

HCCRI XII STUDY GUIDE

# RAJYA SABHA

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INTERNAL SECURITY  
IN INDIA



# WELCOME LETTER

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Dear Delegates of the Rajya Sabha,

Welcome! Congratulations for being part of the illustrious lower house of the Indian government. Armed with the mandate of the masses and the (no doubt) trust of the citizenry, you will decide the fate of India.

India faces a crisis of untold urgency. Instability plagues the cities and regions that comprise the nation, while uncountable points of tension means the threat of violent lurks around every corner. Where will be the next protest? The next riot? The next death?

In times like this, all eyes turn towards the brilliant leadership of India. As members of the Rajya Sabha, it is your sacred duty to pass legislation that will quell this ancient ill plaguing India.

The fate of a nation is in your hands. For the interest of the nation, and for the interest of your own parties and constituents, we urge you to fight tooth and nail for what you believe in — and of course, have fun!

The Dais of the Rajya Sabha,  
Gabriel, Kevin, Peiduo and Cayden

# DAIS INTRODUCTION

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## HEAD CHAIR: GABRIEL POON

Gabriel is a JC1 student in Hwa Chong Institution. He has been called a 'MUN Dinosaur' and doesn't know how to feel about it. His hobbies go beyond existential crises, however: he enjoys singing, obsesses over Warhammer 40K, and is a fierce advocate for Linux. Before he lapses back into aggressively recommending The Oh Hellos, he would like to wish every single delegate a unique and fun HCCRI'23 and a year of delightful detours and unexpected discoveries.

## DEPUTY CHAIR: YANG PEIDUO

Peiduo, a JC1 student from Hwa Chong Institution, regrets his absence at the conference due to a conflicting commitment with the CLEP Camp. Although he won't be directly participating in the ongoing debate, he sincerely hopes that all delegates will find value in reading the study guide and engaging with the topics presented by the chairs. The Rajya Sabha, being an exceptional council, promises a distinctive and enriching experience for each and every one of you. Peiduo hopes that the delegates can find this experience a very fruitful and enriching one.

# DAIS INTRODUCTION

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**DEPUTY CHAIR: KEVIN CHEW**

Currently a JC2 student in Hwa Chong Institution, Kevin believes himself to be someone who is rather risk-averse. Despite having developed a notable interest in international affairs by the approximate age of 15, he was reluctant to engage himself in the world of MUNs. Even upon the urging of his friends, Kevin maintained that public speaking simply wasn't his forte.

As such, it wouldn't be inappropriate to say that it took substantial courage for him to finally decide to sign up for his first ever MUN (coincidentally, HCCRI'22) in JC1. Ever since, he has thoroughly enjoyed his experiences in MUNs and definitely doesn't regret having joined the "MUN circuit". Kevin hopes that HCCRI'23 will serve as an avenue for delegates to explore their interests, deepen their passions and meet like-minded people — in the same way that HCCRI'22 was for him. :D

# DAIS INTRODUCTION

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**DEPUTY CHAIR: CAYDEN CHIK**

Cayden is a JC1 student in Hwa Chong Institution. His pastimes are listening to music, singing (much to the dismay of his neighbours) and playing chess. He looks forward to meeting delegates and hopes that delegates will take this opportunity to challenge themselves and participate actively in council debate. Cayden also hopes that delegates will be able to form friendships through HCCRI and he looks forward to an unforgettable conference!

# I. INTRODUCTION TO COMMITTEE

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The Rajya Sabha (constitutionally the Council of States) is the upper house within the bicameral Parliament of India, with its counterpart being the Lok Sabha (constitutionally the House of the People), the lower house. As the legislative branch of the Government of India, the Parliament's main responsibility is that of proposing, debating and passing laws.

The house currently has a maximum membership of 245 members, out of which 233 are elected by the state and territory union legislatures, while the remaining 12 are appointed by the President of India for their contributions to the fields of art, literature, science and social services.

## II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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### CURRENT COMPOSITION OF THE RAJYA SABHA

At present, the Rajya Sabha comprises two major political alliances: the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and the opposing United Progressive Alliance (UPA). The NDA is led by the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and holds 110 seats, while the UPA is headed by the centre-left Indian National Congress (INC) and holds 64 seats. Of the remaining seats, 65 are controlled by political parties which are not currently aligned with either of the aforementioned alliances.

