compensation.

The Act established the Evacuee Property Management Committee, granting it sweeping powers to recover such property with minimal oversight, while barring judicial review of its actions.

Many reported cases emerged of Hindu residents still residing in East Bengal who became classified as “evacuees” with their properties being illegally confiscated.

Following the 1964 East Pakistan riots, the government enacted the East Pakistan Disturbed Persons Rehabilitation Ordinance.

Although intended to assist those affected, it barred Hindus leaving East Bengal from selling or transferring property without official approval.

With limited access to authorities and fearing for their safety, many were forced to abandon their property and flee without compensation.

In 1965, following the India–Pakistan war, the military government introduced the

Enemy Property Act (EPA), declaring India an enemy state and authorizing the takeover of assets belonging to Indian nationals. While framed as a national security measure, researchers note that in practice, the government designated

Hindus as “enemies” of the state, regardless of their nationality, by portraying them as supporters of India, making Hindu-owned properties the primary targets of the Act.

In contrast, Muslims who migrated to India or held Indian citizenship while residing in Pakistan were not deemed as “enemies” under the EPA, underscoring the law's discriminatory application.

A government circular allowed any seized Muslim-owned properties to be restored to owners or heirs, while minorities whose land was declared “enemy property” lost ownership permanently.

The EPA thus became an expedient tool to seize property from Hindus who either fled to India or stayed in East Bengal but were labelled as “enemies.” Critics argue the Act's intent and application disproportionately targeted Hindus.

Bangladesh's Vested Property Act as a continuation of discriminatory laws

After seceding from Pakistan in 1971 to form an independent Bangladesh, Hindus continued to face challenges despite the country's independence being achieved with India's support. In 1974, the government reinforced earlier provisions under the VPA.

Although the stated objective was to take control of properties formerly owned by Pakistanis and Hindus who fled during the liberation war, the law was widely used against Hindus still residing in Bangladesh.

In many cases, even a temporary departure was enough for authorities to seize property and the absence of a single family member sometimes led to the confiscation of the entire family's assets.

Beyond its structural bias, the VPA enabled collusion between local officials and powerful landowners to seize minority-owned land under the guise of state property.

Some officials personally benefited and a 1977 circular empowered Tehsildars (local government officials) to arbitrarily designate land as “enemy property.”

They were incentivized to expand the list, enabling the takeover of Hindu-owned assets with scant regard for displaced families

Land grabbing was often accompanied by violence.

Shipan Kumer Basu, president of The World Hindu Struggle Committee, noted that apart from the VPA, cases have emerged of Hindus falling prey to false accusations by authorities in order to acquire their land more easily..



The Vested Property Return Act and its limitations

In 2001, the government led by the Awami League passed the Vested Property (Repeal) Return Act to return confiscated properties to the rightful owners. However, the new legislation imposed strict conditions on restitution. Claims were limited to properties declared “enemy” or “vested” before February 1969 and only if such properties remained under government control, excluding large amounts of previously seized Hindu-owned land that had been sold or transferred. Properties in active government use or leased to authorized parties were also ineligible and could not be contested in court.

Claimants were required to prove continuous citizenship and residence in Bangladesh, with a narrow 90-day filing window, effectively excluding many who had fled communal violence. Although special tribunals were established to resolve cases within 180 days, properties not validated or filed in time reverted to the state. The act also offered no compensation to those unable to file claims, while its narrow scope limited access to justice for many affected families, including those whose properties were excluded from the official “vested” list.

In 2002, the new BNP-led coalition government further diluted the legislation through an amendment allowing the government indefinite time to release the list of “vested” properties and implement the restitution process. Consequently, the return of properties did not occur and additional confiscations continued. Estimates suggest that nearly 200,000 Hindu families were deprived of their lands since the BNP assumed office and 8% of the total incidents of land grabbing took place between 2001 and 2006 after the Return Act was enacted.

The 2011 amendment: gaps between law and implementation

Barkat and his team's extensive research gained significant traction and played a key role in mobilizing a coordinated nationwide advocacy movement demanding the implementation of the Vested Property Return Act (VPRA) and the return of properties snatched from religious minorities.

