Proposing Two

Constitutional Reforms

To Make Our Democracy and Political System Better

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The actors change, but the script remains the same—one that has led to the steady erosion of ethics, the declining integrity and effectiveness of institutions, and the fading of the nascent, idealistic dreams of the independence era into a vague and uncertain vision of the future. Visionary leaders with strong values—those in whom we could once place our hopes—have given up hope themselves of entering or surviving in public life. This deterioration will only accelerate unless we rewrite the script itself—through fundamental changes to the Constitution.

Recognizing this urgency, we embarked on a journey of in-depth and critical examination of India's political system, focusing particularly on the following core concerns:

- The gap between democratic values, constitutional vision, and ground realities, especially concerning the independent functioning of the three branches of government (executive, legislature, and judiciary) and the division of powers across the three-tier administrative structure (central, state, and local);
- The lack of fair representation for all sections of society, the mismatch between vote share and seat share, the absence of internal democracy within political parties, and the shortage of honest, dedicated, and visionary leadership at various levels;
- Other major and minor issues such as polarization, voter apathy, public disillusionment, dynastic politics, one-man shows, strained center–state relations, the rise of criminality and corruption, the influence of money and muscle power, and declining social values—

After extensive study and reflection, we believe that many of these systemic challenges can be effectively and sustainably addressed through the following two key constitutional reforms:

1. Replacing the current constituency-based, single-vote electoral system with a **constituency-less, multiple-votes** system—a model inspired by the proportional representation frameworks used in several democracies worldwide.
2. Creating an apolitical collegium, which we call the **Varishth Sabha**, to be entrusted with the appointment of key non-political constitutional functionaries—such as the President of India, the Chief Election Commissioner, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

In this paper, we present these two proposed reforms in detail, demonstrate how they bridge gaps and address the issues outlined above, and explain how they can transform the roles and experiences of all key stakeholders in a democracy—voters, leaders, and political parties.

1. Constituency-less, Multiple-Votes System

Definition

In this proposed system, territorial constituencies would be abolished. Instead of fielding individual candidates in each constituency, political parties would publish a nationwide (for Lok Sabha) or statewide (for Vidhan Sabhas) '**Endorsed List**' of candidates. **Independent** candidates could also contest elections without being tied to any constituency.

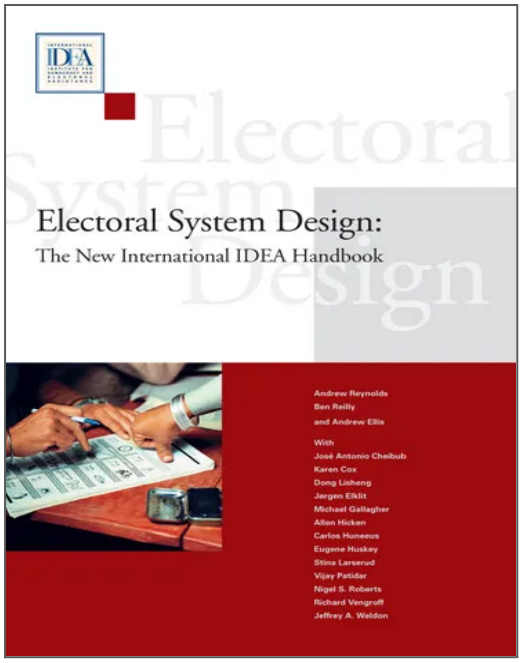
Each voter would be allotted multiple votes—say, twelve—which they could distribute in any proportion among one to twelve candidates, potentially from endorsed lists of multiple political parties as well as independent candidates..

Candidates would be ranked based on the total number of votes they receive—nationwide in Lok Sabha elections, or statewide in assembly elections. The top 543 candidates would be declared elected to the Lok Sabha, and a corresponding number to each state's Vidhan Sabha. We refer to this as the "**Top-Rankers System**".

The voting power of each elected representative within the legislature would be proportional to the number of votes they received—a concept we refer to as **Proportional Voting Power** (PVP). A political party's total voting power would be the cumulative voting power of all its elected leaders.

Comparision

This system is similar to the List PR systems in use in several democracies around the world. The book Electoral System Design, published by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), offers comprehensive guidance on designing electoral systems and provides an overview and classification of the different models used in democracies around the world. Below, we outline where both the current Constituency-based, Single-Vote system and the proposed Constituency-less, Multiple-votes model fit within that classification framework.