The current composition of the Rajya Sabha is representative of the BJP's recent dominance in the Indian political arena. Under the decisive leadership of Narendra Modi, the BJP has gained significant popularity — something perhaps best demonstrated by its historic landslide victory in the 2014 Indian general election<sup>1</sup>. The BJP's exceptional electoral performance has been attributed mainly to its consolidation of the Hindu vote, its successful developmental agenda, Modi's personal popularity and the INC's failure to achieve substantial socio-economic outcomes.<sup>2 3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Burke, J. (2014, May 16). *Narendra Modi's landslide victory shatters Congress's grip on India*. The Guardian. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/16/narendra-modi-victory-congress-india-election>

<sup>2</sup> Katju, M. (2013, March 2). *The truth about Pakistan*. Nawaiwaqt Group. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <https://web.archive.org/web/20131110103720/http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/columns/O2-Mar-2013/the-truth-about-pakistan>

<sup>3</sup> Keay, J. (2010). *History of India* (pp. 464).

# II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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## SECULARISM IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT

To more comprehensively understand secularism and religious diversity in present-day India, it would be imperative for one to look back to its ancient and colonial pasts. For much of India's history, the region was home to a diversity of religions, including Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism. Prior to the arrival of the British to India, tensions and conflicts may have already existed to some degree between the local religious communities (this remains a point of contention among historians).<sup>4</sup> <sup>5</sup> However, what undoubtedly exacerbated such divisions (if any) was the British Raj's colonial strategy of "divide and rule".<sup>6</sup> In an effort to prevent the emergence of a united Indian independence movement and preserve their colonial rule, the British deliberately drove wedges between local ethno-religious communities.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Katju, M. (2013, March 2). *The truth about Pakistan*. Nawaiwaqt Group. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <https://web.archive.org/web/20131110103720/http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/columns/02-Mar-2013/the-truth-about-pakistan>.

<sup>5</sup> Keay, J. (2010). *History of India* (pp. 464).

<sup>6</sup> Tharoor, S. (2017). *Inglorious Empire: What the British Did to India* (pp. 101).

<sup>7</sup> TED. (2021, June 21). Why was India split into two countries? - Halmanti Roy [Video]. YouTube. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/DrcCTgwsjic>.



# II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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For example, under British rule, Indians were only allowed to vote for political candidates of their own religious identification.<sup>8</sup> These practices exaggerated differences between peoples, especially between the Hindus and the Muslims.<sup>9</sup> Eventually, souring Hindu-Muslim relations culminated in the bitter Partition of India in 1947, in which the Indian subcontinent was divided into the two independent dominions of (Hindu-majority) India and (Muslim-majority) Pakistan.<sup>10 11</sup> In the aftermath of this watershed moment in history, vicious rioting arose and mass communal violence broke out between Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. There was also the widespread migration of an estimated 7.2 million Hindus and Sikhs to India, as well as 7.5 million Muslims to Pakistan, resulting in the upheaval of entire communities.<sup>12</sup> Believing the Partition to be emblematic of the deep chasms between local religious communities, Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister, sought to entrench secularism as the cornerstone of the newly independent nation's governance system.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Rama Devi V.S., & Mendiratta S.K. (2019, May 30). *How India Votes: History of Elections During the British Rule*. Sahapedia. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <https://www.sahapedia.org/how-india-votes-history-elections-during-british-rule>.

<sup>10</sup> Asrar, S. (2019, August 14). *How India, Pakistan and Bangladesh were formed*. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from [Rama Devi V.S., & Mendiratta S.K. \(2019, May 30\). How India Votes: History of Elections During the British Rule. Sahapedia. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from https://www.sahapedia.org/how-india-votes-history-elections-during-british-rule](https://www.sahapedia.org/how-india-votes-history-elections-during-british-rule).

<sup>11</sup> Turner, E. (2021, March 31). *A Brief History of India and Pakistan and Their Independence*. Culture Trip. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from [Asrar, S. \(2019, August 14\). How India, Pakistan and Bangladesh were formed. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/8/14/how-india-pakistan-and-bangladesh-were-formed.](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/8/14/how-india-pakistan-and-bangladesh-were-formed)

<sup>12</sup> Talbot, I., & Singh, G. (2009, July 23). *The Partition of India*. Cambridge University Press.

<sup>13</sup> Jaffrelot, C. (2019, April 4). *The Fate of Secularism in India*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/04/04/fate-of-secularism-in-india-pub-78689>.