Finally, the Awami League government passed the Vested Property Return (Amendment) Act in 2011. Between 2011 and 2013, four amendments were passed, the last being the Vested Property Return Bill. These amendments included the repeal of the “B” Schedule — which referred to properties listed as vested but not in government possession — and the renaming of the “A” Schedule, comprising properties held by the state, as “restorable property.” Despite the legal reforms, human rights groups note that the actual restoration of property has been limited, with thousands of cases entangled in unresolved legal proceedings. Although large areas of

vested land were officially “released” after the 2011 amendments, evidence suggests that this did not automatically translate into actual restitution.

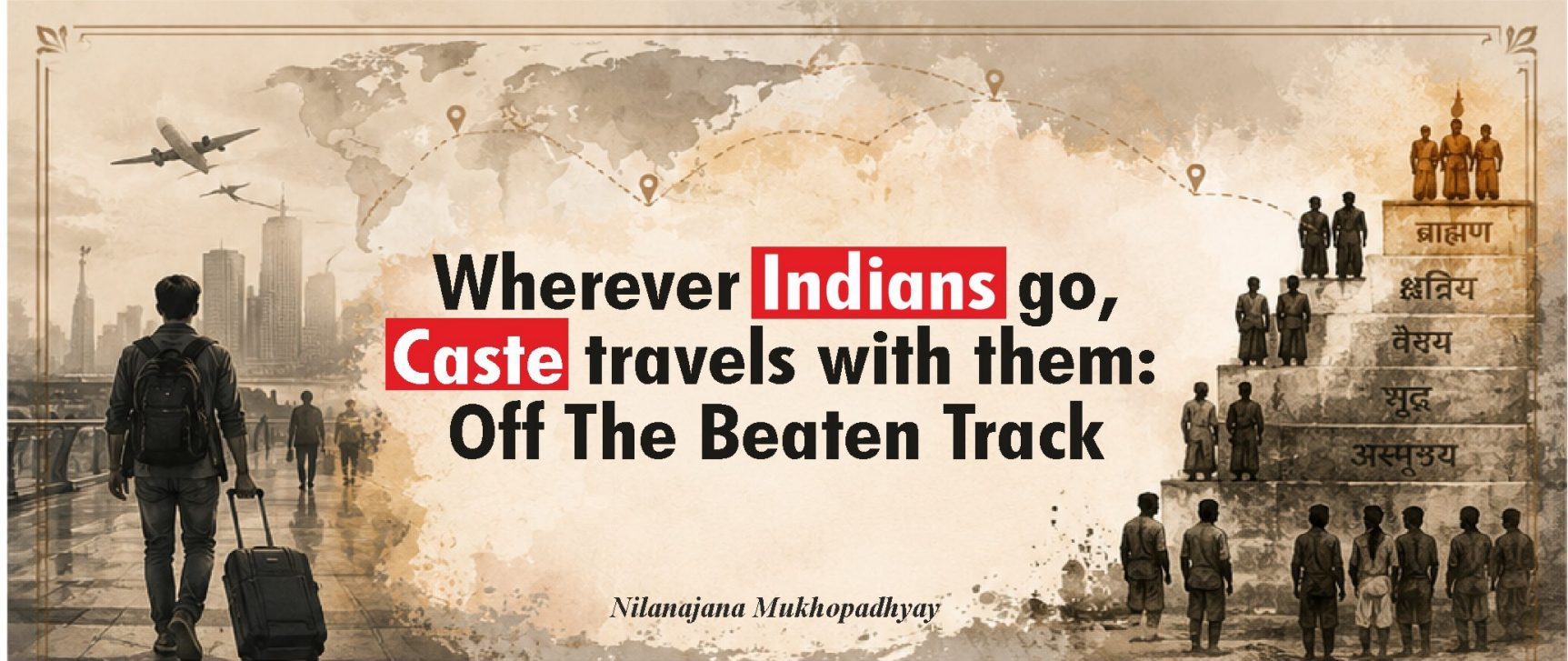
Rights groups reported that, in many cases, land was not returned even after tribunal rulings, while in 2018, the Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council claimed that no land had yet been returned to victims.

