Campaign for Electoral Reforms in India (CERI)

Towards Proportionate Electoral system

MANIFESTO

Preamble

Governance, understood as the distribution of values both material and spiritual has become a serious business in the world today of providing unlimited wealth and luxury as well as of depriving sustenance, dignity and freedom. In indigenous communities of yore it became a tool for providing unlimited space for all people without evolving restrictive dogmas, laws and dominance. It was a direct democracy practised without any definition and discourse. It has made a quantum jump in the postmodern time wherein it cannot be understood nor can it be practiced without definitions and boundaries set by nation-states. Democracy has this tremendous flexibility of playing into the hands of those who want to make use of it the way they wish. In slave societies democracy became a philosophical tool for building up resistance. Democracy became a silent spectator through the phases of monarchy and feudalism, sitting in the peripheries and waiting for its turn to turn thing around and gained the centre stage in the business of governance. It bounced into the arena of world governance from the period of enlightenment going through many phases of transformation and assuming multiple faces. So much so that it has become

impossible to give any finite definition of democracy. That is actually the beauty of democracy that it can assume as many definitions as there are human societies in the world.

Despite the romance and arrogance that surrounds the discourses and praxis of democracy in postmodern times, no one will dare to claim democracy to be the panacea for all complicities of governance. Yet, given all its limitations, democracy remains till today, as the most acceptable way for participatory governance in societies that desire either to minimize or to do away with hegemony and dominance.

Democracy will perch itself in unreachable heights if it is not translated into the lives of individuals, communities, societies and nations in terms of Instruments and Mechanisms of governance. One of these Mechanisms of realizing democratic governance is electoral system. Democracy has the potential for self-deception if it takes up to mindless violence by citizens, militarism by rulers or incongruent electoral systems by elected bodies of governance. Democracy can become a grand illusion of the masses, playing into the hands of rulers, if the electoral system does not provide ample space for citizens who uphold democracy by casting their votes in the electoral systems. Electoral systems can turn out to be as deceptive as democracy itself if the owners of democracy, that is the citizens, do not understand its nuances. Ignorance of the implications of electoral systems can lead citizens into the cosy comforts of the grand illusions of democracy. Such comforts can become the rosy petals in the path of dominant forces to indulge in the serious business not of distribution of values but of limitless accumulation of material and spiritual resources, all for themselves.

It is in this context that the Campaign for Electoral Reforms in India, known as CERI has set out to educate the citizens of India and to campaign for electoral reforms in India. This reform endeavour is specifically directed at ultimately bringing about Proportionate Electoral System in India. The success of this campaign will not only transform the face of democracy in India but also will lend credibility to India's claim to be the largest democracy in the world. By making democracy more meaningful through the proportionate electoral system India will also establish itself as the most mature democracy in the world, which till now has remained a pipedream. This Manifesto is a document of manifesting our conviction as well as of registering the support and solidarity of all well meaning citizens all over the world.

People's Power to Govern

The present phase of history in governance all over the world is marked by democratic forms. Democracy itself is not new to the world. Most communities of the world that were excluded from mainstream governance through the many phases of history have always had democratic forms governing themselves,

though variations and deviations could be found even in these communities. The meaning of the term democracy is a combination of power and people. One can very easily understand that democracy is people's power. However, in modern times, governance of nation states understanding democracy as people's power becomes problematic because of the paucity of conceptual clarity on democracy as well as because of extreme flaws in the praxis of democracy in the context of nation state. The specific context in which democracy is discussed in modern times has a direct relation to governance. Thus democracy in modern understanding can be extended to also include 'people's power to govern'.

CERI strongly believes in the restoration of democracy as truly people's power to govern. All the efforts of CERI are in the direction of evolving systems and structures that will re-invest power to govern with citizens of respective countries.