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As such, secularism was born into modern India, amidst a hostile and religiously polarised environment. In spite of this, secularism proved to be a relatively successful governance model between the 1950s and 1970s. During this period, religious minorities were adequately represented in India’s legislative assemblies and communal riots grew comparatively infrequent.<sup>14</sup> <sup>15</sup> In fact, with the Forty-second Amendment of the Constitution of India enacted in 1976, the Preamble to the Constitution firmly asserted India as a “secular” nation. This notion that secularism is a fundamental characteristic of the Constitution was only further reinforced by the Supreme Court of India in the 1994 case *S. R. Bommai v. Union of India*.<sup>16</sup> In the present day, the Indian government remains officially secular, though secularism has been weakening recently under the pressure of Hindu nationalists — a topic that will be further explored in later sections.

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<sup>14</sup> Jaffrelot, C., & Kumar S. (2009). *Rise of the Plebeians?: The Changing Face of the Indian Legislative Assemblies*. Routledge.

<sup>15</sup> Jaffrelot, C. (2019, April 4). *The Fate of Secularism in India*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/04/04/fate-of-secularism-in-india-pub-78689>.

<sup>16</sup> Yazdani, M.S. (2021, October 13). *Secularism and Constitution: An Analysis*. The Daily Guardian. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <https://thedailyguardian.com/secularism-and-constitution-an-analysis/>.

# II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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To give more examples on the pressure of Hindu nationalists, here are laws being pushed out by the government that many argue are actively discriminatory. One such example is the Citizenship (Amendment) Act passed by the BJP-controlled Parliament on 11 December 2019.<sup>17</sup> Under the act, immigrants from Muslim majority countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh can get fast access to Indian citizenship if they are non-Muslim.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, it allowed the government to withdraw anyone's Overseas Citizen of India card (a pass that allows foreigners of Indian origin to live and work in India without restrictions) if they commit any major or minor offences.<sup>19</sup> Critics have voiced concerns that the bill would be used, alongside the National Register of Citizens (NRC), to deprive Muslims of Indian citizenship, render them stateless and subject them to prolonged detention or deportation.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps unsurprisingly, nationwide protests against this controversial bill erupted immediately after its passing.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> United States Commission on International Religious Freedom. (2020, February). *Factsheet on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in India*. United States Commission on International Religious Freedom. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <https://www.uscirf.gov/resources/factsheet-citizenship-amendment-act-india>.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> United States Commission on International Religious Freedom. (2020, February). *Factsheet on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in India*. United States Commission on International Religious Freedom. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <https://www.uscirf.gov/resources/factsheet-citizenship-amendment-act-india>.

<sup>21</sup> Parashar, U. (2022, August 17). *Fresh anti-CAA protests break out in northeast after nearly 2 years*. Hindustan Times. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/fresh-anti-cao-protests-break-out-in-northeast-after-nearly-2-years-101660721492633.html>.

## II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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Apart from this, the BJP-controlled government has also sought to revoke the constitutional autonomy of Jammu and Kashmir — the only Muslim-majority state in India — as well as impose restrictions which undermine the basic rights of the people there.<sup>22</sup> For example, in 2019, the government enforced a harsh security lockdown in the state, banning public gatherings, curtailing access to the internet and limiting freedom of movement.<sup>23</sup>

Another way in which Hindutva manifests itself is cow vigilantism.<sup>24</sup> Cow vigilante violence refers to a type of mob-based violence perpetrated by Hindu nationalists against non-Hindus in the name of protecting cows, an animal regarded as sacred in Hindu religion.<sup>25</sup> In recent years, instances of such religious violence have been growing worryingly frequent. According to a Reuters report, a total of 63 cow vigilante attacks occurred in India between 2010 and mid-2017, almost all of which were recorded after Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to power in 2014.<sup>26</sup> This statistic, among other evidence, reveals an uncomfortable revelation: Modi and his government have contributed to the proliferation of cow vigilante violence through their spreading of Hindutva ideology.

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<sup>22</sup> Human Rights Watch. (2019, August 6). *India: Basic Freedoms at Risk in Kashmir*. Human Rights Watch. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/08/06/india-basic-freedoms-risk-kashmir>.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Human Rights Watch. (2019, February 18). *India: Vigilante 'Cow Protection' Groups Attack Minorities*. Human Rights Watch. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/02/19/india-vigilante-cow-protection-groups-attack-minorities>.

<sup>25</sup> Ramachandran, S. (2017, July 7). *Hindutva Terrorism in India*. The Diplomat. Retrieved May 10, 2023, from <https://thediplomat.com/2017/07/hindutva-terrorism-in-india/>.

<sup>26</sup> Wilkes, T., & Srivastava, R. (2017, June 29). *Protests held across India after attacks against Muslims*. Reuters. Retrieved May 10, 2023, from <https://www.reuters.com/article/india-protests-idINKBN19J2C3>.

