

### Former Civil Servants Express Concern Over NRC

## 'Poorest of the poor' may not be rendered 'stateless'

Newsdesk: Former civil servants of the All India and Central Services have written an open letter, expressing their concerns about the National Register of Citizens (NRC) that has left over 40 lakh persons ineligible for Indian citizenship.

### The text of the letter:

(Published in NewsClick on 05 Feb 2019)

Our group of former civil servants of the All India and Central Services has, over the last twenty months, issued a number of letters expressing our concern at the erosion of constitutional values in the country and the weakening of institutions entrusted with ensuring the functioning of a healthy democracy. As in our earlier letters, we reiterate our allegiance to the Constitution of India and clarify that we neither have a political agenda nor are we linked to any political party.

The complete draft of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam was published on 30 July 2018, leaving over 40 lakh persons ineligible, making up some 12 per cent of the total applicants. There is a real fear among those excluded - overwhelmingly from minority groups, both Muslims and Hindus of Bengali descent, besides Nepali and Hindi-speaking persons, among them a large percentage of women, children and daily wage

workers, constituting the poorest of the poor - that they might be rendered stateless.

Although the NRC process is being monitored by the Supreme Court (SC), we believe there has been little informed debate in the country on the NRC updation that affects the lives of lakhs of persons; there is also no clarity on what the legal status and fate of those excluded from the final NRC will be, at the end of this court-monitored process. The large exclusion of names from the draft NRC is the outcome of a mix of procedural and capacity weaknesses of the NRC State Coordinator and has been much reported about.

The shortcomings include poor record management, technical glitches and arbitrary physical verifications, among others. Central to the exclusion from the NRC, disproportionately, of linguistic, religious and gender minorities, however, is also the in-built discrimination in rules and procedures, segregating populations into 'original' and 'non-original' inhabitants and the use of differential standards to verify claims and supporting documents for the two categories.

The SC has endorsed this segregation of applicants into so-called 'original' and 'non-original' inhabitants and has also approved automatic inclusion of 'original'

inhabitants in the draft NRC while, on the other hand, decreeing a two-step process of 'exhaustive' and 'thorough' verification for applicants deemed 'non-original'. Without any definition or directions to determine who the 'original' inhabitants of Assam were, 'non-original' applicants, in practice, have been taken to mean mostly Bengali and Nepali-speaking persons and other minorities.

Those aggrieved by their non-inclusion in the draft NRC had the right to file claims and objections (C&O) till 31 December 2018. But this does not seem to provide redress against the already built-in discriminations, exacerbated by the rather liberal provisions for filing objections against wrongful inclusion, which include removing the bar on the number of objections, doing away with the requirement of the objector being a local resident and removing the penalty against false and frivolous objections. Not surprisingly, media reports appear to indicate that, in the final hours of receipt of C&O, the number of objections against inclusion in the final NRC jumped from a mere 6000 to 3 lakhs.

Those not satisfied with the NRC C&O results have the option to appeal to Foreigners Tribunals (FTs), based on whose decisions, the final inclusion in NRC will be

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## A museum will be built at Nandan Kanan

Newsdesk: - In a meeting of Vidyasagar Smriti Raksha Samiti held at Nandan Kanan, Karmatar it was decided that the residence of Vidyasagar will be developed as a museum. Dainik Bhaskar, Jamtara Edition reported on 14th January 2019 that senior member of the Samiti Bhabesh Chandra Deb donated one lakh rupees for the purpose in the memory of his wife. Secretary of the Samiti Debashis Mishra, reported to the press that 200th Birth Anniversary of Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar will be celebrated here at Nandan Kanan, locally called 'Malia Bagan'on 26th September 2019. Prior to that, on 9th and 10th March 2019, Guru Dakshina programme for this year will be held. On those dates, simultaneously a seminar will also be held jointly with Asiatic Society,



Pic courtesy : Dainik Bhaskar

## 'Freedom Box Project'

Newsdesk - We always used to think what to do with our old computers. We looked with fear at some foreign video, showing the heap of these junked gadgets. And now, a NGO named Swecha that works towards enlightening the masses about technology and benefits of using the , has come up in Telengana in which a team of enthusiasts, students, IT professionals and academicians are asking the people to donate their old computer, laptop to the organization. Re-assembling the parts of the junked and discarded gadgets they would build a Wi fi server for a village and give the villagers internet connectivity. Already they have done it for 12 villages and 70 villages are asking for it, as Paturi Rajshankar reported on 5th February 2019 inTimes News Network. The spokesman for Swecha, Siddhartha Malempati was quoted in the story saying, "Every old computer is a potential server that can bring thousands of people onto the digital platform through village community network. So, the next time you want to throw an old PC out cos it's 'just junk', please think of us. We, at Swecha, will happily come collect it and a whole village will thank you for it. Your one gesture can transform lives."

Explaining how the idea took shape, Siddhartha says, "It was in March 2015 that I came up with this idea. At Swecha, we wanted to install a network using a Freedom Box in remote areas for free distribution of social networking,

Behar Herald condemns the terrorist attack on the bus carrying CRPF personnel, at Awantipora, Pulwama, J & K and pays respectful homage to the killed jawans.