Bipolarity of Power

While governance has always been related to power, the power to govern has gone through many historical phases and shifted hands. The exercise of power by different forces in many phases of history has invariably led to the evolution of theoretical positioning. The interpolation of absolute power and attempts to liberate it from the claws of power-mongers has led to the evolution of 'power as dominance and 'power as resistance'. This bipolarity of power has often tended to push the people to becoming objects of power even within democratic framework. Modern democracy itself is perceived to be a variant of this bipolarity leaving the power to dominate and the power to resist simultaneously in the hands of the powerful sections of any given society.

CERI recognizes that power as dominance in democratic societies is untenable. CERI realizes that power as resistance need not always be a resistance against dominance. There can be resistance among dominant communities to usurp power from the hands of those who are exercising dominant power in order to be able to exercise much stronger dominant power. Therefore, any naïve understanding of power as resistance may lead to the emergence of more cruel dominant powers in the name of resistance. CERI finds that power as resistance can be problematic in modern democracies.

Power as Participation

Understanding governance as distribution of values, both material and spiritual, and recognizing the asymmetry that exists in such distribution in the postmodern democratic governance CERI has evolved the tripolarity of power adding 'power as participation'. This will have the specific connotation of all sections of given

societies participating in governance as equal stakeholders and not allowing dominant sections of societies to appropriate all values to themselves. Acknowledging governance as distribution of values, one can conclude with ample evidence that democratic governance in the postmodern period borders more on 'power as dominance' and least on power as participation.

CERI wishes to promote participation of all citizens in the Instruments and Mechanisms of governance at all levels. Such participation in decision making process should ensure proportional democratic space for all people so that no one group becomes the absolute owner of material and spiritual values.

Healthy Competitions

On the other hand democracy is also considered to be that system of governance that can bring about the realisation of the Universal Human Rights, at least better than any other known system of governance. This is mainly because rights of individuals are guaranteed by an elaborated set of measures and mechanisms. Many States in the postmodern period have also developed broad sets of mechanisms which allow the citizens to effectively participate in the political decision making process and the process of distribution of societal resources and wealth. Individuals have the right to form interest groups according to their own will and interests and enter the societal competition for these resources. Such democracies function fairly well only under the condition that individuals and groups within a democratic frame are relatively equal. Under the ideal precondition of equality of all the players the societal competition leads to a fairly high level of equality and justice between the groups and individuals.

However, history bears ample evidence that the lack of congruency and undiluted efforts of dominant groups to usurp power and resources for themselves have alerted well meaning individuals and groups to develop alternative mechanisms to find an inclusive space for all people within the governance mechanisms of nation states.

Variants in Democracy

CERI identifies the following variants in the trajectory of different democracies.

- Colonial Democracy – Liberalism, Individualism, Accumulation and Profit. Not the same brand in colonized countries.
- Representative Democracy-Inbuilt possibility of suppressing representation through majoritarianism
- Substantive Democracy-Democracy is not only in the Constitution but also functions in the interests of all citizens.

- Procedural Democracy-restricted to the procedures of elections within the parameters of Democracy.
- Consociational Democracy: Grand Coalition, Cultural autonomy, Proportionality, Minority veto
- Deliberative Democracy – People have the space to dialogue and evolve democratic governance
- Dialectic Democracy-Space for Thesis-Antithesis-Synthesis
- Participatory Democracy – Individual citizens and groups of people take the responsibility to realize a political space for all citizens in the Instruments and Mechanisms of governance

Plenty Vs Penury

Any given democracy is, however, far away from a "utopian" state of affairs. Weaker sections and minorities cannot take part in societal "game" of democratic governance unless special efforts are undertaken to equip them to become equal players. In order to achieve this, a broad set of instruments and institutional arrangements have to be set in place, one among which would be an electoral system, which ensures a maximum amount of justice, participation and secured rights of minorities and integration of dissenting and differing votes, opinions and interests.

Democracy as it has evolved through the recent centuries of human history is the sum and substance of Utopia. Thomas More of the 16th Century wrote the book Utopia. In Greek, Utopia can mean two things. It is on the one hand U-topia which means no place or it can mean Eu-topia which means a happy place. This sums up the essence of Democracy in the modern world. It is a U-topia (no place) for a vast majority of people and Eu-topia (happy place) for a small minority of people. This is the essence of modernist and post modernist democracy that it provides bliss to a minority of the powerful and penury to a vast majority of its citizens.

