



THE INVISIBLE HANDS

Foreign Interference
in Indian Elections
2024



Preface

Election interference is likely as old as elections, but the word got full-blown currency when the masters of the game were made to test the taste of their own medicine. Or so they claimed.

Like energy, election interference flows from higher power to lower ones. However, the high and mighty can pretend, and at times, allow some election interference in their empire, if it serves some higher purpose – such as taking care of a rough element that appears as a blink on the horizon, or as they say, ‘a glitch in the matrix’.

It is neither the first and most unlikely the last interference that would have happened. Ney, nor would this story be covering the whole gambit of it. Far from it. This story is limited to whatever could be scratched from the open source and limits itself to one aspect – narrative building during an election. This is an attempt to highlight the important roles narratives play, and how they are manufactured.

An idea is the most resilient thing, especially an idea that is planted in a way to make it appear ‘indigenous.’

This report aims to trace the trajectory of the planting of the idea and shed some light on its source. However, it is virtually impossible to put any meaningful light on the source, given that the source is the largest black hole in our galaxy identified so far.

Yet, try we must.

Table of Contents

PREFACE	2
INTRODUCTION	5
CHAPTER 1: FRENCH MEDIA ON INDIAN ELECTIONS.....	8
after French Aircrafts, arrives a French Professor	8
The Common Source	10
Academic Tussle of Facts vs Fallacies	11
Christophe Jaffrelot.....	13
Sciences Po	13
CHAPTER 2: HOW TO SPIN LIKE A PRO.....	14
Caste Census Discourse in India	15
Topics Trends and Variation Analysis	17
CHAPTER 3: TRIVEDI CENTRE DIDN'T SURVIVE.....	19
Trivedi Center, Ashoka University, CPR and CJ's Disciple	19
Trivedi Center for Political Data Members	19
Trivedi Center for Political Data Dissolves.....	22
CHAPTER 4: FRENCH SCHOLAR IN THE US.....	24
Follow the Money	24
The Funding	26
PART II: A LUCE' WONDERLAND	28
CHAPTER 5: THE MAN WHO INVENTED TIME	29
Henry and CIA	30
The Luce family also funded Alpha 66	31
Kennedy Assassination	31
CHAPTER 6: THE PHILANTHROPY: HENRY LUCE FOUNDATION	32
The Honourable Members of the HLF	32
Mariko Silver	32
John J. Hamre	32
Terrence B. Adamson.....	33
Michelle Douenias.....	33
Mary Brown Bullock	33
CHAPTER 7: LUCE' WONDERLAND - INDIA IN 2024	35
HLF funding to Fronts on India in the run-up to Elections 2024	35
A. Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs.....	36
BCRPWA-TPNRD Interference Ahead of Elections in India	37
B. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP).....	38
C. AI Accountability Project & Digital Witness Lab	40
The Reporters Collective	41
D. Human Rights Watch.....	44
CHAPTER: 8 THE CHICKEN COMES HOME TO ROOST.....	46
Political Conflict, Gender & People's Rights Initiative (PCRes)	46
The Founder.....	48
Henry Luce Funding to PCRes-CRG	49
Angana and Christophe Jaffrelot.....	50
PCRes-CRG on Indian Elections 2024.....	52
SIDE STORY: DATA IS NEW OIL.....	56
New Poster Boy - Raqib Hameed Naik	56

CHAPTER 9: SOUTH ASIA SCHOLAR ACTIVIST COLLECTIVE.....	58
Grant from Henry Luce Foundation	60
PART III: CIRCLE OF LIFE – FROM ONE PHILANTHROPIST TO ANOTHER.....	64
CHAPTER 10: FRIENDS OF DEMOCRACY OR FRIENDS OF SOROS?	65
Respublica, and Ricken Patel	66
Access Now and Avaaz	67
NAMATI.....	67
NAMATI & CPR.....	68
CHAPTER 11: FRIENDS OF DEMOCRACY & INDIAN ELECTIONS	71
Friends of Democracy Moderators	72
Modi Mirage	72
Subir Sinha	73
Irfan Nooruddin	73
Ritumbra Manuvie	74
CHAPTER: 12 – THE LONG-TERM GAME.....	78
Creating Synergies: Dismantling Global Hindutva	79
CONCLUSION	81

Introduction

The year 2024 is going to be a landmark year for global democracy, as more than 60 countries are scheduled to go for elections to choose a government. India, the largest democracy in the world also conducted its general elections between April 19 to June 1, 2024. The sheer number of people who were part of this democratic process made it a global spectacle.

Approximately, 968 million people out of the 1.4 billion population eligible to vote had the opportunity to showcase the true essence of democracy and choose their future government. The incumbent, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was vying for its 3rd consecutive term in office while the opposition INDI Alliance tried for a change in the world's largest democracy.

India's rise as a regional power and its increasing geo-strategic importance made the elections in India a global event of relevance. From a geopolitical lens, the Indian general elections hold high significance owing to their implications for global dynamics. With India as an emerging economic and strategic power, the outcome of elections can play a significant role in shaping the global dynamics which starts with India's foreign policies under the new ruling party in the office. With India maintaining a delicate balance in its bilateral ties with superpowers like the US, China, and Russia, global powers are sometimes left spectated at the independent stand it takes. Global crises including the Russia-Ukraine War, and the Israel-Hamas conflict showcased India's unique foreign policy matrix.

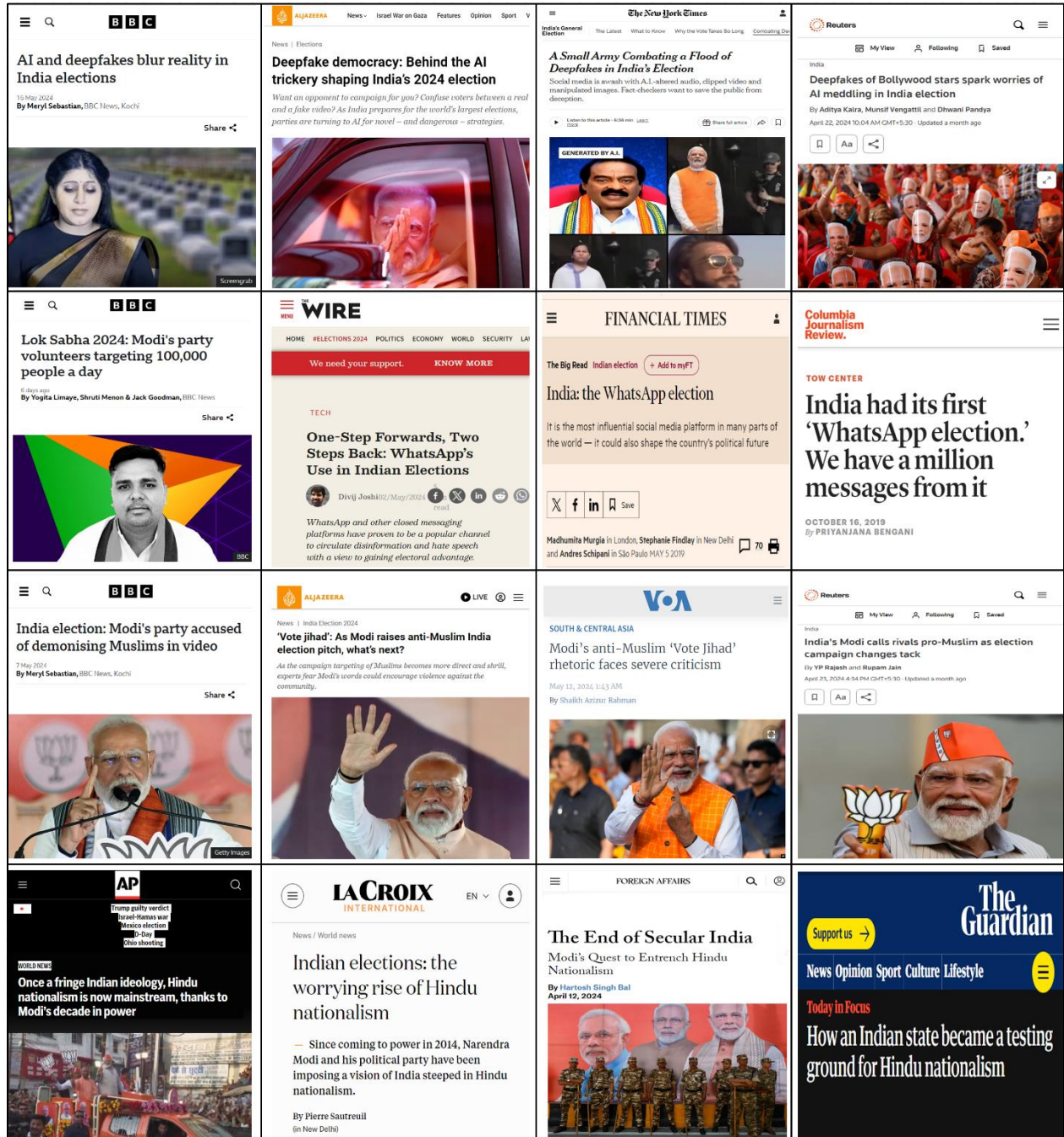
Thus, one can easily state that India stands at the center of the new geo-political chess board and that the side India inclines will depend a lot on the outcome of these elections.

As India's prominence not just as the world's largest democracy, but also as an emerging economic and strategic power increases, it becomes imperative for the global media and intellectuals that set the narrative in this dynamic digital world of ours to keep a close watch on the largest democratic event in the world.

Media or 'the Press' is one of the strongest pillars in any democracy. Thus, a "free press", which is how most media outlets like to attribute themselves today, has a bigger responsibility during elections. Maintaining the strongest ethical parameters to avoid any indulgence that could lead to undue influence/ meddling in elections for vested interests is the benchmark of ethical media.

Unfortunately, as millions of Indians were deciding their future, a section of the global media and academia was planning a sinister plot to influence their decisions through an orchestrated and well-funded plan. The extent of this Influence campaign was not restricted to the Western media itself; many Indian conduits were at the forefront and acted like the anvil that was ready to be molded to any shape. The Western media coverage of Indian

elections with its tireless attack on everything linked to elections from institutions to climate (one media outlet blamed the ECI for conducting elections in the middle of a punishing summer month) was worth a detailed analysis. Not everything felt as organic as it looked! The insane number of pages in the form of articles/ Op-Eds/ research papers were dedicated to the Indian elections that peaked in the last six months.



However, there was one surprising pattern that stood apart amidst the colossal number of articles that were published or “commissioned” (Yes! A good number were actually

commissioned by institutions with a special love for India) on Indian elections. A pattern, striking enough to give birth to this report.

South Asians are not alien to Western media's colonial hangover that is reflected in their editorial bias and supremacist literature. However, their commentary on Indian elections had a distinct tone this time around. Although the usual suspects like BBC, Washington Post, and the New York Times have been exposed by DisinfoLab and others for being propaganda powerhouses when it came to India, these elections saw a more coordinated effort with new players on board.

While analyzing the global reports on Indian elections, an unusual pattern of media coverage trying to shape a particular narrative and influence voter mindset was observed. Surprisingly for us, it was coming from the French Media, including the country's most influential and widely circulated newspaper, Le Monde.

But the most striking pattern was that these Op-Eds/ articles and papers were either written or were based on interviews/ statements from one particular French political scientist and researcher Christophe Jaffrelot, who becomes the anchor to this research. While analyzing the buzz around Indian elections, it was also observed that Jaffrelot had also been the key source of most of these articles from other Western media and a segment of Indian media platforms, especially targeting the Indian elections.

But he was not the only player!

As we scanned through events and activities from outside India in the run-up to and during the elections, (well, there were many), we found the most clinching pattern. A pattern that was binding together all these events, individuals, and narratives- COMMON FUNDING.

Through this report, we aim to highlight the pattern behind these activities and the fronts that are linked to each other. Fronts that are directly funded by the Henry Luce Foundation (HLF) and George Soros's Open Society Foundation (OSF). Groups and individuals that feature in this report constitute a larger network operating out of France and the USA, with funding from US-based philanthropic entities with the aim of influencing the outcome of the Indian elections.

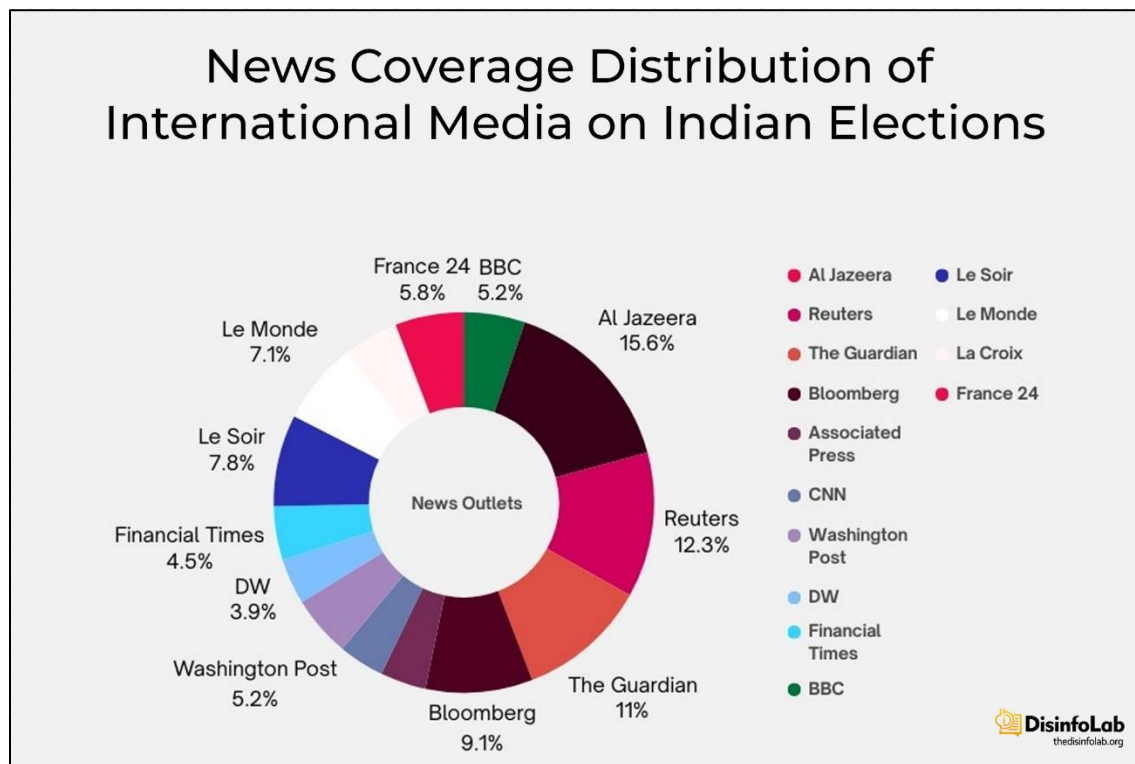
This report is an effort to map these entities which introduced terms like 'Declining Democracy in India', 'Hindu Majoritarianism' and 'Fascism' into the mainstream discourse whenever a mention about India was made until, that became an accepted pattern for the mainstream media. If you remember, the "Democratic revival in India" speech by George Soros in 2023, you will connect to all of this.

Chapter 1: French Media on Indian Elections

after French Aircrafts, arrives a French Professor

There has been increasing rhetoric aimed at elections in India. In the past few months, democratic processes and institutions in India including political establishments have come under hostile attacks from the foreign press, academia, and activists. A deliberate effort has been made to push an agenda that undermines the largest democratic process in the world.

While analyzing the global news coverage of the Indian elections, analyzing the narratives and meta-narratives being pushed around the Indian elections by the Western media, we noticed an interesting fact: an unusually high interest in the Indian election in the French media. We found a plethora of articles coming out of the portals namely Le Soir, La Croix (International), Le Temps, Reporterre, and Radio France Internationale (RFI) to shape a narrative and in turn, tamper with opinion-shaping on Indian elections.



We have already documented some of the US and UK media, and given their inclinations and associations, those narratives do not surprise. But finding the French media peddling the same narratives was amusing at the least. And, taking charge was France's oldest, influential, and widely circulated newspaper- **Le Monde**.

Le Monde alone published dozens of articles with slanted narratives revolving around manufactured themes ranging from rising 'Islamophobia in India' to 'undemocratic nature'













of India, to 'stigmatization of Muslims' to 'growing authoritarianism'. All stock talking points are manufactured in the proverbial democratic heaven, which has recently convicted a political opponent on Trump-up charges.

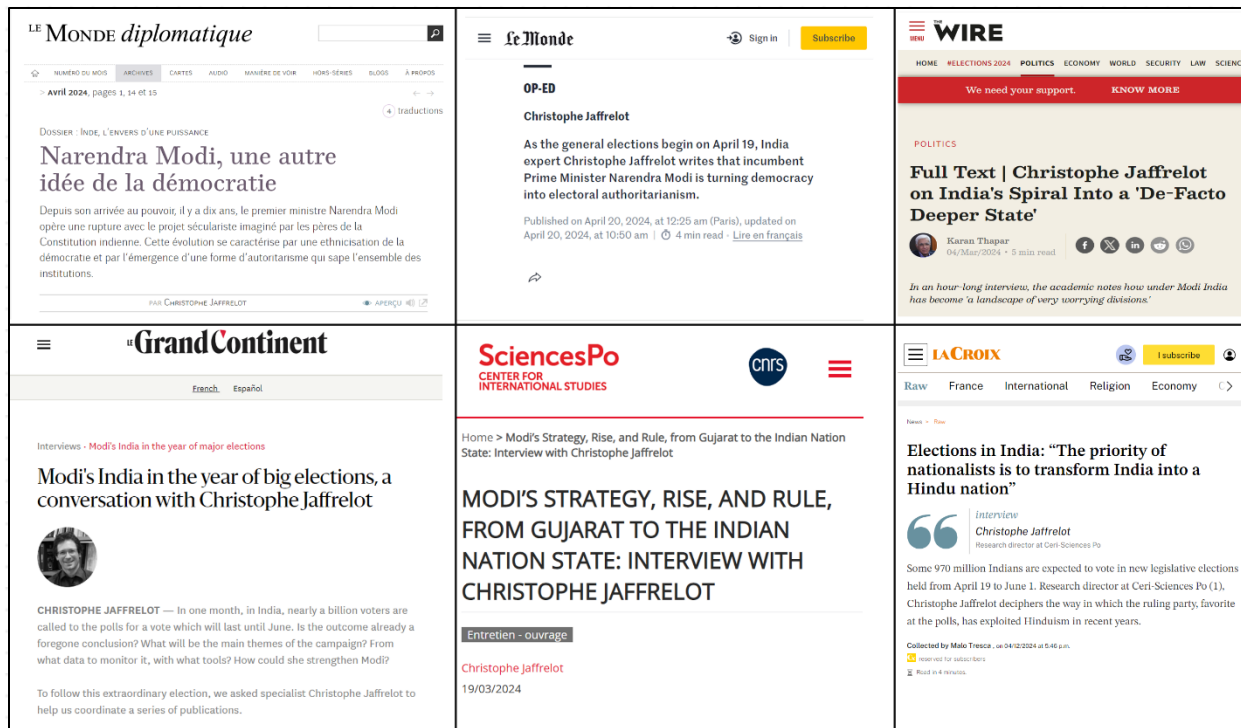
<p>En Inde, l'hindrophobie gagne la campagne électorale</p> <p>Le premier ministre indien, lors de son discours pour les élections législatives, a explicitement fait référence à la « communauté musulmane » comme « le plus grand obstacle ».</p>	<p>En Inde, les élections générales se distinguent cette année par leur caractère non démocratique</p> <p>Christophe Jaffrelot</p> <p>Alors que les élections générales indiennes se déroulent dans le pays, Christophe Jaffrelot, spécialiste de ce pays, nous explique comment Narendra Modi a réussi à mener à bien sa campagne électorale.</p>	<p>En Inde, le culte de Narendra Modi, principal argument de la campagne du parti BJP</p> <p>Le parti dominant indien s'est représenté pour le troisième fois à la campagne électorale de ce pays. Pourquoi le candidat BJP Narendra Modi est-il si populaire ?</p>	<p>Élections en Inde: l'opposition dénonce une dictature, Modi mise sur sa stature</p> <p>Alors que le premier ministre indien se présente pour sa troisième fois à la campagne électorale, l'opposition dénonce la dictature de Narendra Modi et appelle à la tenue d'élections libres et équitables.</p>	<p>En Inde, Narendra Modi traque ses « ennemis de l'intérieur » au sein de la société civile</p> <p>Le premier ministre indien, Narendra Modi, a lancé une campagne de harcèlement contre ses opposants politiques et sociaux.</p>
<p>MONDE diplomatique</p> <p>Narendra Modi, une autre idée de la démocratie</p> <p>Le premier ministre indien, Narendra Modi, a été élu pour un troisième mandat à la tête du gouvernement indien.</p>	<p>MODI'S STRATEGY, RISE, AND RULE. FROM GUJARAT TO THE INDIAN NATION STATE: INTERVIEW WITH CHRISTOPHE JAFFRELOT</p> <p>Christophe Jaffrelot</p> <p>MODI'S STRATEGY, RISE, AND RULE. FROM GUJARAT TO THE INDIAN NATION STATE: INTERVIEW WITH CHRISTOPHE JAFFRELOT</p>	<p>« Le risque avec Narendra Modi, c'est une forme d'impuunité du pouvoir, un autoritarisme croissant »</p> <p>Christophe Jaffrelot</p> <p>« Le risque avec Narendra Modi, c'est une forme d'impuunité du pouvoir, un autoritarisme croissant »</p>	<p>En Inde, le désenchantement de la jeunesse diplômée</p> <p>Plus de 10 millions de diplômés en recherche d'emploi ont été ajoutés au chômage en Inde, ce qui a entraîné un désenchantement croissant de la jeunesse diplômée.</p>	<p>Inde: nouvelle phase des élections dans des États plutôt favorables aux nationalistes du BJP</p> <p>Les élections législatives de l'Inde ont commencé hier soir en Inde. Ce sera la première fois que le BJP obtient la majorité absolue au parlement.</p>
<p>En Inde, Narendra Modi met en œuvre une loi sur le citoyenneté stigmatisante pour les musulmans</p> <p>Le premier ministre indien, Narendra Modi, a mis en œuvre une loi sur le citoyenneté qui stigmatise les musulmans.</p>	<p>Chaque phase des élections nationales en Inde: Bombay et l'État Pradeesh scrutés de près</p> <p>Les élections nationales en Inde ont commencé hier soir en Inde. Ce sera la première fois que le BJP obtient la majorité absolue au parlement.</p>	<p>En Inde, des élections dépeçées aux deepfakes</p> <p>Les élections en Inde ont été marquées par l'utilisation de deepfakes pour influencer les électeurs.</p>	<p>Inde: harcelée, l'opposition veut « sauver la démocratie » face à Modi</p> <p>Le premier ministre indien, Narendra Modi, a été élu pour un troisième mandat à la tête du gouvernement indien.</p>	<p>En Inde, l'intelligence artificielle chahute la plus grande élection du monde</p> <p>Les élections en Inde ont été marquées par l'utilisation de l'intelligence artificielle pour influencer les électeurs.</p>
<p>Élections législatives en Inde: la participation en baisse</p> <p>Les élections législatives en Inde ont commencé hier soir en Inde. Ce sera la première fois que le BJP obtient la majorité absolue au parlement.</p>	<p>Élections législatives en Inde: les inégalités au cœur des débats</p> <p>Les élections législatives en Inde ont commencé hier soir en Inde. Ce sera la première fois que le BJP obtient la majorité absolue au parlement.</p>	<p>Inde fait de moins en moins mystère de l'action de ses services de renseignements</p> <p>Le premier ministre indien, Narendra Modi, a été élu pour un troisième mandat à la tête du gouvernement indien.</p>	<p>LE SOIR</p> <p>Les élections législatives en Inde ont commencé hier soir en Inde. Ce sera la première fois que le BJP obtient la majorité absolue au parlement.</p>	<p>LE TEMPS</p> <p>Les élections législatives en Inde ont commencé hier soir en Inde. Ce sera la première fois que le BJP obtient la majorité absolue au parlement.</p>