Kolkata. Debashis Mishra said that in the proposed museum there will be shown a pictorial biography of Vidyasagar with captions in three languages - Hindi, Bengali and English. He appealed to the people of Karmatar to cooperate to make the programmes successful. Arun Kumar Bose alias Biru Babu, Dr. (Capt.) Dilip Kumar Sinha, Chandan Mukherjee, Bhabesh Chandra Deb, Bidroha Mitra, Chameli Mukherji, Sachchidanand Singh, Sunimal Das, Tapan Roy and others were present in the meeting. Arun Kumar Bose alias Biru Babu was elected President of the Samiti in the meeting. Before him, former chief secretary, government of Bihar, Anup Mukherji was the president.

## News & comments

### 'Spiritual engineering'

Newsdesk - In the Kumbha Mela being held in Prayagraj (erstwhile Allahabad), everyday some or other piece of news is making headline. Of these, one was that ten thousand youth became Naga sadhus. Among the youth who thus renounced the world and its norms, is a diploma holder in marine engineering. During interaction with various newspapers he said that he was doing a job with good salary. But had a feeling that becoming a sadhu should be the aim of his life. The newspapers also interacted with a management graduate from Ukraine and a topper of 12th board from Ujjain.

Renouncement of this world and worldly norms by some is neither unique in India nor happening for the first time. After all the clan of sadhus of all the sects do regularly get new membership only by recruiting 'this worldly' human beings to whom the 'lie of this world' stand revealed.

Nonetheless, sadly we remember what greatest of the great sage Swami Vivekananda dreamed about the sadhus. He rather decried the system of education remaining limited to "few hundred modernized half educated and denationalized" men and asked, "these hundreds and thousands of monks, educating the people on the spiritual plane; why not let these men do the same work on the intellectual plane?" He asserted,

"What I mean to say is this, that it represents a tremendous power. What we can do is just transform it, give it another form. This tremendous power in the hands of the roving Sannyasins of India has got to be transformed, and it will raise the masses up."

But after hundred years, his hope went in vain it seems. Nagas are not known to run schools or spreading literacy. Except for the monks of enlightened sects of 19th and early 20th century, none else are known to be associated with education i.e. 'this worldly' education of children and adults, not the spiritual one.

### 'No Friends but the Mountains'

Newsdesk - Now beware net-haters who go on repeating that these social media things are not for serious work. Writers prefer to write or type on paper, readers throng to purchase 'hard copy' or the printed books at book fairs. Sheer compulsion forces us to use PDF, Digital edition or Kindle editions. Since they are easily accessible. But there is nothing like reading the printed book, reclining on your armchair, the connoisseurs say. No feel is greater than the feel of pressure of pen on the sheet of white paper, and the ink forming the letters, the classy writers affirm. And in the midst of all these, an Iranian has won Australia's top literature prize, Victorian Premier's Literary Prize - 2019 for his debut

book 'No Friends but the Mountains' which he wrote on his mobile phone and delivered one chapter at a time via WhatsApp. The book is about the sufferings, the dreams of freedom of the Kurds, and the title of the book is a part of a popular Kurdish expression that 'Kurds have no friends but the Mountains'.

The Iranian, Behroz Boochani fled from his country six years ago and hoped to find asylum in Australia. But he was caught, taken off the refugee boat and taken to Australia-run Manus Detention camp in Papua New Guinea island, where he is staying till now.

The prize money is big, 72,390 dollars. But the writer said in an exchange of text messages that he does not want to celebrate this achievement as he sees many innocent people suffering around him. But he hopes that the prize would focus attention on the plight of more than 1000 people in various off-shore detention camps run by Australia.

Mr. Boochani said that all the time he remained anxious about the camp guards coming and taking away his mobile. But that did not happen anyway. He wrote the book in his native Farsi and sent it via the WhatsApp to a translator in Australia.

### World Wetlands Day and Patna

Newsdesk - Seventy percent wetland has vanished from Patna. Water level has gone down by 200 feet. Thus warned Gopal Sharma, a

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## Japanese Bengalee

Yoshika Otsuka, a Japanese student learning Bengali in the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies has written about her experiences of learning Bengali and travel to Kolkata and Dhaka as a part of her studies. This piece of writing titled 'Amar Bangla Obhigya o Bhabona' (My Bengali experiences and thoughts) was published in Pratham Alo, a media portal of Bangladesh on 14th January 2019. A good narration of her experiences as student of Bengali it contains so many praises about Bengali language which may fill us with pride. But her experiences of travel to Kolkata may enlighten us about our position as Bangladeshis of India. She came to Kolkata during her first year for a short stay. That was at Jadavpur University. Next time she came in her third year. About it she says:

"My new life in Kolkata began in July 2017. During this long stay I have come to understand that those who live in Kolkata they do not talk much in Bengali. Particularly the young men and women and the taxi drivers. The reason, it seems, that the young men and women do not like to speak Bengali, or they prefer using English more than Bengali. There were some among them who used to speak in English to me even when I was speaking in Bengali to them. On the other hand, most of the taxi drivers have come to Kolkata from neighboring states of West Bengal. They have come to earn their living. Their language is Hindi, so they speak Hindi. That is why, when I took a taxi, I faced difficulty in communicating with the driver. Since I do not know Hindi and they do not know Bengali. But the Indian Bengalees do not face any difficulty since they know Hindi and English both. Thus, it happened so that I stayed in Kolkata but could not speak Bengali time to time. This is my regret and [a feeling of] uneasiness. I felt that after a long time Bengali language will disappear from West Bengal. But when I travelled to Bangladesh, I felt that there it was not like Kolkata. Because for all the Bengalees of Bangladesh Bengali language is important. It seems to me that since the people of Bangladesh have fought for Bengali language and then earned freedom from Pakistan through a liberation war, the language is so valuable for them."

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### 'Poorest of the ...

decided. FTs use the Foreigners Act, 1946 to test claims to citizenship, wherein the burden of proof is on those proceeded against. These are heavily weighted against so-called 'suspected foreigners' without providing them any statutory rights. In practice, by shifting the burden of proof on those proceeded against, they set the bar too high, with likely severe consequences, as those affected by the NRC exclusion are mostly poor and illiterate, and government record keeping is neither efficient nor accessible.

Those excluded from the final NRC will face the risk of being declared foreigners and locked up in detention centres. With Bangladesh or any other country not recognising those excluded from the NRC as their citizens, nor there being any repatriation treaty between India and Bangladesh, these detentions will potentially be indefinite. The six detention centres in Assam currently house, between them, over a thousand persons declared as foreigners. Providing an early warning of the shape of things to come, a recent enquiry by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) into these detention centres provides a chilling account. It speaks of the absence of a legal regime governing rights of the detainees, indefinite incarcerations and accompanying vulnerabilities suffered by detainees, the lack of any legal redress whatsoever and the sheer hopelessness of the detainees' condition.

Even while the exercise to finalise the NRC is going on, the ill-advised decision of the Government of India to push a flawed Citizenship (Amendment) Bill through Parliament has added fuel to an already simmering fire. This has already led to a storm of protest in the North-Eastern states and will further vitiate the NRC process. Not only will this proposed legislation exacerbate local tensions between 'indigenous' and 'migrant' populations, it also appears to be clearly violative of Article 14 of the Constitution, denying as it does "equal protection of the laws within the territory of India" to all persons,

irrespective of citizenship.

Having dealt with such issues during our careers in public service, the signatories would like to offer some constructive suggestions which meet the norms of constitutional principles and human rights, while also giving a measure of comfort to the indigenous populations that perceive a threat to the continuation of their culture and traditions:

(1) We would request the SC to order a review of the NRC C&O modalities and their implementation, so as to prevent them being discriminatory against so-called 'non-original' inhabitants, usher in transparency in the proceedings and involve persons of eminence, drawn nationally, to act as independent observers, supporting the Supreme Court to deliver a just and fair final NRC. We recommend a system akin to that fruitfully used by the Election Commission of India, of senior officers of the Government of India acting as independent observers in each district.

(2) The Assam government should review the working of the FTs to make them effective judicial fora for redress for those likely to be aggrieved by NRC C&O outcomes. This should include both a review of the relevant laws under which FTs operate – ensuring that the proceedings will allow those proceeded against a measure of statutory rights, following due process – besides ensuring that FTs themselves are shielded from extraneous pressures.

(3) The Assam government should review the working of detention centres for 'declared foreigners', enforce safeguards against arbitrary, discriminatory and indefinite detention, and align procedures and practices to principles of natural justice and to international norms and standards. There should be regular third-party inspections by the NHRC and independent organisations to check human rights violations and to monitor the functioning of the camps.

(4) The Government of India should, at the earliest, commence discussions with neighbouring countries, especially Bangladesh, on the future status of those finally

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## News & comments

scientist and officer-in-charge at Zoological Survey of India, working at Patna. His write-up, published on 3rd February 2019 in patna@inext.co.in, i.e. a day after World Wetlands Day was observed, holds rampant urbanization responsible for this loss of wetlands and going down of water level. He asked the government and the civil society to come forward and asserted that the main challenge is to raise and maintain the bio-diversity and the process of ground water recharging.

Behar Herald has focused this crisis in the past as well. It has also narrated the situation all over the state. But the point is, how this government and the civil society are expected to come forward? What you say to be rampant urbanization is the story of fast and faster development in the eyes of the government and a big section of the civil society. In Patna, where no industrial hub lies nearby, no IT hub has grown but money is growing in various businesses of the market of political capital, remittances worth billions are coming from other states and foreign countries (sent of course, by genuine bread earners) the builders and promoters are the missionaries and saints of the holy book of 'Vikas'. So, we remain cursed to live with vanishing calls of sparrow and so many other birds, not to be seen any more in many areas of the city. We remain cursed to live with 'fight for right' on the diara-land and the river going away. We remain cursed to live in a drying land and keep praising the sweetness of the water of Patna anywhere we go – or, even not going anywhere, tomorrow. .