Electoral System Families

- **Plurality/Majority**
  - FPTP (First Past the Post)
    - **Current System**
  - TRS (Two-Round System)
  - AV (Alternative Vote)
  - BV (Block Vote)
  - PBV (Party Block Vote)
- **Mixed**
  - Parallel
  - MMP (Mixed-Member Proportional)
- **Proportional Representation**
  - LIST PR
    - Closed
    - Open
    - Free
      - Panachage Model
        - **Proposed System**
  - STV (Single Transferable Vote)
- **Other**
  - SNTV (Single Non-Transferable Vote)
  - LV (Limited Vote)
  - BC (Borda Count)

Features and Benefits

We will now outline the features and benefits of the Constituency-less, Multiple-Votes system in detail, demonstrating how it addresses key gaps and issues in our current system, strengthens our democracy, and transforms the political landscape in multiple ways.

More Choices

The political landscape today is typically dominated by one, two, or at most three viable political parties. Voters often find themselves with no real choice but to vote for one of these parties—even if they do not fully support the party, its candidates, or its projected chief minister or prime minister nominee—because voting for anyone else is essentially a "wasted" vote.

The Constituency-less, Multiple-votes system liberates voters from this constraint. It allows them to choose specific leaders—drawn from the hundreds or even thousands of candidates on party-endorsed lists or contesting independently—whom they genuinely trust, and prefer.

Voters are instinctively drawn to *five kinds* of leaders: 1) those who are sincere and selfless in working for the common good, 2) those who are charismatic and capture public attention, 3) those who are approachable and responsive to personal needs and grievances, 4) those to whom voters feel personally obligated due to a specific favor or assistance received and 5) those who belong to the voter's own social group—defined by caste, religion, profession, region, or other shared identities.

Under the current single-vote system, voters are forced to choose just one candidate from among many, often leading them to decide based on identity, party affiliation, or charisma. Yet afterward, they are frequently blamed for not voting wisely. Worse still, that single vote is routinely misinterpreted as a full endorsement of the chosen candidate or party—and a total rejection of all others—an oversimplification that rarely reflects the voter's true preferences.

In contrast, the multiple-votes system empowers voters to support several leaders they consider worthy. It better reflects the complexity of their political instincts and gives a fuller, more accurate expression of their preferences.

Moreover, voters may consider some of their preferred leaders more favorable than others. The multiple-votes system allows them to express this nuance by distributing their votes in any proportion they choose. For example, they can opt for equal distribution—such as one vote each to twelve leaders, two votes each to six, four votes each to three, six votes each to two, or even all twelve votes to a single leader. Alternatively, they can choose unequal distribution—such as five votes to one leader, four to another, and three to a third; or six votes to one leader and two votes each to three others.

Less Contentious

In the current system, elections are often perceived by candidates as battles for dominance within their local constituencies. Power is viewed not merely as a means to serve, but as a symbol of prestige, a tool for control, and increasingly, an avenue for amassing wealth. As a result, candidates fight tooth and nail to win. Even a narrow loss can render all their time, effort, and campaigning futile. This high-stakes environment pushes candidates to outspend, outmaneuver, outsmart, and vilify their opponents, and exploit every possible local factor and voter sentiment to gain an edge.

In contrast, under the constituency-less model, elections are no longer arenas for asserting local supremacy. Candidates have no direct opponents, and there is no need to attack, outspend, or outmaneuver anyone. Those who succeed in attracting enough voters will secure a place on the Top-Rankers List. The fear of losing everything by a narrow margin disappears. Candidates with

similar vote counts would all be elected if their totals are high enough—or all would lose if they fall short.

Voter Sharing

In the proposed system, voters are likely to distribute their multiple votes not only among several leaders but also across different political parties. This creates a new and constructive dynamic of "voter sharing"—both among individual leaders and among parties.

This dynamic naturally discourages negative campaigning. No party can afford to aggressively attack its rivals, as doing so risks alienating voters who may also support candidates from those very parties. Such tactics are likely to backfire, ultimately harming the party's and candidate's own electoral prospects.

Even leaders who stand for specific causes cannot afford to dismiss or denounce other causes championed by fellow candidates. For instance, a leader advocating for science and technology cannot afford to ridicule leaders who uphold cultural traditions. Similarly, a leader focused on environmental protection cannot attack those advocating for infrastructure development—because they may very well be "sharing the voter" with them.

This principle of voter sharing helps reduce hostility and polarization. It lowers the temperature of political discourse, discourages divisive rhetoric, and fosters civility—both during election campaigns and within the functioning of legislatures and public life.