<p>MODI'S STRATEGY, RISE, AND RULE. FROM GUJARAT TO THE INDIAN NATION STATE: INTERVIEW WITH CHRISTOPHE JAFFRELOT</p> <p>Christophe Jaffrelot</p> <p>MODI'S STRATEGY, RISE, AND RULE. FROM GUJARAT TO THE INDIAN NATION STATE: INTERVIEW WITH CHRISTOPHE JAFFRELOT</p>	<p>India Elections 2024</p> <p>India's general elections began April 19 and will continue until June 1. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is running for a third term in these high-stakes parliamentary elections, with results expected June 4.</p> <p>By La Croix</p>	<p>Elections transform India into world's largest voting playground for AI</p> <p>During the month-and-a-half-long election in India, the government is concerned about malicious AI-generated deepfakes targeting political parties, yet AI also tantalizingly promises to amplify politicians' voices in legal gray areas.</p> <p>By Malo Trencia</p>	<p>"Nationalists are aiming to transform India into a Hindu State"</p> <p>Exclusive interview with Christophe Jaffrelot, research director at CERI-Sciences Po, who analyzes how the ruling BJP party, a favorite in the upcoming Indian parliamentary elections, has instrumentalized Hinduism.</p> <p>By Malo Trencia</p>
<p>Goodbye, Delhi: After 25 years in India, a journalist is forced to leave the country</p> <p>For 25 years, Vanessa Dougnac, <i>La Croix's</i> correspondent in New Delhi, worked in her adopted country. In September 2022, authorities without explanation barred her from working as a journalist, reflecting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's autocratic turn as he seeks a third term.</p>	<p>Goodbye, Delhi: After 25 years in India, a journalist is forced to leave the country</p> <p>For 25 years, Vanessa Dougnac, <i>La Croix's</i> correspondent in New Delhi, worked in her adopted country. In September 2022, authorities without explanation barred her from working as a journalist, reflecting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's autocratic turn as he seeks a third term.</p> <p>By Nicole Santucci</p>	<p>What is "Hindutva," the ideology of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi?</p> <p>The concept of "Hindutva," a Hindu nationalist ideology, is central to the general elections taking place in India until June 4. Originating before the 1947 independence, this extremist religious ideology has gradually taken over political power.</p> <p>By Malo Trencia</p>	<p>Indian elections: Narendra Modi regime suppresses freedoms</p> <p>The Indian Prime Minister, an authoritarian leader who merges politics and religion to promote an extraordinary ideology, is likely to win a third term in upcoming federal elections by curtailing freedoms.</p> <p>By Jean-Christophe Pissin</p>
<p>Rise of Hindu nationalism and the future of Christians in India</p> <p>In India's elections, 970 million are eligible to vote, including 22.31 million Christians. Despite their numbers, Christians remain nearly invisible in electoral discussions, overshadowed by prevailing xenophobic narratives and policies under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's administration.</p>	<p>Indian elections: the worrying rise of Hindu nationalism</p> <p>Since coming to power in 2014, Narendra Modi and his political party have been imposing a vision of India steeped in Hindu nationalism.</p> <p>By Nicole Santucci</p>	<p>Film about "love jihad" stirs interreligious tensions in India</p> <p>In India's Kerala state, the broadcast of <i>The Kerala Story</i> has inflamed tensions for portraying the indoctrination of Christian and Hindu women by Islamists, serving Hindu nationalist agendas ahead of key parliamentary elections.</p> <p>By Malo Trencia</p>	<p>As elections approach, mosques targeted by Hindu nationalists in India</p> <p>Hindu priests worship in the basement of an iconic mosque in the holy Hindu city of Varanasi, aligning with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's nationalist and religious agendas ahead of the April elections.</p> <p>By Mathieu Lassere</p>
<p>India's highly political inauguration of the Ram temple in Ayodhya</p> <p>A symbol of Hindu nationalism, the temple is built on the ruins of a mosque destroyed in riots that killed more than 3,000 people, mostly Muslims, across India.</p>	<p>Le gouvernement Modi, la corruption et les élections</p> <p>OPINION. Même après en main par la Cour suprême, l'affaire des obligations électorales (Electoral Bonds) est un scandale gigantesque pour le BJP et une 3e jonction de Narendra Modi marquant une grande défaite de la démocratie, écrit Charvaka, journaliste en poste à Genève</p>	<p>En Inde, la chasse aux médias vise aussi la correspondante de « Le Temps »</p> <p>Contrôles, attaques contre les journalistes qui dérangent... Les médias sont mis au pas dans l'Inde de Narendra Modi. Dernier exemple en date avec les violentes accusations visant la correspondante du <i>« Le Temps »</i> en Asie du Sud Vanessa Dougnac.</p>	<p>India's Hindu nationalists confident of victory as elections enter final stages</p> <p>Even before India's six-week general election has run its course, Hindu nationalists are confident the polls will result in a rare third term in office for the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its leader Narendra Modi. But the opposition says the incumbents will face stiff competition in the first two rounds of voting, which begins on Saturday.</p> <p>By Malo Trencia</p>

The Common Source

For the number of articles as well as Op-Eds and interviews that were published creating narratives and micro-narratives on the Indian elections, the go-to person was a French political scientist and Indologist Christophe Jaffrelot (CJ). CJ was so influential, that he was also being quoted frequently not just by French media portals, but also by Indian portals including The Indian Express, The Wire, and so forth as a political commentator and expert on Indian elections.

 <p>Entrevistas - La India de Modi en el año de las grandes elecciones</p> <h3>La India de Modi en el año de las grandes elecciones, una conversación con Christophe Jaffrelot</h3>  <p>CHRISTOPHE JAFFRELOT — Dentro de un mes, casi mil millones de electores indios serán llamados a las urnas para unas elecciones que durarán hasta junio. ¿Se sabe ya el resultado? ¿Cuáles serán los principales temas de la campaña? ¿Qué datos se utilizarán para seguirla y qué herramientas se emplearán? ¿Cómo podría reforzar a Modi?</p> <p>Para seguir estas elecciones extraordinarias, hemos pedido al especialista Christophe Jaffrelot que nos ayude a coordinar una serie de publicaciones.</p>	 <p>News / World news</p> <h3>"Nationalists are aiming to transform India into a Hindu State"</h3> <p>— Exclusive interview with Christophe Jaffrelot, research director at Ceri-Sciences Po, who analyzes how the ruling BJP party, a favorite in the upcoming Indian parliamentary elections, has instrumentalized Hinduism.</p> <p>By Malo Tresca</p> <p>April 16th, 2024 at 05:00 am (Europe/Rome). Updated April 16th, 2024 at 10:29 am (Europe/Rome)</p>	  <p>India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi among his supporters at a Varanasi rally earlier this month © Rishabh Shukla/Getty Images</p> <p>The Big Read Narendra Modi + Add to myFT</p> <h3>Is the 'cult of Modi' starting to lose its lustre?</h3> <p>Modi's body language, including his voice, took on a "distinctively masculine, muscular overtone" during his time as chief minister, political scientist Christophe Jaffrelot writes in his book <i>Gujarat under Modi</i>.</p>
 <p>SOUTH & CENTRAL ASIA</p> <h3>Hindu nationalism now mainstream, thanks to Modi's decade in power</h3> <p>April 19, 2024, 3:37 AM By Associated Press</p> <p>For the group, Indian civilization is inseparable from Hinduism, while critics say its philosophy is rooted in Hindu supremacy.</p> <p>Today, the RSS has spawned a network of affiliated groups, from student and farmer unions to nonprofits and vigilante organizations often accused of violence. Their power — and legitimacy — ultimately comes from the BJP, which emerged from the RSS.</p> <p>"Until Modi, the BJP had never won a majority on their own in India's Parliament," said Christophe Jaffrelot, an expert on Modi and the Hindu right. "For the RSS, it is unprecedented."</p>	 <p>Wednesday, May 22, 2024 Welcome to Global Village Space</p> <p>HOME LATEST NEWS ANALYSIS OPINION BUSINESS TRENDING SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY</p> <h3>Modi's Dangerous Politics of Fear is threat to Future of India? Interview with Christophe Jaffrelot</h3> <p>Najma Minhas, Managing Editor: GVS news, sits in with Christophe Jaffrelot to discuss: World's largest elections in India</p> <p>By News Desk 21 April 2024</p>	 <p>INTERVIEWS POLITICS SOUTH ASIA</p> <h3>Christophe Jaffrelot on What Makes Brand Modi Successful</h3> <p>"Like many populists, Modi is a chameleon — this is his brand. Everyone can find in him what he or she is looking for."</p> <p>By Sudha Ramachandran April 08, 2024</p>
 <h3>Professor Jaffrelot: India under Modi Shares Similar Patterns with Israel in Their 'Ethnic Democracies'</h3> <p>May 8, 2024</p> 	 <h3>Video: Why Gujarat is key to understanding India under Modi</h3> <p>Poll to Poll 2024: A year of elections around the world</p> <p>19 April 2024</p> <p>In this video as part of the Poll to Poll series, PROFESSOR CHRISTOPHE JAFFRELOT argues that, to understand the political strategies employed by India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, one must look at his time as Chief Minister of the state of Gujarat.</p>	 <p>News / Culture</p> <h3>What is "Hindutva," the ideology of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi?</h3> <p>Hindutva thinkers developed their ideology within the context of the India's fight against British colonization and the Westernization of Hindu society, and primarily centered on religious and societal claims. In a 1993 book, Christophe Jaffrelot, a political scientist and expert on India, explained that Hindutva "was conceived as a concept of ethnic community." According to this ideology, the Hindu community forms the "matrix" of the Indian community, while Christians and Muslims are considered mere add-ons.</p>



What picked our interest was a particular theme that CJ and the company promoted heavily – Caste and Caste census. It was indeed surprising that so much of the literature on caste census was churned out from French land, and given our past experience of ‘caste narrative’ from foreign lands, we obviously were a little skeptical.

(To read about the play of ‘caste narrative’, please read our previous story ‘Cost of Caste’, documenting a US-based front Equality Labs, funded by Soros and Open Society Foundations to play on the Indian fault line)¹

Ipsa facto, there is nothing wrong with any foreign expert studying caste and coming up with a recommendation. However, when the ‘research’ is tweaked to suit a narrative, it raises red flags.

Academic Tussle of Facts vs Fallacies

In 2022, Nalin Mehta, (political scientist, journalist, and writer) deconstructed the report and highlighted the points that provide glaring evidence of how a twisted version of the ground reality has been presented on the topic by them.² From churning out wrong data to

¹ <https://thedisinfolab.org/cost-of-caste-equality-labs-caste-binary-blm/>

² <https://nalinmehta.in/nalin-mehta-writes-5-reasons-christophe-jaffreot-and-ashoka-university-data-on-bjp-caste-are-wrong/>

misinterpretation and misrepresentation of castes to producing misleading data, Mehta points out how the report raises skepticism over such supposedly academic research.

Mehta accuses them of selective reporting to suit a particular narrative of the ruling party promoting the upper caste, and when presented with data contrary to their claim, (of Members of Parliament) the dup declares that the number of MPs doesn't matter. This despite the fact that Jaffrelot and Verniers have published entire peer-reviewed articles in global academic journals to make the claim of upper-caste dominance increasing in BJP structures, fundamentally based only on data points and charts from the same research on **MPs alone**.

Reemergence of upper-caste representation

The data collected for the last three General Elections reveal that representational trends among major caste groups have been stable. The upper caste accounts for 20-23% of all MPs, against 23% of OBC MPs and 14% of intermediate-caste MPs.⁷ SC and ST representation is stable by virtue of being mandated by quotas.⁸ Muslims' representation remains low, slightly above 4% of all MPs (Table 1).

A comparison of the two major parties – BJP and Congress – with regional parties clubbed together reveals important variations. Upper-caste representation among BJP MPs is significantly higher (36.2%) than for its opponents (23.1% and 19.0% respectively). Regional parties show better overall representation on top as Muslims are concerned. There are more Christian MPs elected on Congress tickets (2) than on all other parties combined (Table 2).

However, this data does not carry much explanatory value as caste group distribution and configurations vary considerably between local sub-regions. Besides, the overrepresentation of upper castes largely stems from the high-caste states, dominated by the BJP. In these 'top states', 80 out of the BJP's 108 candidates belonged to the upper castes. 81 of them got elected. If one removes SC and ST candidates from the picture, 62% of all general category candidates of the BJP and MPs were upper caste, against 37% for all other parties' candidates combined (Figure 1).

The reemergence of upper-caste representation is thus linked to the BJP performance in these states, but also to the growing co-optation of upper caste candidates among various regional parties. This is not a new phenomenon. Since the late 1980s, the upper castes regularly make up between 40-60% of the BJP's MPs. What varies, however, is the overall performance of the BJP, whose upper caste candidates tend to do better even when the party declines, and still get the lion's share of seats when the party does well. The BJP had a higher percentage of upper-caste MPs in 2009 (50%) than in 2014 (42%), but with much fewer MPs (63 against 171).

Within this broad category, the distribution is skewed towards two specific sets of castes. Across the country, the BJP distributed 146 tickets to upper-caste candidates (out of 404 candidates, 10% of

	2019	2014	2009
UC	20.4%	20.4%	20.4%
SC	22.7%	21.2%	20.4%
OBC	23.1%	22.8%	22.8%
ST	16.2%	16.2%	16.2%
OT	16.2%	16.2%	16.2%
Muslims	3.7%	4.0%	4.0%
Others	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%
Christians	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Non-religious	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Unrepresented	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Jaffrelot and Verniers (2020). The Social Profile of the Indian National and Provincial General Elections.

While their report is deconstructed on multiple counts, the funniest part is their fundamental misunderstanding of the Indian caste structure (for which as foreigners they can't be blamed much). They mischaracterized the castes in their report. And yet, they felt entitled enough to prescribe what should be done on caste issues in India. And he gets ample media space to pontificate. However, his narrative doesn't come only from ignorance but is part of deliberate propaganda, as seen in his argument of 'non-dominant' OBCs. The Duo dilutes the ruling party's efforts to reach out to other non-dominant OBCs, which should be considered one of the most meaningful engagements if the overall objective is empowering all sections of society with participation. To not recognize, let alone appreciate this, smells of inherent bias if not deliberate manipulation.

Mehta has given a detailed account of the issues in the report. These are just a few points that portray the factual errors of the report and the attempt at pushing a consequent narrative associated with it.

Christophe Jaffrelot

Born on February 12, 1964, in Poissy, France, Christophe Jaffrelot is a French political scientist and Indologist specializing in South Asia, particularly India and Pakistan. Christophe holds positions in multiple research and academic institutions. To start with, he holds a PhD degree from Sciences Po University (1991). Upon completing his PhD, he joined the Center for International Studies and Research (CERI) at Sciences Po Research University in 1991 as a social scientist and currently serves as the Research Director at CERI-SciencesPo/CNRS.³

Besides, Christophe has also been a Visiting Professor at Columbia University (Sept 2009-Dec 2009) and a Global Scholar at Princeton University (Jul 2013-Jul 2016). He is currently also Avantha Chair and Professor of Indian Politics and Sociology at the King's India Institute and the Research Lead for the Global Institutes, King's College London. In July 2020, he became the President of the French Political Science Association, and in November 2023, he joined as the Chair of the British Association for South Asian Studies (BASAS).⁴

Sciences Po

Officially known as the Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris (Paris Institute of Political Studies), is a prestigious higher education institution located in Paris, France. Founded in 1952, CERI is a research center affiliated with Sciences Po. According to the website of Sciences Po, CERI focuses on international studies and political science, researching global issues, international relations, and political systems.⁵ While holding the position of social scientist at CERI- Sciences Po/ CNRS, Christophe Jaffrelot also joined the university he earned PhD from (Sciences Po), as a Senior Research Fellow in the same year (1991).⁶

Fun Fact: George Soros' son Alexander Soros is also on the strategic committee of Sciences Po.⁷

³ <https://www.sciencespo.fr/ceri/en/content/mission-statement>

⁴ <https://www.basas.org.uk/contact/>

⁵ <https://www.sciencespo.fr/ceri/en/content/mission-statement>

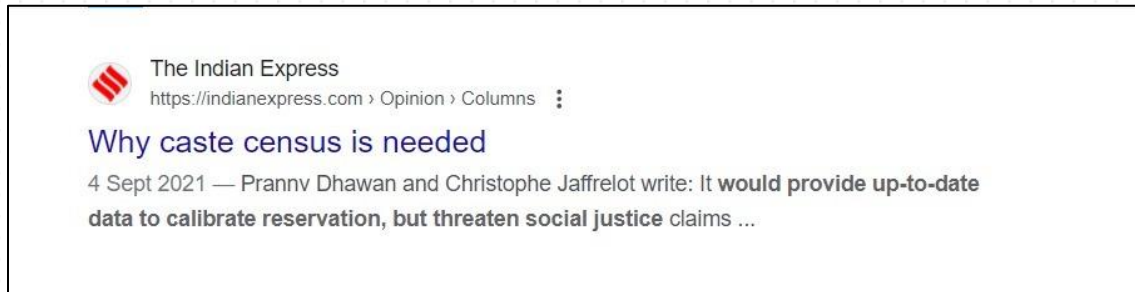
⁶ <https://www.linkedin.com/in/christophe-jaffrelot-india-research-/>

⁷ [Our governance | Sciences Po Paris School of International Affairs](#)

Chapter 2: How to Spin Like a Pro

Christophe Jaffrelot's X (Twitter) Analysis on Caste Discourse

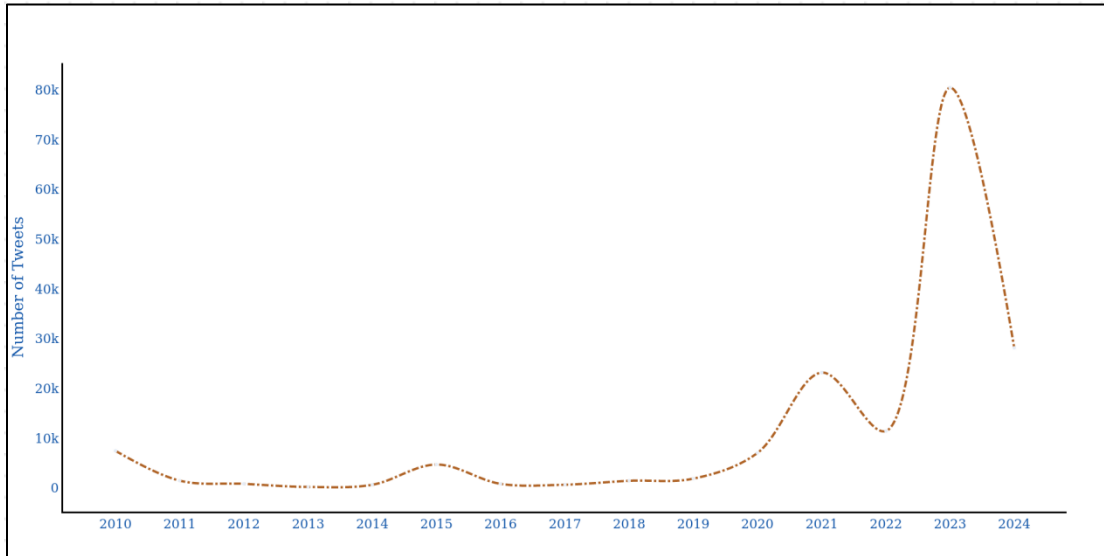
In 2021 Christophe Jaffrelot published a research report on the need for a caste census in India, and subsequently wrote articles in Indian media. And surprisingly, in a country of 1.4 billion, he single-handedly managed to put this topic into public discourse, which was also helped by election season. This was a remarkable feat by any academician.



