



THE HINDU CENTRE

for

Politics and Public Policy

MISSION STATEMENT

The founding spirit of The Hindu Centre is the firm conviction that the publishers of *The Hindu*, a major force for public good and which has had a stellar role in building India's democratic life, can help revive ebbing public confidence in our parliamentary democracy. Public confidence in India's democratic institutions and political processes are at an all-time low and there is a rising danger of the Indian public becoming alienated from the electoral process, angered by the failure of politicians to deliver on basic expectations.

We see this as a dangerous trend and hence, by launching a credible and independent platform for an exploration of ideas and public policies, hope to contribute to the rebuilding of public faith in India's democratic process. We see it as our mission to restore pride and faith in the idea of Indian citizenship and nationhood. This is not a statement of sentiment but intent.

The Centre through its various explorations will seek to:

- Establish stronger and credible roots for parliamentary democracy, pluralism and economic betterment.
- Increase understanding of the various aspects of the challenges today.
- Embark on the task of building research that will revisit key Constitutional concepts and examine the validity of the post-Independence set of political values to assess their relevance and utility in terms of the crisis of confidence besetting the system today.

The Hindu Centre derives its strength from two natural advantages.

- The Hindu Centre is an offshoot of The Hindu group of publications.
- The Hindu group has consistently set the terms of the political

discourse, constantly pointing to higher standards of normative functioning of public institutions.

This is a rich legacy that The Hindu Centre draws from. The Centre's presence in the South foregrounds it as one of the few institutes of research that is exclusively devoted to studies of politics and their impact on the shaping of public policies.

Our endeavour is to promote a vision of nationhood firmly anchored to the rights of all Indian citizens. The Centre's explorations will include the manner in which certain concepts like secularism and social justice have become such contentious items of political discourse. As a public policy resource, our goal is to enlighten the Indian public and to increase their awareness of their political and social choices.

The Hindu Centre will have a view distinct and independent of the editorial perspectives of The Hindu group of publications.

We will function as a public policy resource outlet and not a journalistic resource.

We will serve as a platform for exploration of ideas and themes that will illuminate the complexity of India's political life but not take positions on the issues as a newspaper would.

The Hindu Centre will not just be a "discourse enabler" or a "marketplace of ideas". We are clear that we are promoting civic identity as the primary component of nationalism and we intend for our research to re-energise basic democratic values of pluralism and social equity. We also believe our mission

is to educate Indians that citizenship of this republic is the only valid identity in the public sphere. We believe this set of fundamental values should be strengthened for a liberal society to really take root here.

THE CENTRE'S THREE STREAMS OF ACTIVITY ARE:

1. Undertaking research on current topics
2. Promoting Dialogue and Debate
3. Holding Track II type Round Tables on internal conflicts.

UNDERTAKING RESEARCH ON CURRENT TOPICS

- We will offer a few annual fellowships to distinguished and seasoned policy practitioners, public intellectuals, scholars of established reputation with a broad comparative perspective to undertake a particular field of study that will broaden the public understanding of critical issues.

The salience and relevance of the topics will be a top priority in selection.

- We will host short-term scholars "Public Policy Scholars" to work for a duration of 12 to 16 weeks who will examine topics of urgency & topicality in the political discourse.

A distinguished panel of advisors consisting of leading scholars and public intellectuals will help the Centre select the scholars. There will be flexibility in fixing the time-frame for these studies, depending on their salience and policy significance.

A premium will be placed on scholarship that offers original approaches to intractable problems.

PROMOTING DIALOGUE AND DEBATE

We will provide a platform for debate and an exchange of ideas by:

- Conducting monthly workshops and seminars which will examine contentious issues of policy debate such as the Dravidian movement, the impact of the Eelam narrative in Tamilnadu, the Telengana agitation, the Maoist insurgency.
- Holding lectures by distinguished philosophers and political leaders for the public that will explore contemporary political philosophy and theory.
- Organising high profile events such as summits on particular themes with international and national speakers.

TRACK II TYPE ROUND TABLES

As has been institutionalised in explorations of external disputes, such as between India and Pakistan or China, we intend to host Track II Round Tables and invite key protagonists of long-standing internal conflicts to discussions, aiming to narrow the differences in perceptions.

OUTREACH

The Centre's research will be published on its website www.thehinducentre.com.

We will hold press conferences and issue press releases to announce our major research outcomes.

We will conduct occasional surveys to gauge public opinion on major issues on the national agenda.

BOARD OF ADVISORS

The Hindu Centre will be guided by an Advisory Board comprising eminent scholars and public intellectuals: Zoya Hasan, Dean of the School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University; Pratap Bhanu Mehta, President and CEO, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi; Sunil Khilnani, Director, King's India Institute, London; Martha Nussbaum, Ernst Freund Distinguished Service Professor of Law and Ethics, University of Chicago; Yogendra Yadav, Senior Fellow, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi; Navin Chawla, former Chief Election Commissioner of India; and Gurcharan Das, management expert, author, and commentator on public affairs.

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Dr. Malini Parthasarathy is the Director of The Hindu Centre for Politics and Public Policy and is a Director of Kasturi & Sons Ltd. She is former Executive Editor of The Hindu and has been a political journalist for the last 27 years.

Mr. N. Ram is a Director of Kasturi & Sons Ltd. and former Editor-in-Chief and Publisher of The Hindu, Frontline, Business Line, and Sportstar of The Hindu group of publications, and has been in the media field since 1966.

Mr. N. Ravi is a Director of Kasturi & Sons Ltd. and is former Editor of The Hindu. He has been in journalism since 1972.

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