Persistent delays, administrative resistance and noncompliance with court decisions further indicate that much of the released land did not reach the original owners in practice. According to the Human Development Research Centre (HDRC), obstacles arise at multiple stages of the process — from local administration and land offices to the courtroom involving lawyers, public prosecutors and judges. A shortage of judges and the lack of priority given to cases under the Act further slow proceedings. The financial burden is particularly heavy for poor and middle-class claimants, many of whom struggle to afford the legal fees and administrative costs. Moreover, informal payments are often required to move cases forward. Rights activists also allege that illegal occupiers and land grabbers frequently manipulate the system, sometimes in cahoots with government officials.

In sum, these procedural shortcomings reflect a gnawing gap between legislative intent and implementation, highlighting the limited effectiveness of the restitution process in achieving the intended outcomes. So far, the Awami League appears to be the only political leadership to have sought redress for Hindus by attempting to restore property rights. Now, with the country's sole secular-leaning party pushed into political oblivion, the Rahman-led government has positioned itself as a defender of minority rights and as a guarantor of their protection. The continued failure to ensure effective restitution for Hindus raises concerns about the protection of their fundamental rights.

This may serve as a critical test of Rahman's stated commitments to minority rights and protection, as well as his ability to secure the trust of the Hindu community that extended significant electoral support to his party.

Source: Fair Observer



Wherever **Indians** go, **Caste** travels with them: Off The Beaten Track

Nilanajana Mukhopadhyay

“Caste is not so much confined to India as it travels with Indians when they move abroad — but it moves with them as a part of their cultural instinct,” said Suraj Yengde in an interaction, underlining the central argument of his book *Caste Matters*. As debates around caste intensify within India — from court rulings to political mobilisation — his work expands the conversation beyond national borders, showing how caste persists and evolves across diaspora. In this episode of *Off The Beaten Track*, *The Federal* spoke to Yengde, an Indian scholar and activist known for his work on caste and race. He is also an assistant professor of history and a Ford Foundation Presidential Fellow at the University of Pennsylvania.

Does caste follow Indians abroad like a birthmark — something inescapable regardless of geography or profession?

I think the migratory aspects of caste were actually documented early on by CV Ketkar, an anthropologist from Cornell. He wrote a century ago that caste in the early 20th century in India had already also picked up on this theory — that caste remains attached to the Indian body politic. In my research, I've covered nearly 15 countries. I've interviewed descendants of indentured labourers from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Bengal and Odisha, as well as Gulf migrants and contemporary IT professionals. Across all these groups, caste persists.

When people leave India, they don't consciously think they are carrying caste. They carry it as part of their cultural identity, a kind of inherited history. But it shapes interactions, relationships and hierarchies abroad as well. Caste also evolves in conversation with global structures — colonial histories, white societies and economic systems. The global caste dynamic is not isolated; it is constantly interacting with other power structures.

How does caste discrimination — especially against Dalits — play out abroad? And what about Dalits who converted to Christianity or Islam?

If you look at history, caste has remained persistent across time and geography. That's why you can talk about 19th-century Caribbean societies like Trinidad and connect them to contemporary India. In Trinidad, for example, Dalits and other lower castes were assimilated into a broader national religious identity. Religion there often reflected culture more than rigid hierarchy. Even within Sikh communities abroad, we see caste divisions. In Canada, some areas have separate congregations formed due to caste discrimination. Over generations, identity evolves. Diaspora communities become “hyphenated” — Indian-American, Indian-Canadian — but caste consciousness doesn't disappear. In fact, in recent decades, caste awareness has intensified, particularly among younger generations.

How are upper-caste diaspora communities responding to growing Dalit assertion globally?

From what I've observed, many professionals in the diaspora — especially those from technical fields — come from environments shaped by anti-reservation sentiment. Some dominate caste individuals resist acknowledging caste discrimination. Their common argument is that they were treated unfairly themselves. At the same time, second- or third-generation diaspora communities often treat caste as an “innocent identity marker” because Dalit assertion is less visible earlier.

Did caste communities abroad help influence institutional or legal changes, such as caste policies in universities and cities like Seattle?