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As a final example, many BJP-ruled states in India have lately implemented anti-conversion laws that allow government authorities to punish individuals who convert away from Hinduism with fines or jail time. These laws have met strong opposition from the local Christian and Muslim communities, as they claim that such legislation deprives people of their freedom to choose and follow their own religions.

In summary, “secularism in the Indian context” is markedly different from conventional Western interpretations of secularism. While the West generally views secularism as the complete separation of religion from state, this is not the case in India. In practice, the government has involved itself extensively in religious affairs, such as when it constitutionally abolished untouchability in 1950. Rather, secularism, in the context of India, implies a positive notion which advocates for the equal treatment and protection of all religions. Thus, delegates should keep in mind the Indian government’s unique interpretation of secularism, as well as the history of domestic communal violence, when discussing issues of religion.

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27 Ahmad, T. (2018, October). *State Anti-conversion Laws in India*. Library of Congress. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/service/l1/l1e1rd/2018298841/2018298841.pdf>.

28 Vatican News. (2022, September 23). *India's Karnataka state passes anti-conversion law despite opposition*. Vatican News. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2022-09/karnataka-passes-anti-conversion-law-despite-opposition.html>.

29 Jaffrelot, S. (2011, May 16). *A skewed secularism?*. South Asia Citizens Web. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <http://www.sacw.net/article2081.html>.

30 Samisti Legal. (2018, May 3). *Article 17 of the Constitution*. Samisti Legal. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <https://samistilegal.in/article-17-of-the-constitution/>.

31 Yazdani, M.S. (2021, October 13). *Secularism and Constitution: An Analysis*. The Daily Guardian. Retrieved February 11, 2023, from <https://thedailyguardian.com/secularism-and-constitution-an-analysis/>.

# III. KEY ISSUES

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## RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE

India is a country that is highly religiously diverse. This resulted in people having different and even conflicting ideologies. When these ideologies that define a group's identity are fundamentally challenged, the believers have historically resorted to more violent ways to resolve these conflicts. From 2005 to 2009, 648 people were killed and 11,278 people were injured in 4030 incidents of communal violence in India. These measures can appear in forms ranging from discrimination to intimidation and harassment or even terrorism. However, it is hard to address some of the root causes of religious violence due to political factors.

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32 Sahgal N., Evans, J., Salazar, A. M., Starr, K. J., & Corichi, M. (2021, June 29). *RELIGION IN INDIA: TOLERANCE AND SEGREGATION*. Pew Research Center. Retrieved April 5, 2023, from <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/06/29/religion-in-india-tolerance-and-segregation/>.

33 Muggah, R., & Velshi, A. (2022, May 20). *Religious violence is on the rise. What can faith-based communities do about it?*. World Economic Forum. Retrieved April 20, 2023, from <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/02/how-should-faith-communities-halt-the-rise-in-religious-violence/>.

34 (2011, June 15). *Communal Violence in India*. Wayback Machine. Retrieved April 5, 2023, from [https://web.archive.org/web/20200306025121/https://www.prsindia.org/administrator/uploads/general/1308201190\\_Vital%20Stats%20-%20Communal%20Violence%20in%20India%2014Jun11%20v2.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20200306025121/https://www.prsindia.org/administrator/uploads/general/1308201190_Vital%20Stats%20-%20Communal%20Violence%20in%20India%2014Jun11%20v2.pdf).

35 Muggah, R., & Velshi, A. (2022, May 20). *Religious violence is on the rise. What can faith-based communities do about it?*. World Economic Forum. Retrieved April 20, 2023, from <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/02/how-should-faith-communities-halt-the-rise-in-religious-violence/>.

# III. KEY ISSUES

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## HINDU NATIONALISM

Hindu Nationalism, or Hindutva, is a belief that advocates the government to create policies according to the Hindu scriptures. It originated in the late 1800s when organisations perceived Christianity, Islam and Sikhism to be a threat to Hinduism. The concept of Hindutva has resulted in an increase in religious segregation, which has fostered a sense of isolation and exclusion among non-Hindu religions. This made the harassment of minority religions seem more justifiable since they are regarded as a threat and an external party.

Although it has been criticised as ruining India's democracy, it is still very popular among Hindus, who make up around 80% of the nation's population. Due to its popularity, it is even favoured by some political parties such as the BJP to win elections. With around half of the seats in Rajya Sabha taken by BJP politicians who have a clear political bias towards Hindutva, the Rajya Sabha has been questioned on whether it can serve as a fair corrective mechanism for minority religions' underrepresentation.