### Keeping data cool

Newsdesk – Now the seas have started keeping the servers of IT giants cool. Two years back, in 2016 Microsoft began the project off the coast of Scotland's Orkney Islands. It was called Project Natick. It did put a server pod approximately one kilometer underwater cased in a stainless-steel tube. At present there are 864 servers primed with zinc-rich coating. Zinc-rich coating is used by Naval Group (French marine renewable energy and defence specialists) to protect its submarines from ocean erosion. The steel tube is now 12-meter-long and 2.4 meter in diameter. It will remain there for five years. After that, the whole thing will be brought over-water and then, necessary replacements, changes or maintenances will be made or done. Which means that presently it is made in such a way that it do not require regular maintenance for five years. Presently, this deployment is wind powered. As the cost of offshore wind generation continues to fall, one could even imagine that. However, research is going on to fully power these data centers with tidal energy from water turbines as well.

While speaking in the Future Decoded conference of Microsoft held in London, its CEO Satya Nadela pointed out the advantages of under-water data centers. Firstly, these data centers will have proximity to human population. He said that 50% of world's population lives within 120 miles of a coast. Whereas, according to United Nations, around 40% lives within 100 kilometers. And in those places, land is premium. Huge tracts of land would be required to build data centers on land. So,

second advantage is that, no land will be required, and such server modules will be placed at various seas near the populated coasts. This also means low latencies, which is particularly important for real-time services.

Inputs from: <https://arstechnica.com/gadgets/2018/11/satya-nadella-the-cloud-is-going-to-move-underwater/> & <https://stories.worldsteel.org/infrastructure/underwater-servers-keep-worlds-data-cool/>

### Saudi women take que from Rahaf

Newsdesk – Power of social media worked. The Thai authorities were all ready to deport 18-year-old Rahaf Mohammed Alqunun back to Kuwait. The teenager fled the country, in fact fled from her relatives (the family was vacationing in Kuwait) to seek asylum in Australia.

She made international headlines this week after she escaped from her family and boarded a flight to Bangkok, Thailand, on January 5. She was intercepted at the airport in Thailand, where authorities confiscated her passport and lanned to deport her back to her family.

Alqunun resisted, saying that she feared for her life, and appealed for asylum. She has claimed that she faced abuse at home, and feared punishment because she had denounced Islam. (Her family had denied allegations of abuse, Thai officials said.)

The emigration threats began trending on social media since then. Rahaf barricaded herself in a hotel at Thailand's Suvarnabhumi Airport and broadcast her fears to the world. The teenager refused to leave until she could speak with UN officials, who could determine her asylum status. After a nearly 48-hour standoff that Alqunun and her supporters broadcast through social media, the Thai authorities dropped their efforts to deport Alqunun, and the teen was allowed to meet with UN representatives.

The U.N. Refugee Agency (UNHCR) intervened, and on Wednesday recommended her for asylum in Australia. Though Australia was ready after intervention by UNHCR, finally Alqunun was sent to Canada and Canadian Prime Minister accepted her.

The impact of Rahaf's shrewd use of social media—and the international support she was able to muster—was underscored by a Saudi diplomat's lament, captured on video and shared by the teenager as she awaited news of her fate. "I wish they could have taken her phone, rather than her passport," he could be heard saying.

Now, women across Saudi Arabia, inspired by a teenager who fled the country to seek asylum in Australia amid fears that she would be killed by her family, are demanding further reforms — including an end to the male-dominated guardianship system — or else they will leave the country, they say. In the days since, an Arabic language hashtag that roughly translates as "remove the guardianship system or we'll all migrate" has trended on social media in Saudi Arabia, a country notorious for cracking down on dissent.

Saudi Arabia's guardianship system, which treats women as legal minors and requires them to get male guardians' permission to travel, marry and more, remains intact. Human Rights Watch in 2017 called Saudi Arabia's guardianship system the most "significant impediment to realizing

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### Freedom Box Project ...

ourselves and our children, browse entertainment content... the joys of the Internet are endless. The best part is that it's owned and run by us. If we don't get signal, we inform the support teams who then resolve the matter."

Sunil Mohan Adapa, a US-based product developer, who is part of the Freedom Box Project, was reported to have explained, "In a paper published by TRAI, it was noted that the cost of delivering Internet using networks costs a fraction of what it costs using mobile networks. This is due to the licensed nature of commercial mobile networks vs the unlicensed spectrum used by Wi-Fi networks. There are still many areas in our country where the Internet is not available. Further, not everyone is able to pay the price for Internet connectivity. This underlines the importance of community-owned Wi-Fi networks as demonstrated by this initiative, .... This project shows the ability of technology to bring very low-cost Internet connectivity and other facilities such as free voice calling. It shows that Internet connectivity, which is already a citizen's legal right in some countries, can be provided to everyone and not just those who can afford it. Internet connectivity is changing the way people conduct commerce, get educated and even receive medical treatment."