CERI strongly believes that democratic governance in all nations of the world should aim at providing not only the basic needs of human being but also a proportional share in all the wealth and resources for all citizens in an equitable way. Depriving millions of people of the means of living will gradually reduce the respect of people for democracy and may compel them to take recourse to undemocratic means of fulfilling their needs.

Direct Vs Representative Democracy

Rousseau and Voltaire are the two people who mesmerized the whole of France and led the way to French Revolution. Both of them espoused the cause of the

common people. They believed that science and philosophy led to depression and not to progress. Of course they were referring to the science and philosophy of their own time, that is, of the period of Enlightenment. The two major works of Jean Jaques Rousseau are Emile and Social Contract. Overwhelmed by the reality of inequality that the emergence of the new nation state and industrialization was bringing about he put forward the following paradigm. "Man is born free and everywhere he is in chains". One can read between the lines of Rousseau's writing the distinction between direct democracy and representative democracy. Though he does not explicate it, one can understand that direct democracy was and is still practiced in the indigenous communities of people including the Dalits and Tribal people of India whereas representative democracy is a product of the 'enlightened' world. For Rousseau people are still slaves of the will of another in representative democracy. In direct democracy it is the people who make the law. People are free if they obey the law that they make.

Current democratic systems can be described as election-based representative democracy. In some countries these systems are complemented by elements of grassroots democracy like petitions and plebiscites. In addition to this, representative democracies can be divided in two bigger groups of electoral systems, which are the majoritarian ones in countries like the US, Great Britain or India and on the other hand proportionate representation systems like in most of the West European nations, New Zealand, Nepal etc.

Democracy in India

India is one of the countries of the world that practised democratic form of governance in the pre-Aryan period. Remnants of such forms of governance are still available within the Dalit, Adivasi/Traibal communities spread out all over India. However, the democratic complexion of India changed after the Aryans attained a pre-eminent position in governance. Kautilya in his treatise on governance lays out a feast of dominant governance to those how usurped the power to govern. India has traditionally been a hierarchical society. Indigenous communities were isolated and made outcaste by the dominant forces enslaving them and controlling their sources of livelihood.

CERI feels proud of the great Indian traditions of democratic governance that existed in the indigenous and presently Dalit and Adivasi/Tribal communities. Being deeply aware that forms of such ancient democratic governance are still available in these communities CERI will strive hard to regenerate them in ways that will become integral to the praxis of democracies in postmodern times.

Different Civilizations

India is one of the few countries that has as many as 4 different civilizations viz the Dravidian civilization in south India, Aryan civilization in most of north India, Central Asian civilization operative in Kashmir and the mongoloid civilization in areas starting from Leh and Laddakh and extending to cover the whole of Northeast. All these civilizations have different and distinct histories apart from belonging to different racial and ethnic groups. Moreover, there is a great diversity in the whole of India in terms religions, castes, languages, regions and cultural identities. Democracy in India has this overbearing responsibility to make legitimate and legal space available to all the multicultural, multi-ethnic, multilingual and multi-religious communities.

However, the percentage of people belonging to different civilizations and having different histories having participation in governance is largely disproportionate. The members from the Aryan and Dravidian civilizations are very large in numbers and cover most of India geographically and are positioned as the mainstream of the Indian polity. Even within the Aryan – Dravidian combination, most historians agree that the Aryans have invaded India and enslaved the indigenous Dravidian communities and this dominance of the Aryan civilization continues to this day in most of what is sought to be established as 'Indian civilization and culture'.

CERI recognizes that recognition of the existence of different civilizations in one country will add to the beauty of nation building, provided adequate and proportional space is available for all such civilizations in mechanisms of governance. As long as differences are not made to be the foundations of discrimination, the flow of many streams into one river will add to the strength of national life and national governance.

