

Proposing

A New Political System

Leadership by cause, community and field —
and other reforms to rebuild democracy and transform India

Key Phrases:

No Constituencies | Multiple Votes | Top Rankers | Proportional Voting Power | Endorsed Lists | Shared Voters | Private Bills | Advanced Voting Machines | Varishth Sabha | Online Legislatures | Leadership Councils

Abstract

We are all agonized by the current state of our political system — the erosion of ethics and the mockery of democratic processes at nearly every level. Positive and constructive efforts face enormous hurdles. Political polarization, demagoguery, appeasement, divisive strategies, and populistic measures have become the order of the day, leaving both victims and perpetrators feeling helpless, caught in a vicious web.

After examining these problems at a deeper level for many years, we concluded that the root of these symptoms lies in our "**leadership by constituency**" model and the lack of sufficient autonomy for key constitutional offices such as the President of India and the Chief Election Commissioner of India. These issues, we believe, can be corrected by replacing the current model with a "**leadership by cause, community and field**" model, establishing a **Varishta Sabha**, a non-political collegium, and making the necessary structural changes required to implement these reforms.

This manifesto presents these reforms. The associated articles available on Medium.com elaborate on their nuances and details.

New Kind of Leadership

The Crisis

India does not lack potential or aspirations. It does not lack talent, optimism, pride, or compassion. What India truly lacks is leadership-leadership with vision, values, and courage at the top. We do have good leaders, but not enough. We need them in abundance.

Every cause — from cleaning our surroundings (Swachh Bharat), to cleaning up institutionalized corruption, to the pursuit of excellence, to ensuring equality before the law, to saving the nation from external and internal threats — calls for leaders who can channel personal convictions into meaningful social change.

Every community — SCs, STs and their subcastes, BCs, OBCs, and beyond — needs champions who advance its pride and aspirations in absolute terms.

Every field — from the farms of our farmers to the labs of our scientists, from the markets of our entrepreneurs to the frontlines of our defence, from the roads that keep us moving to the ethics that keep us together — needs leaders who dream big and act clean.

The Solution

We can make this happen through a simple yet fundamental reform: switch from a "leadership by constituency" model to a "leadership by aspirations" model.

This means doing away with constituencies and allowing people with shared aspirations — whether rooted in community, profession, interest, or ideal — to elect leaders of their own.

Farmers could elect leaders devoted to agriculture. Women could elect those who champion their rights and welfare. Weavers, teachers, transport workers, media professionals, factory workers, and others could choose leaders who truly understand their aspirations and challenges. People with special needs could elect leaders who care deeply for them.

SCs, STs, and subcastes within them — as well as BCs, OBCs, and other communities — could elect their own leaders in proportion to their numbers. No need for reserved constituencies, subclassifications, or caste censuses. No need to lock the political system into a caste framework forever. Castes are already melting and merging through urbanization and inter-caste marriages. Let society evolve — freely, naturally, and at its own pace.

People are not monolithic. Each person would have multiple aspirations — around the welfare of their community, the progress of their profession, the development of their state and nation, and the preservation of the planet.

They deserve the freedom to support multiple leaders who advance these aspirations—resolving related issues and pursuing shared ideals. Let us give voters **multiple votes**—and let them distribute those votes among leaders who advance those aspirations, in whatever proportion they wish.

The **top-ranking leaders** by total votes would be declared elected—543 to the Lok Sabha, and a corresponding number to each Vidhan Sabha. Each leader's voting power in the legislature would be proportional to the votes they receive—called **Proportional Voting Power (PVP)**.

Almost every voter would see at least one or two of the leaders they truly support in power—unlike in the current system, where the winning candidate typically gets only about 35% of

the vote, and the remaining 65%—a majority—must live with leaders they never chose. This disconnect breeds apathy, frustration, and disillusionment with democracy itself.

The Transformation

No more local strongmen — typically lacking state-level or national vision — elevated to the Vidhan Sabha or Lok Sabha. No more leaders pretending to be "all things to all people."

Freed from the constraints of constituencies, leaders would build their own voter bases across the nation or state—openly and sincerely dedicated to the fields, communities and ideals they are truly passionate about.

No more hidden agendas. No more leaders selling themselves to party bosses for tickets or buying voters by outspending rivals. No more sleepless nights over narrow margins. Anyone who builds a genuine voter base would find their rightful place among the Top-Rankers.

Every field, ideal, and community — no matter how small — would find a leader to champion it with genuine commitment. Leaders and voters would connect through shared issues and aspirations, not party labels. Together, they would pursue lasting solutions, refusing inducements, appeasements, or freebies.

Voters, in turn, would hold leaders accountable for the specific fields, ideals, and communities they represent. No one could hide poor performance behind ideologies, party manifestos, or the borrowed charisma of party leadership.