Candidate Selection

In today's political reality, internal elections within parties are rare—and understandably so. Conducting them is complex, costly, and politically risky. As a result, party leadership typically handpicks candidates based on factors like local influence, loyalty, factional dynamics, and perceived electability. Yet, no matter how carefully these selections are made, they almost always provoke resentment—from sidelined leaders, disgruntled factions, and disillusioned grassroots workers. Worse still, there is no guarantee that a handpicked candidate will command voter support. History is replete with examples of parties losing winnable seats due to flawed candidate choices and internal discord.

The constituency-less model liberates parties from the burden and risk of "picking the wrong candidate." Instead of narrowing choices to one candidate per constituency, parties can include all credible contenders—those backed by different internal factions, those with public appeal, loyal long-time workers, emerging grassroots leaders, and even ambitious relatives of established politicians—on their endorsed lists. The final decision is left to the voters, who choose which leaders deserve to represent them. This approach eliminates the need for complex internal elections, reduces factional strife, and enhances the party's image of fairness and inclusivity.

Political parties typically strive to field candidates from diverse social groups to appeal to a broad cross-section of voters. However, under the constituency-based system, they are often forced to select candidates from wealthy and dominant communities—usually upper castes—because only such individuals can marshal the money and muscle power needed to win high-stakes local contests.

The proposed model frees parties from this constraint as well. Since elections are no longer fought on narrow local turf, parties can endorse leaders from all sections of society—Dalits, backward castes, minorities, women, youth, professionals, and others from across the state or nation. It is then up to the voters to choose the leaders they genuinely trust and want to see in power.

Vote Share vs. Seat Share

One of the major issues in the current system is that a small change in vote share can result in a disproportionately large change in seat share for political parties. The win or loss of an election gets excessively amplified. This not only creates an unfair advantage or disadvantage for the parties but also misrepresents the will of the people, violating a fundamental principle of democracy.

In the proposed system, seat share itself becomes irrelevant due to PVP. Every vote received by any given party through any of its elected leaders is accurately reflected in its voting power in the legislature. The only caveat arises when a party fields too many candidates, causing its vote base to be spread too thin among them—thereby preventing many of its candidates from getting elected. However, parties would be smart enough to include an optimal number of candidates on their endorsed lists to avoid such an outcome.

Fair Representation

The current constituency-based electoral system fragments population groups that share common concerns, identities, needs, and causes—such as Dalits, farmers, factory workers, transport workers, weavers, persons with disabilities (Divyangs), and others—by scattering them into small minorities across multiple constituencies. As a result, even large and significant communities at the state or national level often fail to elect leaders of their own. They are left with no choice but to vote for candidates fielded by major political parties—many of whom are "generic politicians" attempting to be "all things to all people," often with little genuine commitment to the specific concerns of any one group.

In contrast, the constituency-less model allows such communities to unite across geographic boundaries and elect leaders in proportion to their actual numbers. This ensures a far more democratic, accurate, and inclusive form of representation than the current method of reserved constituencies—which compels all voters within a constituency to choose only from candidates of a particular caste, thereby making the process inherently undemocratic.

Moreover, the reservation model as it exists today offers fair representation only to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Extending similar fairness to other communities—such as OBCs, religious minorities, or professional groups—would require two deeply problematic steps: 1) Conducting a caste-based census, an exercise widely seen as politically divisive and socially fraught, and 2) Creating reserved constituencies to all castes, which risks freezing the political system into a rigid caste framework, undermining the constitutional aspiration of separating caste from politics and eventually moving toward a casteless society.

By contrast, the proposed system remains agnostic to caste and group identities, yet empowers every community to elect leaders of their own, if they so choose. It achieves this organically, without relying on formal recognition, subclassification, or quotas. The system also adapts naturally to shifting demographics brought about by urbanization, migration, inter-group marriages, and other evolving social trends.

Furthermore, there would be no need for subclassification within SC or ST categories, as each sub-caste or community within these groups could independently rally around and elect its own preferred leaders. Similarly, communities currently grouped under broad classifications such as BCs or OBCs could also secure representation for their distinct identities—without requiring further subclassification.

Visionary Leadership

Under the current system, only those with strong local clout, party clout, money power, or muscle power can realistically enter and survive in politics. Individuals who are averse to engaging in local or party politics—or unwilling to resort to money and muscle—are largely excluded, no matter how visionary their leadership is or how deeply committed they are to public causes, critical issues, or marginalized social groups. As a result, our legislatures are filled mostly with individuals driven more by the pursuit of power, prestige, and profit than by a genuine sense of national or state-level purpose and vision.

The Constituency-less, Multiple-votes model opens the doors of the political system to sincere, visionary, and capable leaders from all walks of life—leaders who can attract support from voters across the state or nation, regardless of geography or identity.