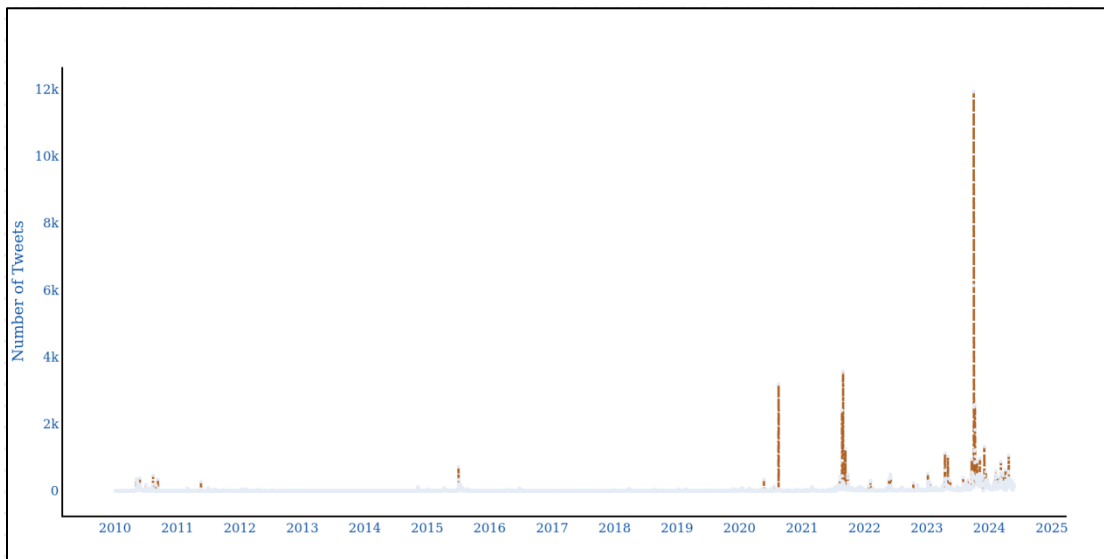
Just a month ago, another French expert Giles Verniers, at the time with the Trivedi Center at Asoka University, also wrote about the caste census in India. CJ is the PhD mentor of Giles Verniers, and the CPR and Trivedi Center have interesting relations, which we will explain in the later part of the story. Incidentally, it was CJ who got the most media attention, and the sheer reference to his work, and especially the media attention he received seemed to hint at a major play. When we looked, we found that his caste census narrative was ‘coincidentally’ timed with a fund from a US-based ‘philanthropic foundation’ – Henry Luce Foundation (HLF). CJ had received HLF funding for three years in 2021 – three years, ending in 2024. Again, coincidentally, many other fronts and organizations had received similar funding from HLF – all in 2020/21, all for three years – all focusing on India with a set of pre-defined narratives that we have gotten used to over the years. We return to HLF in detail in a while, but first the caste census narrative.

Caste Census Discourse in India

The below plot shows the year-wise timeline of tweets on the keyword caste census from 2010 till 2024. As is obvious, a significant peak appears in 2021, coinciding with CJ's publications.



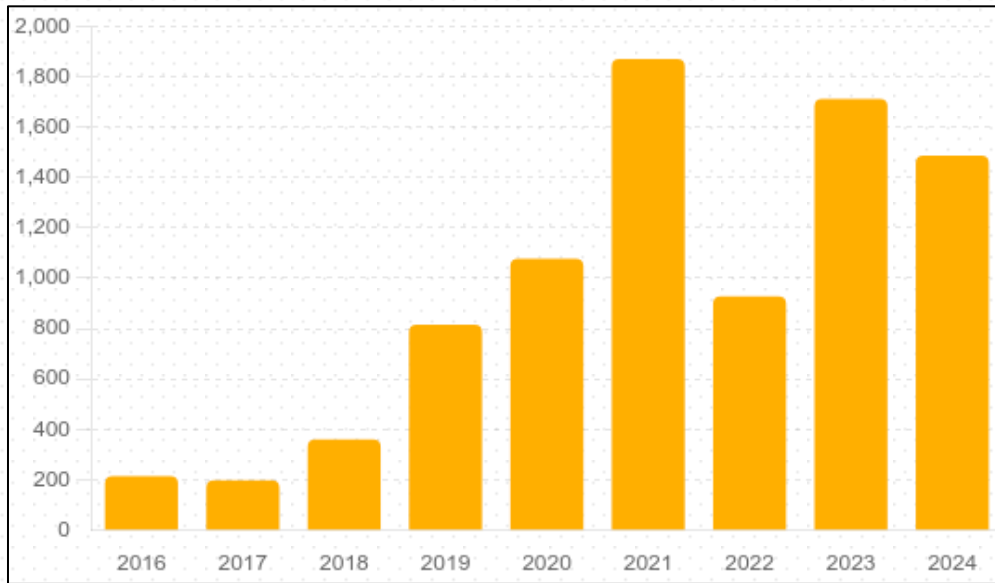
Yearly Mention of Caste Census



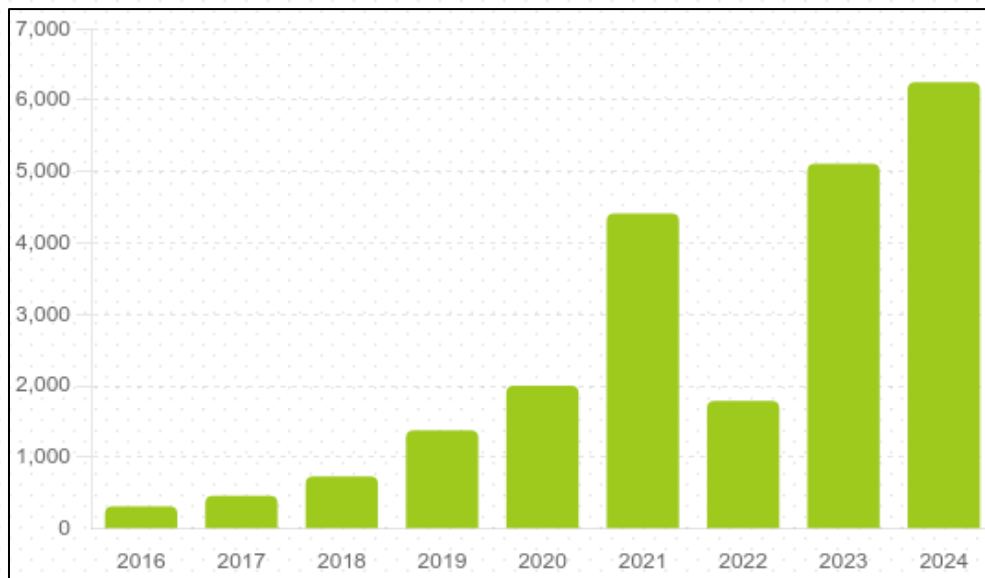
Day-wise data of caste Census

Even more surprising, we found that the buzz on the caste census has not been constant throughout the years, even not monthly. Rather there are distinct peaks on certain days, which suggests that the buzz around the caste census is manufactured and is activated on Twitter on certain days for some agenda. This was an even bigger red flag. As we have observed over the years, there is an SOP for manufactured narratives, and this fit into that.

To get into more details, and to differentiate the noise from the signal we needed to segregate the discourse on the caste census being discussed by others (politicians/ other experts, etc.,) from the caste census discourse being discussed in the context of CJ. To measure this, we pulled a total of 23,449 Tweets mentioning Christophe Jaffrelot from January 1st. 2016 till 30th May 2024, out of which 8656 tweets were related to India. 8656 tweets were further analyzed, and what we found confirmed our assessment. Coinciding with the HLF funding, the tweets spiked in 2021, continuing to sustain till 2024. If we add the total number of retweets (reposts), it indicates that tweets mentioning Jaffrelot are getting more traction in 2024



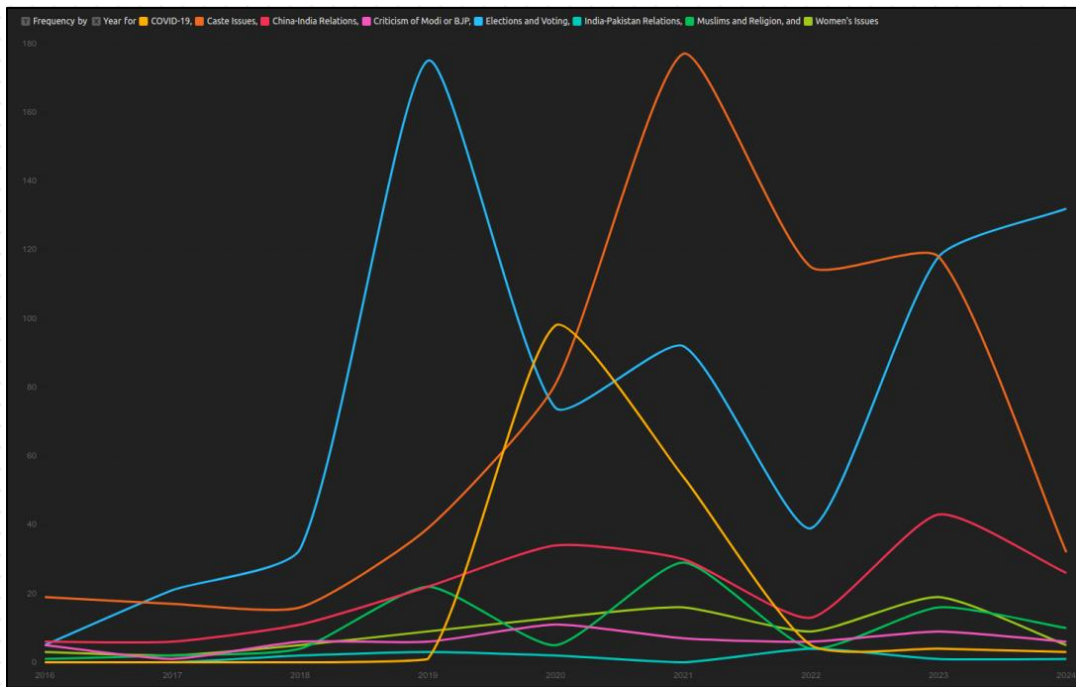
Year-wise tweets timeline of tweets mentioning Jaffrelot (&related to India)



Tweets plus retweets volume distribution (on tweets related to India)

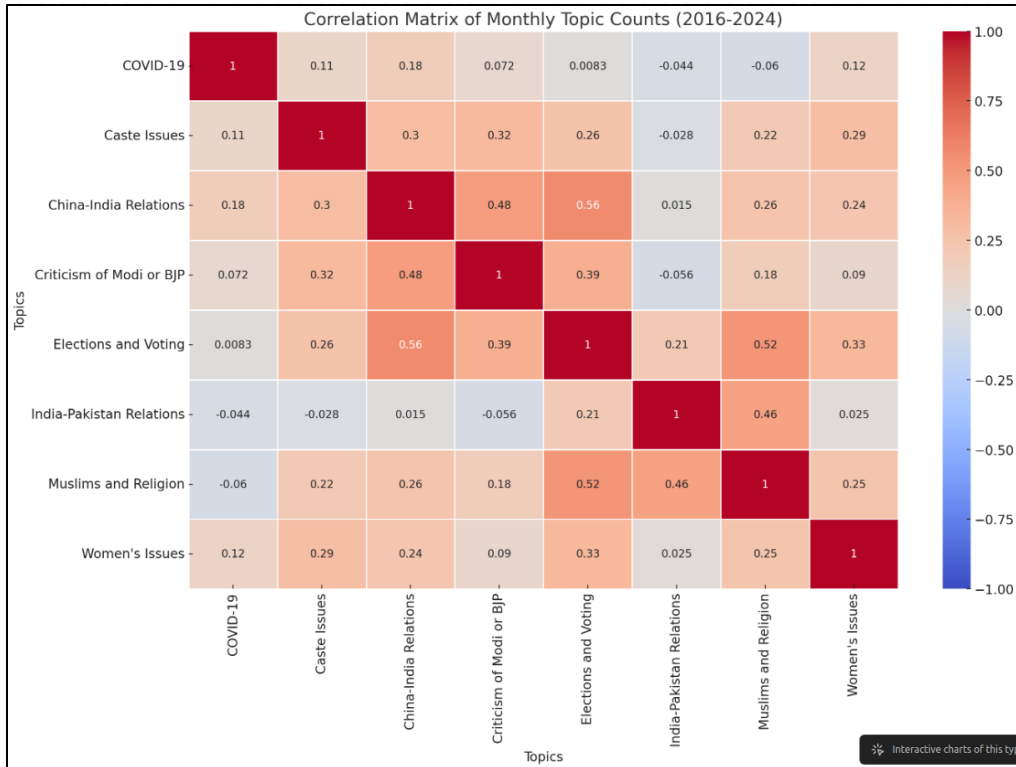
Topics Trends and Variation Analysis

Upon analyzing the tweets mentioning Jaffrelot from 2016 to 2024, we computed the key topics that are being discussed in those tweets. We found these key topics: **Elections and Voting, Caste Issues, China-India Relations, Muslims and Religion, Modi/BJP, Women's, COVID-19, and India-Pakistan Relations.** The below graph shows the variation in the frequency of these topics over the years.



Visible Patterns – while all major topics remain the same in their appearances, the keyword Election appeared significantly in 2019 and Covid peaked in 2020, both topical issues. But what is rather peculiar is, that his conversation suddenly intensified on caste discourse in India, specially harping on caste census. Apart from the HLF funding, there appears no particular trigger for this sudden attention shift. A similar Seasonal Analysis of topic variations per tweet over the years also shows the same variation in tweet volume per topic over the years. Tweets on Caste issues were a recurring topic through, however, they abruptly peaked in 2021.

If we look at the seasons for Elections and Voting topics, it has peaks in the winter and spring seasons, inferring that tweets around elections on Jaffrelot start appearing from around Nov-Dec till March-April, in conclusion, the Election period. However, the peaks for Caste Issues are almost similar, inferring that Tweets around Caste and Jaffrelot are common. The below plot shows a heat map for the correlation matrix of the different topics.



This heat map is used to analyze how much different topics co-relate with each other, indicating how the discussion of one topic relates to the discussion of another. Key Inferences - Caste Issues have a strong correlation with Elections Topics and Criticism of Modi/ BJP. That means Tweets related to caste issues are often discussed together with tweets on Elections or Tweets criticizing the BJP.

The figure displays a grid of six news article thumbnails:

- WIRE:** "The case for caste census in India | Explained". Article by Prasenjit Bose, Souryaadeep Biswas, Samiran Sengupta. October 17, 2023 10:43 pm | Updated October 14, 2023 12:02 pm IST.
- WIRE:** "Why Caste Census? The Answer Lies in Wealth Disparities, Quality of Neighbourhoods". Article by Komica Sehgal. Many are still not taken by the idea of a caste census, claiming that caste is no longer an issue and there is no correlation between caste and wealth. However, empirical evidence proves otherwise.
- Business Standard:** "No nationwide caste census since independence, limited data available". An official nationwide caste census has not been conducted since independent numbers collected by private and government entities as part of other data collection exercises provide some insights.
- DH (Deccan Herald):** "Caste census: Why's Modi hiding the X-ray results?". Article by Praveen Chakraverty. Last Updated: 01 October 2022, 09:40 IST.
- THE ECONOMIC TIMES:** "Caste census: The long and the short of new caste data and its politics".
- The NEWS Minute:** "Why India needs Caste Census: We need to count underprivileged and the privileged". In a society that is already divided along caste lines, conducting a Caste Census could actually provide comprehensive and comparable data, which in turn can inform evidence-based policymaking.

Chapter 3: Trivedi Centre Didn't Survive

Trivedi Center, Ashoka University, CPR and CJ's Disciple

Housed within Ashoka University, Trivedi Centre for Political Data (TCPD) was formed in March 2016 as a partnership between Ashoka University and the University of Michigan with seed funding worth INR 15 crores. The center was named after the entrepreneur, investor, and 'philanthropist' **Ashok Trivedi**, the Co-Founder and Co-Chairman of companies, Mastech Inc. and IGATE in the US.⁸

The TCPD was set up by a Belgian native and academician **Gilles Verniers**. He is a graduate from Sciences Po University where he pursued his M.Phil (Comparative Politics and Societies, Political Science and Government, and Sociology), followed by his Ph.D. from the same university under the guidance of his mentor Christophe Jaffrelot. Christophe Jaffrelot is a visiting professor and member of the Academic Council at Ashoka University, Sonipat, India.⁹ ¹⁰ During his Ph.D. tenure (2006-15), he became India Sciences Po India representative in 2007-09 under which he recruited undergraduates, postgraduates, and even Ph.D. students for Sciences Po's educational programs and the development of the Sciences Po brand in India. Between 2009-11, he also worked as a Ph.D. affiliate at New Delhi-based Centre de Sciences Humaines.¹¹ ¹² In 2015, Verniers completed his Ph.D. Dissertation on "*The Construction and Institutionalisation of Samajwadi Party in Uttar Pradesh*", under the guidance of his mentor, Prof. Christophe Jaffrelot.¹³ ¹⁴ During the final years of his Ph.D., in 2014, he joined Ashoka University as an Assistant Professor of Political Science, and two years later, he co-founded the Trivedi Center for Political Data. Currently, Verniers is a Karl Loewenstein Visiting Assistant Professor at Amherst College, Massachusetts (since 2022) where he teaches about '*political violence, Democratic erosion in India, and Histories of the Far-right*'. from Sciences Po.¹⁵

Trivedi Center for Political Data Members

The executive board of TCPD included Ashoka's founders, **Ashish Dhawan** and **Ashok Trivedi**, as well as India's former chief election commissioner, **S.Y. Quraishi**, political science professor, and **Pratap Bhanu Mehta** (Rockefeller Visiting Professor at Princeton

⁸ <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/education/ashoka-university-michigan-university-partner-to-set-up-ashok-trivedi-centre-for-political-data/articleshow/51299277.cms?from=mdr>

⁹ <https://www.ashoka.edu.in/profile/christophe-jaffrelot/>

¹⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/AshokaUniversity/photos/a.379454312140362/587359348016523/>

¹¹ <https://casi.sas.upenn.edu/visiting/gillesverniers>

¹² <https://www.csh-delhi.com/about/institution/>

¹³ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09584935.2015.1029243>

¹⁴ <https://www.thequint.com/news/india/mulayam-singh-yadav-death-gilles-verniers-samajwadi-party-uttar-pradesh>

¹⁵ <https://www.linkedin.com/in/gillesverniers/>

University). The scientific board which was behind the project conception and implementation comprised Christophe Jaffrelot (head of the project), **Francesca R. Jensenius** (Norwegian Institute for International Affairs), **Milan Vaishnav** (Senior Fellow, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace), **Susan L. Ostermann** (University of Notre Dame), Tariq Thachil (UPenn), and **Mukulika Banerjee** (London School of Economics).¹⁶

One of the partners of TCPD is the **Digital Society Project**.

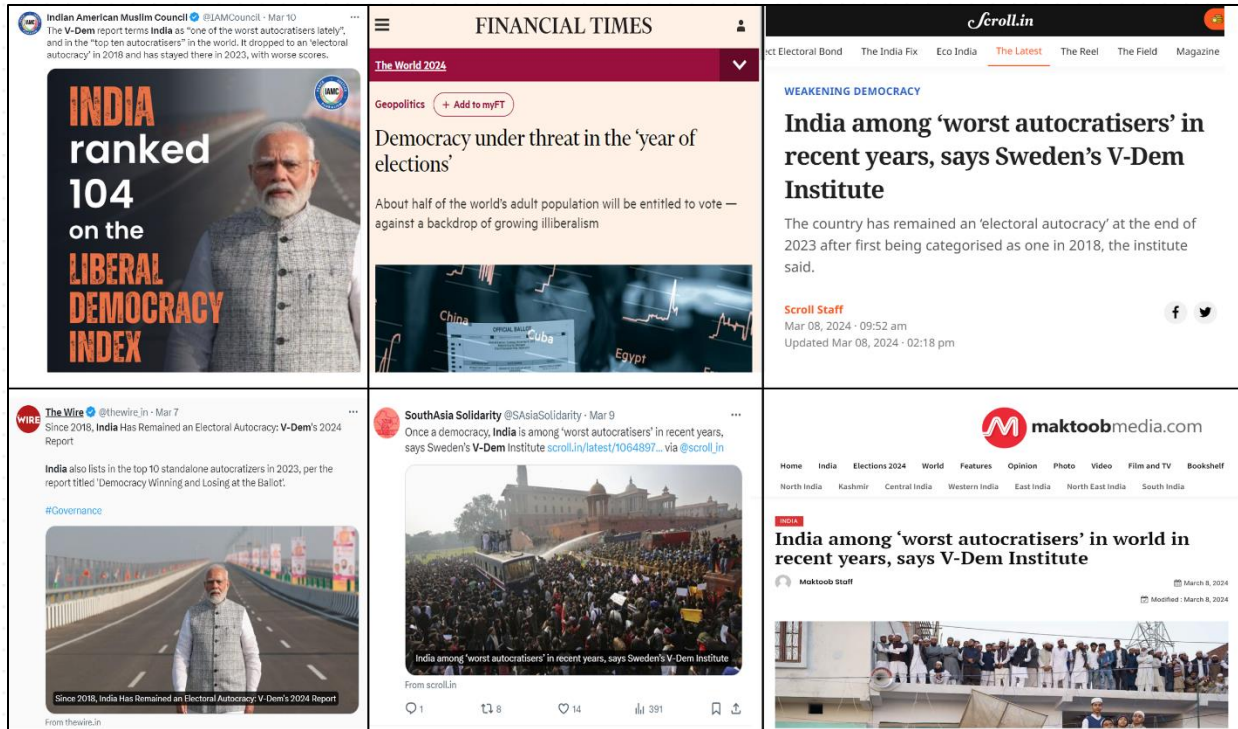


Partners of Trivedi Center

Created in 2018 using the award-winning **V-Dem infrastructure**, the Digital Society Project is the product of a global survey of hundreds of country and area experts, covering virtually all countries in the world from 2000 to the present.¹⁷ It is important to note that V-Dem in its annual reports has also been rating India poorly since 2018.

