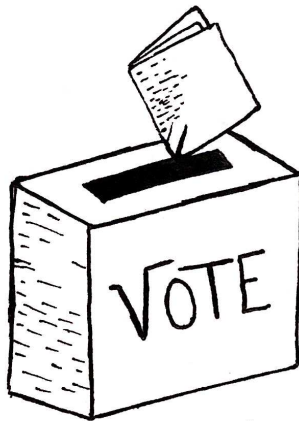


# Dissecting the Evasiveness of Inner Party Democracy

---

Vivek Mishra, Ambar Ghosh\*

Indian democracy has acquired a venerable place among the comity of thriving and robust democracies in the world due to its unflinching resilience and almost unhindered continuity. The case of Indian democracy receives accolades and appreciation due to its survival and durability in unimaginably challenging circumstances through history, especially in its peaceful transition of power between sworn rival parties.<sup>1</sup> However, despite palpable success in keeping the elements of procedural democracy intact, including the perpetual election cycle in India, while still guaranteeing civil and political liberties to its



*RATSHREE*

---

\* **Vivek Mishra** is Assistant Professor of International Relations at Netaji Institute for Asian Studies, Kolkata & Deputy Director, Kalinga Institute of Indo-Pacific Studies. **Ambar Ghosh** is a Doctoral Research Scholar in the Department of International Relations, Jadavpur University, Kolkata and Research Assistant at ORF Kolkata.

citizens, Indian democracy is replete with a plethora of impediments which is indiscernibly enervating the substance that a democratic project entails. One such glaring shortcoming of Indian democracy is the lack of internal democratic functioning of the political parties in India.

## **The Imperative**

It must be stated right at the onset why inner-party democracy is critical for the survival and consolidation of democracy in India. It is a no-brainer to understand that the political parties are the most prominent drivers of the political discourse in a multiparty democracy. It is the parties, which provide political leadership, mobilize the electorate during the elections and perform crucial functions like agenda-setting and political propagation based on a wide range of issues impinging on the aforementioned factors. Moreover, the political parties are the organizationally coherent, functional units that compete for capturing state power and hold the levers of power and resources, once they manage to win the popular mandate. Hence, the question that naturally arises is whether the institution, which works as a lynchpin for the democratic order to thrive, is itself truly democratic in its working internally or not. The need for an inner-party democracy that is strictly followed has been reiterated by a plethora of notable political leaders in India.

The recent debate on the pressing need for democratic functioning of the parties was evoked by the incumbent Prime Minister, Narendra Modi.<sup>2</sup> Besides the political dispensation, a slew of comprehensive reports on electoral reforms in India have emphatically argued in the favor of urgently strengthening intra-party democracy in India.<sup>3</sup> But, despite the relentless proclamations and affirmations in its favour, the plight of inner-party democracy in India is embodied in the abysmal opacity that shrouds the working of most major political parties in India. Financial, structural and political ambiguities and lack of transparency pave the way for the emergence of a number of pathological traits that is incessantly weakening the democratic fabric of most of the political parties in India. These pathologies are manifested in the Indian political discourse in four fundamental ways:

### **1. Manifestations of a Deeper Malaise**

First, the glaring dominance of dynasticism in most of the political parties in India strikes at the very foundation of political democracy, whose fundamental principle is equal opportunity in political participation.<sup>4</sup> While, there is a plethora of political parties whose highest leadership position is perennially controlled by one political family, there are other parties, which have non-dynastic

leadership at its helm but high level of dynasticism among its leadership at the intermediate and lower levels. The strong level of dynasticism can also be traced in the newly elected 17<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha which comprises of Members of Parliament (MPs) of which 30 per cent are dynasts.<sup>5</sup> The deeply entrenched dynastic control in the political parties in India can be attributed to two structural factors; firstly, there is an inherent predilection in Indian society towards dynastic succession in the occupational lineage, primarily owing to traditional veneration of lineage, perpetuation of inequality and consequent lack of opportunity. Therefore, dynastic succession of power appears naturally acceptable to the Indian electorate, despite the ostensible backlash against dynasticism in the wake of the decline of electoral fortunes for the Gandhi family-led Congress party.<sup>6</sup> Secondly, the political currency attached to names, material resources and patronage remain pivotal factors which guarantee the “*winnability*” of candidates in the complex and volatile political scenarios that Indian elections have to offer.<sup>7</sup> Under such circumstances, dynastic leaders appear more preferable to the Indian electorate, especially with vast resources at their disposal. This malaise runs deep in every party and political constituency in India, irreparably damaging the scope of equal opportunity in politics.