Only when such individuals—experts and changemakers from fields like education, agriculture, healthcare, sports, technology, tourism, and beyond—enter politics and offer meaningful leadership can the nation truly realize its potential. Much of the underdevelopment in various sectors across the country can be traced back to the chronic absence of strong, sustained, and visionary leadership at the top.

Three-tier Administration

The Constitution envisions a three-tier administration—national, state, and local. However, this vision is undermined by its own provision for territorial constituencies. As previously discussed, constituency-based elections tend to elevate local strongmen to national and state legislatures—bodies that should ideally be composed of leaders with a national or state-level spirit, outlook, and appeal.

The proposed model corrects this distortion. By eliminating territorial constituencies, it enables leaders with a national outlook to be elected to the national legislature, and those with a state-level perspective to serve in the state legislatures. At the same time, it allows leaders who are passionate about local issues to contest and serve in local bodies, where their focus and efforts are most appropriately directed.

Voter Empowerment

In the constituency-based model, the winning candidate—often backed by no more than 30% of the total electorate—is made to represent the entire constituency, including the remaining 70% who either voted against them or abstained from voting altogether. Even within that 30%, many votes may have been cast not out of conviction in the candidate's leadership, but simply out of loyalty to a political party or its projected chief ministerial or prime ministerial nominee.

When over 70% of voters are represented by someone chosen by less than 30%, it amounts to minority rule. Unsurprisingly, this leads to growing apathy and disillusionment among voters. People cannot be expected to hold leaders they never chose to high standards of accountability. And since this pattern repeats in every constituency, election after election, the country remains trapped in a cycle of perpetual minority rule. Over time, we—the voters—have become accustomed to accepting low-performance, low-accountability, low-vision, and low-integrity leadership.

The Constituency-less, Multiple-votes model turns this on its head. In this model, no voter is represented by someone they did not choose. Nearly every voter is likely to see at least one of the leaders they actively supported rise to power. Thanks to Proportional Voting Power (PVP), each voter's concerns, values, and priorities are more meaningfully reflected on the legislative floor—through leaders they personally selected and trust.

Instead of reluctantly voting for party-imposed candidates—or being represented by someone they did not support and cannot hold accountable—voters can now elect high-performing, high-vision, and high-integrity leaders, in whom they believe in, whom they can hold accountable, and who are genuinely dedicated to their concerns and needs.

Strong and Sustained Relationships

In the current constituency-based model, leaders constantly face factors beyond their control that threaten their political careers—such as being denied a party ticket, losing by a narrow margin, or being affected by the overall poor performance of their party. Their political survival is uncertain from one election to the next. Past success offers no assurance of future continuity. Even dedicated and high-performing leaders may be pushed aside due to internal politics, local arithmetic, or factional rivalries.

The constituency-less model frees leaders from these arbitrary risks. Leaders who can earn the trust of voters—across the general population or within a specific group—their vision, work, and integrity can steadily build loyal *voter bases* of their own. They can get re-elected election after election, as long as they retain the trust of their respective voter bases. Their political career depends solely on their sustained connection with voters, rather than on party politics or electoral arithmetic.

Voters too, under the current system, can never be certain that their preferred leader will remain in power for long to serve them. In contrast, the proposed model empowers voters to keep their trusted leaders in office for as long as they earn their confidence—even if those leaders are not featured on a party's endorsed list.

In essence, the constituency-less model fosters long-term, stable relationships between voters and leaders. When leaders are no longer compelled to fight for survival in every election cycle, they can take a long-term view—not only of their political careers, but also of the evolving needs and aspirations of their voter base. Freed from the pressures of short-term popularity, they can speak honestly about tough issues and propose sustainable, future-focused solutions instead of relying on populist shortcuts. Sincere, ongoing dialogue between leaders and voters becomes central to governance, making democracy deeper, more responsive, and more accountable.

Criminality and Corruption

In the current constituency-based system, fierce local competition compels political parties to field local strongmen—candidates who can win by hook or by crook, often outspending and outmaneuvering rivals in raising and discreetly distributing funds. Parties routinely overlook criminal records, questionable associations, and even violent tendencies if a candidate brings the muscle power needed to sway the outcome. Similarly, candidates with corrupt backgrounds are tolerated—even welcomed—if they can bring substantial funds to run aggressive campaigns.

In the proposed constituency-less model, with contests no longer confined to narrow geographic turf, political parties are freed from the compulsion to field local strongmen. Muscle power becomes largely irrelevant, as it holds little sway over voters dispersed across wide areas. Similarly, discreetly raising and distributing funds to such a geographically scattered electorate becomes far less feasible for individual candidates.