¹⁶ <https://web.archive.org/web/20210228041021/https://tcpd.ashoka.edu.in/governing-body/>

¹⁷ <https://digitalsocietyproject.org/the-project/>



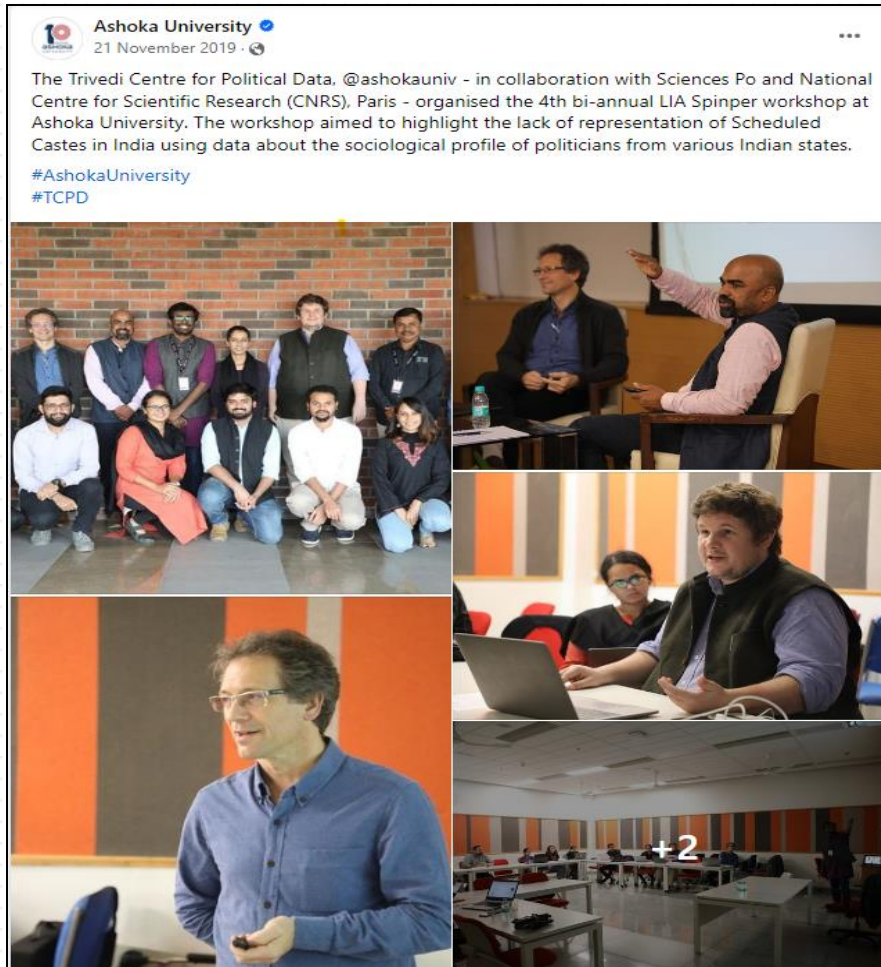
TCPD partnered with several institutions including the Sciences Po (France) for one LIA SPINPER program and the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), Paris to study the social profile of the elected representatives of the “world’s largest democracy” and its evolution between 1962 and 2019. The SPINPER website claimed that for its data repository, it used AI and machine learning methods for scraping, and data mining available online undertaken jointly by TCPD and Sciences Po (& its research units CERI, CDSP, and Médialab).¹⁸ The joint program (LIA SPINPER) by TCPD and Sciences PO also maintained datasets on **Caste, Religion, Class, Dynasty, and Gender** in India.^{19 20}

Various partners of TCDP would be a story in itself, which we would return to later.

¹⁸ <https://web.archive.org/web/20200925233020/http://liaspinper.com/>

¹⁹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20200925232336/http://liaspinper.com/about-the-project/>

²⁰ <https://web.archive.org/web/20200925220454/http://liaspinper.com/people/>



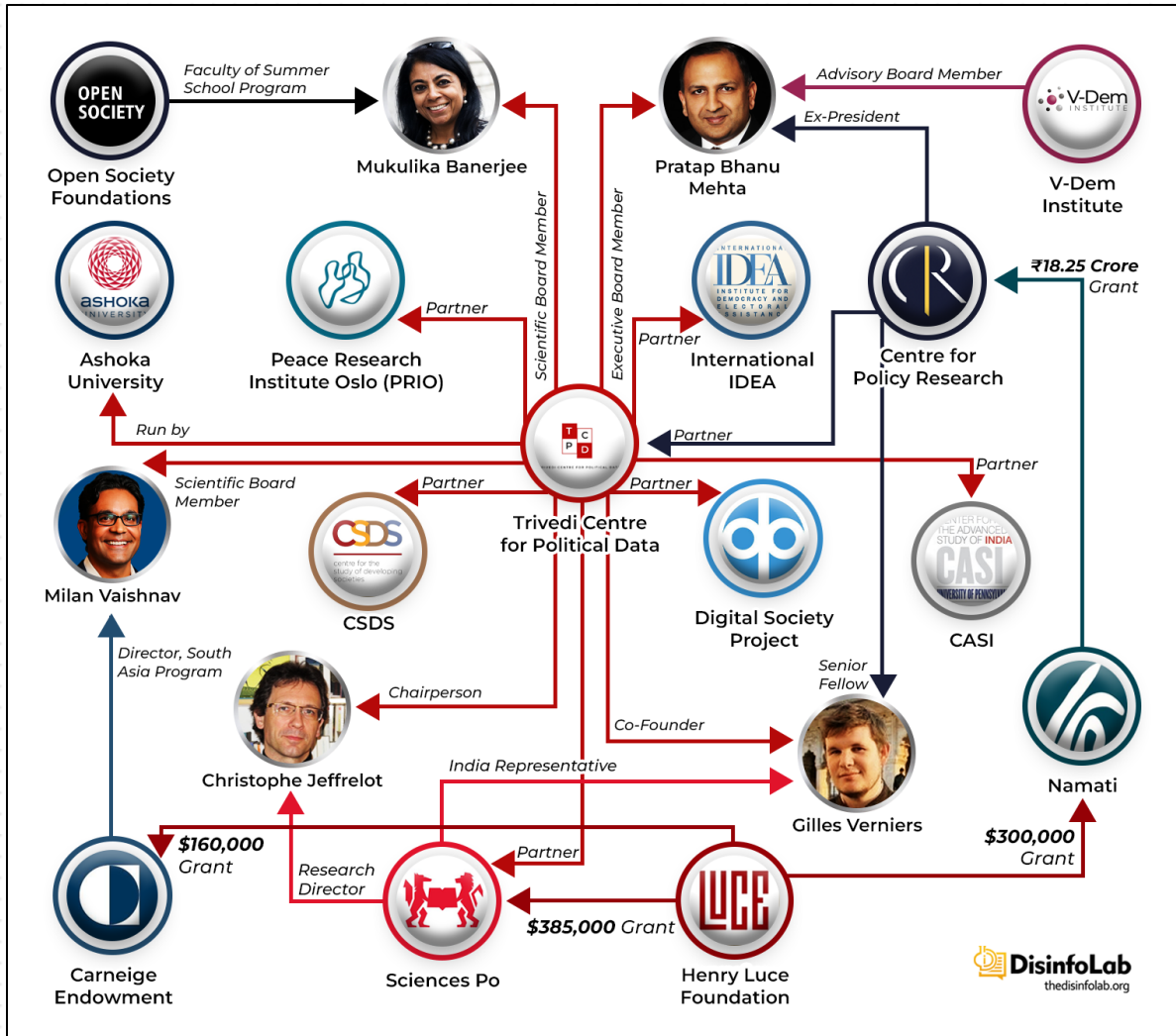
Trivedi Center for Political Data Dissolves

In September 2023, it was reported by media that the scientific board of TCPD self-dissolved after its co-founder Gilles Verniers was allegedly "forced to leave" as the university claimed that Verniers did not meet the "*stringent tenure process*" and that "*faculty who do not qualify for tenure exit the University within 3 semesters.*"²¹ Amid so much controversy, which followed by Verniers resigning from Ashoka University, the scientific board of Trivedi Centre continues to stand dissolved. After resigning from Ashoka in September 2023, almost four months later, Vernier joined the New Delhi-based think tank **Centre for Policy Research (CPR)** in January 2024 as its Senior Fellow. Along with Verniers, other key members of TCPD who appear in CPR events are Mukulika Banerjee and Pratap Bhanu Mehta who joined CPR as honorary senior fellow.^{22 23}

²¹ <https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2023/Sep/12/ashoka-universitys-political-data-centre-board-dissolves-itself-after-founder-forced-to-leave-2614191.html>

²² https://x.com/CPR_India/status/1684199210005004289

²³ https://x.com/CPR_India/status/1499384099894669314



Chapter 4: French Scholar in the US

Follow the Money

Irrespective of the news source, the origin seems to be going back to the same circle, The funding that CJ received was from a US-based philanthropist organization Henry Luce Foundation, set up in honor of Henry Luce, co-founder of TIME magazine. The funding grant came via the US affiliate of Science Po. The Sciences Po runs its foundation in the US, i.e., **the Sciences Po American Foundation**, based in New York.²⁴

The center is also the base of Christophe Jaffrelot's academic network in the US. In January 2021, the US Sciences Po Foundation/ Sciences Po American Foundation along with two other American universities Princeton University, and Columbia University jointly conceived a research project called '**Muslims in a Time of Hindu Majoritarianism**', spanning three years (2021-2024).

'Muslims in a Time of Hindu Majoritarianism'

The narrative setting can't get Henry blunter than this. Please try to find any similar narrative anywhere in the world. And yet, it was not only acceptable but 'eminent Indologist' CJ happily became part of it.



The project was jointly developed by a professor of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University, **Bernard Haykel** along with **Christophe Jaffrelot**, and **Manan Ahmed Asif**,

²⁴ <https://www.sciencespo.fr/american-foundation/>

associate professor of history at Columbia University with support from the Alliance Program.²⁵

[Note*- Alliance Program is a non-profit Franco-American academic venture between Columbia, Sciences Po, the Ecole Polytechnique, and the Université Paris 1/Panthéon-Sorbonne.^{26]}

For the project, Sciences Po, Columbia, and Princeton University brought together over 30 scholars and researchers in India, the United States, France, and the UK to examine factors impacting Indian Muslim communities.²⁷

Note: No details about all “30 researchers” or their work and funding amount were disclosed. Only a few names have been made public, apparently for fear of exposure aka ‘trans-national-repression’.

One of the researchers of the project is **Soma Basu**, an investigative journalist and doctoral researcher at Tampere University (Finland). She is the social media research team of the project.²⁸ Previously, Soma Basu worked at Deccan Chronicle (Jun 2009- Nov 2009), The Statesman (May 2010-Nov 2012), and Youth Ki Awaaz (Feb 2017-Oct 2017) before joining Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism as a journalist fellow in October 2018. She also worked as FactCheck Editor at AFP’s India bureau.²⁹ Since October 2020, she has been working as a Columbia University researcher on the above-mentioned project.³⁰

²⁵ <https://www.princeton.edu/news/2021/01/08/haykel-receives-luce-grant-three-year-research-project-muslim-communities-india>

²⁶ https://www.sciencespo.fr/us-foundation/sites/sciencespo.fr.us-foundation/files/us_sciences_po_foundation_ar_end_2013_web.pdf

²⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xnj5aA9tOLI&t=90s>

²⁸ <https://www.tuni.fi/en/soma-basu>

²⁹ <https://www.linkedin.com/in/somabasujournalist/details/experience/>

The Funding

For the project, “Muslims in a Time of Hindu Majoritarianism.”
US Sciences Po Foundation

AMOUNT	\$385,000
AWARD DATE	March 4, 2020
LOCATION	New York, New York, United States, Mideast Region
PROGRAM	Religion in International Affairs
WEBSITE	http://www.usscpo.org

The project, conceived jointly by the US Sciences Po Foundation/ Sciences Po American Foundation along with Bernard Haykel (Princeton University), and Manan Ahmed (Columbia University) was funded by one US-based **Henry Luce Foundation (HLF)**. For the project, the Sciences Po American Foundation received USD 385,000 in March 2020.^{31 32} However, the public announcement regarding the same was done in 2021.

We will come back to some of the other members who were joint recipient of the fund. But first, the Fund itself. For the record, Time Magazine is independent of the HLF. And yet, you might not think so. In a surprising coincidence, the Time’s articles mood is same as the HLF funding mood.

³¹ <https://www.hluce.org/grants/grants/muslims-in-india-in-a-time-of-hindu-majoritarianism/>

³² <https://www.princeton.edu/news/2021/01/08/haykel-receives-luce-grant-three-year-research-project-muslim-communities-india>

☰ **TIME** **SUBSCRIBE**

A Modi Win Will Only Mean More Trouble for Indian Muslims
8 MINUTE READ



☰ **TIME** **SUBSCRIBE**

India Begins Third Phase of Elections, as Modi Escalates Rhetoric Against Muslims
5 MINUTE READ



☰ **TIME** **SUBSCRIBE**

Indian Opposition Leader Hemant Soren Arrested Months Before Elections
3 MINUTE READ



☰ **TIME** **SUBSCRIBE**

As India Votes, Modi's Party Misleads Online
3 MINUTE READ



☰ **TIME** **SUBSCRIBE**

Why India's Political Opposition Is So Weak
7 MINUTE READ



☰ **TIME** **SUBSCRIBE**

Exclusive: YouTube Approved Ads Promoting Disinformation on India's Election
8 MINUTE READ



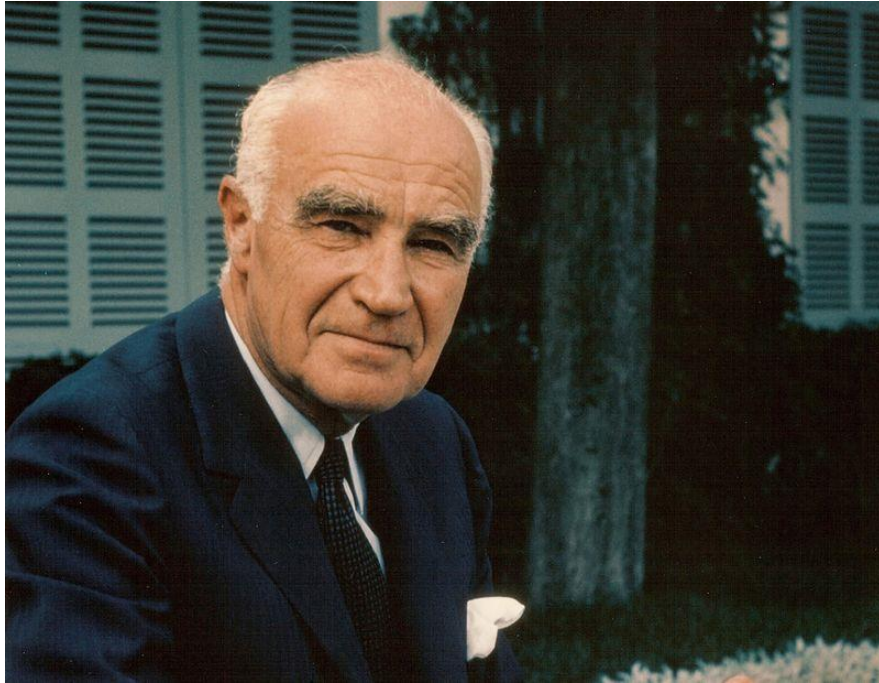
PART II: A Luce' Wonderland

Founded by Henry Robinson Luce, co-founder and editor-in-chief of Time Inc. (Magazine), the Henry Luce Foundation (HLF) is a major private philanthropic foundation based in New York City since its inception in 1936. The foundation is known for its philanthropic work in various fields, including journalism, higher education, and public policy.³³

So, they claim.

³³ <https://www.hluce.org/about/>

Chapter 5: The Man Who Invented Time



Brief History of the Henry Luce Foundation (HLF) Founder

Early Life

Henry R. Luce, the founder of HLF (Henry Luce Foundation), was born in Tengchow, China, on 3rd April 1898 to American Presbyterian missionary parents. Incidentally, he was mentored and supported financially by another Presbyterian ‘philanthropist’ Nancy Fowler McCormicks. She was said to have given more money to the Presbyterian Church than any other "citizen of the United States.

Luce later joined Yale, and after graduating in 1920 and spending a year at Oxford, Luce pursued journalism as a means to promote his internationalist vision. He was particularly interested in America’s relationship with Asia and lobbied for America’s involvement in the affairs of China. For this, he became a central figure within a powerful network “China lobby” battling for Nationalist Kuomintang, and was a strong supporter of Christian educational missions in China. Later they were defeated by the Communists and moved to present-day Taiwan.

In college, Luce and his long-time associate Briton Hadden became members of the secretive **Skull and Bones** group in 1919. Other members of this secret society include **William Howard Taft, Henry L. Stimson, William Averell Harriman, Clarence Douglas Dillon, Frederick Trubee Davison, James Jesus Angleton, William F. Buckley, McGeorge**

Bundy, Robert A. Lovett, Potter Stewart, Lewis Lapham, George H. W. Bush and his son, George W. Bush. Hadden and Luce used their contacts through the Skull and Bones secret society to source funds for setting up the Time.

Luce, unlike his partner Hadden, was not averse to fascist forces and permitted an outright pro-fascist slant and perverted the news every week. He would be called a possessed man. When his long-time friend Hadden was seriously ill, Luce badgered him on his deathbed to part with his shares of the company so that he could run Time as he pleased. Hadden did not want this, as he feared the free of moral Luce might further tabloid the publications. He eventually managed to secure Hadden's share after his death, despite Hadden writing a will that it should not be sold to him for the next half a century.

Immediately after Hadden's death, Luce got his name erased as co-founder of Time, though he always expressed his explicit admiration of the person.

Luce married a second time with Clare Boothe, the former managing editor of *Vanity Fair*, and later opened another publication Life. Luce was also instrumental in the British Secret Service the British Security Coordination (BSC), which lobbied and manipulated US public opinion towards joining the war. Time played a crucial role. Incidentally, an office of BSC was opened in the Rockefeller Centre in Manhattan with the agreement of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and J. Edgar Hoover of the FBI. British Ernest Cuneo, who was "empowered to feed select British intelligence items about Nazi sympathizers and subversives to friendly journalists, worked closely with editors and publishers including Henry Luce, Arthur Hays Sulzberger (*New York Times*), Helen Rogers Reid (*New York Herald Tribune*), Paul C. Patterson (*Baltimore Sun*), Marshall Field III (*Chicago Sun*) and Ralph Ingersoll (*Picture Magazine*).

Henry and CIA

But Luce's most inspiring stints were at home. In a way, the man who declared the century as American was an institution in himself. He helped shape and run some of the most critical US deep-state operations.

Henry Luce used his media empire to get Dwight D. Eisenhower elected as president. In return, in 1953 Eisenhower appointed his spouse Clare Booth Luce ambassador to Italy; the first American woman ambassador to a major country. Claudio Accogli, an Italian historian, argues that Luce was heavily involved in covert anti-communist activities with local CIA personnel. Larry Hancock adds: "With no-holds-barred political activism and heavy spending (including the support of the SIFAR/Italian Army Secret Service), Luce and the CIA

managed to block the probable takeover of the center-left governments, an alliance between Christian Democrats (DC) and the Socialist Democratic Party (PSI)."

According to Carl Bernstein, Luce's close friend Charles Douglas Jackson, the publisher of *Life Magazine*, was "Henry Luce's personal emissary to the CIA". He also claimed that in the 1950s Jackson had arranged for CIA employees to travel with Time-Life credentials as cover. Drew Pearson supported this view: "Life magazine is always pulling chestnuts out of the fire for the CIA, and I recall that C. D. Jackson of the Life-Time empire was the man who arranged for the CIA to finance the Freedom Balloons. C. D. Jackson, Harold Stassen, and the other boys who went with me to Germany spent money like water while I paid my own way. I always was suspicious that a lot of dough was coming from unexplained quarters and didn't learn until sometime later that the CIA was footing the bill."

The Luce family also funded Alpha 66

In 1962 Alpha 66 launched several raids on Cuba. This included attacks on port installations and foreign shipping. The authors of *Deadly Secrets: The CIA-Mafia War Against Castro and the Assassination of JFK* (1981) argue that Clare Boothe Luce paid for one of the boats used in these raids: "The anti-communist blonde took a maternal interest in the three-man crew she adopted. She brought them to New York three times to 'mother' them.

Kennedy Assassination

When John F Kennedy was assassinated, CD Jackson, Luce's conduit to the CIA, purchased the Zapruder Film on behalf of Luce. The films were the most clear documents of the assassination of Kennedy. Surprisingly, Luce and company never commercially used the footage, despite having bought it at a very high price. Coincidentally, soon after the assassination Jackson also successfully negotiated with Marina Oswald spouse of the alleged killer, the exclusive rights to her story. Peter Dale Scott argues in his book *Deep Politics and the Death of JFK* (1996) that Jackson, on the urging of Allen Dulles, the CIA head, employed Isaac Don Levine, a veteran CIA publicist, to ghost-write Marina's story. This story never appeared in print.

Déjà vu: In the 1940s, the US policymakers and the public were divided into two groups – those supporting US involvement in war and those opposing it. The one supporting the US' more aggressive international role set up what is called the Council for Democracy, with Luce a key player. The one opposing was 'America First'. The name 'Democracy' is a euphemism. As an author described Luce, his world was American supremacy by staying in a constant state of war. That was Luce dream world. Today again, there are 'Democracy Philanthropists' battling against MAGA.

Chapter 6: The Philanthropy: Henry Luce Foundation

The man who invented Time also invented Life. And also founded a philanthropy. Having seen other American philanthropists like Soros, we would be forgiven for some amount of healthy scepticism about such enterprise, and we were not disappointed.

Since its inception, the HLF has been led by individuals who have either served in the US government or have been part of other influential philanthropic fronts or think tanks in the US including - Asia Foundation, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). For those uninitiated, all three are US deep-state projects. It's not that we are saying so, it's the CIA's declassified publications themselves.