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36 *Hindu Nationalism*. Oxford Reference. Retrieved April 5, 2023, from

<https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095937583;jsessionid=D206EF3BE725D0395536C361EF39C027>.

37 Ibid.

38 Dhattiwala, R. (2022, August 2). *The Hindu and the Muslim in India: A Communal Conflict?*. The Wire. Retrieved April 20, 2023, from

<https://thewire.in/communalism/hindu-muslim-conflict-communal-racial-violence>.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid 48

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Under these circumstances, religious violence became a tricky topic to be dealt with as a small degree of discrimination has been justified under the influence of Hindutva. On the politicians' side, the BJP has reduced its relation with extreme Hindutva. However, it is still practising Hindutva by claiming it as a cultural agenda that promotes India's heritage and history. This is because Hindutva also serves an important role in Indian politics. The Indian community is facing many social and economic issues due to its diversity and attempts to transform its economy from a semi socialist economy to a more capitalist one. As a result of these social issues and a lack of clear direction, the sense of national identity is fading and the society becomes more fragmented, resulting in a rise in resentment towards the government. Hindutva shifted people's attention away from social and economic issues and toward other races, particularly the Muslim and Christian communities, so that less people will feel exasperated about the BJP. Hindutva also provided a sense of belonging to people who are witnessing the collapse of their traditional Hinduism world and created a collective resentment that they can put on the minorities. Although Hindutva is extreme, it is able to unify the Hindu population — which makes up a large part of the nation's population.

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42 *What is Hindu nationalism and how does it relate to trouble in Leicester?* (2022) The Guardian. Guardian News and Media. Retrieved April 5 2023 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/sep/20/what-is-hindu-nationalism-and-who-are-the-rss>.

43 *Transition of India from Socialism to capitalism.* (n.d.). Retrieved May 5, 2023, from <https://www.legalserviceindia.com/legal/article-4895-transition-of-india-from-socialism-to-capitalism.html>.

44 Chakravarty, M. (2015, October 19). *The significance of Hindutva.* Mint. <https://www.livemint.com/Opinion/fONtRgEVZ6EQx1Y5xFd3qJ/The-significance-of-Hindutva.html>.

45 Ibid.



# III. KEY ISSUES

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## 2020-2021 FARMERS' PROTEST

In September 2020, the Parliament of India passed three farm acts, commonly called the Farm Bills, in a bid to reform the agricultural industry. Collectively, these acts effectively deregulated local agricultural markets (locally known as *mandis*) by creating frameworks for increased private, corporate involvement and reduced government oversight. However, this move was quickly met with intense backlash from local farmers and unions as they believed that the Farm Bills would inevitably cause great financial harm to small farmers and agricultural workers. Their utmost concern was that these reforms would disadvantage farmers by unfairly transferring their yields into corporate hands. Without original levels of government oversight in mandis, opponents argue, stable market crop prices would turn volatile and farmers' bargaining powers would be weakened, resulting in the destabilisation of farmers' (already low) incomes. In light of these issues, farmers demanded the immediate repeal of the perceived "anti-farmer" laws and took to the streets to demonstrate their deep discontent.

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46 Thornell, C. (2020, December 30). *India's huge farmer protests, explained*. Vox. Retrieved May 5, 2023, from <https://www.vox.com/videos/22205334/indias-huge-farmer-protests-explained>.

47 Gettleman, J., Singh, K. D., & Kumar H. (2020, November 30). *Angry Farmers Choke India's Capital in Giant Demonstrations*. The New York Times. Retrieved May 5, 2023, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/world/asia/india-farmers-protest.html>.

48 (2020, June 16). *'Ordinance to put farmers at mercy of corporates'*. The Tribune India. Retrieved May 5, 2023, from <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/punjab/ordinance-to-put-farmers-at-mercy-of-corporates-99720>.

49 Singh, K. (2021, November 19). *Timeline: Indian farmers' protests against agricultural laws*. Reuters. Retrieved May 5, 2023, from <https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/indian-farmers-protests-against-agricultural-laws-2021-11-19/>.

50 Palnitkar, K. (2021, November 19). *Why Have Farmers Been Protesting the Farm Laws From Their Inception?*. The Quint. Retrieved May 5, 2023, from <https://www.thequint.com/news/india/farmers-protesting-the-3-new-ordinances>.