Furthermore, candidates who can hold the imagination of people through their vision and dedication would not, and would not have to resort to these unsavory techniques of campaigning. Voters too are likely to look for genuine leaders with whom they can establish long term relationships. In the least, they would distribute some, if not all, of their multiple votes to such genuine candidates.

In such an environment, political parties would find it increasingly difficult to sway voters with cash or other inducements. And when all parties attempt such tactics, voters—like gods—may accept the 'offerings' from everyone, but bless only those they truly believe in.

Issue-based politics

In the proposed model, relying on their own voter bases, leaders would be free to voice their opinions and act independently without being constrained by political compulsions. Leaders, in this model, may choose to associate with a political party if they want, but their political survival would not depend on it. As a result, they would not be compelled to unconditionally support every stance or policy of the party, as often happens in the current system.

The relationship between leaders and political parties would undergo a fundamental shift under the proposed model. It would resemble the relationship between top universities and distinguished professors. Leading universities seek out renowned professors to enhance their reputation and academic standing; in turn, top professors join universities that offer them the freedom and resources to pursue their work independently. Similarly, political parties would strive to attract capable leaders to strengthen their platform, while leaders would associate with parties that respect their autonomy and principles.

This independence would foster a healthy plurality of opinions—essential for a vibrant democracy. Leaders would be free to disagree with party leadership on specific issues without fear of retribution. Political parties, too, would move away from rigid ideological lines and focus instead on individual policies and programs—each open to reasoned debate and judgment on its own merits. Legislative deliberations and voting would become more issue-driven and substantive, rather than dictated by party whips.

Cordial Collaboration

The people—and the Constitution—expect elected leaders to work together to ensure good governance. Yet today's party-dominated political system has entrenched a rigid dichotomy between the ruling party and the opposition. Legislatures, instead of serving as platforms for constructive dialogue, often devolve into battlegrounds where political parties settle scores. The ruling party frequently uses the machinery of government to harass its rivals, while the opposition often aligns with motivated media or fringe elements to embarrass the government—sometimes even becoming unwitting tools for external forces seeking to destabilize the nation.

Even the term "opposition" is problematic. It implies that a party's primary role is to oppose the government—regardless of the merit of its proposals. But why would citizens want a party they didn't trust enough to vote into power to reflexively undermine the one they did choose to govern?

The proposed Constituency-less, Multiple-votes model transforms this dynamic. The culture of voter sharing—where voters distribute their support across leaders from different parties—naturally compels elected leaders to adopt a more objective stance. They can no longer afford to be belligerent toward other parties, knowing that many of their own voters may have supported leaders across party lines. Deriving their political strength from their own loyal voter bases, leaders would be able to take nuanced positions without fear or favor.

Checks and Balances

The Constitution envisions the legislature as an independent body tasked with holding the executive accountable. But in today's party-driven system, that mechanism has broken down. Since the executive is formed by the party that holds a majority in the legislature, that majority has little incentive to scrutinize its own. Meanwhile, the minority, lacking sufficient numbers, lacks the power

to enforce accountability. The result is a serious failure of checks and balances: the majority party won't, and the minority party can't hold the executive to account.

The proposed model addresses this dysfunction at its root. By distributing their votes across multiple parties, voters compel leaders to maintain objectivity—not just toward rival parties, but toward their own as well. Their independent voter bases give them the political strength to maintain such objectivity and exercise independent judgment to hold the executive accountable regardless of which party it belongs to.

Peoples' voice

Governance should reflect the ethos and aspirations of the people in a democracy. But today, governance is shaped less by public will and more by the ideologies, judgments, and whims of party leadership, which are presented to voters through manifestos. Voters are expected to choose among parties based on these manifestos. But there are a few problems with this setup.

First, there are usually only two—or at most three—parties, and therefore only two or three manifestos to choose from.

Second, manifestos are bundled sets of policies and positions. They offer an "all-or-nothing" option for voters. By voting for a party, voters end up endorsing the entire manifesto, which may include policies and provisions they fundamentally disagree with or that run counter to their own interests.

Third, manifestos are not binding documents. Parties can completely ignore what they had presented and pursue entirely different policies after getting elected. They can claim voter endorsement for controversial provisions buried in the fine print, while abandoning key commitments that were prominently highlighted during the campaign.

The proposed model transforms this dynamic entirely. In this system, manifestos become irrelevant. The various positions, policies, and causes professed by the leaders on the endorsed lists clearly indicate what can be expected. Voters, too, by voting for specific leaders, would be able to clearly express which professed positions and policies they particularly support.