## **2. Wealthy Backgrounds of Political Leaders and Bribing**

Another prominent manifestation of the lack of inner-party democracy in India is reflected in the extremely wealthy background of majority of the political leaders and intra-party financial hierarchies across most political parties. The very imperatives of a multi-party competitive election process demand large amounts of financial resources for running a successful political campaign, besides buying influence and leverage illegally at the constituency level. The economic prowess of the candidate becomes a necessary, if not a sufficient, condition for ensuring electoral victory. In a society like India, where various inefficiencies and incapacities of the state render depravities on vast sections of the society, particularly through poverty and unawareness, the political parties and the candidates often resort to distributing material goods like cash or liquor in exchange for assurances to votes. Such practices further enhance the salience of wealth and financial hierarchy present in the society in determining the winnability of candidates in political parties.<sup>8</sup> The lack of any credible regulation on campaign finance in India only bolsters such an unfair political culture, which perpetuates political and societal hierarchies in the country.<sup>9</sup> The recently concluded 2019 Lok Sabha elections in India further reinforces the prevalence of such practices.<sup>10</sup> Thus, it becomes increasingly difficult for candidates without access to financial resources, recognition of family name and influence to successfully contest elections in India. Hence, the sheer lack of inner party

democracy makes it an almost impossible task for the non-influential and legally credible leaders to successfully get access to the corridors of political power. A number of political leaders rising to the highest echelons of power from humble background still remain exceptionally low in Indian politics.

### **3. Anti-Social Elements and Criminalisation**

The tremendous increase in criminalization of Indian politics is one of the major threats to the health of Indian democracy. Increasing criminalization in politics, to a large extent, stems from the lack of democratic functioning within the parties with the inability to restrain political carders leading to illegal and incriminating consequences. In consonance with the previous point on the salience of money power in politics, the entry of anti-social elements in political parties in India shows the obligatory prevalence of muscle power in politics, which can be viewed from the prism of two functional factors.<sup>11</sup> First, the breakdown or fragility of state machinery and the ineptness of state capacities to deliver, creates a power vacuum in many states in India. As Milan Vaishnav states in his seminal work, it is this vacuum that has been filled up by economically powerful individuals with a criminal background, by providing patronage and protection to local constituencies.<sup>12</sup> Secondly, the increasingly violence-prone landscape of Indian politics has made the muscle power a crucial element to ensure survival and sustenance in electoral contests. Thus, political parties feel compelled to induct and give patronage to powerful individuals with criminal background for political expediency, ignoring all imperatives of democracy in general and inner-party democracy in particular.

### **4. Political Defection and Horse Trading or Party-Hopping**

Lastly, the menace of defections and political horse-trading has perpetually threatened the functioning and survival of political parties in India.<sup>13</sup> It has been a regular phenomenon for the party legislators to resign in order to destabilize the government led by the party of one's present affiliation in order to switch over to the opposition party for more lucrative career prospects. Such convenient cross-overs by the political turncoats facilitate lateral entry of leaders from one party to another which distorts the cycle of internal political mobility within the political parties, which is detrimental to the growth of inner party democracy as well as democratic stability. With the increasing salience of money power in politics and the tremendously aggressive scramble for state resources and defections, political crossovers are rapidly become a leitmotif of Indian politics, further pushing the imperatives of genuine democratic practices into oblivion. In fact, as we write this piece, reports of widespread defections of party legislators in the states of Karnataka and Goa is massively impacting its political landscape.<sup>14,15</sup>

Moreover, the Anti-Defection Act of 1985, which is currently in place, is not only inadequate but also counter-productive.<sup>16</sup> The obligatory whip that the act imposes on the party legislators compels them to adhere to the directives of their party high-command in the legislature. Therefore, the discretionary autonomy of the legislators becomes hostage to the whims of the party leadership, once again doing irreparable damage to the principles of internal democracy in the parties.