Inputs from: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/entertainment/events/hyderabad/every-old-computer-is-a-potential-server-that-can-bring-internet-connectivity-to-an-entire-village/articleshow/67833580.cms>

women's rights in the country."

### Negative Marking is negative

Newsdesk - So, the point is clear now. While negative marking apparently seemed to work in some examinations to make the participants more focused and prevent wild guesses finally it mentally cripples the students. Recently the Madras High Court has observed that negative marking system in competitive examinations requires reconsideration and has to be done away with.

A writ petition was filed by Nelson Prabhakar (Minor, represented by his father R. Sivalingam) in which he sought for a direction to CBSE to revalue his answer sheets of the Physics and Mathematics of JEE (Main) 2013. In the meantime he was also granted interim order by the court permitting him to write the JEE Advance Level examination. But he was not allowed to take part in the examination on the ground that no order was communicated to them by their official higher level. Hence, the writ petition became infructuous. Even then, Nelson's lawyer (Advocate A. Arulmozhi) urged the court to address his concerns against negative marking system. Honorable Justice R. Mahadevan remarked in his judgment that, "negative marking will not help a student to think rationally. In other words, negative marking does not allow a student to develop an element of guessing. Intelligent guessing is an art. It is very useful in our life. One cannot be sure about all things at all times. An individual will come across a situation, where he/she has to decide an issue not merely based on his knowledge, but with little guessing." He further explained,

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# Manifesto for change: 'Reclaiming the Republic:

## 19 issues for elections 2019

A group of eminent citizens outline reforms for India's judiciary, media, education, healthcare, police and social welfare system.

We are a group of concerned citizens. We have varied political opinions and affiliations, but are united in our trust in democratic institutions, in our adherence to the philosophy of the Constitution and belief in the idea of a plural, democratic Republic of India. Deeply concerned, of late, over the multiple challenges to the Republic, we have undertaken to examine these challenges in some depth, and to propose to our fellow citizens means to protect and strengthen the Constitutional safeguards for our democratic polity and composite society. We see the forthcoming Lok Sabha election as an opportunity to retrieve and, indeed, reclaim from manipulation and subversion, our legacy of the Republic.

The situation today calls for urgent reforms in law, policies and institutions. This involves, first of all, restoration or undoing the damages inflicted by the current ruling establishment: ensuring proper operation of the rule of law in our country, non-interference with judiciary and anti-corruption institutions, the integrity and fairness of our administrative structures and, last but not least, the vigorous energy of our media in reporting national events with freedom, accuracy and responsibility. But undoing the damage is not about a simple roll back. The roots of some of these challenges go back to the earlier times. We require reconstruction and substantial measures to ensure that similar damage cannot be done in the future. Unless we reignite the spirit of the Constitutional resolve to secure justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity and carry out programmes in that direction, we cannot hope to involve a majority of Indians in this national duty.

Accordingly, we place before the country specific ideas and measures for recovery, reconstruction and reorientation. The range of reforms that we propose include:

### Democratic liberties

**1) Doing away with antiquated and draconian laws that have been widely misused to curtail personal liberties and intimidate political activists.**

Repeal of Section 124A (sedition) and 499 (criminal defamation) of the Indian Penal Code, Unlawful Activities Prevention Act and the National Security Act and amendments to the Armed Forces Special Powers Act and Foreign Contributions Regulation Act as well as the existing laws on blasphemy and criminal contempt of legislature and judiciary.

**2) Electoral reforms aimed at reducing the influence of money power in elections and making the electoral system more democratic.**

Reverse the Electoral Bond scheme and other recent regressive changes to the laws on electoral funding, bring a comprehensive law for election financing reforms and set up a National Election Fund for state funding of election.

**3) Media reforms aimed at making the media freer, more diverse and accountable through an independent regulator.**

Media Freedom Bill along the lines of the First Amendment in the United States that guarantees freedom of expression and removes all arbitrary restrictions such as pre-censorship broadcast of news on radio, arbitrary internet shut down. Set up Independent statutory licensing and regulatory authority, independent statutory complaints

### Continued from Page - 3 Negative Marking...

"Wild guessing is another type of guessing. While intelligent guessing requires an amount of prior knowledge on the subject, wild guessing is the decision taken just like that. In a competitive examination, the students come prepared with varied degree of preparation. As such, when a student is not sure about the answer, he/she attempts to take intelligent guessing. This type of intelligent guessing should be permitted and encouraged, as it would help the students in their future life, ... negative marking acts only as a bolt in the brain development of the students."

The judgment also discusses the importance of intuition, "Everyone comes across a situation in life where decisions are taken purely out of intuition. It may work or may not, but an element of boldness comes along, while making a decision through intuition. The threat of negative marks will never allow intuition to grow in a student."

And finally, it said that, "the very system of awarding negative marks is improper and against the principles of fairness, equality and equity. Students, who take part in competitive examinations, come from different strata of society. Those hailing from affluent families, can afford to take private coaching and enhance their knowledge and techniques and the same cannot be expected from meritorious students coming from economically weaker background. There has to be a level playing field in examination in general, especially in competitive examination. Negative marking acts a weight behind the mental strength of a student and the student approaches every question with an element of fear. He/she has to be doubly cautious, while choosing the answer for the question. In other words, a student has to be confident about

authority and make Prasar Bharati truly independent public service broadcaster.