Unlike political parties, which may not stick to their own manifestos faithfully, individual leaders are less likely to stray and more likely to follow through on the policies and positions they have professed—because those are what helped them build their voter bases, and deviating from them would mean risking the continued support of their voters.

Furthermore, the number of votes each leader receives becomes a direct and quantifiable indicator of public support for the specific policies and positions they represent. No party or leader can hide behind manifestos, vague ideologies, or rhetorical claims to assert popular backing for one issue or dismiss another. Voter intent is recorded and reflected—issue by issue, leader by leader—in this model.

Mature Politics

In the current model, a political party may have 300 elected members in the legislature, but in practice, it amounts to one voice with 299 echoes. They vote not based on individual conviction, but in obedience to the party whip. Debates become mere performances, and voting a ritualistic formality. One could simplify the entire parliamentary process by replacing it with a single question: Does the ruling party support or oppose the bill?

In contrast, under the constituency-less model, legislators are not mere extensions of party leaders or replicas of one another. No leader can push legislation through by relying on party clout or whipping up public emotion. Every bill must withstand scrutiny from independently elected

members who assess it based on whether it serves the common good and whether it supports—or harms—the causes they represent. Just as leaders must persuade voters of their vision before the election, they must persuade fellow legislators afterward. They must craft proposals that not only advance their own priorities but also respect the concerns of others—an essential test of political maturity and democratic leadership.

The Transformation

Democracy—and the Constitution—envisions a clear sequence: The people elect trustworthy leaders to the legislature; the legislature, in turn, elects the head of the executive; and that individual forms and runs the government. But in today's party-dominated system, voters do not elect leaders they personally trust. Instead, they vote for political parties as a whole. They have little to no say over who gets nominated or what policies are ultimately pursued once a party comes to power.

Political parties are inherently difficult to build and sustain. Their survival often hinges on strong, centralised leadership. As a result, the political landscape—both nationally and at the state level—tends to fall into one of three dominant patterns at any given time: 1) One dominant party led by a dominant leader, or 2) Two dominant rival parties, led by two strong leaders or 3) Multiple weak parties, lacking clear leadership.

Each of these scenarios poses significant problems. The first often results in one-man rule—if not outright authoritarianism. The second fuels divisive politics, often driven by rigid ideologies or identity fault lines. The third produces unstable coalitions, weakening institutions or allowing them to function without accountability or direction.

Moreover, dominant leaders of national parties often control the appointment or removal of chief ministers, undermining the independence of state governments. Similarly, powerful leaders of state parties shape the composition of local bodies, eroding grassroots autonomy.

The solution to this unhealthy political culture lies in restoring the system to the Constitutional vision it was meant to follow. That is exactly what the Constituency-less, Multiple-votes model aims to do.

As explained throughout this paper, it empowers voters to choose leaders they truly trust—not merely party-selected nominees. It enables leaders to build independent voter bases, giving them the freedom to speak their minds, follow their conscience, and exercise sound judgment.

Such a system creates the conditions for respected, balanced, and independent statesmen—like Atal Bihari Vajpayee and P. V. Narasimha Rao—who commanded the respect not only of their own party members but also of leaders across the political spectrum, to rise to the top, lead governments, and provide the balanced, visionary leadership that the nation and states truly need.

Other Benefits

The proposed model also addresses several additional—often overlooked—problems currently plaguing our political system.

First, this model resolves the long-standing and sensitive issue of delimitation, which, if left unaddressed, could trigger significant unrest and strife among various regions of the country. In this model, there are no territorial constituencies to begin with—eliminating the need to redraw constituency boundaries. Concerns about densely populated states dominating the Lok Sabha also become irrelevant, as leaders from any state can attract votes from across the entire country. With voter bases potentially spanning multiple states, leaders would attain a truly national stature, with their identities decoupled from their home states—much like the pan-Indian leaders of India's

independence era. Meanwhile, the Rajya Sabha, as envisioned by the Constitution, would continue to represent and safeguard the interests of individual states.

Second, the proposed model eliminates what may be termed as "leadership leak"—a quiet but significant flaw in the current system. At present, only one leader can win from each constituency, meaning that other capable candidates, even if they enjoy substantial public support, are excluded from office. As a result, the country and its states are often deprived of the service of many talented and committed leaders—sometimes for an entire five-year term. History is replete with examples of respected parliamentarians who lost elections due to narrow margins or vote-splitting, thereby cutting short their valuable contributions to public life.

In the constituency-less model, this problem does not arise. Every leader who commands a sizable voter base—regardless of where those voters are located—has a chance to be elected. No leader loses merely because another candidate secured slightly more votes within a defined boundary. Instead of being a zero-sum contest, elections become a more inclusive process, allowing a wider pool of competent leaders to enter the legislature and contribute to governance.