Caste System and Governance

The caste system introduced by the Aryans continues to this day and effectively marginalizes and exploits vast numbers socially, economically, culturally and politically. Caste system in India was established with a particular bias towards governance of the vast majority of people by a miniscule minority. This small group of dominance so schemed their way that governance in this country has been done only according to their designs and only for the appropriation of maximum resources of this nation for its benefits. Caste governance in this country was established precisely because the dominant caste groups planned to exclude indigenous groups of people at all levels of governance. Through the present representative democracy that is a colonial legacy in India it virtually closes the doors for the participation in governance of many communities which it has rendered 'powerless' over many millennia of continued exploitation.

CERI will stand against all forms of discriminatory governance in this country. The priority of CERI will be to revive and establish forms of governance that will not undermine the legitimacy of any community to participate, however small that may be. CERI will do all it can to enhance and ensure the participation of all communities in India in the Instruments and Mechanisms of governance undermining all tendencies to usurp dominant and brutal power by some caste groups in India.

Indian Nationalism

The praxis of democracy in India is encapsulated into the discourses of Indian nationalism, which once again is a reflection of dominant schools of thought in India. Dr. B R Ambedkar, who was the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution of India gives loud expression to this state of affairs.

" I am of the opinion that in believing that we are a nation, we are cherishing a great illusion. How people divided into several thousands of castes can be a nation? The sooner we realize that we are not yet a nation in the social and psychological sense of the word the better for us...In this country you find really two nations – a ruling nation and a nation which is a subject nation"

Indian nationalism is actually borrowed from the British. "Indian nationalism is undeniably an anti-colonial force but in its very anti-coloniality it shares discursive practices with Orientalism and with nationalism of the colonizing British. In Asia, especially in India Nationalism is a mixture of culture and power. Indian nationalism has developed two branches.

- Cultural Nationalism
- Political Nationalism

The simple logic of cultural nationalism is that governance of India should be founded on the culture of her people. The logical trajectory of this argumentation has ultimately led to the vociferous claim of the Hindutva forces that India should become a Hindu Rashtra.

Hindutva Nationalism

Discourses of Indian nationalism are delicately interwoven with Hindu nationalism that it is difficult for anyone to separate these two easily. On par with Indian nationalism which one may trace as a secular theory of nationalism grew also the theory that India should be for Hindus. The myth of the Muslims as the threatening other which formed the fundamentals of Hindu nationalism was already codified in the 1920s. But much before that, already in the year 1875 the Arya Samaj was founded. The Hindu theoretician M.S. Golwalkar saw the Indian unity in terms of a "geographical, racial, religious, cultural and linguistic synthesis", in his book 'We or Our Nationhood Defined'. He wrote, "All those…

can have no place in the national life unless they abandon their differences, adopt the religion, culture and language of the nation and completely merge themselves in the national race. So long, however, as they maintain their racial, religions and cultural differences, they cannot but be only foreigners. The strangers have to acknowledge the national religion as the State religion and in every other respect inseparably merge in the national community".

Cultural nationalism is problematic in multicultural nations. It is not possible to determine which culture and whose culture is national culture. In democracies all people have a right to claim a rightful place for their culture. If any group claims its culture superior to all other cultures such democracies will lead either to a camouflaging of the democratic rights of many communities of people or to the instrumentalization of a few other cultures to strike at groups that the dominant community in power considers as its enemy.

Proponents of cultural nationalism in India, unfortunately belong to the fascist face of Hinduism. They propose what they call Hindu culture as the culture of India which should give identity to all Indians and unite all Indians. This is problematic because what is considered as Hindu culture has manifested itself till now as exclusive, divisive and disintegrative through the caste system and the widely prevalent practice of untouchability.

Hindutva Indian Nationalism engineers a nationalism that intentionally denies the nationalism of others and strives hard to construct a nation on such denial. In the process of building such a nation it is deeply aware that there will be conflicts and in order to win the conflict it promotes and glorifies violence.