Yes, there has been significant movement. I witnessed early discussions at universities like Brandeis, where students shared experiences of caste discrimination.



These efforts led to institutional responses — task forces, policies and broader recognition of caste as a form of discrimination. While Dalit victories triggered these discussions, the movement expanded into a broader human rights concern among South Asian communities and allies. You often cite Ambedkarite student groups around the world. Even in places like Kyrgyzstan, students celebrate Ambedkar. This is not just resistance — it is assertion. Students are saying: “This is our culture, our history, our identity. We deserve space too.”

Did your own experience as a Dalit shape how you encountered caste abroad?

Yes, very much. Stigma is not something you can easily shed — it requires deep psychological unlearning. I grew up in a Dalit colony with open sewage and extreme marginalisation. That environment shaped my consciousness. Reflecting on your relationship with caste hierarchy in India. My work reflects this journey. I call it a kind of “cosmopolitan Dalit universalism” — a worldview shaped by marginality but connected globally. My upbringing also exposed me to global Black movements. My father admired figures like Kofi Annan. That influenced how I understood solidarity between Dalit and Black struggles.

How would you define Dalit struggles and Black movements? How has this played out globally?

The Dalit movement has long relied on literature, poetry and cultural expression as tools of resistance. Dalit literary conferences became major spaces where communities gathered, shared experiences and built solidarity. These spaces are not just artistic — they are deeply political and rooted in resistance. Growing up in that environment naturally led you to challenge thinking. It wasn't forced — it was part of lived experience.

You describe an “army” during global protests after George Floyd's death. What did you observe?

It was striking. Many Indian students in the US participated in protests after George Floyd's killing.

But I asked: What have you done to address caste inequality in your own society?

There is an irony here. By aligning with Black struggles,

some people recognition as 'oppressed minorities' in the West—while ignoring caste privilege. Caste creates a worldview where one centres oneself and ignores others' struggles. contradiction was very visible during those protests.

How does the Indian diaspora respond to caste violence and politics in India today?

It varies by region and community. Punjabi diaspora communities, for instance, still engage with caste dynamics—Jat assertion and Dalit pushback. Tamil diaspora groups, including political cadres, also remain connected to caste-based movements back home.

However, the mainstream 'cultivated diaspora' narrative—especially under recent governments—often excludes Dalit voices. There has been no meaningful effort to include Dalits in this global Indian identity. At the same time, Dalit diaspora communities continue to assert themselves through academic spaces and constitutional values inspired by Ambedkar. One concerning trend is the emergence of diaspora networks aligned with ideological groups, sometimes monitoring and targeting activists abroad. This raises serious questions about democratic space and freedom.

What is your view on the debate over reservation rights for Dalits who convert to Christianity or Islam?

This is a complex issue. The original policy framework involved multiple leaders, including B. R. Ambedkar, Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel. The question is not just legal—it's social and economic.

We must ask: How do caste-based inequalities persist within different religious communities?

Dalit Christians and Dalit Muslims often face 'double marginalisation'—excluded both within broader society and within their own religious communities. This issue requires national dialogue. It cannot be reduced to a simple yes-or-no policy question. We also need to recognise regional variations. In coastal regions, caste boundaries between communities have historically been blurred. Ultimately, the goal should be to address inequality in all its forms, regardless of religion.

Source: The Federal

Muslims, Dalits face systematic disadvantages in public services: Study

Bhimraj M



A major new study has revealed stark patterns of residential segregation and unequal access to public services across India's neighborhoods, highlighting how marginalised communities like, Dalits and Muslims, continue to face systemic disadvantages.

Researchers from Imperial College London, Dartmouth, Harvard and the University of Chicago analysed data from 1.5 million urban and rural neighborhoods.

They found that Muslims and Scheduled Castes (SCs) are highly segregated by global standards—only slightly less than Black-White segregation in the United States.

The study shows that segregation translates directly into poorer access to essential services.

Muslim neighborhoods are 10 percent less likely to have piped water and only half as likely to host secondary schools compared to non-Muslim areas.