Third, the proposed model also eliminates the need for by-elections. In the event of a member of the Lok Sabha resigning, being disqualified, or passing away, the next highest-ranked leader—say, the one who ranked 544th in the original results—can simply be declared elected. A similar process can be followed for state legislatures. This ensures continuity without the cost, disruption, and political maneuvering that often accompany by-elections.

Fourth, there is a strange provision in the current system that allows a leader to contest from multiple constituencies, even though they can ultimately represent only one. After the results, they must resign from all but one seat, triggering by-elections in the rest—wasting public resources and creating unnecessary political churn. In the constituency-less model, this issue becomes irrelevant. Leaders who have support across multiple regions can simply aggregate votes from all areas.

Fifth, the boundaries of electoral constituencies often overlap with local administrative units such as districts, taluks, samithis, and mandals, creating confusion around responsibilities, programs, and protocols—both official and unofficial. Under the proposed model, these issues would become moot, as territorial constituencies would be abolished altogether.

Sixth, road encroachment by individuals, retail shops, hawkers, and other actors is rampant across the nation. National and state highways—already choked with traffic—often come to a standstill, especially where they pass through towns and cities. Yet politicians avoid taking action, fearing backlash from specific voter groups in their local constituencies. Under the proposed no-constituency system, leaders would be free from the grip of local vote-bank politics. They could enact and enforce strict policies to keep national and state highways clear of encroachments and congestion—without fearing political repercussions.

Road encroachment is only one example. Across the board, numerous local interests routinely obstruct national and state-level policymaking and implementation. The proposed system removes the "local voter group" risk for leaders, empowering them to design and implement policies that serve the larger good and advance national and state progress.

Seventh, anecdotal evidence suggests that similar-looking election symbols often confuse voters—especially those impaired by the alcohol that flows freely during elections—causing them to vote for a leader or party they did not intend to support. In the proposed system, a redesigned voting process—described in the next section—eliminates election symbols entirely, removing the possibility of such errors.

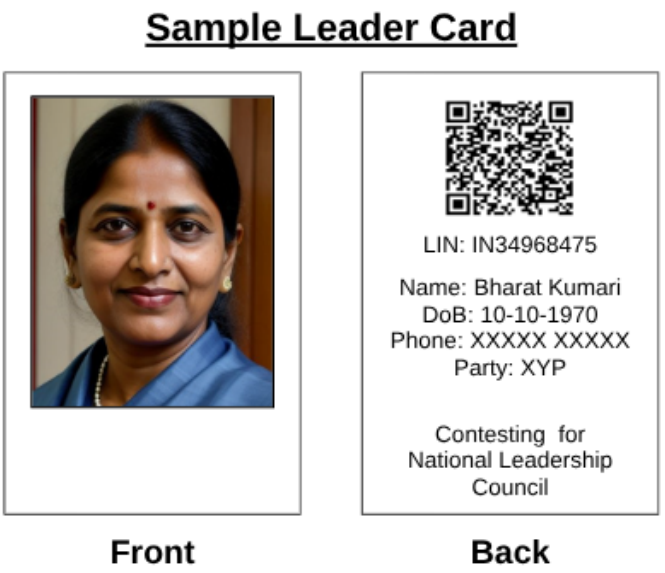
Voting Process

Implementing the Constituency-less, Multiple-votes model would require listing potentially thousands of candidates on the ballot, along with a simple, secure, and foolproof mechanism for voters to quickly identify their preferred leaders and allocate their multiple votes in any proportion they choose. Neither paper ballots nor the current Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs)—which can handle a maximum of 384 candidates—are adequate for this task. It is quite possible that the Constituent Assembly might have considered a model like this when framing the Constitution, had it not been limited by the constraints of paper-based voting.

To address this challenge, we propose the development of a new voting system centered around Advanced Voting Machines (AVMs). These machines would feature QR code scanners and touchscreens, and would retain the same robust security mechanisms as current EVMs, including the Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) system.

In this system, the Election Commission of India (ECI) would move away from the current practice of allocating distinct and unique election symbols to thousands of candidates—a task that would be logistically overwhelming. Instead, each registered candidate would be assigned a unique Leader Identification Number (LIN).

Candidates would then create their own Leader Cards, which would include their photograph, name, date of birth, LIN, party affiliation (if any), and other relevant details—along with a QR code. These cards would resemble the example shown in the image here, which features a fictitious leader with an AI-generated face.