Those in seats of power to govern have started using the emotive issue of identity to mobilize votes and diverting the electorate from the real and substantive issues. As a result, while the politicians are able to capture power by appealing only to the community sensitivities, the real issues of the people are remaining unaddressed. Recognizing the gains from this strategy, the politicians are creating tensions and conflicts between different communities to further consolidate their vote banks resulting in unnecessary loss of life and property and increasing alienation of communities.

CERI asserts that the discourses of cultural nationalism are untenable in the Indian context as India can never claim to have one culture as a national culture. It is well known all over the world that India is a multi-cultural society and therefore, any attempt to build Indian nationalism on particular cultures will naturally not only undermine but also exclude other cultures within national boundaries. Ultimately such attempts will be grossly undemocratic.

Largest Vs Mature Democracy

Indian democracy is self styled as one of the best int he world but Nepal has tarred this image by taking recourse to a proportionale representation system in their democratic praxis. India is recognized all over the world as the largest democracy in the world. But CERI wishes that Indian democracy also moves into the realm of being the most matrue democracy in the world. In the Indian electoral system people are making their choices. There is no doubt about it. But they are forced to make a choice within certain dominantly designed boundaries of which they are ignorant. That somebody with less than 10% of votes can get into the Parliament is a democratic anomaly in its character of representation. That a party that manages to scrape through with 28.6% of vote share is hailed as the harbinger of political hope of a nation is a democratic anomaly in its representational character. If actual representation is removed from the praxis of democracy it is bound to be farce. Unfortunately the trajectory of modern democracy has this farcical dimension inbuilt into its from the time of its evolution from an enlightenment-cum-colonial period in history.

Electoral Systems

India has been witnessing sproadic clamour for electoral reforms. Such clamour has been restricted to cleaning up the existing system and has not been extended to critically examining the legitimacy of the same in the praxis of a mature democracy. There are some sections of Intelligentsia in India that are not even aware of the nuances of other electoral systems that are in vogue in many democracies. There is another section of intelligentsia that is aware of the existence of other forms of electoral systems but know intuitively that it is going to provide space for many marginalized communities of people in India. This is something that the chemistry in their bodies naturally resist and therefre, such intellectuals have shunned any public debate on the First Past The Post or the Majoritarian Electoral System.

Another set of intellectuals have clamoured for the American type of two party democracy in India. The USA, UK and India are major democracies that still cling on to the Majoritarian Electoral System though dialectics are in advanced stage in the former two countries for ushering in a Proportionate Electoral System. Arun Shouried belongs to this school of thought though he stretches his argument a bit further and argues for the power of governance to be handed over to the executive. The underlying argumentation is that representatives of common people should not be vested with the power to govern the country.

CERI stands against such tendencies to invest power to govern in the hands of the elite and the executive who can easily be produced by those sections of society that have already appropriated unlimited opportunities

for themselves. **Elections in democratic societies are for delegating representatives of citizens to govern, to distribute values equitably.**

Militarization

An ideal democracy provides equal protection to those who disagree with mainstream formulations. It also recognizes people's right over their resources accepting the fact that any out side imposition on their territory and culture must be asked from the local population. The flaws in the praxis of democracy in India stand starkly exposed in the cases of the States in North East and in Jammu and Kashmir where governance is executed through the power of gun relegating the power of people's participation. Subsequent governments in India have suppressed the democratic aspirations of the people of North Eastern parts of India through the Armed Forces Special Powers Act and the like giving a free hand to Military to deal with citizens.

CERI is of the strong view that democratic governance does not require the assistance of military. The role of military in any country is to protect her from external aggression. However, militaries are being more and more used against citizens of the same country in dominant form of governance. Though this is done in the name of democracy, CERI will not subscribe to any type of governance with the use of military force.

Ethnic Swamping

In order to offset the genuine democratic aspirations and in order to scuttle the democratic rights of indigenous people subsequent governments in India have taken recourse to ethnic swamping. This is done with an avowed purpose of tilting power equations within given regions in favour of dominant communities. Eco-friendly indigenous people have been rendered as minority at the mercy of swamped powerful and majority of people. In the course of time this migrated majority becomes an oppressor community in the land of the indigenous people and are supported by the ruling elite in their violent denial of human rights of the indigenous people.