By-elections would become unnecessary: when a vacancy arises, the next candidate in line (for example, the 544th for the Lok Sabha) would automatically be elected.

Even resizing the Lok Sabha—from 543 to 1000 seats, to account for population growth—would require no complex delimitation exercise; the top 1000 leaders by total votes would stand elected. The same mechanism would apply to Vidhan Sabhas in the states.

Political parties, too, would transform. No longer scrambling for "right" candidates in every constituency, they would publish endorsed lists of leaders passionate about diverse fields, ideals, and communities — empowering voters to choose the leaders they consider "right".

No more dramatic mismatch between vote share and seat share of parties. No more candidates losing by narrow margins. All strong candidates—from all parties—would find a place in the Top-Rankers list, and their collective vote counts would translate directly into the proportional voting power of their parties within the legislatures.

Decentralization of Power

MPs and MLAs would no longer fight with local leaders over their turf. Local bodies would be free to govern without interference. State and national policies would no longer be held back by local political compulsions.

Leaders focused on national issues would build voter bases across states and serve in the Lok Sabha. Those focused on state issues would serve in Vidhan Sabhas. Local leaders would be elected to local bodies and focus on governance at the local level. The constitutional vision of a three-tier democracy—local, state, and national—would finally come alive.

No member of the Lok Sabha would represent any single territory or state, as their voter bases would span multiple states. The Lok Sabha would become a true house of the people's

representatives, while the Rajya Sabha would continue to serve as the genuine council of states, fulfilling the Constitution's vision.

Concerns about populous states dominating the Lok Sabha — the delimitation issue — would become irrelevant, since members' voter bases would extend across states both populous and less populous.

Freedom from Party Control

Backed by their own voter bases, leaders would no longer depend on party tickets to win. They could vote independently in legislatures-on the merit of each issue, guided by conscience, not by party whips.

With multiple votes, every voter could support leaders across parties. Parties would have to share voters instead of monopolizing them. Demonizing opponents would backfire when the same voters support good leaders across party lines. Parties could no longer maintain exclusive vote banks. No more a small minority of swing voters deciding the elections fortunes of the parties.

The rigid divide between "ruling" and "opposition" would begin to blur, as most voters back leaders from both sides. In truth, the very notion of an "opposition" party is flawed. Why would people elect one party to govern and another to oppose it? Some argue it serves as a watchdog-but how can it play that role when it lacks the majority?

Parties-extra-constitutional entities trapped in defending the past instead of shaping the future, and enslaved by ideologies that divide rather than unite-would, under this Leadership by Aspirations model, fade away or at least lose their grip on politics.

No more parties extending their roots into campuses, unions, and villages-sowing wedges within society and aggregating isolated local rivalries into national fault lines.

No more single-party dominance turning dictatorial. No more rival parties alternating power-undoing good policies and outdoing one another in populism. No more instability born of weak or fragmented parties.

Legislators could then elect widely respected figures-like Atal Bihari Vajpayee or P. V. Narasimha Rao-to head governments on merit rather than party allegiance, and replace them when they fail to deliver. Governments could finally function quietly and efficiently, like well-run enterprises-focused on outcomes, not theatrics or posturing.

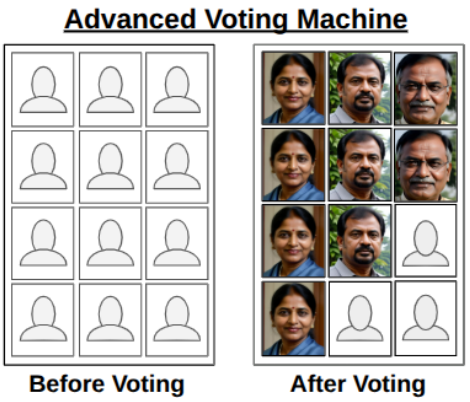
Better Legislation and Oversight

Legislators would harness the **Private Bills** provision to turn good ideas into law, persuading enough fellow legislators on merit — not waiting for government approval.

In this system, no issue or cause — however small, local, or specialized — would be too minor to gain attention and legislative support. Every community, profession, and interest group would have champions in the legislature who understand their realities and advocate their needs.

Leaders dedicated to specific fields, ideals, communities would also provide effective, informed oversight of the corresponding ministries and institutions of the executive branch. This would bring expertise, accountability, and continuity to policymaking and governance.

Voting Process



The current voting process, based on election symbols and Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), cannot support a no-constituency, multiple-votes model — one that must handle thousands of candidates and allow voters to cast multiple votes.

To meet these needs, we propose a modern voting system built around Leader Cards and Advanced Voting Machines (AVMs). These AVMs would feature touchscreens and QR code scanners, while retaining all robust security measures, including the Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT).