Candidates would distribute their Leader Cards to potential voters across the country (or across the state, in the case of state elections), both in physical form—at political events or through volunteers—and in digital form via social media platforms. Voters should also be able to download Leader Cards directly from the Election Commission of India (ECI) website or collect them free of cost from any e-Seva center. Additionally, voters could request Leader Cards by contacting candidates via SMS or phone calls. (This is similar to how sports fans collect pictures of their favorite athletes, movie enthusiasts collect images of film stars, or devotees collect photos of spiritual leaders through various channels and formats).

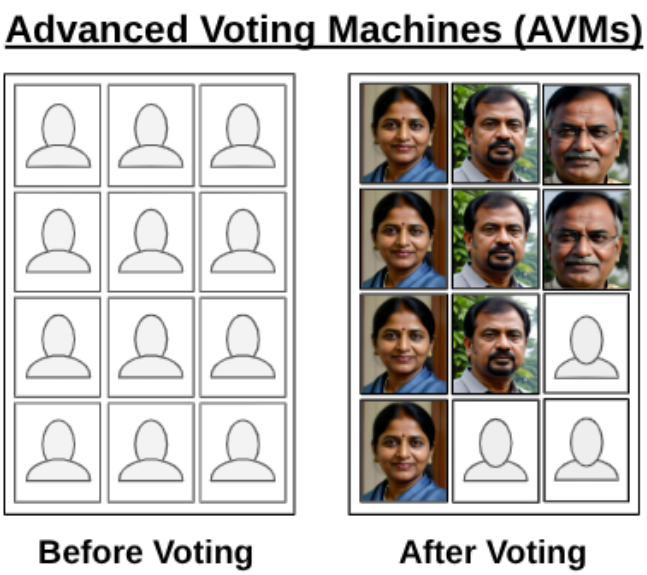
In the days and weeks leading up to the election, voters would collect the Leader Cards of their preferred candidates and bring them to the polling station on election day.

Polling booths would be equipped with Advanced Voting Machines (AVMs) featuring a touchscreen interface that displays a 3x4 grid of blank spaces—each representing one of the twelve votes a voter is entitled to cast, as illustrated on the left side of the image on the next page.

To begin voting, the voter would tap any one of the blank boxes on the screen. The selected box would then be visually highlighted— through blinking, a colorful border, or another clear indicator. The voter would then scan the QR code from a Leader Card into the AVM. Upon successful scanning, the candidate's face would appear in the selected box, confirming that the vote has been assigned.

Alternatively, tech-savvy voters could search for candidates directly by entering identifying information such as the candidate's name, date of birth, or phone number, instead of scanning a QR code.

Voters would repeat this process—selecting each box and scanning the QR codes of the same or different leaders—until all twelve votes are cast. If a mistake is made, the voter can simply tap the corresponding box and scan the correct Leader Card to overwrite the previous selection, ensuring the final choices accurately reflect their intent.



The right side of the image shows a sample AVM screen after voting is completed. In this example, the voter chose to assign four votes to one leader, three to another, and two to a third leader, while leaving three boxes blank—i.e., unvoted, which is also a valid option. Once satisfied with the selections, the voter would press the **SUBMIT** button on the AVM to confirm and finalize their votes.

Polling stations would be equipped with dummy AVMs for practice, allowing voters to familiarize themselves with the multiple-vote process before entering the actual booth. Additionally, the Election Commission could release a mobile app that simulates the AVM experience. Voters could use this app to practice casting their multiple votes—with help from tech-savvy youngsters or political party volunteers if needed. This would help ensure voters are comfortable and confident with the new voting process well ahead of election day.

2.Varishth Sabha

This constitutional reform represents a genuine case of out-of-the-box thinking. We are guided by two core objectives in proposing it:

First, we must safeguard the independence of non-political offices in our democracy by ensuring that their appointments are free from political interference and considerations.

Second, as a nation, we must recognize and draw upon the wisdom and experience of public figures who have served society in their prime and possess deep insight into public affairs.

Combining these objectives, we propose entrusting the responsibility of appointing key non-political constitutional officeholders to a newly established apolitical collegium called the Varishth Sabha.

We recommend that this collegium be composed of the following categories of individuals:

- Former legislators who have served in the Lok Sabha or any Vidhan Sabha for at least eight cumulative years;
- Former judges of the Supreme Court or High Courts with a minimum of three cumulative years of service;
- Padma award recipients recognized for their significant contributions to public life.

Any individual from these three categories may apply for membership in the Varishth Sabha, provided they are at least 65 years of age and will serve until the age of 75. Applicants must declare under oath that they have renounced all political affiliations and will never hold any political office for the rest of their lives.

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