CERI takes serious exceptions to the method of ethnic swamping in democracies. This will virtually set up citizens against citizens and will lead to internal conflict within democratic societies. It is illogical reasoning that the services of the military are required to quell the unrest that is generated by such ethnic swamping.

Need for Electoral Reform

CERI likes to see the governance of India based on her Constitution. In order to realize the rights of all people in India the Indian democracy is in dire need of becoming more substantive and proportionally representative. The multi-cultural reality of India needs to be appropriately captured in the praxis of democracy in India. Constitutional governance in India is constantly threatened by caste and communal forces who want to convert the constitution of India into their handmaid. Apart from Constitutional governance, the daily lives of nearly half the population of India is determined and conditioned by caste and communal forces, especially in the rural area where feudalistic form of ordaining people's lives is still widely prevalent. It is because of this that untouchability is still widely practiced in India despite the fact that the Constitution of India banned it already at the time of its inception. The praxis of democracy in India is also mainly by co-option of people into dominant values and not by participation of citizens in the Instruments and Mechanisms of governance. Lack of education and wide spreading of illiteracy in the country only add substance to such co-option which then leads to instrumentalization of people.

More than ever India is in dire need of introducing an electoral system that will enhance and guarantee the participation of citizens in governance. The present First Past The Post (FPTP) electoral system not only does not provide necessary space for representation of all citizens as it has been witnessed in all the elections at different levels, it also effectively pushes weaker sections of society to the periphery of democratic governance. It has succeeded to do this by creating an impression in the minds of many citizens that democracy in India has survived because of its electoral system. Its survival has also been ensured by an activated ignorance of the existence of other electoral systems in other countries of the world.

First Past The Post (FPTP)	Proportionate Electoral System
Indian Democracy has the First Past The Post (FPTP) as its electoral system to provide representation to voters in State Assemblies and in the Parliament of India. Most citizens of India are unaware of the existence of other possible electoral systems in the world.	Many democracies in the world have shifted to the Proportionate Electoral System. This system is being widely in practice in many democracies of the world and more and more countries in the world are shifting to Proportional Representation.
The FPTP representation system allows political parties to come to power both in the States and at the Centre with woeful minority of votes. Though it is known as majoritarian it does leaves out majority of voters	In PR electoral system any party can gain seats only in proportion to the percentage of votes that it gains. There will not be any difference between the percentage of votes and the percentage of seats. Thus only parties

without representation as the one who has more votes than the next one is declared winner.	with more percentage of voter support can come to power.
Parties with less than 30% of votes win more percentage of seats and claim the right to form governments. This leaves out a vast majority of voters unrepresented in governance.	In PR system majority means more than 50% of votes. The other votes are not wasted. They are given to other candidates in order to provide representation to all voters in the Assemblies and in the Parliament.
This is because majority is understood to be the one who gets more number of votes than other contestants instead of being over 50%. There are members in the present Lok Sabha who got less than 10% votes but won the seat as others did not manage to get that many votes. There are only 5 members in the present Lok Sabha who have won with more than 50% of votes.	If parties are unable to gain more than 50% of votes they cannot assume power to govern. Parties have to make pre-poll coalitions with similar ideologies before elections in order to influence voters.
The percentage of votes that a party gains is not the same as the percentage of seats it gains in this electoral system. Parties with less percentage of votes can gain more number of seats and parties with more percentage of votes can gain less number of seats in this system. This does not give a true representation of the voters' choice. It is only a token representation.	In the Proportionate Electoral System any party will be able to gain seats only in proportion to the percentage of votes that it gains. This is one of the reasons why it is called Proportional. There is not possibility of manipulating number of seats against the percentage of votes in this system. With its variants in counting this system sees to it that all voters are represented in governance.
In FPTP system only one member can be elected from one constituency. It is called single member constituency. This leads to alienation of representation instead of being inclusive. Apart from promoting extreme rivalry and violence it systematically excludes the losing voters from participating in governance.	PR system has multi-member constituencies. This will enable two or more members getting elected from the same constituency in order to provide representation to different parties. In return this will enhance voter interest in elections and enables greater participation of citizens in governance.
It is a well recognized truth that FPTP is more suited for countries with two party systems and not best suited for countries with multiparty system.	Proportionate electoral system is more suited for counties with multi-party system. India arrived at an era of coalition politics long time ago and