### Welfare state

**4) Universal basic services and social security for all citizens.**

Universal public provision of good quality social services including education, health, maternal care and early childhood care; universal access to food security through Public Distribution System in rural areas with addition of nutria-cereals, pulses and oil to the ration, universal pension for the aged at half the minimum wages and special provisions for specially disadvantaged groups; reorient fiscal policy towards employment: allow for increased spending that can create jobs by investing in the creation of public goods.

**5) A "new deal" for the farmers comprising assured income, freedom from indebtedness and sustainable farm practices.**

Statutory assurance of remunerative prices (at least 50% on C2 Cost of Cultivation); One-time comprehensive loan-waiver, along with a National Debt Relief Commission; timely and effective relief from disaster related distress; Reduce the cost of inputs and remove all legal and vigilante-imposed restrictions on cattle trade; extension of all benefits meant for farmers to tenant farmers, sharecroppers, women farmers, Adivasi farmers, landless cultivators and livestock rearers.

**6) Turning Right to Education into a reality.**

Properly staffed and funded government schools; ensure that every school is Right To Education compliant; expand RTE to age 16 and early childhood education; end shortage of teachers by filling regular vacancies; a national campaign to sustain universal functional literacy and numeracy.

**7) Well endowed, regulated and autonomous higher educational institutions.**

Allocate an additional 1% of GDP for public universities with a special programme to revive and support state universities and affiliated colleges; ten-fold increase in fellowships for all social and economically deprived students; restoring and strengthening autonomy for higher educational institutions.

**8) Affordable and accessible health care for all through public health delivery system.**

Raise government expenditure on health care to 3% of GDP with three-fourths of additional increase to be funded by the central government; strengthen government health system at all levels, with primacy being accorded to primary, preventive and promotive care; pooled procurement of generic medicines; stronger public health cadre with two ASHAs; regulation of private health system and medical colleges.

**9) Extension and expansion of MNRGA to guarantee to every adult at least 150 days of work a year at minimum wages.**

And expand the employment guarantee programme to provide 150 days of work to all adults in rural and urban areas, at minimum daily wage (by category according to state).

**10) All vacancies must be filled in education, health and other essential public services.**

And all workers in essential services (health, education, cleaning) must be treated as regular public employees, including those currently classified as volunteers in anganwadi, MDM and ASHAs.

the answer. Such confidence of knowing each and every answers cannot be expected from the students, meritorious or otherwise. If there is no negative mark, the students are given an opportunity to take a wide thinking and apply intelligent guessing. This practice of taking an intelligent guess indeed, develops the brain of a student and builds his/her confidence to tackle any situation in future. Albert Einstein famously stated, "Imagination is more important than knowledge".

## Jharkhand Bengalee Association hold elections at Lindsay Club. Dhanbad

Newsdesk – On 3rd February 2019 a meeting of Jharkhand Bengalee Association was held under the presidentship of Manjulika Chakrabarty. In the meeting new committee for the term 2019-21 was elected. Representatives from all the districts of Jharkhand were present in the meeting, as mondaymorninglive.in reported.

Unanimously, Bidroha Kumar Mitra from Madhupur was elected as president. B. B. Guha from Dumka, Subhash Saha from Ramgarh and Arun Bikas from Gomia were elected as vice presidents.

Tapan Roy from Dhanbad was elected General Secretary whereas Assistant Secretaries elected were Arindam Bose, Giridih, Bikash Mitra, Deoghar, and Sanjay Pddar, Ranchi. For the post of Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer Aditya Mandal and Pradip Majumdar respectively of Bokaro Thermal was elected.

**11) Additional expenditure on these to be met by active fiscal strategy for raising resources.**

At least 20% inheritance tax, wealth tax in rising slabs for wealth above Rs 10 crore, corporate social tax linked to turnover, not profits; green taxes to encourage less carbon emissions, pollution tax. These would generate anywhere between 3% to 5% of the GDP as additional revenue.

**12) An independent and empowered Environment Commission to lay down environmental standards and regulations and ensure their compliance.**

An autonomous agency to conserve and protect the rivers, increase the number of air quality monitoring stations in highly polluted areas, a national energy policy for phased shift to decentralised and renewable energy over the next fifteen years and incentivise public transport and non-motorised private vehicles; nationalise oil and gas and recognise communities as trustees, custodians and shareholders of their natural resources.

### Social justice

**13) Assure minimum critical presence of women in decision making.**

Amend the Constitution and laws to provide for at least one-third representation of women in parliament and state assemblies as well as in judiciary and police.

**14) Enact a comprehensive anti-discrimination law.**

And constitute an Equal Opportunity Commission to oversee implementation of such a law, which covers all vulnerable groups, prevent rising hate crimes against religious minorities and disadvantaged castes by creating criminal culpability of public officials, statutory backing for Tribal Sub-Plan and Special Component Plan and legal changes for reversing tribal land alienation.