The Honourable Members of the HLF

Mariko Silver

The President and CEO of the Henry Luce Foundation (HLF) since July 2019, Mariko Silver is a former Acting Assistant Secretary of International Affairs (homeland security and international policy) between February 2009 and November 2011 during then-US President Barack Obama's first tenure. Besides, she has also worked as a Technology Policy Specialist at Columbia University (2001-02) and also worked as a Policy Advisor at the Office of the Governor in the State of Arizona (Aug 2008-Jul 2009). In November 2011, she joined Arizona State University as Senior Counsellor to the President before becoming the President of Bennington College in 2013 until July 2019. She continues to be a member of the **Council on Foreign Relations (CFR)** since 2018.^{34 35}

John J. Hamre

Member of the board of directors of HLF, John Julian Hamre is an American international relations scholar belonging to the Republican party.³⁶ He is also the CEO of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) at Georgetown University since January 2000. Before joining CSIS, he held the position of the 26th U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defence. In his role as Comptroller, Dr Hamre was the principal assistant to the Secretary of Defense, responsible for the preparation, presentation, and execution of the defense budget, as well as management improvement programs. In 2007, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates appointed Dr Hamre as the chairman of the Defense Policy Board, a position he held for four consecutive Secretaries of Defense.³⁷

³⁴ <https://www.hluce.org/about/staff/117-mariko-silver/>

³⁵ <https://www.linkedin.com/in/mariko-silver-1451401/details/experience/>

³⁶ <https://www.hluce.org/about/board-directors/20-john-j-hamre/>

³⁷ <https://www.csis.org/people/john-j-hamre>

Terrence B. Adamson

Co-chair of the Board of Directors of HLF since 2022, Terrance B Adamson is a former Vice President of Global Law Affairs at Boeing (May 2016- 2020) and a member of the Board of Directors of The Carter Center since 1993. Since 1985, he has also been serving as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of **The Asia Foundation** since 1985.³⁸ The Asia Foundation is a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) proprietary, established in 1954 by the agency to undertake cultural and educational activities on behalf of the United States Government in ways not open to official U.S. agencies.³⁹

Michelle Douenias

Michelle Douenias has been the Senior Program Manager for Luce Scholars at the Henry Luce Foundation since 2022. Prior to that, she held numerous positions within the HLF since 1990 to date. Notably, she also oversees The Asia Foundation grant.^{40 41}

Mary Brown Bullock

Mary Brown Bullock is a missionary and scholar who specializes in the US-China relations. She served as the inaugural executive vice chancellor of Duke Kunshan University in Kunshan, China (2012-15). Prior to that, she held notable positions such as distinguished visiting professor of Chinese studies at Emory University, director of the Asia program at the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars, and director of The Committee on Scholarly Communications with the People's Republic of China at the National Academy of Sciences. From 1995 to 2006, she served as the president of Agnes Scott College.^{42 43}

She is currently the vice-chair of The Asia Foundation and director of the Henry Luce Foundation.

³⁸ <https://www.linkedin.com/in/terry-adamson-4344328/details/experience/>

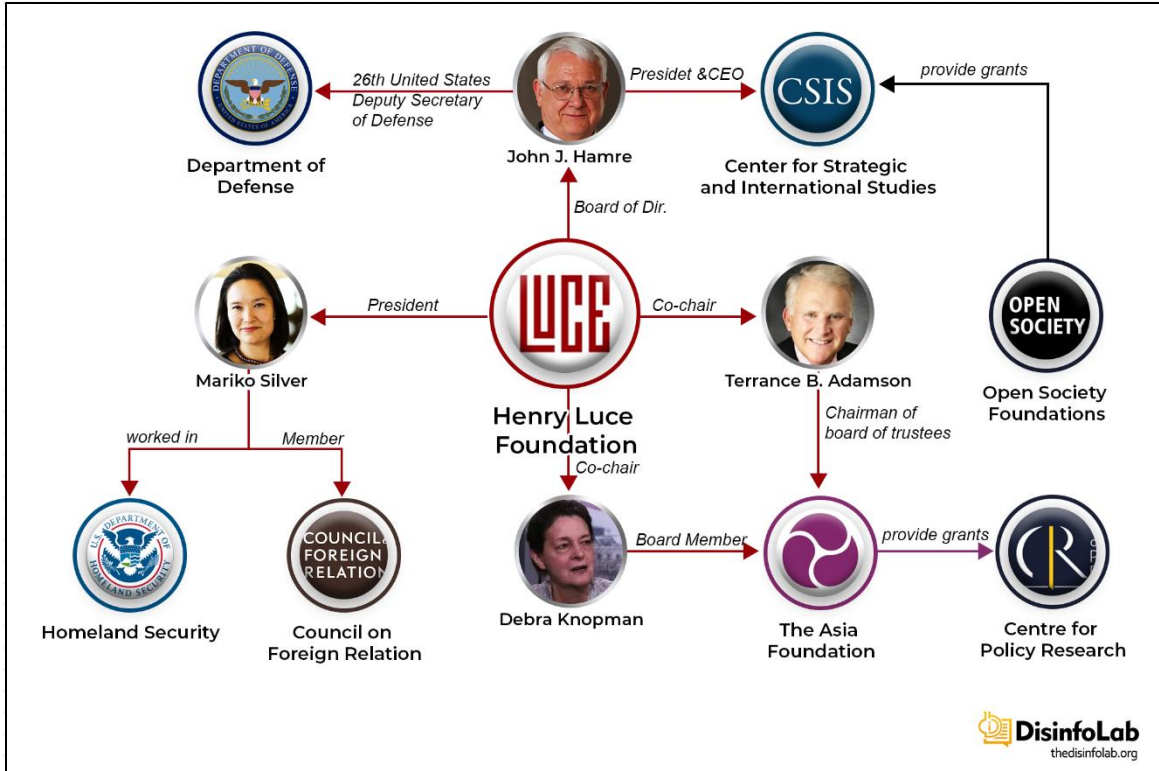
³⁹ [https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v10/d132#:~:text=The%20Asia%20Foundation%20\(TAF\)%2C,open%20to%20official%20U.S.%20agencies](https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v10/d132#:~:text=The%20Asia%20Foundation%20(TAF)%2C,open%20to%20official%20U.S.%20agencies)

⁴⁰ <https://www.linkedin.com/in/michelle-douenias-03b5139/details/experience/>

⁴¹ <https://www.hluce.org/about/staff/34-michelle-douenias/>

⁴² <https://www.hluce.org/about/board-directors/17-mary-brown-bullock/>

⁴³ <https://www.marybrownbullock.com/about-the-author/>



Disclaimer: we don't take any stand on the issue for fear of being labelled 'conspiracy theorists', a term CIA is alleged to have popularized to distract people from questioning the CIA's role in assassination and cover-up.

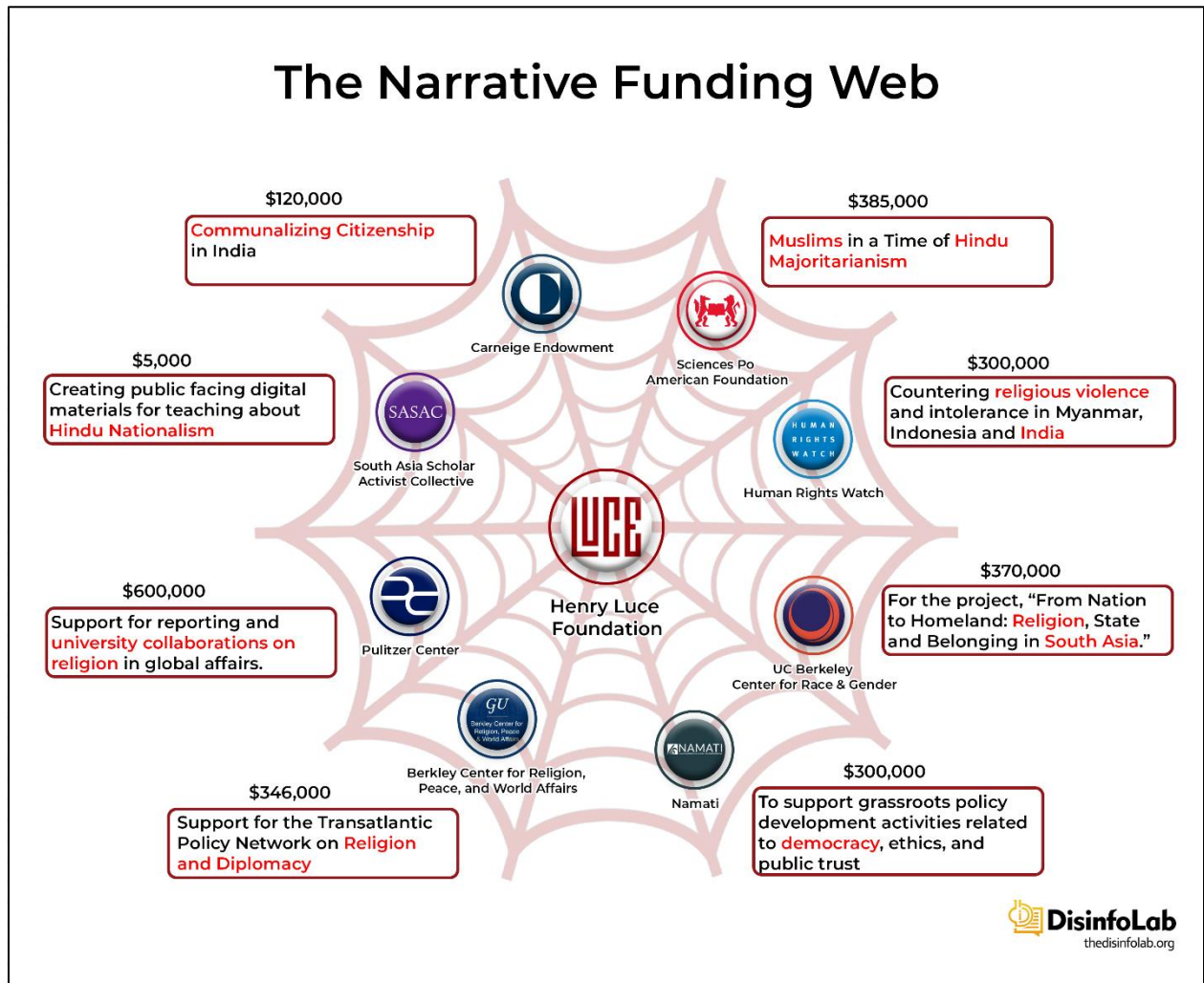
Chapter 7: Luce' Wonderland - India in 2024

HLF funding to Fronts on India in the run-up to Elections 2024

HLF's funding of India is by definition electoral interference. We could not fathom any other interpretation of the fact that funds were allocated to fronts with known bias and anti-India affiliation – in 2020/2021 for three years on topics that were explicitly designed to create a negative narrative.

If you can find alternative explanations, please help us out.

A plethora of individuals and groups funded by the Henry Luce Foundation (HLF), especially those operating out of the USA and France have been involved by means of articles in the Western press, the conduct of online/ physical events, and creating micro-narratives through social media posts/blogs.



Since 2020-21, the HLF has made six major grants to organizations to work on projects pertaining to India for the next three years. The operative words should be the ‘next three years’. The organizations that were granted funds from the Henry Luce Foundation (HLF) already have questionable intent owing to their past works/ reports, physical events, and creating micro-narratives to paint a slanted narrative against India, some of which have already been exposed by DisinfoLab in previous reports.

A. Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs

In January 2021, the Henry Luce Foundation granted USD 346,000 to **Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs (BCRPWA)**, housed at Georgetown University.^{44 45} The three-year grant was aimed at ‘**Transatlantic Policy Network on Religion and Diplomacy (TPNRD)**’ to expand its public engagement efforts, forge new partnerships, and refine its approach to fostering transatlantic diplomatic collaboration and policy-relevant scholarship in the field of religion and international affairs. Following the grant, TPNRD, which was originally based at Cambridge University, migrated to Georgetown University’s Berkeley Center as one of Georgetown's ongoing programs.⁴⁶

BERKLEY CENTER
for Religion, Peace & World Affairs

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

\$346,000 Luce Grant to Fund the Transatlantic Policy Network on Religion and Diplomacy at Georgetown University

WASHINGTON (January 27, 2021)—The Berkley Center has received a \$346,000 grant from the Henry Luce Foundation to fund the Transatlantic Policy Network on Religion and Diplomacy (TPNRD), which will migrate from Cambridge University to Georgetown University as one of Georgetown’s ongoing programs. The three-year grant will help the TPNRD to expand its public engagement, capitalize on opportunities to forge new partnerships, and fine-tune its method of fostering transatlantic diplomatic collaboration and policy-relevant scholarship in the field of religion and international affairs.

⁴⁴ <https://s3.amazonaws.com/berkley-center/210127%20LuceTPNRDGrantPressRelease.pdf>

⁴⁵ <https://www.hluce.org/grants/grants/transatlantic-policy-network-on-religion-diplomacy/>

⁴⁶ <https://www.hluce.org/news/articles/transatlantic-policy-network-religion-and-diplomacy-moves-georgetown-university/>

What is the Transatlantic Policy Network on Religion and Diplomacy (TPNRD)?

TPNRD was founded by the European External Action Service and the U.S. State Department in 2015 and is a policy forum of top diplomats from foreign ministries in the European and Atlantic regions (North American region) whose portfolios focus on religion-related issues.⁴⁷ Following the merger, TPNRD's content and its entirety shifted to a new website www.Religionanddiplomacy.org which was registered on April 15, 2021.^{48 49}

BCRPWA-TPNRD Interference Ahead of Elections in India

Almost six months ahead of the Indian General Elections 2024, in October 2023, the Berkeley Center for Religion (BCRPWA) along with the Transatlantic Policy Network on Religion and Diplomacy (TPNRD) published a report titled 'THE HINDU RIGHT AND INDIA'S RELIGIOUS DIPLOMACY'.⁵⁰ The report alludes to how India is investing in religious diplomacy which essentially has a Hindu character and further concludes how India's reputation has declined in the eyes of Western governments & thinktanks and references the Country of Particular Concern (CPC) tag labelled on India by the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF).⁵¹ The report in turn was funded by the Henry Luce Foundation owing to the fiscal backing of TPNRD by Henry Luce Foundation since 2021.

BERKLEY CENTER
for Religion, Peace & World Affairs
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Berkley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs
**TRANSATLANTIC POLICY NETWORK
ON RELIGION & DIPLOMACY**

The Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University seeks a more just and peaceful world by building knowledge and advancing cooperation through research, teaching, and dialogue. Two premises guide the center's work: that a comprehensive examination of religion and norms is critical to address complex global challenges, and that the open engagement of religious and cultural traditions with one another can promote peace.

The Transatlantic Policy Network on Religion and Diplomacy (TPNRD) is a forum of diplomats from North America and Europe working at the intersection of religion and foreign policy. Based at Cambridge University from 2015 to 2020, since 2021 the TPNRD project has been housed at the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University and is made possible by a generous grant from the Henry Luce Foundation. To learn more, visit Religion & Diplomacy.

The grant and report or symptomatic of the narrative cycle against India. The report laments that 'India's image is down' in Western eyes, and quotes the USCIRF and other Western media. What it does not explore and document as to how this space and organizations such as USCIRF have come to be dominated by individuals in cahoot with radical Islamists and

⁴⁷ <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2016/06/258658.htm>

⁴⁸ <https://religionanddiplomacy.org/about/>

⁴⁹ <https://who.is/whois/religionanddiplomacy.org>

⁵⁰ <https://s3.amazonaws.com/berkeley-center/231025HallHinduRightIndiasReligiousDiplomacyPolicyBrief.pdf>

⁵¹ <https://s3.amazonaws.com/berkeley-center/231025HallHinduRightIndiasReligiousDiplomacyPolicyBrief.pdf#page=11>

Christian missionaries. And that the narrative in Western media is based on a ghetto of reporters/ experts who are all part of one small group, all funded and cultivated by the same set of ‘philanthropists’ such as Soros and Luce among others.

B. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP)

Another front that benefitted from the grants of the Henry Luce Foundation is the Washington DC-based think tank, **Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP)**. HLF’s funding to CEIP for projects pertaining to India has been made on two occasions i.e., in 2018 and 2020.^{52 53} In 2020, HLF granted USD120,000 to CEIP for the project, “Communalizing Citizenship in India”. As a result, two years later, on June 2, 2022, CEIP published a collection of essays which were sponsored by grants from HLF which are as follows:⁵⁴

- i. Religion, Citizenship, and Belonging in India- By **Madhav Khosla** (Author) and **Milan Vaishnav** (Director & Senior Fellow of South Asia Program, CEIP)⁵⁵
- ii. Reinventing the Republic: Faith and Citizenship in India- By **Niraja Gopal Jayal** (Avantha Chair at King’s India Institute at King’s College, London)⁵⁶ She also served on the advisory board of V Dem alongside Pratap Bhanu Mehta.
- iii. Hindu Nationalism: From Ethnic Identity to Authoritarian Repression- By **Pratap Bhanu Mehta** (Laurence S. Rockefeller Visiting Professor for Distinguished Teaching at Princeton University)⁵⁷ (more details about Pratap Bhanu Mehta provided in subsequent sections.)
- iv. New India, Hindutva Constitutionalism, and Muslim Political Attitudes- By **Hilal Ahmed** (Associate Professor at the Center for the Study of Developing Societies in New Delhi)⁵⁸
- v. Representation and Legitimacy in the Supreme Court: Adjudicating Law and Religion in India- By **Raeesa Vakil** (J.S.D. candidate at Yale Law School)⁵⁹

⁵² <https://www.hluce.org/grants/grants/communalizing-citizenship/>

⁵³ <https://www.hluce.org/grants/grants/religious-populism-and-the-future-of-indian-democracy/>

⁵⁴ <https://carnegieendowment.org/posts/2022/06/religion-citizenship-and-belonging-in-india?lang=en¢er=russia-eurasia>

⁵⁵ <https://carnegieendowment.org/posts/2022/06/religion-citizenship-and-belonging-in-india?lang=en¢er=russia-eurasia>

⁵⁶ <https://ceipfiles.s3.amazonaws.com/pdf/2022-India-Citizenship-Jayal-final.pdf>

⁵⁷ <https://ceipfiles.s3.amazonaws.com/pdf/2022-India-Citizenship-Mehta-final.pdf>

⁵⁸ <https://ceipfiles.s3.amazonaws.com/pdf/2022-India-Citizenship-Ahmed-final.pdf>

⁵⁹ <https://ceipfiles.s3.amazonaws.com/pdf/2022-India-Citizenship-Vakil-final.pdf>

vi. Religion-as-Ethnicity and the Emerging Hindu Vote in India- By **Neelanjan Sircar**⁶⁰
(Senior fellow at the Centre for Policy Research in New Delhi)

<p>fore ▾</p> <p>COMMENTARY</p> <h2>Religion, Citizenship, and Belonging in India</h2> <p>As India commemorates the seventy-fifth anniversary of the country's independence from the British Raj, one question above all strikes at the heart of democracy's uncertain future: who belongs in today's India?</p> <p>By Madhav Khosla and Milan Vaishnav Published on June 2, 2022</p>	<p>Original Article</p> <h2>Representation and Legitimacy in the Supreme Court: Adjudicating Law and Religion in India</h2> <p>Studies in Indian Politics 1-14 © 2022 Lokmiti, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies Reprints and permissions: in.sagepub.com/journals-permissions-india DOI: 10.1177/23210230221083064 journals.sagepub.com/home/insp</p> <p>Raeesa Vakil¹</p> <p>Abstract This article presents the argument that the Supreme Court of India's jurisprudence on procedural bars to litigation is insufficient to address challenges that arise in cases involving religious rights. Examining the Court's views on standing (the right to litigate) in three key public interest decisions (the Sabarimala Temple case, the Ram Jambhoomi case, and the triple talaq case), I argue that the Court has privileged a discretionary, ends-based reasoning over an approach based on principle and law, resulting in erratic and inconsistent outcomes. The result is an uncertain level of protection to minority rights in judicial processes.</p> <p>Keywords India, constitution, law, religion, majoritarianism, Supreme Court</p>
<p>Original Article</p> <h2>Religion-as-Ethnicity and the Emerging Hindu Vote in India</h2> <p>Studies in Indian Politics 1-14 © 2022 Lokmiti, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies Reprints and permissions: in.sagepub.com/journals-permissions-india DOI: 10.1177/23210230221083064 journals.sagepub.com/home/insp</p> <p>Neelanjan Sircar¹</p> <p>Abstract Religious division formed the basis for the subcontinent's partition and has continued to be a major social cleavage in local relations. Yet remarkably religious parties have rarely been successful in India. This may be changing with an ascendant Bharatiya Janata Party mobilizing the Hindu vote. Accordingly, this article seeks to explicate the conditions under which successful religious parties may emerge. In order to do so, I conceive of electoral mobilization on religion as a form of ethnic mobilization, what I refer to as religion-as-ethnicity voting. I argue that religion-as-ethnicity voting emerges when the religious group meets certain spatial demographic criteria (density and pivotality) and when a governing party representing these interests can use state power to reify boundaries between religious groups. I use this framework to explain the emergence of the Hindu vote in the Indian state of Assam.</p> <p>Keywords Campaigns and elections, ethnic conflict, Indian democracy, religion and politics, voting and elections</p>	<p>Original Article</p> <h2>Hindu Nationalism: From Ethnic Identity to Authoritarian Repression</h2> <p>Studies in Indian Politics 1-17 © 2022 Lokmiti, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies Reprints and permissions: in.sagepub.com/journals-permissions-india DOI: 10.1177/23210230221083028 journals.sagepub.com/home/insp</p> <p>Pratap Bhanu Mehta¹</p> <p>Abstract This article reflects on the relationship between Hindu nationalism and democracy and how the former emerges from within democracy only to subvert it. The essay outlines important conceptual issues in the relationship between Hindu nationalism and democracy, discusses the relationship between the idea of a 'Hindu Rashtra' and 'Hindu Rajya', and delves into the complex interplay between Hindu nationalism and caste. This article ultimately argues that Hindu nationalism's alignment with authoritarianism in a political style does not simply corrode democracy, but it also undermines all values. The objective of this analysis is not to provide a comprehensive explanation of the rise of Hindu nationalism, as much as to reflect on the ways in which its ideology operates at multiple levels.</p> <p>Keyword India, Hindu nationalism, BJP, secularism, democracy, authoritarianism</p>
<p>Original Article</p> <h2>Representation and Legitimacy in the Supreme Court: Adjudicating Law and Religion in India</h2> <p>Studies in Indian Politics 1-14 © 2022 Lokmiti, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies Reprints and permissions: in.sagepub.com/journals-permissions-india DOI: 10.1177/23210230221083064 journals.sagepub.com/home/insp</p> <p>Raeesa Vakil¹</p> <p>Abstract This article presents the argument that the Supreme Court of India's jurisprudence on procedural bars to litigation is insufficient to address challenges that arise in cases involving religious rights. Examining the Court's views on standing (the right to litigate) in three key public interest decisions (the Sabarimala Temple case, the Ram Jambhoomi case, and the triple talaq case), I argue that the Court has privileged a discretionary, ends-based reasoning over an approach based on principle and law, resulting in erratic and inconsistent outcomes. The result is an uncertain level of protection to minority rights in judicial processes.</p> <p>Keywords India, constitution, law, religion, majoritarianism, Supreme Court</p>	<p>Original Article</p> <h2>Reinventing the Republic: Faith and Citizenship in India²</h2> <p>Studies in Indian Politics 1-17 © 2022 Lokmiti, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies Reprints and permissions: in.sagepub.com/journals-permissions-india DOI: 10.1177/23210230221083799 journals.sagepub.com/home/insp</p> <p>Niraja Gopal Jayal¹</p> <p>Abstract In India, a new legal regime and political ecosystem has been enacted for India's Muslim minority that effectively undermines the constitutional commitment to secularism. This article examines the legal, political, social, moral, and international implications of an assemblage of law and policy—namely, the Citizenship Amendment Act 2019, as well as two other initiatives, the National Register of Citizens and the National Population Register—that cumulatively animates an ambitious project to reinvent the nature of the Indian republic, from a pluralist, multi-ethnic and multi-religious civic community to a political community marked by ethno-religious majoritarianism.</p> <p>Keywords Citizenship, Citizenship Amendment Act, National Register of Citizens, minorities, religion</p>