	therefore, FPTP is a misfit for India.
The present electoral system in India encourages corruption, use of muscle power, communalism etc. in order to gain the slight margin of winning votes. The parties that come to power are not mandated by the citizens. Only parties that have the power to manipulate voters are able to come to power. These are generally parties that have dominant, fascist, communal and casteist ideology.	Many countries with PR system follow State sponsoring of election expenses. This prevents corruption, money and muscle power, malpractices, play of emotions on communal and caste basis etc.
State expenses for bye-elections in India are generally very huge. Also parties indulge in mindless corruptions and violence in bye-elections	There are no bye-elections in PR system as the next candidate in the Party List will automatically enter the Parliament in the event of death or resignation of existing member. This reduces huge expenses, corruption and electoral violence.
Parties that represent a vast majority of Dalits, Adivasis/Tribal people, Minorities and Women are unable to get their proportional representation in the present electoral system. They are able to get only representation through reserved seats provided they follow the dictates of dominant parties that they belong to. This makes them representatives of their respective parties and not true representatives of their people.	In the party list the constituency that a candidate will represent will be indicated. This will enable voters from that constituency to vote for the party to which their popular candidate belongs. If a party fields more and more popular candidates their percentage of votes will increase in many constituencies. Thus the popularity of party ideology and the popularity of candidates are both important in PR system.
Because parties are unable to gain the required number of seats to form government there is much horse trading after the elections and formation of coalitions that are not desired by voters.	Proportionate Electoral System provides ample space for formation of coalitions representing smaller communities that do not have the chance of being represented in FPTP. Smaller parties representing unrepresented communities can make a coalition and gain required percentage of votes in order to come to a winning position of power.
There is much less inner party	In PR electoral system inner party

democracy in the present electoral system. Parties based on a single personality and his/her family can easily gain power through the present electoral system without holding organizational elections and selection of candidates with their parties.	democracy is a must as before the elections political parties will have to prepare a list of candidates selected through party elections and submit the same to Election Commission. Candidates of parties will be declared elected from this list in the same proportion as the percentage votes that a party or a coalition gains.
By its very nature FPTP divides candidates and their followers (voters). It leads to fragmentation by its individualistic orientation. 'The winner takes it all' is its paradigm.	The chances of Dalits, Adivasis/Tribals, Minorities and Women forming a coalition to gain the power to govern and form stable governments are much greater in PR system than in FPTP. By its very nature, PR system unites and brings voters and parties together.
FPTP results in centralization of power in the individual. India's experience with political parties shows that they are increasingly becoming leader centric with little or no reference to ideology. The issues get relegated to backstage while the identities become more important. This has affected the credibility of the entire political system as the leaders become unaccountable to people as most of them have realized that they will definitely get the mandate of the people based on their identity and not on the basis of their performance or ideologies.	In Proportionate Electoral System it is the party that matters most and individual power has much less to do. Voters select parties more for its ideology and less for personalities, though it is recognized that the leaders have an image. Parties with similar ideologies have greater chance of coming into coalition rather than parties coming to grab power based only on calculations of required number of seats. Countries with PR system have till now shown that family and dynastic rule has not place in governance.

CERI Sets Out

1. CERI stands by the value fundament that women are different but not in any way less than any other human beings. Therefore CERI will strive for an electoral mechanism within the PR electoral system that will ensure 50% of representation for Women at all levels of Governance.