# III. KEY ISSUES

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To pressure the government into repealing the Farm Bills, farmer unions continually organised various protests and strikes across the nation, employing methods such as sit-ins, traffic obstruction and encirclement of politicians and government buildings to achieve their goals. In Punjab, for example, farmers managed to bring railway services to a grinding halt for more than 2 months. Despite the widespread demonstrations, the central government initially maintained that the farm acts were instrumental to reviving the agricultural economy and refused to back down. As such, the two camps were engaged in an unrelenting standoff, with negotiations between both sides repeatedly breaking down and proving unproductive. Thus, protests dragged on and the use of police force against protesters was sustained. In September 2021, protests arguably reached a peak when more than 500,000 farmers rallied in Uttar Pradesh to voice their dissatisfaction towards the Farm Bills.

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51 Gettleman, J., Singh, K. D., & Kumar H. (2020, November 30). *Angry Farmers Choke India's Capital in Giant Demonstrations*. The New York Times. Retrieved May 5, 2023, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/world/asia/india-farmers-protest.html>.

52 Dasditar, A. G. (2020, November 11). *Explained: The Railways network in Punjab, and how it has been impacted by the ongoing protests*. The Indian Express. Retrieved May 5, 2023, from <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/the-railways-network-in-punjab-and-how-it-has-been-impacted-by-the-ongoing-protests-7046586/>.

53 Singh, K. (2021, November 19). *Timeline: Indian farmers' protests against agricultural laws*. Reuters. Retrieved May 5, 2023, from <https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/indian-farmers-protests-against-agricultural-laws-2021-11-19/>.

54 Staff, S. (2021, January 15). *Farm laws stir: Talks with Centre '120% fail', say farmer leaders; next round on January 19*. Scroll.in. Retrieved May 5, 2023, from <https://scroll.in/latest/984158/farm-laws-stir-talks-with-centre-120-fail-say-farmer-leaders-next-round-on-january-19>

55 Siddiqui, D. (2020, November 8). *Thousands of protesting Indian farmers and police face-off at New Delhi border*. Reuters. Retrieved May 5, 2023, from <https://www.reuters.com/article/india-farms-protests-idCNL4N2IE01L>.

56 Kumar, S. (2021, September 6). *Indian farmers resume protests against Modi's agriculture reforms*. Arab News. Retrieved May 5, 2023, from <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1923181/world>.

# III. KEY ISSUES

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Two months later, Prime Minister Modi would announce the government's decision to finally repeal the divisive agricultural laws. With this, over a year of farmers' protests were brought to an end.

Although the conflict between the farmers and the government has since subsided, this incident still serves as an important case study for better understanding the threats to internal security within India. Delegates should carefully consider the implications of the 2020-2021 farmers' protests and what further preemptive and reactionary measures, if any at all, can be taken to mitigate the unrest and instability which any future protests may trigger.

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57 Saaliq, S. (2021, November 19). *Bowing to protests, India's Modi agrees to repeal farm laws*. AP News. Retrieved May 5, 2023, from <https://apnews.com/article/business-india-narendra-modi-77a931b25cf3a74727cf9514169a68cd>.

# IV. SCOPE OF DEBATE

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The nation of India is no stranger to riots and protests. Sometimes, they arise from religious animosity, but just as often do they occur due to political disagreements. These incidents pose a major threat to the continued stability of India, and also result in large amounts of direct harm to victims on the ground. While these were formerly on a downwards trend, riots in India rose sharply again in 2020. This coincided with the rise of many high-profile cases of civil disobedience such as the Indian farmers' protests, which received widespread international coverage and support, against the wishes of the Indian government.

## MANAGING INSTABILITY AND DIVISION

Protests also frequently lead to greater polarisation, especially when they revolve around divisive topics. At present, polarisation is a large issue within India, and it has led to increases in intolerance and violence, the marginalisation of minorities, the politicisation of national security, the increasing prominence of identity politics and a rise in attacks on independent institutions. Polarisation occurs across divides between nationalists and liberals, different social castes and races and different religions.

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# IV. SCOPE OF DEBATE

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In 2022, about 39% of urban Indians were indicated to be “strong partisans” — an inauspiciously high number.

Protests and riots have been used as a political tool, sparking only greater internal division within India. Oftentimes, protests do not actually represent the will of the people; instead, they act as political theatre meant to attract attention to various topics. In February 2023, Congress Party members led protests against the government’s refusal to investigate Adani Group companies, while also disrupting Parliament proceedings. All this is demonstrably counterproductive to the goal of greater unity within India.