Essays by CEIP funded by HLF

In case there remains a doubt, the previous HLF funding removes that. The HLF funding to CEIP, especially the timing, remains a case study for electoral interference. CEIP received a total of USD 40,000 from the Henry Luce Foundation in November 2018 which was under the project titled, 'Religious Populism and the Future of Indian Democracy'.^{61 62} On April 4, 2019, CEIP published a report titled, 'The BJP in Power: Indian Democracy and Religious

⁶⁰ <https://ceipfiles.s3.amazonaws.com/pdf/2022-India-Citizenship-Sircar-final.pdf>

⁶¹ <https://www.hluce.org/grants/grants/religious-populism-and-the-future-of-indian-democracy/>

⁶² <https://x.com/HLuceFdn/status/1118556736116416516>

Nationalism'.⁶³ The report was published one week ahead of the 2019 General Elections which began on April 11, 2019. The report in its evaluation of the Indian democracy ahead of the 2019 Indian general elections was essentially a documentation on the country's then-ruling party- Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and alluded to how India under BJP had been backsliding in many aspects including the continued decline of the Indian military.⁶⁴

The report was authored by the Director & Senior Fellow of the South Asia Program, CEIP, **Milan Vaishnav** with contributions from **Christophe Jaffrelot**, **Gautam Mehta**, **Abhijnan Rej**, **Rukmini S.**, **Rahul Sagar**, and **Rahul Verma**. It is worthwhile to note that Jaffrelot is also a member and non-resident scholar of the South Asia Program at Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.⁶⁵

C. AI Accountability Project & Digital Witness Lab

In 2023, Pulitzer Center partnered with an organization Digital Witness Lab for their project AI Accountability Fellowships, which seeks to support journalists working on in-depth AI accountability stories pertaining to the governments' use of technologies. The project was directly funded by the Open Society Foundations for which the Pulitzer Centre received \$432,000 in 2021 for a period of two years, within which the program was launched.⁶⁶ Notably, Pulitzer Center has also received funding from The Henry Luce Foundation amounting to \$500,000 granted in 2019 for reporting and university collaborations on religion in global affairs.⁶⁷

OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS		WHO WE ARE	HOW WE WORK	WHAT WE DO	Q	≡
2 GRANTS FOUND						
<p>▼ Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting</p> <p>Description to support the Pulitzer Center's Algorithmic Accountability Fellowship Program and machine learning grants, increasing public access to information on AI and for communities most affected by the harms of technology and furthering AI literacy and capacity in the media field</p>		<p>Theme Information & Digital Rights Journalism</p>	<p>Referring Program Independent Journalism Program Information Program</p>	<p>2021</p>	<p>\$432,000</p>	
		<p>Term 2 years</p>	<p>Region Global</p>			
		<p>Funder Open Society Institute</p>				
<p>► Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting</p>				<p>2021</p>	<p>\$250,000</p>	

⁶³ <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2019/04/the-bjp-in-power-indian-democracy-and-religious-nationalism>

⁶⁴ https://carnegie-production-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/static/files/BJP_In_Power_final.pdf

⁶⁵ <https://carnegieendowment.org/people/christophe-jaffrelot>

⁶⁶ <https://pulitzercenter.org/blog/open-call-proposals-pulitzer-centers-ai-accountability-fellowships>

⁶⁷ <https://www.hluce.org/grants/grants/beyond-religion-reporting-projects-and-educational-initiatives-with-pulitzer-center-partner-universities/>

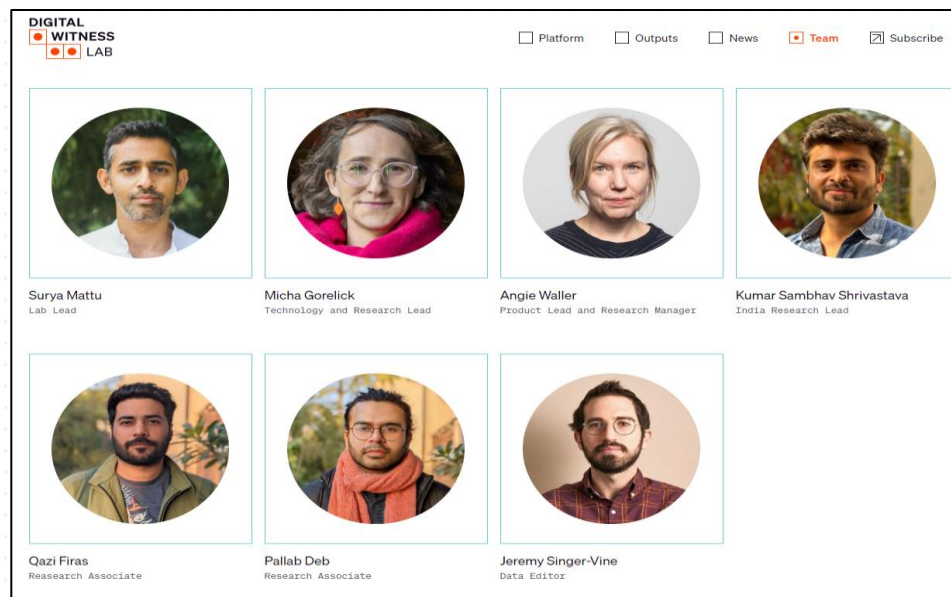
Launched on November 7, 2022, Digital Witness Lab (DWL) is a program at the Center For Information Technology Policy (CITP) at Princeton University to debunk misinformation campaigns during elections in India and Brazil and to build tools for journalists to capture bad actors on platforms that manipulate user information.⁶⁸ While DWL was set up back in 2022, it became active on social media platforms during the election cycle in 2024.

DWL is headed by journalist and engineer Surya Mattu.⁶⁹ The India Research Lead of DWL is Kumar Sambhav Shrivastava, a Pulitzer Grantee and co-founder of Reporter's Collective.

The Reporters Collective

Reporters Collective is a New Delhi-based media portal co-founded by Nitin Sethi and Kumar Sambhav Shrivastava. It is one of the members of the Global Investigative Journalism Network, which receives direct funding from organizations including the Open Society Foundation and Ford Foundation among others.⁷⁰

Another member of The Reporters Collective and also a Pulitzer fellow, Srishti Jaiswal. Srishti Jaiswal is also a member of the Digital Witness Lab (DWL) which is housed inside the Princeton University and its India research lead is The Reporters' Collective co-founder Kumar Sambhav.⁷¹



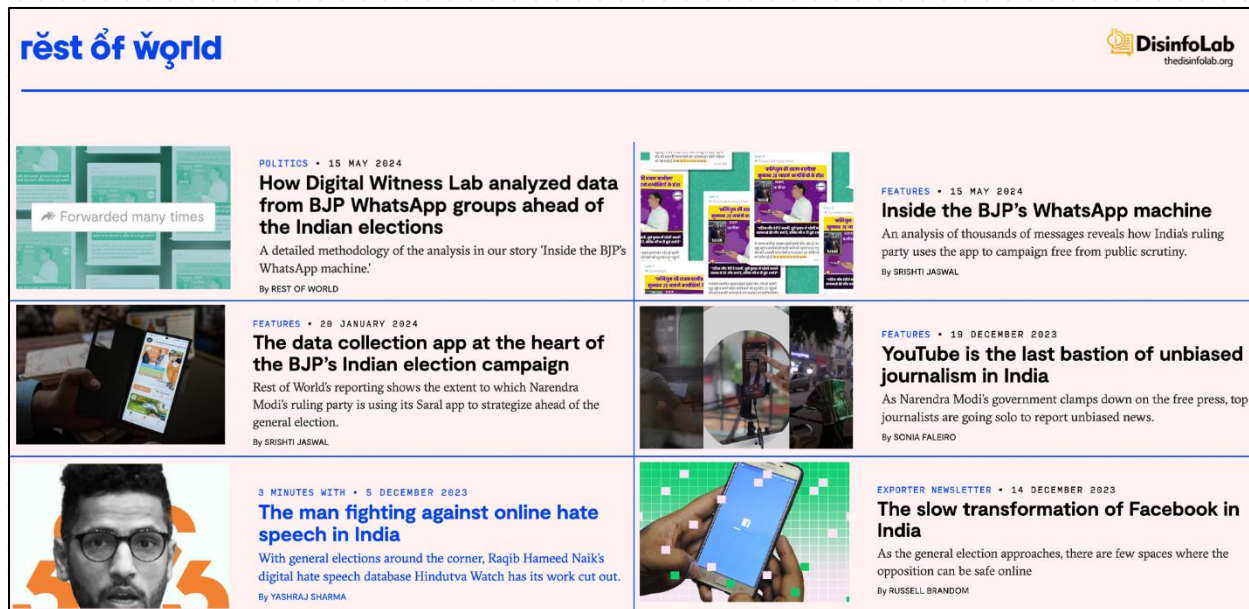
⁶⁸ <https://citp.princeton.edu/citp-launches-the-digital-witness-lab-to-help-journalists-track-bad-actors-on-platforms/>

⁶⁹ <https://www.digitalwitnesslab.org/team/surya-mattu>

⁷⁰ <https://gijn.org/about-us/sponsors-and-supporters/>

⁷¹ <https://www.digitalwitnesslab.org/team>

DWL member Srishti Jaiswal has written articles for the portal **Rest of the World** which was duly promoted by the Pulitzer Center. Two of the articles that she has written for Rest of the World are titled “Inside the BJP’s WhatsApp Machine” and “The Data Collection App at the Heart of the BJP’s Indian Election Campaign”.^{72 73}



Notably, Rest of the World has also been awarded a grant from the Henry Luce Foundation. In December 2023, the HLF granted \$100,000 to the Rest of the World for its coverage of religion and technology.⁷⁴ It is worth noting that most of the grants HLF has given away to entities we have mapped in this report are particularly for these two subjects- religion and technology, the same is reflected in the literary works of its grantees.

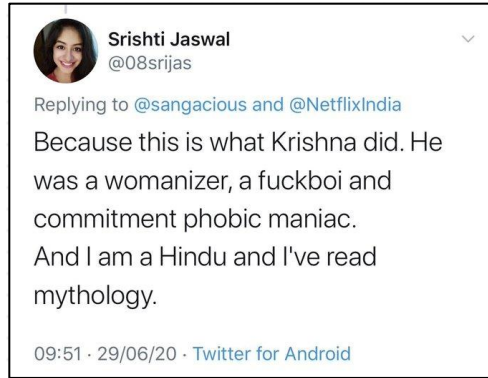
Jaswal has written for The Caravan magazine, Hindustan Times, Newslandry, Vice World News, and Al Jazeera among others. In June 2020, Srishti was caught making Hinduphobic statements on the microblogging platform ‘X’ (formerly Twitter). Following the incident, Srishti’s then-employer, Hindustan Times (HT) confirmed on X that it had suspended her over the comments she made via her X account.⁷⁵ That she could be trusted to write a neutral, let alone nuanced, article on issues of religion baggers belief. But if one were to get a pre-decided slant, she would be a natural choice.

⁷² [The Data Collection App at the Heart of the BJP’s Indian Election Campaign | Pulitzer Center](#)

⁷³ [Inside the BJP’s WhatsApp Machine | Pulitzer Center](#)

⁷⁴ <https://restofworld.org/inside/rest-of-world-receives-100000-grant-from-henry-luce-foundation/>

⁷⁵ <https://x.com/HindustanTimes/status/1278723758518235136>



Similarly, in 2018, her colleague at DWL, and also the co-founder of The Reporters' Collective, Kumar Sambhav Shrivastava wrote a misleading article stating the Union environment ministry had proposed a project in Delhi involving the construction 120-metre-high office building of approximately 30 storeys, designed in the shape of a conch.⁷⁶ The article criticized the structure for inflicting a toll on the trees in the vicinity of the proposed project and disturbing the skyline.



Fact: The location that was mentioned in the article, no conch shell infrastructure was constructed, rather in that place now stands the building of Bharatmandapam. Sambhav wrote no follow-up article on the same. A similar building matching the same description, i.e. the shape of a conch shell, was inaugurated in West Bengal in 2023.⁷⁷ Sambhav did no reporting on this either

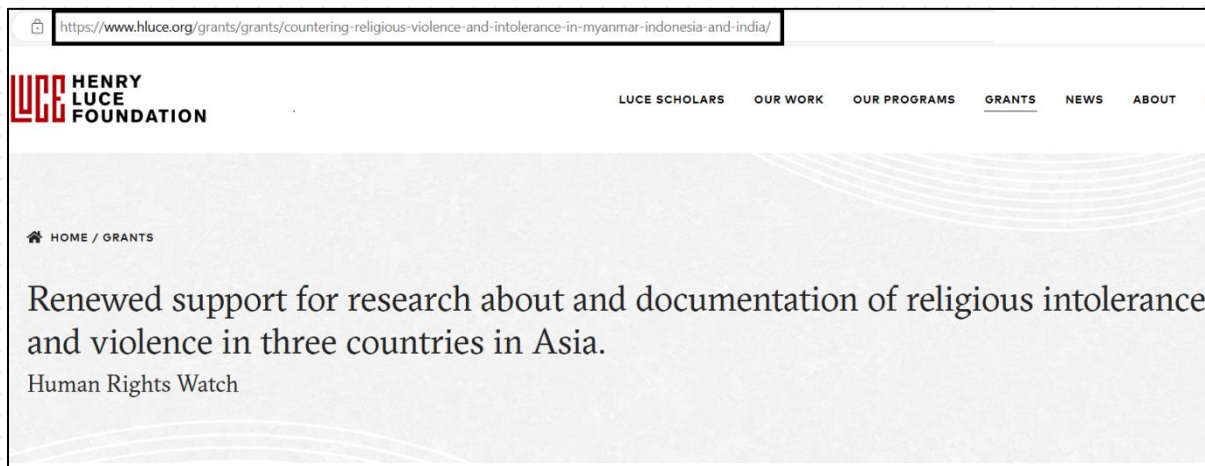
⁷⁶ <https://scroll.in/article/885281/centre-looks-at-developing-area-near-delhi-zoo-even-as-its-other-projects-in-city-hit-tree-barrier>

⁷⁷ <https://scroll.in/video/1047348/watch-aerial-views-of-new-conch-shaped-auditorium-in-kolkata>

D. Human Rights Watch

In March 2020, Human Rights Watch (HRW) received USD 300,000 from Henry Luce Foundation (HLF), for '*Renewed support for research about and documentation of religious intolerance and violence in three countries in Asia*'. Of those three Asian countries, it was neither specified by HLF nor HRW. However, as the saying goes, the devil lies in the details. The URL of the grant-making link gave away the names of those countries, namely- Myanmar, Indonesia, and India.⁷⁸

Why specifically these countries, is a question to ponder over.



To no surprise, the HRW has published reports in 2023, that have been highly critical of human rights issues in India for years. While HRW publishes annual reports for countries, it is supported by grants from the Ford Foundation,⁷⁹ and over USD 6.4 million from the Open Society Foundations (OSF) since 2016.⁸⁰ HRW has been a recipient of Henry Luce Foundation funding since 1992, and in 2020, it received a USD 300,000 grant from the foundation to document religious intolerance and violence in three Asian countries, including India.⁸¹ Taking that into consideration, HRW's reports have been found to be publishing reports critical of India, on pretexts of COVID-19 impact in India, Article 370 in

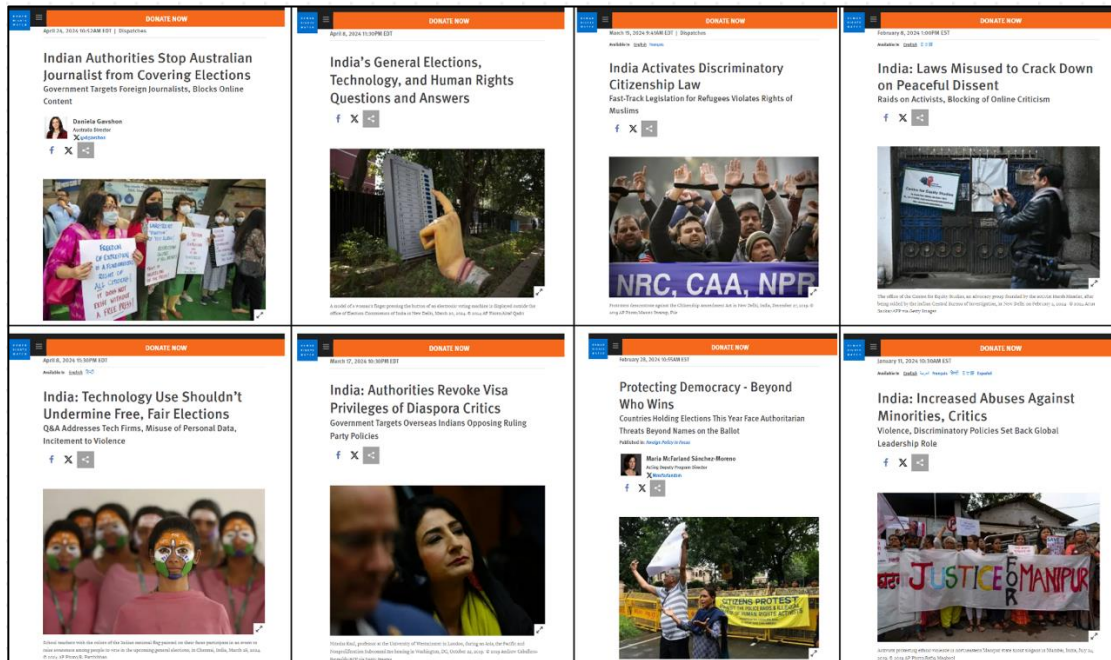
⁷⁸ <https://www.hluce.org/grants/grants/countering-religious-violence-and-intolerance-in-myanmar-indonesia-and-india/>

⁷⁹ <https://www.fordfoundation.org/work/our-grants/awarded-grants/grantee/human-rights-watch/>

⁸⁰ https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/grants/past?filter_keyword=Human+rights+watch

⁸¹ https://www.hluce.org/grants/?sort=newest&date_day=&date_month=&date_year=&keyword=human%20rights%20watch

Jammu & Kashmir, *plights of Dalits, Tribal Groups & Religious Minorities*⁸² Clampdown on *Civil Societies*, and even the *Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA)*.^{83 84}



An even more interesting is the prevailing ghetto of experts, the same set of faces that travel from one front to another. The Deputy Director of HRW’s Asia Division is Meenakshi Ganguly who has been associated with the body since 2004 and was formerly its South Asia Director. Before joining HRW, Meenakshi Ganguly was a correspondent for Time Magazine and also worked for the Press Trust of India (PTI).⁸⁵ Besides, Meenakshi Ganguly was also on the initiatory board of the **Political Conflict, Gender, and People’s Rights Initiative at the Centre for Race and Gender (PCRes-CRG)** from 2012-17 along with many other notable names including Betsy Apple (Advocacy Director, Open Society Justice Initiative), Patrick Ball (Executive Director, Human Rights Data Analysis Group), Harsh Mander (Director, Center for Equity Studies), Khurram Parvez (Program Coordinator, Jammu & Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society), Teesta Setalvad (Secretary, Citizens for Justice and Peace) among other key names.⁸⁶

We detail this front in the next chapter.

⁸² <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/india>

⁸³ <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2023/country-chapters/india>

⁸⁴ <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2024/country-chapters/india>

⁸⁵ <https://www.hrw.org/about/people/meenakshi-ganguly#:~:text=Meenakshi%20Ganguly%20is%20deputy%20director.of%20countries%20in%20the%20region.>

⁸⁶ <https://crg.berkeley.edu/research/research-initiatives/political-conflict-gender-and-people%E2%80%99s-rights-initiative>

Chapter: 8 the Chicken Comes Home to Roost

Political Conflict, Gender & People's Rights Initiative (PCRes)

One of the biggest beneficiaries of Henry Luce Foundation funding is the **Political Conflict, Gender, and People's Rights Initiative (PCRes)** housed at the **Center for Race and Gender** at the University of California Berkeley.

PCRes has quite a history.

Before being revamped to its present name in 2016, PCRes was called **Armed Conflict Resolution and People's Rights Project (ACRes)**, instituted in 2012 at the Center for Social Sector Leadership, which is part of the Haas School of Business (2012-15). ACRes aimed to 'engage with affected communities, and periodically engage with members of the Government of India,'. It identifies J&K, Manipur, Chhattisgarh, Punjab, Gujarat, and Odisha as having been 'impacted by far-reaching violence on minority communities in recent history.' But the biggest takeaway is the founder.

Core Group:



Leti Volpp
Director, Center for Race & Gender

- Hosted event on “India Elections 2024: Hindu Nationalism, Ayodhya, and Dispossession”



Hatem Bazian
Director, Islamophobia Research & Documentation Project

- Founder of Students for Justice in Palestine
- Co-founder of American Muslims for Palestine (AMP)
- Member of Russel Tribunal on Kashmir.