2. CERI takes cognizance of the fact that many indigenous people in India are perpetually governed through militarism. CERI stands by the need for democratic governance at all levels and denounces all possible attempts at governance through militarism in any part of India. Therefore CERI will strive to build institutions of democratic governance of these peoples respecting their holistic aspirations and the principles of equality and freedom. In doing so, CERI will enhance their effective participation in governance through the proportional electoral system.

3. CERI strive for democracy in its true form. Taking into consideration the social fabric of India CERI believes that it is inadequate to implement only political democracy and shall also strive for Social Democracy, which will empower the hitherto excluded people of India to become effective participants in the instruments and mechanism of governance.

4. CERI realizes that present FPTP system in Indian Democracy has splintered fragmented many sections of Indian people for short term political gains. CERI strongly assets that this has led to co-option of citizens in different strata of society. Therefore CERI will support the CERI will support the emergence of national coalition of hitherto excluded and un-represented communities of people.

5. CERI understands that in spite of the profession of democracy by political parties in India there is strongly regrettable lack of inner party democracy. CERI realizes that the mechanism of procedural democracy in India has not succeeded in guaranteeing inner party democracy. Therefore, CERI believes in establishing proportionate electoral system which ensures inner party democracy that necessarily integrate party democracy

6. CERI is aware that India is hailed as the largest democracy in the world. While acknowledging that this is true in sheared number CERI believes there is much to be desired in the praxis of Indian Democracy. India has established representation as actualization of its democracy, which is largely confined to the realm of procedural democracy. CERI shall strive to deepen democracy by establishing substantive democracy through propionate electoral system that will provide true representation to all its citizens.

7. CERI is aware that this Campaign for Proportionate Electoral System is not the first one to strive for the realization of meaningful governance within the framework of democracy. Many countries in the world have already tried and tested out the Proportionate Electoral System as a true translation of democratic representation in their systems of

governance. While deeply appreciating all such countries and also those who are still in the transition endeavors of their electoral systems CERI will strive hard for forging a global alliance with all such countries to promote the Proportionate Electoral System. CERI will join hands with all those countries that are striving to transform their electoral system towards a Proportionate one in their respective countries. In this endeavor CERI believes that ultimately PES will become an inevitable choice for the whole world which can survive only through equitable distribution of material and spiritual values, which CERI believes is genuine governance.

8. CERI believes that it is much easier to profess democratic values than to put the same in practice, especially in the instruments and Mechanisms of governance. While striving to promote and establish the values that guide CERI within the political framework of India she will also strive hard to put into practice all such values in its own individual members, member organizations, movements, parties and influence all those who come into a dialogue with her.

The holistic vision of CERI for Indian democracy is one that will effectively integrate the values of genuine participation of all citizens, equality especially of women, social democracy that respects the rights of Dalits, Adivasis/Tribals and Minorities of all kinds. Such democracy will irreversibly respect the individuality of all citizens without in any way undermining the rights of communities and respect the space for dissent and specificities. When democracy and its praxis are established in such integrative way the basic needs of all citizens of India will be reasonably fulfilled. Only then will India as a nation be in a position to assert that there is everything to fulfill one's needs and not many things to fulfill one's greed.

Appeal for Participation

This Campaign for Electoral Reforms in India has already spread to almost all the States of India and intensive activities are taking place. We appeal to all people all over the world to support the Campaign in whatever way one is capable. There are many options:

- Become a Member of the Campaign in the state/national/international levels

- Participate in state and national conferences of CERI

- Study more about the Proportionate Electoral System in different countries of the world and bring the learning as a resource to CERI

- Organize Study Circles to understand the positive and negative effects of existing electoral systems

- Organize local seminars and workshops on electoral systems, especially the Proportionate Electoral System

- Disseminate information about the campaign far and wide

- Write articles and letters to newspapers and magazines

- Sensitize both the visual and print media on publicizing the need for Proportionate Electoral System

- Write letters to elected members and parties to reform the present electoral system and bring about Proportionate Electoral System

- Increase the ownership level of the campaign at all levels

For More Details please contact:

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