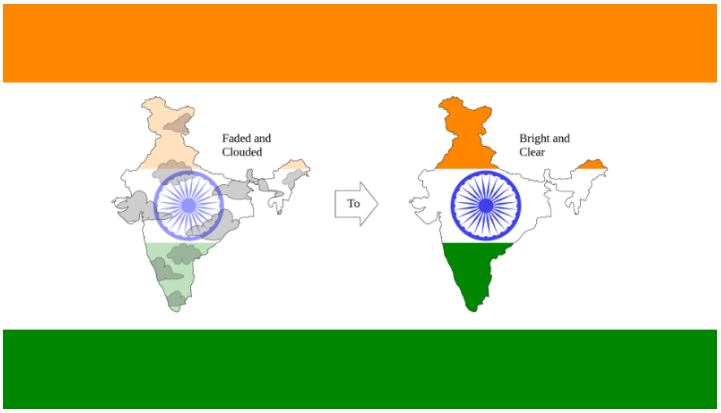
RESET INDIA

With Political and Education Reforms



Every nation, at certain moments in its history, must pause, reflect, and reset the systems that shape its future, two in particular: its **political system**, which determines leadership and power structures, and its **education system**, which shapes the next generation of citizens. In India today, both are failing to function as they must.

Corruption, nepotism, sectarianism, entitlement, and duplicity have seeped into these two vital pillars. Instead of nurturing ethics, excellence, and initiative, the systems often reward expediency and manipulation. The consequences are visible everywhere. Across many critical measures—science, technology, manufacturing, infrastructure, sports, and global influence—we continue to trail our large neighbor to the east.

As faith in governments and institutions erodes, people increasingly retreat into survival mode. Personal welfare begins to take precedence over collective progress. Some withdraw quietly; others exploit whatever opportunities they can find. Society continues to function, but not in a way that inspires pride, fulfillment, or confidence in the future.

It is tempting to think that human failings are hollowing out these systems. But could it be the other way around? Could it be the thematic and structural weaknesses within these systems that allow human vices to rear their ugly heads, trouncing the virtues?

History answers this question resolutely. It is the system that helps a society rise or fall, that enables people either to move forward together or to fall apart. Time and again, history offers examples of how bold systemic changes can alter the course of nations. A decisive reset in 1978 propelled China toward a historic surge in its journey. India's own economic reforms in 1991 rescued the country from crisis and unleashed unprecedented growth. The Plano Real (URV reform) in 1994 stabilized Brazil's economy, lifting millions out of poverty, and transforming the country into a major exporting nation.

Inspired by these examples, we present two systemic solutions for India: one to cleanse and revitalize politics, and the other to reimagine education. We offer them for the consideration of fellow Indians and leaders who possess the zeal, strength, and courage to bring about change and steer our nation toward accelerated and equitable growth.

RESET POLITICS

Why India Must Change How It Elects Its Leaders

Today, leaders are caught in a '75% politics, 25% leadership' trap, voters in "75% emotion and cynicism, 25% discretion and hope", and legislation in "75% ad-hocism, 25% grounded in public opinion". Corruption, nepotism, sectarianism, money power, and muscle power have seeped deep into our political system—slowing national progress, eroding the ethical backbone of the country, and polluting public institutions. Citizens and businesses increasingly seek backdoors before approaching the front gates, which often stand broken. Exploitation appears more rewarding than contribution.

We propose three structural political reforms to revive ethics in public life and place the nation on a path of accelerated growth—by reversing the 75:25 ratio:

- **LCCF+ Model –** A new electoral framework for electing members of Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabhas.
- **Inculot Model –** A new electoral framework to elect leaders of the local bodies.
- **Varishth Parishad –** A non-political collegium to elect leaders of apolitical offices like the President of India and the Chief Election Commissioner of India.

LCCF+ Model for Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha Elections

LCCF+ stands for **Leadership by Community, Cause, Field and More**. Under this model, territorial constituencies would be abolished. Instead, political parties would publish nationwide (or statewide, in the case of state elections) endorsed lists of candidates. Independents could also contest. Each voter would have multiple votes—say, twelve—which they could distribute among one or more candidates from any party's endorsed list and independents, in any proportion. Candidates would then be ranked by total votes received. The top 543 candidates would be elected to the Lok Sabha (with corresponding numbers for Vidhan Sabhas). Crucially, each elected leader's voting power in the legislature would be proportional to the votes they received—this is called Proportional Voting Power (PVP).