### **Factors Hindering Inner-Party Democracy**

***Institutional Weakness:*** The failure to consolidate the principles of inner party democracy as the driving force for an effective functioning of the political parties can be attributed to several factors. While personal ambitions and political opportunism at the individual level make it conducive to negate the principle of inner party democracy, there are two fundamentally structural factors that act as a stumbling block in the path of establishing truly democratic parties in India. First, it is the institutional weakness of the political parties that make their organizational structure extremely centralized. This is largely because political parties in India are mostly patronage-based parties, rather than power-dispersed parties.

The parties in India survive on clientelist network, which is strictly controlled, and often revolves around the highest leadership of the party. Such centralization of power thwarts the growth of inner party democracy in most of the political parties.<sup>17</sup> Parties in India witness both dynastic as well as non-dynastic centralization of power. The Indian National Congress (INC) is one of the most widely discussed, often vehemently criticized,<sup>18</sup> national political party which is completely in the shackles of dynastic control of the Nehru-Gandhi family since the last five decades. Despite the INC's illustrious history of emerging as a handmaiden of a broad-based national movement in the Indian freedom struggle, the party degenerated into an extended appendage of the Gandhi family since the times of the former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.<sup>19</sup>

Besides the INCs, Indian political scene is replete with innumerable examples of parties, which function as a family enterprise of one domineering political dynasty.<sup>20</sup> Prominent regional parties like Samajwadi Party in UP, National Conference in Kashmir, Shiromani Akali Dal in Punjab, Shiv Sena in Maharashtra, Rashtriya Janata Dal in Bihar, Biju Janata Dal (BJD) in Odisha and Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) in Tamil Nadu are only some of the notable examples of dynasty-controlled political parties. Unlike Congress, most of these regional parties with dynastic control are often founded by the family patriarch. Hence, these ruling families are naturally predisposed towards maintaining

dynastic succession in controlling the parties as they view the party as their private political entrepreneurship, thereby denying any leader outside the family, any kind of an access to the highest echelons within their parties.

Devoid of any larger long-term programmatic agenda, these families become the lynchpin around which their parties survive. The habitual obedience and unquestioning authority that these families enjoy in the party, obfuscates any possibility of the emergence of alternative non-dynastic leadership within these parties, which only confers trust on a coterie that is unfailingly loyal to the family. It would be grossly fallacious to presume that inner party democracy only fails to consolidate within the dynastic parties in India. Even non-dynastic parties with coherent organizational structure like the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the left parties like Communist Party of India (Marxist) or CPI(M), fall prey to massive centralization of power that makes it uncongenial for the principles of inner party democracy to strengthen its roots in the party in the true sense of the term. The picture is far more gloomy with the non-dynastic regional parties like All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) in Tamil Nadu, where its leaders MG Ramachandran and then Jayalathitha, enjoyed supreme authority, which has led to mindless sycophancy around them within the party. Other examples include Janata Dal (United) where Nitish Kumar is the de facto power holder; and the Bahujan Samajwadi party (BSP), where its leader Mayawati enjoys all-pervasive control and authority within the party.

Hence, dynastic or otherwise, *power centralization* seems to be inherent in the modus operandi of the political parties in India.<sup>21</sup> The preponderance of charismatic leadership leads to hero-worship of the leaders and the loyalty to the highest leadership becomes the fundamental prerequisite for the survival of other leaders in the party. Organizational elections within political parties in India are often irregular and remain as mere façade under the strict watch and control of its highest leadership.<sup>22</sup>

***Asymmetric Political Landscape:*** Apart from the institutional weakness of these parties, the lack of inner-party democracy should also be attributed to the functional imperatives of electoral politics in India. It is crucial to note that the political landscape of India has evolved as an asymmetric theatre of competition with hierarchies, gaps and divisions. Despite the customary proclamations of inclusive empowerment and high-sounding principles of equal political opportunity, it must be pragmatically acknowledged that the capturing of state power is the ultimate goal of politics. In a democratic polity, winning of elections is the only prerequisite to the corridors of political power. Therefore, the task of electoral mobilization becomes the most crucial project in an electoral

democracy. In India, where the demands of the vast electorate are so diverse, cross-cutting and variegated, the task of mobilizing the people politically becomes a herculean task. Even more so, deprivation and lack of basic amenities and employment remain the hallmark of the majority of people in India. Hence, name, recognition, money power as well as muscle power become highly significant conditions for mobilizing the electorate during the elections.