The Election Commission of India (ECI) would assign every registered leader a unique Leader Identification Number (LIN), replacing election symbols.

Candidates would distribute Leader Cards containing their photograph, name, date of birth, LIN, party affiliation (if any), and QR code — both in physical and digital form through websites, social media, and other channels. A sample Leader Card is shown on the right.

Voters would carry the Leader Cards of their preferred candidates to the polling station on the election day.

The AVM would display a touchscreen with multiple boxes—say, twelve—each representing one vote. Voters would tap a box, scan the QR code on the Leader Card, and see the candidate's face appear on the screen. They would then repeat the process until all twelve votes are cast. Voters can distribute their votes among leaders in any proportion they choose, including giving more than one vote to the same leader if they wish. Mistakes can be corrected by rescanning the intended Leader Card.

The image on the right illustrates the AVM screen before and after voting. Once satisfied with their selections, voters would confirm their choices by pressing the 'SUBMIT' button on the AVM.

To help everyone feel comfortable with the new system, polling stations would provide dummy AVMs for practice, and a mobile app would let voters simulate the process in advance. Assistance from tech-savvy youngsters or election volunteers would ensure that every voter, regardless of age or background, feels comfortable with the system.



Additional Reforms

Varishth Sabha

Appointments to non-political offices—such as the President, Chief Justice, Election Commissioners, and the Governor of the Reserve Bank—must remain above politics.

To ensure this, we propose establishing a non-political collegium, the Varishth Sabha— a body composed of individuals with experience in public affairs, aged between 65 and 75, drawn from four independent streams of public service:

- Former legislators with at least eight years of service in Lok Sabha or Vidhan Sabhas.
- Retired judges with at least three years of service in the Supreme Court or High Courts.
- Former High Commissioners or Ambassadors of India with at least five years representing the nation abroad.
- Distinguished citizens who received Padma awards at least six years prior.

Membership would be entirely voluntary. Members must relinquish any prior party affiliations, swear under oath to refrain from any political activity for life, and would be permanently barred from holding any political office, even after the age of 75.

e-Legislatures

Today, legislative sessions have become largely ceremonial and theatrical — consuming vast time and public resources without meaningful debate or outcomes. Hardly anyone changes their opinions or votes based on the debates.

Let us replace them with a transparent online platform, where legislators can share opinions, proposals, and questions in text, audio, or video form — all open to public viewing and searchable by AI tools for analysis, summarization, and fact-checking.

Such a system would turn legislatures from arenas of spectacle into spaces of substance — enabling every citizen to observe, understand, and engage with the democratic process.

Leadership Councils

The responsibilities of legislatures extend far beyond lawmaking. Their members elect and supervise the executive, ensure accountability, serve on committees, respond to crises, and lead public celebrations.

To reflect this broader and more dignified role, we propose renaming Lok Sabha as National **Leadership** Council and Vidhan Sabha as State Leadership Council — institutions dedicated not merely to passing laws, but to guiding the nation's progress with wisdom, integrity, and foresight.

Implementation Roadmap

The no-constituency, multiple-votes model need not be implemented nationwide all at once. It can begin with pilot projects in three or four states of varying sizes and ruled by different political parties, allowing refinement through practical experience. Subsequent phases could expand implementation across other states and, in time, at the national level.

Meanwhile, the Varishth Sabha, Leadership Council nomenclature, and e-Legislature platform can each be introduced independently — without waiting for the full adoption of the no-constituency, multiple-votes model.

Democratic Leadership

In the middle of the last century, we embraced democracy as our future. Guided by the world's veteran democracies, we took our first steps and have since traveled a remarkable journey.

Today, we stand tall as the largest and most vibrant democracy on Earth. Elections are conducted regularly. Voters from every corner of the nation participate freely in local, state, and national polls. Power transitions smoothly, peacefully, and predictably at every level — a living testament to our democratic maturity.

The world studies our experience, admires our resilience, and learns from our journey, recognizing India's rightful place in global democratic leadership. Lead we must, for many democracies remain trapped in outdated structures, too polarized and divided to serve the common good.

The *Leadership by Aspirations* model empowers every section of society — small and large, vulnerable and stable, hesitant and confident — while addressing the deep flaws of the old *Leadership by Constituency* system. The AVM-based voting process and e-Legislatures bring our electoral and legislative systems fully into the digital age, while the *Varishth Sabh*a ensures that the foundations of democracy remain strong.

Reforms like these show that democracy can evolve, innovate, and renew itself without losing its spirit — proving that even the gravest challenges of governance can be solved through structural reform and by embracing human diversity.

Let us implement the reforms, lead the world by example — inspiring other democracies to adapt these ideas in ways that suit their own contexts.

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November 9, 2025