Angana P. Chatterji
Chair, Political Conflict, Gender, & People's Rights Initiative

- Close aide of convicted ISI mole Ghulam Nabi Fai
- Part of Kashmir syllabus of Stand with Kashmir
- Co-founder of the “International People's Tribunal on Human Rights and Justice in Indian-administered Kashmir” with Parvez Imroz in 2008.



Ariana Ceja
Associate Director, Center for Race & Gender

- Event Co-ordinator of “India Elections 2024: Hindu Nationalism, Ayodhya, and Dispossession”

PCRes Scholars:



Haley Duschinski

- Testimony against India in the United States Congress' Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission.



Parvez Imroz

- Co-founder of the “International People's Tribunal on Human Rights and Justice in Indian-administered Kashmir” with Angana Chatterji in 2008.
- Founder and President of the Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS).



Christophe Jaffrelot

- Head of the Project “MUSLIMS IN INDIA” funded by Henry Luce Foundation.
- Chairperson of Trivedi Centre for Political Data.
- Research Director at CERI-SciencesPo/CNRS.



Khurram Parvez

- Program coordinator of Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil Societies (JKCCS) and chairperson of Philippines-based NGO AFAD.
- Arrested by NIA in NGO terror-funding case.

PCRes Affiliates:



Pei-hsuan Wu

- She has worked with and assisted Angana Chatterji on Kashmir Project.
- Research and Communications Assistant with the International People's Tribunal on Human Rights and Justice in Kashmir from 2008-2012.



Raqib Hameed Naik

- Current owner of Hindutva Watch.
- Former International correspondent with The Globe Post.
- Pulitzer Center grantee.
- Ex-News Director of TwoCircles.net

The Founder

One of the founding co-chairs of (ACR-PRP) is **Angana P Chatterji**. She is also the co-founder and convener (2008-12) of the People’s Tribunal on Human Rights and Justice. But most importantly, she was one of the three Indians alongside Gautam Navalakha and Ved Bhasin who used to attend events on Kashmir separatism (from India) organized by the convicted ISI agent **Ghulam Nabi Fai** at Capitol Hill.^{87 88}

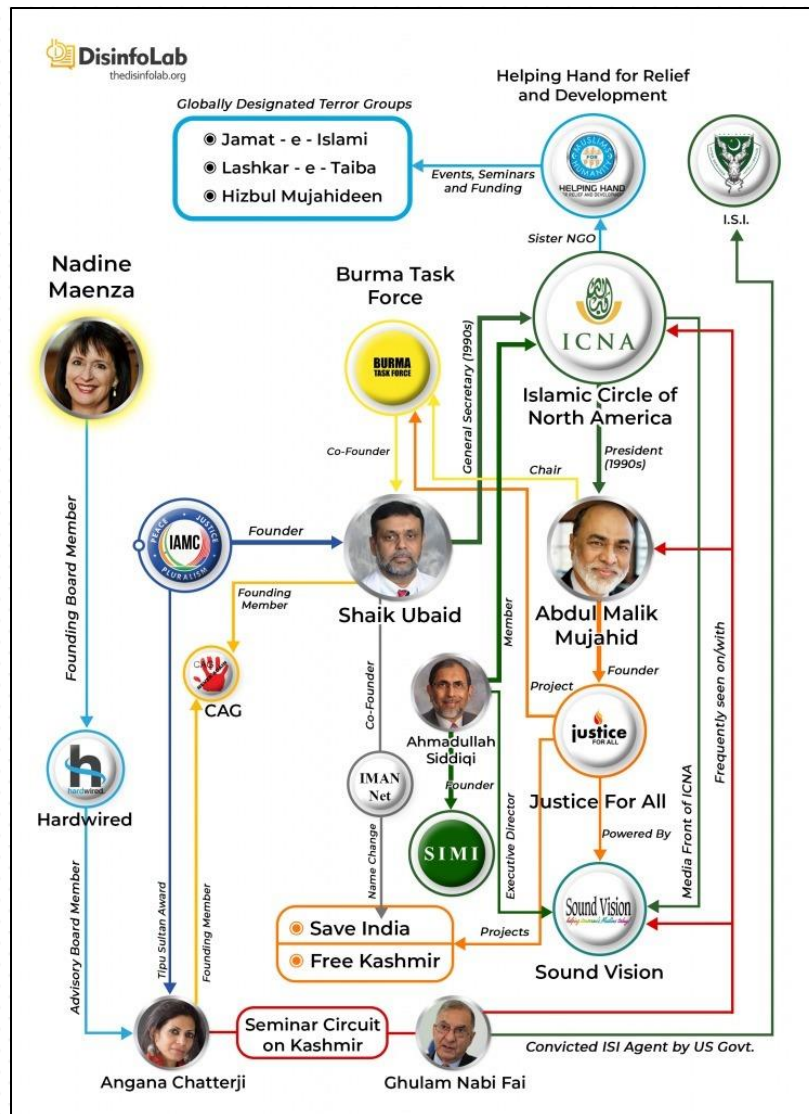
In 2003, Angana Chatterji convened an event titled “A Progressive Discussion Forum on Kashmir”, held at the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS) in San Francisco, where she was then serving as a Professor of Social and Cultural Anthropology Program.⁸⁹ The speakers of the event, which promoted the self-determination of Kashmir, included Ghulam Nabi Fai, Pakistani Physicist Dr. Pervez Hoodbhoy, and Akhila Raman (researcher of Kashmir Conflict). ISO, Berkeley was one of the supporters of the forum. Besides, Angana has been vile on India’s policies on matters including Kashmir (Article 370), the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), and the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) and also calls for sanctions on India via referencing the USCIRF annual reports. After the completion of its first phase which focused on analyzing sexual violence against women in India until 2015,⁹⁰ the ACRes project moved to the Center for Race and Gender (CRG) in January 2016. Currently, PCRes is a research initiative at the Center for Race and Gender at the University of California, Berkeley.

⁸⁷ <https://groups.google.com/g/alt.education/c/ZAcP7c96-bY?pli=1>

⁸⁸ <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/nation/story/20110801-us-based-isi-agent-ghulam-nabi-fai-746997-2011-07-22>

⁸⁹ <https://www.countercurrents.org/kashmir-raman280803.htm>

⁹⁰ https://www.dailycal.org/archives/campus-researchers-find-flaws-in-indian-governments-response-to-sexual-violence/article_5ed303bb-defa-5ea6-bda1-a252cc73173d.html



Henry Luce Funding to PCRes-CRG

In April 2021, The Political Conflict, Gender, and People’s Rights Initiative at the Center for Race and Gender (PCRes-CRG) received a USD 370,000 grant from the Henry Luce Foundation ‘to examine the fault lines between citizenship, religion in the public sphere, and belonging in contemporary South Asia’⁹¹

⁹¹ <https://vcresearch.berkeley.edu/news/political-conflict-gender-and-peoples-rights-initiative-receives-henry-luce-foundation-grant>

Political Conflict, Gender and People's Rights Initiative Receives Henry Luce Foundation Grant

April 12, 2021

By: The Center for Race & Gender



"From Nation to Homeland" Principal Investigators (left to right): Angana P. Chatterji, Thomas Blom Hansen, and Sharika Thiranagama.

PCRes-CRG partnered with Stanford University's Department of Anthropology and Stanford Libraries. PCRes-CRG Founding Co-Chair and Principal Investigator **Angana P. Chatterji** (UC Berkeley) along with **Thomas Blom Hansen** (Stanford) and **Sharika Thiranagama** (Stanford) collaborated on the project funded by HLF. They also collaborated with **Michael Keller** (Stanford) and **C. Ryan Perkins** (Stanford) for the project. They also partnered with civil society collectives in five regions across South Asia. The Advisory Consultative Panel was comprised of **Paola Bacchetta** (UC Berkeley), **Abdul Jan Mohamed** (UC Berkeley), and Leti Volpp (UC Berkeley).⁹²

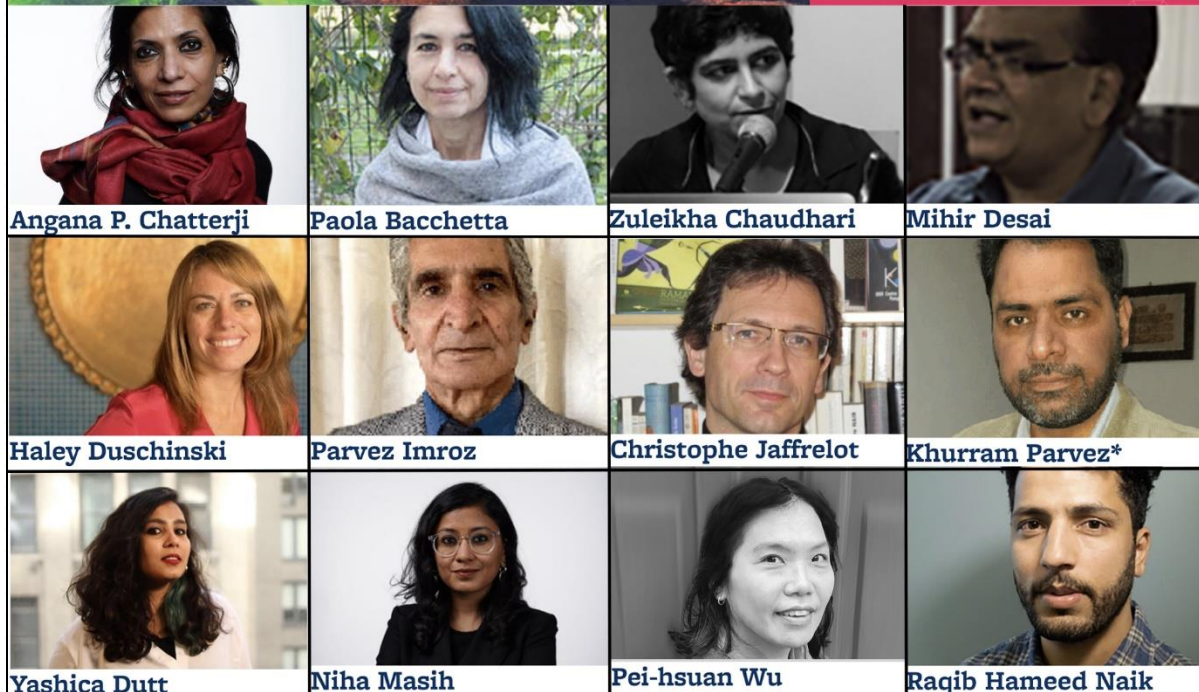
Angana and Christophe Jaffrelot

Christophe Jaffrelot is a Distinguished Scholar (non-resident) at PCRes. Other key members of PCRes include Paola Bacchetta, Zuleikha Chaudhari, Mihir Desai, Haley Duschinski, Parvez Imroz, and Khurram Parvez (formerly). Research fellows of PCRes include Yashica Dutt, Niha Masih, Pei Hsuan Wu, Raqib Hameed Naik, and Moosa Izzat.

⁹² <https://vcresearch.berkeley.edu/news/political-conflict-gender-and-peoples-rights-initiative-receives-henry-luce-foundation-grant>



Political Conflict, Gender and People's Rights Initiative



The initiatory advisory board of PCRes is an exhaustive list of individuals including Harsh Mander, Khurram Parvez, Sam Gregory, David Cohen, Meenakshi Ganguly, Betsy Apple, and Rajvinder Singh Bains among others.⁹³

⁹³ <https://crg.berkeley.edu/research/research-initiatives/political-conflict-gender-and-people%E2%80%99s-rights-initiative#:~:text=The%20Armed%20Conflict%20Resolution%20and,next%20phase%20of%20its%20work>

PARTNERS

Academic Institutions:

- Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley
- Stanford University Libraries
- Center for Human Rights and International Justice, Stanford University
- Center for Human Rights Documentation & Research, Columbia University (Between 2013 – 2017)
- Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University (Between 2013 – 2017)
- International Human Rights Law Clinic, School of Law, University of California, Berkeley (Between 2013 – 2015)
- International Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Clinic, Stanford University Law School (Between 2012-2014)

International and Diaspora Civil Society Organizations:

- Rafto Foundation for Human Rights
- Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances, Philippines
- Asian Legal Resource Center, Hong Kong (holding general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, United Nations) (Between 2012 – 2015)
- Indian American Muslim Council (Between 2012 – 2015)

South Asia Civil Society Organizations:

- Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons, Jammu & Kashmir
- Citizens for Justice and Peace, Mumbai
- Khalra Mission Organization, Punjab (Between 2013-2015)
- Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network (Between 2012-2013)
- Prashant: Center for Human Rights, Justice, and Peace, Gujarat (Between 2013-2015)

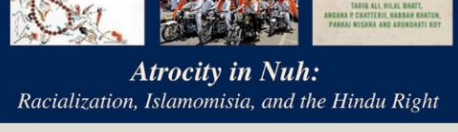





Partner organizations of PCRes (Courtesy: Center for Race & Gender website)

PCRes-CRG on Indian Elections 2024

Since October 2023, PCRes-CRG has organized several events/ webinars on subjects including violence in Nuh (Haryana), Islamophobia, and violence in Manipur (with Niang Hangzo, Co-Founder, NAMTA: North American Manipur Tribal Association)., Casteline, Hindu Nationalism, and Indian elections 2024.

(For details on NAMTA please refer to our story **Manipur Unrest: Foreign Hands and Communal Lens**)⁹⁴

⁹⁴ <https://thedisinfolab.org/manipur-unrest/>

 <p>Atrocity in Nuh: Racialization, Islamomisia, and the Hindu Right</p> <p>Dr. Angana P. Chatterji Scholar, University of California, Berkeley, USA</p> <p>Saturday, November 11, 2023 11:00 AM USA (EST), 9:30 PM India (IST)</p>	 
<p>Atrocity in Nuh: Racialization, Islamomisia, and the Hindu Right</p> <p>11.11.2023 8:00 AM PST, 11:00 AM EST Zoom Webinar</p> <p><i>Atrocity in Nuh: Racialization, Islamomisia, and the Hindu Right</i>® with Angana P. Chatterji (Founding Co-Chair, Political Conflict, Gender and People's Rights, Center for Race and Gender and Research Anthropologist, UC Berkeley). Introduction by Ziya Us Salam (Journalist, The Hindu Newspaper (Delhi, India)), and concluding remarks by Dr. Amritjit Singh (Professor Emeritus, Ohio University).</p>	<p>Majoritarian & Ethnic Violence in Manipur</p> <p>11.13.2023 7:30 - 9:30 PM 155 Dwinelle Hall</p> <p><i>Majoritarian & Ethnic Violence in Manipur</i>® with Dr. Angana P. Chatterji (Founding Co-Chair, Political Conflict, Gender and People's Rights, Center for Race and Gender and Research Anthropologist, UC Berkeley) and Niang Hangzo (Co-Founder, NAMTA: North American Manipur Tribal Association).</p> <p>Join us for a discussion on the rights of the Indigenous and the ongoing violence in Manipur, India, which has displaced thousands since May 3rd.</p>
<p>UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY</p> <p>CRG FORUM SERIES</p> <p>COMING OUT AS DALIT: SURVIVING INDIA'S CASTE SYSTEM</p>  <p>Tuesday, February 13, 2024 5 - 6:30 PM Institute for South Asia Studies Conf. Room 10 Stephens Hall UC Berkeley REGISTER: bit.ly/Spring2024-CRGEventReg</p> <p>YASHICA DUTT JOURNALIST AND AUTHOR OF COMING OUT AS DALIT: A MEMOIR OF SURVIVING INDIA'S CASTE SYSTEM</p>  <p>Coming Out As Dalit: Surviving India's Caste System</p> <p>02.13.2024 5 - 6:30 PM 10 Stephens Hall (ISAS Conference Room)</p> <p>CRG Research Initiative Event & Book Launch CRG's <i>Political Conflict, Gender and People's Rights Initiative</i> presents: COMING OUT AS DALIT: SURVIVING INDIA'S CASTE SYSTEM® with Yashica Dutt (Journalist and Author of <i>Coming Out as Dalit: A Memoir of Surviving India's Caste System</i>), in conversation with Angana P. Chatterji (UC Berkeley).</p>	<p>Race & Gender UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY</p> <p>CRG FORUM SERIES</p> <p>COUNTERING FALSEHOODS / DISCOURSES OF POWER</p>  <p>Wednesday, March 13, 2024 5 - 6:30 PM Institute for South Asia Studies Conf. Room 10 Stephens Hall UC Berkeley REGISTER: bit.ly/Spring2024-CRGEventReg</p> <p>SREENIVASAN JAIN JOURNALIST AND BROADCASTER</p> <p>Countering Falsehoods / Discourses Of Power: Love Jihad and Other Fictions</p> <p>03.13.2024 5 - 6:30 PM 10 Stephens Hall (ISAS Conference Room)</p> <p>CRG Research Initiative Event & Book Launch CRG's <i>Political Conflict, Gender and People's Rights Initiative</i> presents: COUNTERING FALSEHOODS / DISCOURSES OF POWER: LOVE JIHAD AND OTHER FICTIONS® with CRG's Distinguished Journalist-in-Residence Sreenivasan Jain (Journalist, Broadcaster, and Co-author of <i>Love Jihad and Other Fictions: Simple Facts to Counter Viral Falsehoods</i>), in conversation with Angana P. Chatterji (UC Berkeley) and Leti Volpp (UC Berkeley School of Law).</p>

Events hosted by PRes-CRG since November 2023

In the run-up to the Indian elections, on April 26, 2024, PRes organized an online event 'India Elections 2024: Hindu Nationalism, Ayodhya, and Dispossession' as part of the CRG Forum series.⁹⁵ The event was co-sponsored by the Institute for South Asia Studies, the Department of Gender and Women's Studies, the Berkeley Center for Right-Wing Studies, and the **Department of Anthropology - at Stanford University.**

⁹⁵ <https://events.berkeley.edu/crg/event/243690-india-elections-2024-hindu-nationalism-ayodhya-and-di>

April 26, 2024

India Elections 2024: Hindu Nationalism, Ayodhya, and Dispossession (CRG Forum Series)

Sponsor(s): Institute for South Asia Studies, Department of Gender and Women's Studies, Berkeley Center for Right-Wing Studies, Department of Anthropology - Stanford University

NEW EVENT



CRG FORUM SERIES

INDIA ELECTIONS 2024: HINDU NATIONALISM, AYODHYA, AND DISPOSSESSION



Friday, April 26, 2024 | 12-1:30 PM
Institute for South Asia Studies Conf. Room
10 Stephens Hall
UC Berkeley
Register: bit.ly/April26_CRGForum



WITH

ANGANA P. CHATTERJI
FOUNDING CO-CHAIR, POLITICAL CONFLICT, GENDER AND PEOPLE'S RIGHTS INITIATIVE, CENTER FOR RACE AND GENDER, AND RESEARCH ANTHROPOLOGIST, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

THOMAS BLOM HANSEN
PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY AND DEPARTMENT CHAIR, STANFORD UNIVERSITY

AUDREY TRUSCHKE
PROFESSOR AND ASIAN STUDIES DIRECTOR, SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, RUTGERS UNIVERSITY - NEWARK

ATHER ZIA
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY AND GENDER STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

WELCOME, MODERATION & CLOSING REMARKS BY:

PAOLA BACCHETTA
PROFESSOR OF GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES AND VICE CHAIR FOR RESEARCH, AND DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE FOR GENDER AND SEXUALITY RESEARCH, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

ELORA SHEHABUDDIN
PROFESSOR OF GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES AND GLOBAL STUDIES AND DIRECTOR, SUBIR AND MALINI CHOWDHURY CENTER FOR BANGLADESH STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

LETI VOLPP
ROBERT D. AND JULIA KAY RAVEN PROFESSOR OF LAW, UC BERKELEY SCHOOL OF LAW, AND DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR RACE AND GENDER, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

SPONSORED BY:



If you require an accommodation for effective communication (ASL, interpreting/CART, captioning, alternative media formats, etc.) to fully participate in an event, please contact Ariana Cota at centercr@berkeley.edu with as much advance notice as possible and at least 7-10 days in advance of the event.

LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED. FIRST-COME, FIRST-SERVED.

Credits: UC Berkeley website

It is worth noting that the grant made by HLF to PCRes-CRG for the period of three years. The grant was made for the collaboration between PCRes-CRG and Stanford University's Department of Anthropology and Stanford Libraries.

Key speakers at the event were **Angana Chatterji**, **Thomas Blom Hansen** (Professor of Anthropology and Department Chair, Stanford University), **Audrey Truschke** (Professor and Asian Studies Director, School of Arts and Sciences, Rutgers University – Newark), **Ather Zia** (Associate Professor of Anthropology and Gender Studies, University of Northern Colorado), **Paola Bacchetta** (Professor of Gender and Women's Studies and Vice Chair for Research, and Director, Institute for Gender and Sexuality Research, UC Berkeley), **Elora Shehabuddin** (Professor of Gender and Women's Studies and Global Studies, and Director, Subir, and Malini Chowdhury Center for Bangladesh Studies, UC Berkeley), and **Leti Volpp** (Robert D.

and Leslie Kay Raven Professor of Law, UC Berkeley School of Law, and Director, Center for Race and Gender, UC Berkeley).⁹⁶

Rutgers University Newark professor, Audrey Truschke, who attended the event on Indian Elections 2024 hosted by PCRes-CRG, is also part of the South Asia Scholar Activist Collective formed in July 2021 and has also received grants from the Henry Luce Foundation which will be elaborated in the next chapter.