Under this system, Lok Sabha aspirants would build pan-India voter bases, Vidhan Sabha aspirants would build statewide voter bases support through demonstrated commitment to specific communities (such as SCs, STs, or OBCs), causes (environmental protection, women's empowerment), fields (agriculture, education, sports, tourism), or any issue that resonates with citizens at large.

Voters could distribute their votes to multiple candidates based on their concerns, aspirations and interests. A woman from an agricultural family, for instance, could distribute her votes to multiple leaders dedicated to farmers' issues, women's empowerment, inflation control, and the concerns of her own community.

The Big Gain:

Every community, cause, and field—large or small—would find a champion and representation in direct proportion to public support. The era of local strongmen occupying the national and state legislatures would come to an end.

Key Benefits:

A Level Playing Field: Anyone deeply committed to a community, cause, or field—and able to earn public trust—could build a durable voter base and win repeatedly without relying on party hierarchy, local strongmen, or shifting political winds. Principled leaders who once stepped away, unwilling to compromise, would find space to return.

Healthier Politics: Voters would no longer be locked into partisan loyalty. They could support leaders across parties based on merit. Judgment would replace polarization. Voter bases would replace vote banks. Parties would learn to "share the voter." Demonizing opponents would backfire, since voters may be supporting leaders across party lines. The rigid divide between ruling and opposition parties would soften as voter bases overlap.

Legislative Independence: Backed by their own direct voter support, legislators would be able to speak and vote freely. Issue-based debate would replace partisan posturing. The party whip—an inherently anti-democratic instrument—would be a thing of the past.

Three-Tier-Administration: Under this model, leaders with national vision, stature, and appeal would be elected to the national legislature, while those with statewide vision and appeal would be elected to state legislatures—fully decoupled from local politics. Local leaders, in turn, would govern local bodies without interference from higher tiers.

This model also delivers several other systemic gains. It renders the looming delimitation crisis moot, compensates for the absence of internal party democracy, corrects the mismatch between vote-share and seat-share, and empowers legislatures to meaningfully supervise the executive—among other structural improvements.

Inculot Model for Local Body Elections

Local body elections are increasingly driven by money, muscle, and the pursuit of dominance. The Inculot Model—a coined term derived from the words *incumbent* and *lottery*—seeks to correct these distortions. Inculot is a made up word taking the initial letters of incumbent and lottery. Under this model, if the incumbent secures the highest vote count, he or she is re-elected, as at present. If not, the new leader is chosen by lottery from among the top three vote-getters, excluding the incumbent.

The model offers several advantages. It motivates incumbents to perform well, reduces the pressure to chase every marginal vote, and gives leaders from all communities a fair chance. It allows dormant leadership to surface, enables losing candidates to save face, and lowers polarization and hostility in local contests.

Varishth Parishad For Apolitical Offices Elections

The offices of the President of India, the Election Commission, the Supreme Court, the Reserve Bank, and the Enforcement Directorate must remain autonomous and insulated from political influence to safeguard democracy and maintain balance of power.

Appointments to these offices can be made more credible by entrusting them to a non-political collegium—the Varishth Parishad—comprising former legislators, judges, diplomats, and Padma awardees aged 65 to 75, all barred from political activity for life.

For a fuller account of these proposals, including a new voter process to implement the LCCF+ model, see the long-form article at: resetindia.org/politics.

RESET EDUCATION

From Factory and Farm Models To Vibrant Forest Model

The current education system is a haven for the 10% to 15% who relish academic content. Its rigid clockwork of instruction and evaluation is painful and wasteful for the 5% or so who are gifted and talented, and it deprives every child of many vital familial and social events and experiences. Furthermore, the “educated” often discover that much of what they learned is irrelevant to their careers and lives.

The system suffers from an "RRR" problem: too much **Rigidity**, and too little **Relatability** and **Relevance**. The majority—some 70% to 80% of children—are left to navigate this system through rote memorization, lenient evaluation, or outright cheating in assignments and examinations, tacitly and even strategically blessed by schools under pressure to boost pass rates. Growing up amidst this duplicity, children learn that exigencies matter more than ethics and excellence. The system breaks the nation’s backbone of ethics and excellence day by day, year by year, and child by child.

NEP 2020 tries to address this RRR problem and its ill-consequences, rightly so, by advocating flexible learning trajectories and erasure of rigid barriers between arts and sciences, curricular and extracurricular activities, and so on. However, there are a few issues with its formula to make this happen—granting autonomy to institutions and asking them to innovate.