Therefore, the objective of fulfilling these pivotal requirements for winning the elections naturally remains a greater priority over observing internal democracy for the political parties. As name recognition and brand building remains one of the most fundamental conditions to succeed in politics in India, the parties feel compelled to induct recognizable and notable faces for contesting elections rather than efficient and sincere leaders from ordinary backgrounds. The proliferation of movie stars, dynasts and other celebrities in politics, despite proving to be inept public representatives, is emblematic of how brand making and name recognition of the candidates helps in winning election as it attracts more votes based on popularity and resonates with the electorate easily.<sup>23</sup>

Moreover, as the political landscape is turning increasingly competitive, campaign finance is making a game-changing impact over the political fortunes of the political parties. Besides the traditional practices of exchanging cash or alcohol for votes, technology revolution has introduced new platforms for mass mobilization and instruments to connect with the electorate. The use of holograms, media advertisements, social media outreach, cultural and recreational avenues for attracting masses have become crucial tools for electoral campaign apart from holding public rallies and assemblies. In order to avail these innovative campaign tools, parties require financial resources in significantly larger proportions. Increasing reports on how the electrifying election campaign riding on the bludgeoning financial clout of the ruling BJP has left the campaign of the cash starved opposition look lackluster, is a case in moot point.<sup>24</sup> Hence, the parties scramble for wealthy candidates, regardless of their criminal background, as incentives for the party coffers, which would facilitate in ensuring spellbinding political campaign.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, where glamorous political campaigns do not suffice, electoral malpractices and political violence becomes actual alternative resorts for political parties to ensure electoral victories, therefore legitimizing the dominance of muscle power in politics.<sup>26</sup> Hence, the functional prerequisites of politics also do not allow inner party democracy to thrive.

***Absence of a Credible Regulatory Framework:*** It is curious to observe that despite the enormous role that the political parties play in the democratic discourse in India, constitutional and legal regulations to monitor the functioning

of these parties is conspicuously limited and in some instances, non-existent.<sup>27</sup> The Section 29 A of the Representation of the People Act 1951 merely mandates the registration of political parties. Hence, the Election Commission of India (ECI) is rendered powerless in ensuring that the political parties conduct fair and regular internal elections for choosing its office bearers.<sup>28</sup> In the landmark Indian National Congress versus Institute of Social Welfare Case, the Supreme Court judgment has reiterated that the ECI cannot take punitive action against the registered parties for violating the principle of inner party democracy.<sup>29</sup>

The political inaction, notwithstanding, there is a slew of recommendations on electoral reforms given by several government constituted committees like Dinesh Goswami Committee, Tarkunde Committee and Indrajit Gupta Committee which strongly argued for more transparent working of the political parties in India.<sup>30</sup> The 1999 Law Commission Report strongly recommended the introduction of a regulatory framework for governing the internal structures and inner party democracy of the political parties.<sup>31</sup> Even, a draft; Political Parties (Registration and Regulation of Affairs) Act, 2011 was submitted to the Law Ministry which envisaged the creation of an Executive Committee for every political party whose members would be elected by the members of the local committees of the state units of the party, who themselves would elect the office bearers of the party from amongst themselves, without accepting any nomination.<sup>32</sup> But, any significant development in making it legally binding for the parties to strictly observe internal democracy in its functioning has not been initiated by any political party or ruling coalition in power so far.

### **Democratising the Drivers of Democracy**

In order to ensure an effective legal regime to guarantee genuine adherence to the principle of inner party democracy in India, the two fundamental factors – institutional as well as functional, which impede the consolidation of democratic culture in the parties, needs to be adequately addressed. One needs to be mindful of the fact that the menace of centralization of power that has a corrosive influence on the internal democracy of the parties, cannot be done away with, by only ensuring free and fair organizational elections in the parties. Such efforts should be complemented by other commensurate measures in order to ensure that the cascading impact of money and muscle power and rampant defections and crossovers can be effectively mitigated. But, it is highly improbable that the incumbent political leadership of parties in India, who are the biggest beneficiaries of such shortcomings in the electoral system, would genuinely initiate any meaningful step for ushering in robust electoral reforms.

Therefore, any momentous landmark legislation in advancing the goal of equal opportunity for political participation in India seems difficult to perceive



in the near future. Rather, it is the non-elected apex judicial body, the Supreme Court, which has till now issued a number of advisory recommendations in the path of such electoral reforms.<sup>33</sup> It is for the interest of advancing the substantive objectives of Indian democracy that the Supreme Court must step up its jurisdiction in order to make a leeway for initiating structural reforms in the functioning of the party as well as in the conduct of the election campaign under the efficient watch of another non-elected body, the ECI.