Meanwhile, Dalit neighborhoods face greater deficits in infrastructure such as electricity, drainage and water.

Private providers do not compensate for these gaps, leaving marginalised groups doubly disadvantaged.

Most importantly, these disparities are invisible in

aggregate district or state-level data, where resource allocation appears more balanced.

Segregation Patterns:

- **Muslims more isolated:** 26 percent of Muslims live in neighborhoods >80 percent Muslim, compared with 16 percent of SCs.

- **Urban vs rural:** Cities replicate rural settlement patterns; Muslims more segregated in urban areas.

- **Correlates:** Larger, poorer, older cities and those with histories of religious violence, show higher segregation.

- **Mobility impact:** Strong negative correlation between Muslim segregation and upward mobility.

At the neighborhood level, however, inequities are stark, with local governance bodies—often operating with little scrutiny—playing a decisive role in service distribution.

The findings highlight that while affirmative action policies have narrowed gaps at higher administrative levels, local allocation processes frequently undermine progress.

The authors argue that high-resolution administrative data is crucial to uncovering these inequalities and ensuring that public services reach those most in need.



Source: *The South First*

Milestone Achievements:

Hindu Representation in Pakistan's Federal Civil Service

In a significant development, two individuals from Pakistan's Hindu minority community have successfully passed the rigorous selection process to join the country's federal civil service.

Jeevan Rebari and Khem Chand Jandora, both hailing from the Sindh province, made it to the final list of candidates eligible for the Central Superior Services (CSS), a notable achievement given the historically low representation of minorities in government positions.

Despite a population of 3.8 million Hindus in Pakistan, primarily residing in Sindh, minority representation in federal civil service exams has been scarce.

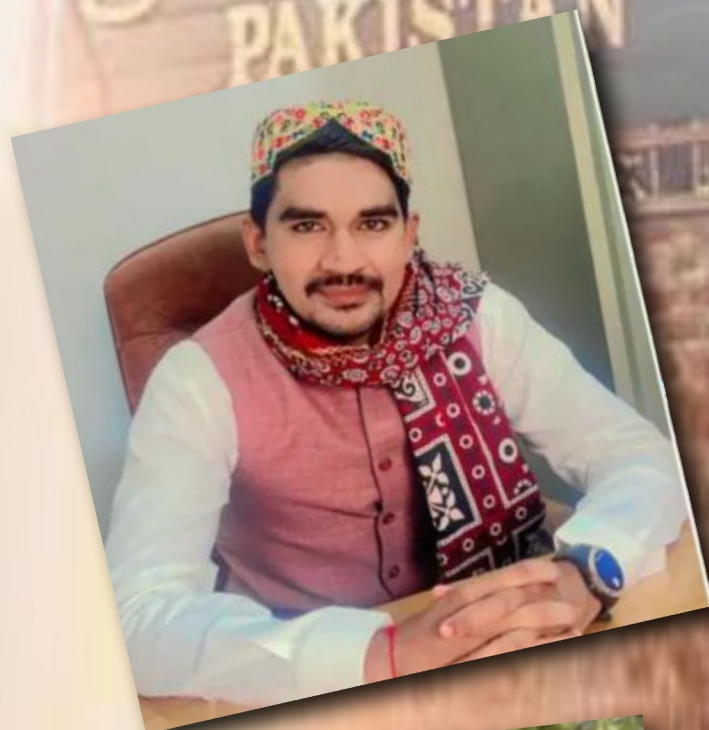
This prompted the government to announce initiatives, like a special training program set for 2025, to fortify inclusivity.

The Federal Public Service Commission reported that out of 12,792 candidates appearing for the exams, 355 passed, with 170 ultimately selected.

Highlighting the personal sacrifices made on this journey, Khem Chand's parents resorted to taking high-interest loans and selling family jewelry for his education.

In contrast, Jeevan Rebari, who did not utilize the minority quota, relied on community support and government education to reach this milestone.

These stories stand as a testament to resilience and the ongoing struggle for equal representation.