**15) Special programmes for most vulnerable social groups.**

National mission to end manual scavenging and sewer workers death and full implementation of the Prohibition of Employment as manual scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013; State support for educational, housing and other facilities for protection and development of denotified tribes, nomadic and semi-nomadic peoples; mandatory disability audit of all policies and schemes of the government and public institutions, implementation of reservations, childcare for disabled persons and effective ICDS integration of all disabled children.

**Transparent and accountable governance**

**16) Repair the damage done to anti-corruption laws and institutions.**

Undo the regressive amendments made to the Prevention of Corruption Act, set up the Lokpal in a transparent manner, operationalise the Whistle Blowers Protection Act and enact the Grievance Redressal Bill.

**17) Strengthen accountability and transparency.**

Reinforce independence of institutions of oversight such as CBI, CVC, CAG, strengthen the Right to Information regime, introduce pre-legislative consultation and make social audit mandatory for all public schemes.

**18) Making the judiciary more independent, efficient, transparent, representative and accountable.**

Independent judicial appointment commissions to select judges, independent judicial complaints commission, professional court management team and video recording of court proceedings.

**19) Police reforms fully in accordance with the seven directions of the Supreme Court in the Prakash Singh case.**

The Model Police Bill 2006 to be a starting point to modulate the relationship between the police and the political executive.

Endorsed by Members of Reclaiming the Republic, February 2019.

Justice AP Shah (Chairperson), Prashant Bhushan (Convenor), Anjali Bhardwaj (Convenor), Aakar Patel, Aruna Roy, Bezwada Wilson, Deepak Nayyar, EAS Sarma, Gopal Guru, Gopal Gandhi, Harsh Mander, Jayati Ghosh, Kavitha Kuruganti, Krishna Kumar, Nikhil Dey, Paul Divakar, Prabhat Patnaik, P Sainath, SP Shukla, Srinath Reddy, Sujatha Rao, Sakshi Selvaraj, Ravi Chopra, Syeda Hameed, Vipul Mudgal, Wajahat Habibullah, Yogendra Yadav.

Courtesy: <https://scroll.in/article/912101/manifesto-for-change-reclaiming-the-republic-19-issues-for-elections-2019>

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With best compliments from -

**Dr. Supriyo Mukherjee**

Secretary

Samastipur Branch, Bengalee Association, Bihar

# The Table that defines chemistry turns 150

- T. Pradeep

Present Version of the Periodic Table

Lanthanide series																Actinide series															
La Ce Pr Nd Pm Sm Eu Gd Tb Dy Ho Er Tm Yb																Ac Th Pa U Np Pu Am Cm Bk Cf Es Fm Md No															
Fr Ra																Uu Uuu Uub Nh Fl Mc Lv Ts Og															

The majestic table of elements that hangs on the walls of classrooms across the world has turned 150 years old in 2019.

The 'Periodic Table of Elements', or simply, 'The Table' for many, was written by Dmitri Ivanovich Mendeleev on 17th February 1869. Looking back, the Table opens a window to the world of inanimate matter. Mendeleev's profound impact on chemistry is comparable to those of his contemporaries, Gregor Mendel and Charles Darwin in genetics and evolution, respectively. Therefore, the United Nations General Assembly and UNESCO have decided to celebrate 2019 as the "International Year of the Periodic Table of Chemical Elements (IYPT2019)".

Mendeleev was not the first one to create a table of elements. Earliest of such efforts was due to the father of modern chemistry, Antoine Lavoisier in 1789 who classified them in terms of their properties. John Newlands introduced the concept of octaves in chemistry, wherein properties repeat for every eighth element. There were other attempts too.

However, the proposal of Mendeleev was unique. On February 17, 1869 he sent out a single page note to the Russian Chemical society outlining his findings and it was published in the first volume of the society's journal. In the same year, its German abstract with a table and eight comments was published in Zeitschrift für Chemie, taking it to larger Europe.

Mendeleev's finding was that "The elements, if arranged according to their atomic weights, exhibit an evident stepwise variation of properties". In his Faraday Lecture, delivered in 1889 the statement of the periodic law appeared in the more familiar form: "The elements, if arranged according to their atomic weights, exhibit an evident periodicity of properties". While putting together all the 63 elements known at that time, his periodic table placed four slots between the known ones with question marks. He labeled them with a prefix, eka. All eka elements

## We and our police

We, the common people get scared whenever something happens which require us to go to the police. Their experiences give them reasons to be scared. Even the police department knows about it and they try to be friendly and easily approachable to the people in need. But we need to know about this civil security force as well. Behar Herald is serializing the question and answers in its issues to get the readers informed and also aware of their rights as citizen. The material being published here are available at the website of Maharashtra Police.

(Continued from last issue)

### 51. Can the police do anything they want?

Not at all. They can only do what is lawful. In fact, they are very strictly governed by many, many rules. These include their own regulations, the procedures laid down by the criminal codes, the orders given by the Supreme Court and the guidelines of the human rights commissions.