However, it is of pivotal importance to take cognizance of the fact that mere legal regulatory framework would never be a sufficient condition to bring about a seismic transformation in the working of the political parties in India. As the electorate remains the fulcrum of political vicissitudes in a democracy, a change in the psyche and the views of the people worldwide would be the biggest facilitator of any such reform. If the electoral salience for such reforms increases amongst the people, the parties would gradually but definitely feel pressurized to mend their ways. The element of sycophancy for “branded” candidates, easy lure for short-term political patronage, and lack of information regarding the background and credibility of the candidates among the electorates, have deepened the pathologies in the functioning of the electoral democracy in India. Only when the electorate will be conscious enough to understand that democracy is much more than just passively voting in elections at periodic intervals, a holistic democratization of the political landscape in general and functioning of the political parties in particular would be possible.

## Notes

1. Ashutosh Varshney, “India Defies the Odds: Why Democracy Survives”, *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 9, issue 3, July 1998, <https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/articles/india-defies-the-odds-why-democracy-survives/>.
2. Liz Mathew, “PM Narendra Modi to media: Raise debate on inner party democracy”, *The Indian Express*, New Delhi, 29 October 2017, <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/pm-narendra-modi-to-media-raise-debate-on-inner-party-democracy-4911538/>.
3. Ruchika Singh, “Is There Intra-party Democracy in Indian Political Parties?”, *The Hindu Centre*, 12 April 2014, <https://www.thehinducentre.com/verdict/get-the-fact/article/5896168.ece>.
4. Ajaz Ashraf, “Most political parties in India are dynastic. But some are more dynastic than others”, <https://scroll.in/article/829588/most-political-parties-in-india-are-dynastic-but-some-are-more-dynastic-than-others>, 21 February 2017.
5. Gilles Verniers & Christophe Jaffrelot, “Explained: Why so many MPs are dynasts”, *The Indian Express*, 27 May 2019, <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/experts-explain-why-so-many-mps-are-dynasts-lok-sabha-election-bjp-congress-rahul-gandhi-5749570/>.
6. Vikas Pandey, “Has Narendra Modi ended dynastic politics in India?”, *NEWS*, 27 May 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-48385611>.

7. Ambar Kumar Ghosh & Avishek Jha, “What explains the enduring resilience of political dynasties in India?”, *The Diplomat*, 09 July 2019, <https://thediplomat.com/2019/07/what-explains-the-enduring-resilience-of-political-dynasties-in-india/>.
8. Nilanjan Sircar, “Money matters in Indian elections: Why parties depend on wealthy candidates”, *Hindustan Times*, 26 July 2018, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/money-matters-in-indian-elections-why-parties-depend-on-wealthy-candidates/story-z81zpqyWH7yA1rx3dLzVrN.html>.
9. Milan Vaishnav, “Political finance in India: déjà vu all over again”, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/01/31/political-finance-in-india-d-j-vu-all-over-again-pub-78280>, 31 January 2019.
10. “Lok Sabha elections 2019: 427 crorepati candidates in the second phase”, *The Economic Times*, 17 April 2019, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/elections/lok-sabha/india/lok-sabha-elections-2019-427-crorepati-candidates-in-the-second-phase/articleshow/68903307.cms>.
11. Viju Cherian, “Why Criminalisation of politics is unlikely to stop”, <https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/politics/opinion-why-criminalisation-of-politics-is-unlikely-to-stop-2985601.html>, 26 September 2018.
12. Milan Vaishnav, “When crime pays: Money and muscle power in Indian politics”, <https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/politics/opinion-why-criminalisation-of-politics-is-unlikely-to-stop-2985601.html>, 26 September 2018.
13. Dipankar De Sarkar, “How politicians normalized defections”, <https://www.livemint.com/opinion/columns/opinion-how-politicians-normalized-defections-1553428879362.html>, 25 March 2019.
14. “Karnataka Crisis: Congress-JDS alliance in trouble as 12 MLAs submit resignation”, <https://www.businesstoday.in/current/economy-politics/karnataka-crises-congress-jds-alliance-in-trouble-as-11-mlas-submit-resignations/story/362125.html>, 08 July 2019.
15. “Congress crisis deepens as 10 out of 15 MLAs switch to BJP, CM Pramod Sawant says move unconditional”, <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/karnataka-go-a-crisis-congress-mlas-join-bjp-1566215-2019-07-10>, 10 July 2019.
16. “Examine the anti-defection law”, <http://pragati.nationalinterest.in/2013/01/examine-the-anti-defection-law/>, 25 January 2013; Chakshu Roy, “The limits of anti-defection”, <https://www.prsindia.org/media/articles-by-prs-team/explained-limits-anti-defection>, 25 July 2019.
17. Akshay Balwani & Pradip Chibber, “The power to centralize”, <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/The-power-to-centralise/article14025225.ece>, 29 January 2016.
18. Sunil Gatade, “The congress problem: Dynasty in the DNA”, *The Tribune*, 29 May 2019. <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/comment/the-congress-problem-dynasty-in-the-dna/779878.html>.
19. Manoj Joshi, “First family: Dynastic politics remains the USP of India’s grand old party”, *India Today*, 29 September 2013, <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/north/story/congress-dynasty-politics-gandhi-family-212609-2013-09-29>
20. “Dynasty politics: BJP has its own share”, *Business Standard*, 24 January 2019, [https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/dynasty-politics-bjp-has-its-own-share-119012401114\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/dynasty-politics-bjp-has-its-own-share-119012401114_1.html).