Source: Devdiscourse

Dalit Christian Manifesto 2026



Pon Chandran

We, Dalit Christians of India, assert our inalienable dignity as citizens and as a historically oppressed people whose struggle against caste discrimination continues across religious boundaries. Conversion has not erased caste; it has only denied us constitutional protections. This manifesto is a collective call for justice, equality and structural transformation. We refuse invisibility. We demand rights—not concessions.

I. Constitutional Justice: Religion-Neutral Scheduled Caste Status

At the heart of our struggle lies a fundamental constitutional wrong. We demand the amendment of the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, to delink Scheduled Caste status from religion.

- **Equal Protection:** Extend SC status to Dalit Christians and Dalit Muslims, on par with Sikh (1956) and Buddhist (1990) Dalits.
- **Recognition of Social Reality:** Caste discrimination persists despite religious conversion; legal denial of this fact perpetuates injustice.
- **Rejection of Judicial Exclusion:** We oppose recent rulings of the Supreme Court of India that enforce the automatic loss of SC status upon conversion, ignoring lived realities. We demand constitutional parity—nothing less.

II. Protection from Atrocities and Violence

Dalit Christians are doubly vulnerable—targeted for both caste and religion.

- **Inclusion under Law:** Immediate inclusion of Dalit Christians within the ambit of the Scheduled Castes and

Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

- **End Legal Exclusion:** No citizen facing caste violence should be denied legal recourse due to religion.
- **Special Courts:** Establish fast-track courts to address “dual-targeted” crimes combining caste and religious hate.
- **Police Accountability:** Mandatory registration of FIRs in caste-based crimes against Dalit Christians.

Justice delayed and denied is violence sanctioned.

III. Transformation within the Church

Caste injustice within Christian institutions must end.

- **Proportional Representation:** Where Dalits constitute the majority of believers, they must hold proportional leadership—at least 70% representation in church governance, seminaries and clergy.
- **End Segregation:** Abolish caste-based discrimination in burial grounds, seating, sacraments and parish life.
- **Dalit Theology and Leadership:** Institutional recognition and promotion of Dalit theology, voices and leadership. Faith cannot coexist with caste hierarchy.

IV. Economic Justice and Educational Equity

Systemic exclusion has produced structural poverty.

- **Scholarships and Welfare:** Creation of state-funded “Dalit Minority” scholarship schemes equal in scale to SC/ST benefits.
- **Land Redistribution:** Implement “Land for the Tiller” policies for Dalit Christian agricultural workers.

• **Livelihood Security:** Targeted employment programs and access to credit for Dalit Christian youth and women.

Economic justice is essential for social dignity.

V. Democratic Rights and Secular Freedoms

We reject laws that criminalize belief and target the poor.

• **Repeal All Anti-Conversion Laws:** Abolish all anti-conversion laws such as the Karnataka Protection of Right to Freedom of Religion Act, 2022, which disproportionately surveil and intimidate marginalized communities.

• **Freedom of Conscience:** Uphold the constitutional right to choose and practice one's faith without fear.

• **Caste Census:** Conduct a comprehensive caste census that includes Dalit Christians to inform policy and justice.

Democracy cannot exist without freedom of belief.

VI. Political Representation and Accountability

Representation is not symbolic—it must be substantive.

• **Inclusion in Governance:** Appointment of Dalit Christians to Legislative Councils, Minority Commissions and State Planning Boards.

• **Electoral Commitments:** Political parties, especially those claiming social justice legacies, must formally adopt Dalit Christian SC status as a national policy demand.

• **Beyond Tokenism:** We will hold parties accountable for measurable progress, not rhetoric.

No decision about us without us.

VII. Building Alliances for Justice

We align with all oppressed communities resisting caste, class and communal injustice.

• Solidarity with Dalit, Adivasi, Bahujan and Minority movements.

• Commitment to secular, democratic and anti-caste politics.

• Collective struggle for a just and equal republic.

Conclusion: From Charity to Rights

For decades, Dalit Christians have been treated as subjects of charity—by both Church and State. That era is over.

We claim our place as equal citizens under the
C o n s t i t u t i o n o f I n d i a .

We demand recognition, protection and representation.

Our struggle is not for privilege. It is for justice.

Source: Counter Current





Ambedkar Society for South Asia