First, it is difficult for true innovation to flourish under centralized frameworks and bureaucratic weight, which remain largely unchanged. Second, the pressure to innovate can simply turn into greater pressure on teachers. Third, it invites "retail" interference—masquerading as innovation—from heavy-handed bureaucrats, school management, and influential figures or NGOs, adding to the "wholesale" political and bureaucratic interference from the top that already weighs down the system. Worse yet, fourth, autonomy risks abuse by unscrupulous elements offering meaningless courses or selling degrees.

Genuine innovation cannot be ordered or forced. It happens when it happens. What we need is an ecosystem where innovation is harvested, distributed, and field-tested regularly—without disruption or additional cost. And the innovation should not be about teaching children superficial memory tricks to pass "prep" content designed backwards from major academic disciplines and delivered over uninspiring and relativistic phases of learning—primary, secondary, higher, and lifelong education; rather, it should be about helping them discover and pursue fields and functions of the economy and society that match their potential and interests, in a seamless **learning continuum from childhood to grandparenthood** mirroring the natural biological, psychological, and sociological development of a person, focused on:

- **Sampling in Childhood**—exposure to languages, science, law, spirituality, heritage, carpentry, sewing, music, cooking, and more.
- **Discovery in Adolescence**—understanding oneself, human diversity, major fields and functions of society, collaboration, and interdependence.

- **Adventure in Youth**—diving deep into one's own interests and testing one's own true mettle in them.
- **Strategy in Adulthood**—balancing responsibilities, ambitions and fancies.

With this shift, we also let go of the Factory model integral to the primary and secondary education, the Farm model that dominates higher education, and the associated exams, grades, age-wise groupings, rigid schedules, academic years, expected learning outcomes, and the slavish rush to finish the syllabus.

Instead, we let a Vidyaranya (Educational Forest) Model emerge where educators, like trees, offer innovative learning experiences that are like fruits, and learners consume what matches their palate and system. In fact, this kind of ecosystem is nothing new; this is how classical music, dance, yoga, and other traditions have survived and thrived for ages. The only external intervention needed is to prevent the fallible palates from succumbing to 'junk foods,' and minds to peer pressure, fads, and shortcuts.

We can accomplish this with three foundational constructs:

- **Growth Centers**—open from ages *5*–9 (not 9–*5*), year-round, designated as Child, Adolescent, Youth, and Adult Centers. Learning unfolds throughout the day; educators and learners set their own hours. Existing school, college, and university buildings and campuses would be repurposed.
- **Grownules**—Multi-dimensional learning experiences—short or long, dense or sparse, immersive or light—around both contemporary and timeless topics and skills, customized for all backgrounds, with embedded reflective evaluation; open to any creator from any walk of life to design, and to any educator (today called a teacher) to offer in any Growth Center, and any interested learner to participate.
- **Edvisors**—a new role, similar to financial advisors and family counselors, devoted to helping children and parents craft personalized curricula, selecting Grownules that match each child's interests, potential, and ambition, and various other aspects of human nature. For example, nothing means the same to everyone; an elephant's food is the squirrel's terrain and the monkey's playground.

The four-phase continuum and the three-construct ecosystem resets the education system, addressing the RRR problem and its ill-consequences. It makes quality education affordable and available everywhere, from urban neighborhoods to tribal villages and expensive private schools to neighborhood government schools. It reduces stress on children, teachers, parents, schools, and even governments, eases work-family-education balance and even addresses transportation challenges. Last but not least, it gives the economy and the nation truly **fortified talent**. And it will do all of this without needing any additional budget.

For full details of the Vidyaranya model and how it accomplishes these goals, see the long-form article at: resetindia.org/education.

Call to Action

These solutions, the LCCF+ model, Inculot model, Varishth Parishad, Vidyaranya Model, unconventional by design, demand fundamental change. The leaders who summon the courage to champion them will secure a place in history and earn the gratitude of the nation—much like the duo of P. V. Narasimha Rao and Manmohan Singh, whose bold reforms in 1991 saved our economy from the brink of collapse.

Once set in motion—ignoring the cynics and naysayers, as was done with UPI—transformative ideas tend to carry themselves forward through their own innate power and appeal.

India does not lack talent, energy, or aspiration. What it needs is a systemic reset—one that releases the virtues and energies of its people rather than trapping them within failing structures.

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