21. Bhanu Dhamija, "In democratic India Why do we still have autocratic parties", <https://www.thequint.com/voices/blogs/no-inner-party-democracy-internal-elections-in-india>, 25 April 2017.
22. Dishil Shrimankar, "Party organization and state of political parties in India", *Asia Dialogue*, 17 August 2017, <https://theasiadialogue.com/2017/08/17/party-organisation-and-the-state-of-political-parties-in-india/>.
23. Nikhil Rampal, "Sunny Deol join politics: But do actors really perform well in Lok Sabha?", *India Today*, 26 March 2019, <https://www.indiatoday.in/elections/lok-sabha-2019/story/actors-turned-politicians-flop-show-16th-lok-sabha-1487187-2019-03-26>.
24. Anumeha Chaturvedi, "BJP top spender on political ads on digital platforms", *The Economic Times*, 16 May 2019, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/elections/lok-sabha/india/bjp-top-spender-on-political-ads-on-digital-platforms/articleshow/69351792.cms>.
25. Bibhudatta Pradhan, Archana Chaudhary & Abhijit Roy Chaudhury, "Empty coffers hinder India's Congress Party's plan to topple Modi", <https://www.bloomberquint.com/global-economics/empty-coffers-hinder-india-congress-party-s-plans-to-topple-modi>, 24 May 2018.
26. Satish Mishra, "Rising specter of political violence", *ORF*, 10 December 2018, <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/rising-spectre-of-political-violence-46118/>.
27. "Inner party democracy", <https://www.gktoday.in/gk/inner-party-democracy/>, 27 March 2016.
28. "Registration of political parties under section 29 A of the RP act, 1951", <https://www.insightsonindia.com/2019/03/16/registration-of-political-parties-under-section-29a-of-the-rp-act-1951/>, 16 March 2019.
29. VN Khare, "Indian National Congress (I) vs. Institute of Social Welfare & Ors on 10 May 2002", <https://indiankanoon.org/doc/1158072/>.
30. "Report of the committee on electoral reforms, 1990", [https://adrindia.org/sites/default/files/Dinesh %20 Goswami %20 Report % 20 on % 20Electoral%20Reforms.pdf](https://adrindia.org/sites/default/files/Dinesh%20Goswami%20Report%20on%20Electoral%20Reforms.pdf); "Election Reforms Commissions in India", <https://www.gktoday.in/gk/election-reforms-committees-in-india/>, 26 March 2016.
31. "Law Commission Report no 170: Reform of the electoral laws, 1999", <https://www.latestlaws.com/library/law-commission-of-india-reports/law-commission-report-no-170-reform-of-the-electoral-laws-1999/>.
32. "Political Parties (Registration and Regulation of Affairs) Act, 2011 (draft)", <https://www.adrindia.org/sites/default/files/Bill%20on%20pol%20parties.pdf>.
33. "Criminalisation of politics of largest democracy is unsettling, says Supreme Court", <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/criminalisation-of-politics-of-largest-democracy-is-unsettling-says-supreme-court/article25037934.ece>, 25 September 2018.