### 52. But supposing police officers do not obey them?

You can complain to his senior or to the magistrate depending on how serious the matter is. It is always better to complain in writing and get a receipt.

### 53. What can I complain of?

You can complain of any wrong-doing by a police officer because he is a public servant bound to do his duty at all times. He cannot neglect his duty, or delay doing it.

### 54. But suppose the police officer is rude and insulting to me?

Again, you can complain to his senior if it is a matter of breach of duty or discipline. But if it is anything more serious than that or amounts to a crime then you can file a complaint against him at a police station or go straight to the local judicial magistrate and file a complaint.

### 55. But if I file a complaint with the local police station they may refuse to take it against their own officer?

Yes, that does happen often. But it need not be the end of the matter. You can take a complaint about rude or discourteous behaviour or neglect of duty or abuse of police power to the chief of police or if it amounts to a crime you can take it to the nearest magistrate

iodine with a question mark, although tellurium is heavier than iodine. Today we know that his placing was indeed justified.

Periodicity in properties made systematisation of information. Modern periodic law states that, "the properties of the elements are periodic functions of their atomic numbers." This restatement is due to Moseley who worked on the topic in 1913. Here, we must note that Mendeleev related the properties to atomic weights at a time when atomic numbers, or number of protons in the atomic nucleus was unknown. They were found to be part of nuclei in 1917 and the nucleus itself was discovered in 1911, both by Rutherford. In 1869, atomic weights were considered as the single most important property of elements.

Mendeleev had a compelling reason to discover the periodic table. He was deeply concerned about the prevailing systematization of chemical knowledge and decided to write textbooks (Principles of Chemistry, Vol. I & II). He could cover only eight elements in his first volume of the book, which was finished in January 1869 and wanted to condense information in the form of a table for the second volume. It is said that the first version of the Table appeared in his dream.

Intense passion of the man to study science should motivate anyone. He was the youngest of 17 siblings who lost his father at the age of 13 and saw the destruction of his mother's factory by fire. She took him across Russia, walking all the way from Siberia to Moscow, a distance of 3,500 km. Having denied a place in Moscow, they next went to St. Petersburg where Mendeleev joined the pedagogy course. After graduation and a few years of work, he returned to St. Petersburg for his Masters degree.

The current periodic table decorating the walls of classrooms, printed on tea-cups, T-shirts and memorabilia is far removed from the original version of Mendeleev. Yet, the core principle that 'properties of elements are periodic functions of the inherent properties of its atoms' remain. This would indeed be one of the most fundamental insights into the puzzles of nature for which Mendeleev would be known for eternity. For that reason, element 101 is aptly named as Mendeleevium (Md). Although narrowly missed the Nobel Prize of 1906, he became one of the 15 scientists to be remembered with an element, a more illustrious recognition considering that 181 have won a Nobel Prize in chemistry so far.

(T. Pradeep is an Institute Professor at IIT Madras. Email: pradeep@iitm.ac.in) Published on - February 09, 2019 <https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/the-table-that-defines-chemistry-turns-150/article26224712.html>

Continued from Page-2 'Poorest of the poor ...

established as "illegal migrants". Sincere efforts should be made to arrive at an understanding that resolves the present issue, addresses future concerns and seeks to mitigate the hardship and sufferings of those who are declared "illegal migrants". The Government of India should also examine measures to ensure that the burden of "non-nationals" is shared by different states, and not left for Assam to shoulder alone.

(5) The Government of India should, at the earliest, clarify, so as to clear the air, its position on the legal status of those who will stand excluded from the final NRC, and what the future holds for them. To prevent their being made "stateless", thus depriving them of the basic human right to a nationality, Government of India must, where extradition of "non-citizens" is not possible, declare a pathway to citizenship for those excluded. This must take into account, in this passage of 47 years since the cut-off date (of 25th March, 1971), children born and families established in their places of residence.

(6) The Government of India should desist from any planned changes to national laws and procedures concerning citizenship that, in so far as they make citizenship contingent on religious affiliation, are discriminatory and violative of the equality provisions of the Constitution, apart from threatening to derail the intent of NRC updation.

Long-pending problems call for innovative solutions. These require the cooperation of all stakeholders in the democracy that is India, in a spirit of compassion, trust and respect for the dignity of the individual. We are suggesting some steps for coming to grips with the issues confronting us today. We appeal to all citizens concerned with the development of a healthy democracy to debate the issues raised by us in the hope that we are able to evolve workable solutions in the near future.

Courtesy: [https://www.newsclick.in/former-civil-servants-express-concern-over-nrc?fbclid=IwAR3ivUphost9zPY2GJ\\_r3uqpnJ5bt82jm2mUHB-y5L16LVJZTEoe0X3M](https://www.newsclick.in/former-civil-servants-express-concern-over-nrc?fbclid=IwAR3ivUphost9zPY2GJ_r3uqpnJ5bt82jm2mUHB-y5L16LVJZTEoe0X3M)



The students of Nihshulk Vidyalaya, run by Barari branch of Bengalee Association, Bihar celebrated Saraswati puja at Barari Samudayik Bhawan

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