Riots and the government response to them aggravate instability already present within India. In June 2022, perceived anti-Islamic comments allegedly made by members of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led to protests that quickly turned into riots, with clashes in the streets between police and protestors, and between Muslims and Hindus. In response, houses of the “alleged mastermind[s] of the riots” were demolished by bulldozers, which only led to further conflict between political parties and a potential bomb attack on a member of the BJP.

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# IV. SCOPE OF DEBATE

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In managing the greater effect on India's political scene and society, the government can consider implementing legislation limiting the ability of individuals or organisations to pass inflammatory comments, as well as implementing criminal offences for stoking such divisions, especially in previously unregulated areas like the Internet. The government can also suspend privileges or rights in reaction to irresponsible speech, such as preventing divisive candidates from running for office. The government can also consider ways to staunch protests around divisive issues entirely, be it by instituting curfews, arresting initial aggravators, or engaging in censorship of divisive media sources.

## MANAGING VIOLENCE

In the 2020 Delhi riots, there were at least 53 deaths; some victims were shot, others slashed, and more unfortunate ones set on fire. Violence is a common occurrence in Indian riots, not least due to the high amounts of tension present between different societal groups, a phenomenon that stretches back to even before the 1950s.

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# IV. SCOPE OF DEBATE

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In February 2016, originally peaceful protests escalated quickly to violence; 3 Jat youths and 4 others were all dead by the end of the Jat reservation agitation. This is a single example in a sea of similar ones, where peaceful protests quickly devolve into arson, murder and widespread anarchy. At the same time, the police response can be just as devastating; the 3 Jat youths who died during the Jat reservation agitation were all shot by police, who opened fire when attempting to contain the protests.

Delegates can consider a variety of methods to prevent escalation into violence in the first place, as well as ways to stop it once it has broken out. Giving greater authority to police, sending in trained negotiators, and increasing police presence in protests are some viable options. Specific groups or organisations can also be targeted for monitoring and scrutiny, in order to pre-empt violent outbreaks. Public order bills, such as the one introduced in Britain in 2022, contain elements of this, notably by banning individuals from protests and giving greater powers to security forces in dealing with protests.

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# IV. SCOPE OF DEBATE

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## CONTAINMENT

India faced the “largest protest in world history” in November 2020: an unmitigated disaster for the Indian government. (69) Local protests evolved into a mass march onto the Indian capital; violent reactions to protests further inflamed support for the farmers; disparate farmers’ unions united under a common cause. (70)

Once civil disobedience reaches a critical mass, it becomes difficult to stop it. The farmers’ protests eventually led to a complete repeal of the original laws that triggered it in the first place, the government’s hand having been forced due to the sheer size of the movement against it. (71) Naturally, the unfavourable international coverage India was receiving due to these protests was not helping either.

When containing protests to a certain region, delegates can consider limiting the freedom of movement of individuals into and away from affected regions, stopping the outflow of photos, videos and other forms of inflammatory media, and clamping down harshly on protests that have the potential to grow out of control, ensuring this growth is effectively nipped in the bud.

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# V. KEY STAKEHOLDERS

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## THE BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY (BJP)

The BJP is the largest party in the Rajya Sabha, holding 91 out of the 245 seats. It has been accused of having an Hindu nationalist agenda, as well as being Islamophobic; despite this, its electoral performance is still exceptionally good. (72)

This can be seen in the legislature passed by the BJP; one instance is the passage of the Uttar Pradesh Vidhi Viruddh Dharma Samparivartan Pratishedh Adhyadesh, 2020 (Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance). This bill prohibited religious conversions for marriage, provoking widespread criticism. In recent times, the calls for equality within India have grown louder; as such, the BJP needs to balance appeasing its core base without alienating other societal groups in India. (73) The National Democratic Alliance has, in the past few years, lost many key allies; from 2018 to 2020, they were abandoned by the Telugu Desam Party, the Shiromani Akali Dal, the Lok Janshakti Party, and notably “its ideologically closest ally – the Shiv Sena”. (74) This caused them to lose ground in many regions of India, weakening the Alliance.

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# V. KEY STAKEHOLDERS

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It is also important to note that the BJP does not command an outright majority in the Rajya Sabha; rather, they currently hold onto power via a political alliance, the National Democratic Alliance, with various other parties, the largest of which being the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam. (75) Even then, however, the BJP is still outnumbered, saved only by the fractured nature of the opposition. As such, the BJP will have to be careful in their politicking, always cognisant that a minor slip up can cause them to lose their grip on power in the Rajya Sabha.

In this case, the BJP might want to be selective about how they counter religious violence, while still making token efforts to appeal to a wider base and present the veneer of fairness. It is still reliant on a strongly Hindu base, but at the same time needs to not appear overtly extreme in order to not drive away the moderates. In dealing with riots and protests, deeply cognisant of how most protests are in fact against policies instituted by the BJP, the BJP will likely advocate for harsh measures to quell civil disobedience. If order is restored, it will both reflect well on the BJP and avail themselves of a political headache.

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72 English Archives. (n.d.). *Radical shifts: The changing trajectory of politics in West Bengal*. English Archives.

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# V. KEY STAKEHOLDERS

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## THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (INC)

The INC being the largest opposition party took up 31 seats out of 245 seats in the Rajya Sabha. (76) The formation of the Congress can be dated back to 1885 when India was still under British's colonial rule. (77) Since then, the Congress has been actively spreading the idea of liberalism and equality. This idea is also known as the Nehruvian Secularism which believes that all religions should be respected but they have no place in politics. (78) This is ideologically antithetical to the BJP's principle of Hindutva. (79) However, the party itself has been controlled by the Gandhi's family since most positions with powers have been held by members of the Gandhi's family for over 50 years. (80)

Recently, the party's power is fading. Congress, which was once invincible across India, currently only controls 2 of the country's 28 states. (81) This is due to the increasing distrust the public has on the Congress since it has been hit by many scandals. (82)

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76 Party position in the Rajya Sabha. Retrieved 5 May 2023, from: [http://164.100.47.5/newlob/party\\_position.pdf](http://164.100.47.5/newlob/party_position.pdf)

77 Indian National Congress | History, Ideology, & Facts | Britannica. (n.d.). Retrieved May 5, 2023, from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Indian-National-Congress>

78 Nehru and his Views on Secularism. (n.d.). Retrieved May 5, 2023, from <https://inc.in/congress-sandesh/tribute/nehru-and-his-views-on-secularism>  
79 Ibid.

80 A Non-Gandhi Will Helm India's Congress Party After 25 Years. (n.d.). Retrieved May 5, 2023, from <https://thediplomat.com/2022/10/a-non-gandhi-will-helm-indias-congress-party-after-25-years/>

81 The Indian National Congress Party Prepares for a Leadership Change. (n.d.). Retrieved May 5, 2023, from <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/10/15/indian-national-congress-party-internal-election/>

82 India's corruption scandals. (2011, March 17). *BBC News*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-12769214>

# V. KEY STAKEHOLDERS

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This is coupled with the criticism that the party has no clear direction under the Gandhis since the politicians have no clear motivations to serve the nation. Due to this, many promising politicians have left the Congress and even joined the BJP. (83)

Furthermore, the Congress is also in a hard position. When it tried to provide more incentive for the Indian Muslim population, it was accused by the BJP for being minority appeasers. (84) Therefore, to gain more votes from the majority, the Congress must be very careful when supporting the minority, which might appear as the party being too passive over such conflicts. For example, the Congress hardly ever discusses the suffering of Kashmiri civilians; nor did it intervene when protestors of the Citizenship Amendment Act were arrested. (85) However, it is also very hard for the Congress to lean towards the majority using the idea of Hinduism as that would contradict with its identity of being a secular party. (86)

In conclusion, the INC being one of the oldest parties in India has the power to oppose the BJP, however it has to restore its reputation among the public and take necessary approaches to unite the party.

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83 Congress fails to stem exodus as Sibal quits: Leaders who left the party in 2022. (2022, May 25). Hindustan Times.

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86 Ibid 84

# V. KEY STAKEHOLDERS

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## THE ALL INDIA TRINAMOOOL CONGRESS (AITC)

Currently the third largest party in the Parliament of India, the AITC holds 13 of the 245 seats in the Rajya Sabha. Owing to an ambition to drive the then-ruling Communist Party of India (Marixst) (CPIM) out of the Indian state of West Bengal, Mamata Banerjee founded the AITC in 1997. (87) Initially, the AITC had achieved only limited success in the local political scene. However, in 2011, Banerjee's popularity grew as she actively campaigned against the CPIM's proposed land-acquisition scheme in West Bengal in a bid to oust the communists from power. (88) Today, the AITC is predominantly active in West Bengal and appears to be championing "Bengali sub-nationalism" in an effort to counter the BJP's Hindutva ideology. (89) (90) As such, the AITC's approach to religious violence is likely to be informed by the principles of secularism, communal harmony and minority rights. (91)

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## **VI. QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER (QARMA)**

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- How should local governments react to riots and protests in India?
- How should violence be prevented during civil disobedience?
- How can riots and protests be prevented from spreading to other regions?

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