⁹⁶ <https://events.berkeley.edu/crg/event/243690-india-elections-2024-hindu-nationalism-ayodhya-and-di>

Side Story: Data is New Oil

New Poster Boy - Raqib Hameed Naik

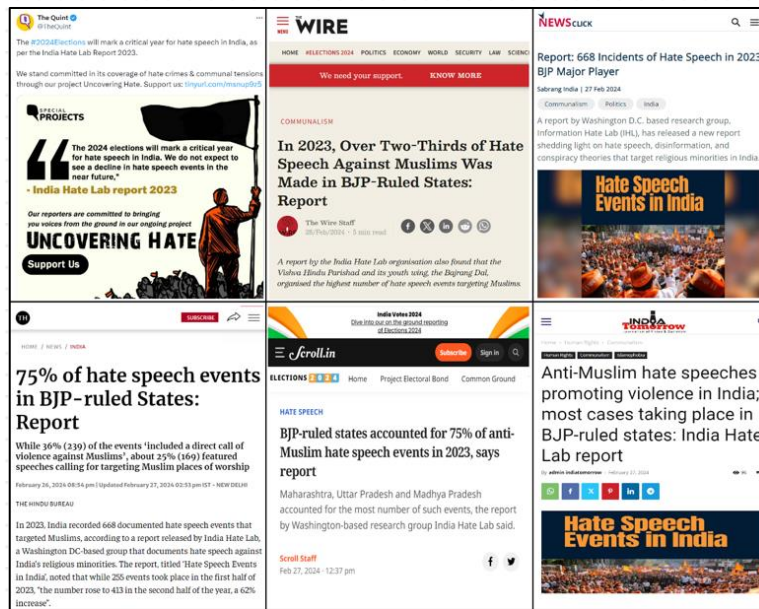
Data is new oil. And this is not only because one needs data for ML/ AI. The narratives also need data, and once data is obtained, it could be tortured to conclude anything. CJ did that with India's electoral data. Hence, to play up narratives of Islamophobia in India and fascism and anarchy – one needs data. One such data project was DOTO.

[The Documentation of the Oppressed (DOTO) Database was registered in 2017 and claimed to document data regarding violence perpetuated on Indian minorities since 2014. It was essentially a tool by Jamaat and its fronts for mapping rising communal violence on minorities in India. DOTO was used by Jamaat fronts 'Save India' and further by UNHRC for labelling India as a minority-oppressing country. However, the most significant feature of this database is that it is fake, fabricated, and highly inflated. Some outright fake news included in the Database has been debunked by several media. DOTO Database shutdown months after it was also exposed by DisinfoLab.]

Unfortunately, for them, Lab exposed their fakery and they ran away. Then they created the Hindutva Watch. Unfortunately, Lab against exposed their fakery. This time, they realized that they couldn't run away.

So, they joined other exposed or trans-nationally-repressed Anagana – in her PCRes.

The latest inclusion in the PCRes is the US-based **Raqib Hameed Naik**, the founder of the banned portal in India, **Hindutva Watch**. Hindutva Watch was banned in India in January 2024 for violating the Information Technology Act, of 2000.⁹⁷ Raqib Hameed Naik has been serving as a key figure in leading the narratives of Islamophobia and even the caste rhetoric, as evidenced by his articles on Al Jazeera.⁹⁸



The attempts to re-legitimize Raqib and his two projects Hindutva Watch and **India Hate Lab (IHL)** have been going on, both domestically and internationally. Not surprising that IHL has been proactive months ahead of the Lok Sabha Elections 2024. The portal published two reports, purportedly documenting hate speeches against Muslims in India, fanning the narrative of Islamophobia. These reports have been made the basis of several articles by national and international media to highlight the rhetoric of Islamophobia in India, especially during the run-up to the Lok Sabha Elections 2024. Following the suspension of both his portals in India, a New Delhi-based **Internet Freedom Foundation (IFF)** is now representing Raqib to challenge the ban on his portals.⁹⁹ Not surprisingly, the individuals engaged with IFF in Raqib's case have also been part of the same nexus – Soros and Thakur Foundation.

Most recently, India Hate Lab's report was promoted by one Washington DC-based 'Dangerous Speech Project', which rated India as a 'violent Islamophobic' country ahead of the general elections by citing the IHL report.¹⁰⁰ As per its website, receives its operational funding solely from private foundations, including the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the Open Society Foundations.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ <https://scroll.in/latest/1062244/x-account-of-hindutva-watch-withheld-in-india>

⁹⁸ https://www.aljazeera.com/author/raqib_hameed_naik_200331040916878

⁹⁹ <https://internetfreedom.in/delhi-hc-issues-notice-on-hindutva-watches-petition-challenging-the-blocking-of-their-entire-x-twitter-account-2/>

¹⁰⁰ <https://dangerousspeech.org/violent-islamophobia-india-elections/>

¹⁰¹ <https://dangerousspeech.org/funding/>

Chapter 9: South Asia Scholar Activist Collective

Formed in July 2021, the South Asia Scholar Activist Collective (SASAC) describes itself as a group of scholars, activists, and students of South Asian studies and adjacent fields based in North America.¹⁰² The group claims to tackle and fight what it states as Hindutva ideology, otherwise known as Hindu nationalism.¹⁰³ After its formation, SASAC established its social media mainly on Facebook on July 17, 2021.¹⁰⁴

SASAC is also behind the initiative Hindutva Harassment Field Manual.¹⁰⁵ To date, SASAC has been one of the key forces behind numerous projects in the US including supporting the Dismantling Global Hindutva (DGH) event,¹⁰⁶ to show support for implementing caste in the US university anti-discrimination policies.¹⁰⁷ The group also supported Seattle's Proposed Ordinance to ban caste discrimination,¹⁰⁸ and the group also supported Equality Labs' campaign on caste in the US, based on a single rigged Caste survey published in 2018 (and duly funded by philanthropic fronts like Open Society Foundations, Luminate Group, New Media Ventures, and Ford Foundation).^{109 110}

The key members of SASAC are as follows:

- i. **Manan Ahmed**, Columbia University
- ii. **Ananya Chakravarti**, Georgetown University
- iii. **Rohit Chopra**, Santa Clara University
- iv. **Purnima Dhavan**, University of Washington
- v. **Supriya Gandhi**, Yale University
- vi. **Simran Jeet Singh**, Aspen Institute
- vii. **Davesh Soneji**, University of Pennsylvania
- viii. **Dheepa Sundaram**, University of Denver
- ix. **Audrey Truschke**, Rutgers University-Newark

¹⁰² South Asia Scholar Activist Collective. United States, 2021. Web Archive. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, www.loc.gov/item/lcwaN0038303/

¹⁰³ <https://www.southasiacollective.org/>

¹⁰⁴ https://www.facebook.com/southasiascholaractivistcollective/about_profile_transparency

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.hindutvaharassmentfieldmanual.org/>

¹⁰⁶ https://www.southasiacollective.org/statements/statement-of-support-for-adding-caste-to-us-university-anti-discrimination_1

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.southasiacollective.org/statements/statement-of-support-for-adding-caste-to-us-university-anti-discrimination>

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.southasiacollective.org/statements/support-for-seattles-anti-casteism-ordinance>

¹⁰⁹ https://www.instagram.com/sikhprof/p/CrtP9kPo-zy/?img_index=1

¹¹⁰ <https://billtexts.s3.amazonaws.com/ca/ca-analysishttps-leginfo-legislature-ca-gov-faces-billAnalysisClient-xhtml-bill-id-202320240SB403-ca-analysis-361427.pdf>

South Asia Scholar Activist Collective (SASAC)

Board Members:



Audrey Truschke
Rutgers University

Member of American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS)
AIPS 2012-13 Fellow to Pakistan.
Member of Board of Advisors of Students Against
Hindutva Ideology (SAHI)



Manan Ahmed
Columbia University

Mentor of Audrey Truschke.
Trustee of American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS)
Member of the Project "MUSLIMS IN INDIA" funded by
Henry Luce Foundation.



Dheepa Sundaram
University of Denver

2023 Luce-AAR Advancing Public Scholarship Grant
Headed "Hindutva-Explained" Project from the grant.



Most recently, on May 14, 2023, SASAC released a statement denouncing U.S. legislation for recognizing and endorsing 'Hinduphobia'.¹¹¹ It was also shared by SASAC member and Rutgers University Newark professor Audrey Truschke on her X handle.¹¹²

Audrey and Manan also also associated through AIPS. Audrey Truschke is married to an American citizen (from Monterey, California) **Thane Rehn**, who worked at the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan in 2007.¹¹³ In 2012-13, Audrey was selected as one of the three candidates for short-term Fellowship to Pakistan by the **American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS)** in 2012-13 for 3 months. AIPS was formed in 1973 to foster scholarly exchange between the USA & Pakistan.¹¹⁴ ¹¹⁵ Manan Ahmed served as a trustee on the board of AIPS until 2017.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ <https://www.southasiacollective.org/statements/against-legislation-on-hinduphobia>

¹¹² <https://x.com/AudreyTruschke/status/1790898605328318687>

¹¹³ <https://www.facebook.com/thane.rehn>

¹¹⁴ <https://www.pakistanstudies-aips.org/content/aips-short-term-2012-13-fellows-are-selected>

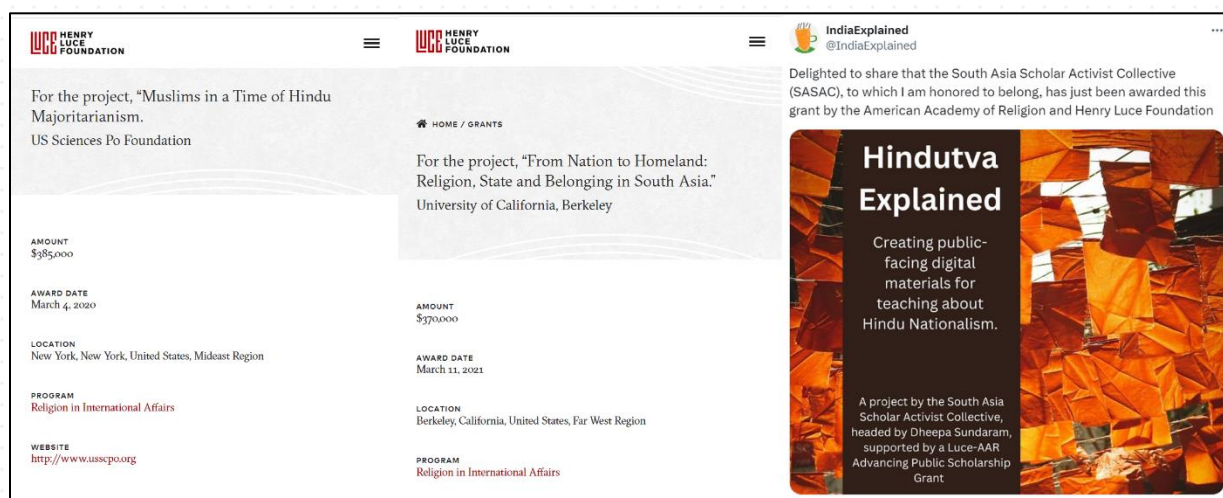
¹¹⁵ <https://www.pakistanstudies-aips.org/content/aips-member-publishes-book-1>

¹¹⁶ <https://web.archive.org/web/20171212191405/http://www.pakistanstudies-aips.org/about/board-of-trustees>

Grant from Henry Luce Foundation

In May 2023, SASAC member **Dheepa Sundaram**, assistant professor of religion at the University of Denver was awarded under the Luce-AAR Advancing Public Scholarship Grant program, duly funded by the Henry Luce Foundation.

The Luce-AAR Advancing Public Scholarship Grant is a grant program funded by the Henry Luce Foundation and administered by the American Academy of Religion (AAR). The goal of this grant is to support projects that connect the scholarly study of religion to a broader public audience and promote the public understanding of religion.¹¹⁷ Dheepa was granted up to USD 5000 for the project, **“Hindutva Explained: Creating public-facing digital materials for teaching about Hindu Nationalism”**^{118 119}



HLF grant to SASAC Member

As a result, in February 2024, SASAC published a report titled, *“Reporting Guide on Hindu Nationalism”* co-authored by Manan Ahmed, Ananya Chakravarti, Ken Chitwood, Rohit Chopra, Dheepa Sundaram, and Audrey Truschke.¹²⁰ The report is based on sources and reports including Freedom House Reports, Hindutva Watch, Amnesty International’s India report, EU DisinfoLab’s EU Chronicles report, and Equality Labs’s Caste survey report. Worth noting that Freedom House, Hindutva Watch, and Equality Labs – all have been repeatedly exposed for fabrication and propaganda.

¹¹⁷ <https://aarweb.org/AARMBR/AARMBR/About-AAR.aspx?hkey=32443cfe-2a95-439d-a625-25831c44b085>

¹¹⁸ <https://aarweb.org/AARMBR/AARMBR/Publications-and-News/Newsroom-/News-/2023/2023-Luce-AAR-APS-Grant-Winners.aspx>

¹¹⁹ <https://www.scu.edu/cas/internal/communication/college-notes/2022-23-archive/23-may-19/>

¹²⁰ <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/6071ade75ec5cc32d610231f/t/65bebe8c9bd37e7b4b0abbda/1706999437043/SASAC+Hindu+Nationalism+Reporting+Guide.pdf>

Dr. Audrey Truschke @AudreyTruschke · Feb 5
Hot off the press — The **Hindu Nationalism Reporting Guide**, edited by SASAC.

Read and share widely please.

P.S. — it's useful for teaching as well as for journalists.

hindutvahasmentfieldmanual.org/s/SASAC-Hindu-...



Nationalism 2024

HINDUTVA IS A POLITICAL IDEOLOGY

The idea of Hindutva has remained stable over the years, especially in its core goal of making India, a constitutionally secular state, into a Hindu nation, where some Indians will be more equal than others.

This Reporting Guide provides extensive background on Hindu nationalism, what it is, where it comes from, what advocacy organizations and human rights groups are saying about it and what the future might hold for Hindutva.

3 **Who is impacted?**
4 **Key terms**
5 **Frequently asked questions**
6 **Additional resources**

246 465 70K

HindutvaWatch @HindutvaWatchIn Subscribe

Reporting Guide on Hindu Nationalism 2024



Reporting Guide on Hindu Nationalism 2024

Reporting Guide on Hindu Nationalism 2024 (SASAC) - Hindutva Watch

From hindutvawatch.org

7:04 PM · Feb 6, 2024 · 849 Views

Indian American Muslim Council @IAMCouncil

Attention Reporters!

Here is your guide on Hindu Nationalism:

religionlink.com/reporting-on/r...

Reporting on Hindu Nationalism

Hindu nationalism is a far-right political ideology of Hindu supremacy. Also known as Hindutva (meaning "Hindu-ness"), it was first articulated in India in the 1920s.

The concept has remained stable over the years, especially in its core objective of turning India, a constitutionally secular state, into "a Hindu Rashtra (nation) where some Indians will be more equal than others."

This Reporting Guide provides extensive background on Hindu nationalism, what it is, where it comes from, what advocacy organizations and human rights groups are saying about it and what the future might hold for Hindutva.

10:30 PM · Aug 9, 2023 · 1,994 Views

IndiaExplained @IndiaExplained

Hello, friends. Thrilled to share this 44-page Reporting Guide on Hindu nationalism that me and my colleagues--@sepyo, Ananya Chakravarti, @themosisyphus & @AudreyTruschke -- have worked on for months, in collaboration with ReligionLink religionlink.com/reporting-on/r... Thanks @kchitwood



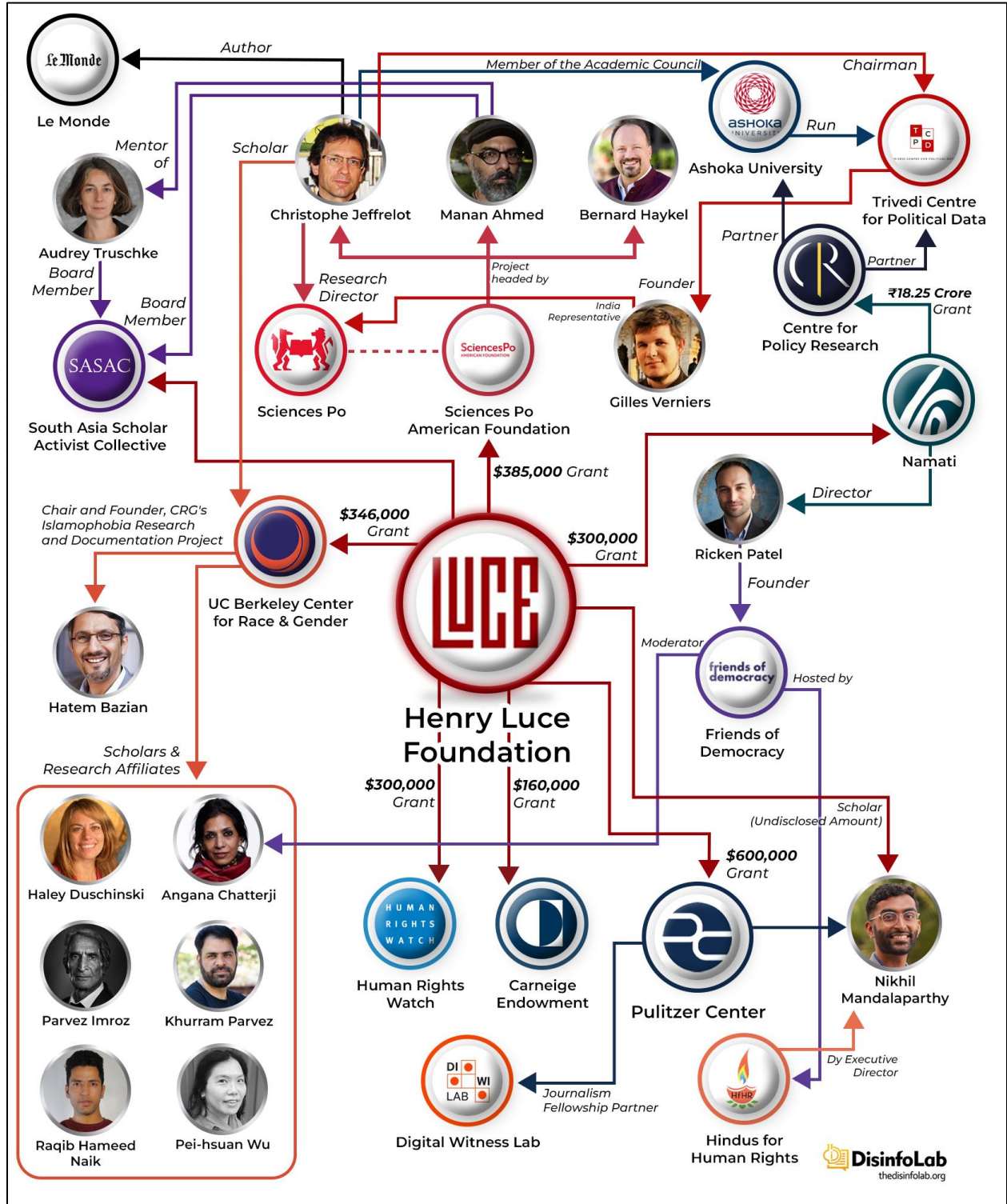
9:25 PM · Aug 10, 2023 · 14.6K Views

Key amplifiers of the SASAC report

Henry Luce Foundation Grants Beneficiaries

S. No.	Grantee	Year	Grants
1	South Asia Scholar Activist Collective (SASAC)	2023	\$5,000.00
2	Center For Race And Gender (UC Berkeley)	2021	\$370,000.00
3	Council on Foreign Relations	2021	\$125,000.00
4	Pulitzer Center	2021	\$100,000.00
5	Sciences Po U.S. Foundation	2020	\$385,000.00
6	Carnegie Endowment for International Peace	2020	\$120,000.00
7	Human Rights Watch	2020	\$300,000.00
8	Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs	2020	\$346,000.00
9	Council on Foreign Relations	2020	\$395,000.00
Total			\$2,146,000.00

Network and Funding of Henry Luce Foundation on Indian General Elections 2024



Part III: Circle of Life – From One Philanthropist to Another

It is a compulsion for all ‘philanthropists’ to spread the net wide – and hence, some of the funding might have to go to people who may not fully fall into the agenda. Hence, the philanthropists cultivate a set of loyal ‘experts’ who could be relied upon to push the agenda as brazenly as possible, as these experts do not have much credibility nor do they care. To this end, various funding groups converge.

Is it surprising why HLF funded many fronts funded by Soros/ OSF – even if they were exposed repeatedly?

Chapter 10: Friends of Democracy or Friends of Soros?

In March 2023, a new domain named **Friends of Democracy** (www.friends-of-democracy.net) was registered and the portal was live in the subsequent months.¹²¹ Based in New York, **Friends of Democracy** claims to fight against the ruling party of India to ‘save’ the Indian democracy, calling India a country whose democracy is hanging on a ‘thread’ due to big techs and Hindu ‘extremism’.¹²²

As per the old version of its website, Friends of Democracy was hiring for two positions, i.e., Head of Digital and National Coordinator, Friends of India Democracy UK for £40,000 & £50,000 annually on a one-year contract.¹²³ While not much detail about its employees is available, as per the only detail available on its website, the chair of Friends of Democracy is **Ricken Patel**, who (as per the further details mentioned on the website) was the founding CEO of Avaaz, one of the world's leading movements for democracy.¹²⁴

Fun Fact: There exists another platform by the name Friends of Democracy PAC, co-founded by George Soros’ son Jonathan Soros.¹²⁵ Same name, coincidence much?

Another person identified as an employee of FoD is Sydney-based **Oliver Courtney**, who is employed as the Co-Managing Director of FoD since March 2023. As per his professional profile, he has worked with Bloomberg, CDP, Clean Air Fund, Chatham House, European Climate Foundation, Greenpeace, Oxford University, Johns Hopkins University, Save the Children, Sundance, TED, Transparency International, Oxfam, WaterAid, World Economic Forum, WWF, the UN, 350.org. He also previously worked at **Global Witness** as a Communications Officer (Oct 2009 - Nov 2011) and head of news (Apr 2012 - Aug 2017).¹²⁶

On September 5, 2023, Friends of Democracy (FoD) published a blog titled, **‘India spent \$61.2 billion on Russian fossil fuels since the start of the Ukraine war’**.¹²⁷ The admin of the article was **Respublica**.

¹²¹ <https://who.is/whois/friends-of-democracy.net>

¹²² <https://www.friends-of-democracy.net/post/big-tech-and-the-bjp-vs-indian-democracy>

¹²³ <https://web.archive.org/web/20231023140653/https://www.friends-of-democracy.net/>

¹²⁴ <https://www.friends-of-democracy.net/blank-1>

¹²⁵ <https://www.newamerica.org/our-people/jonathan-soros/>

¹²⁶ <https://www.linkedin.com/in/ocourtney/details/experience/>

¹²⁷ <https://web.archive.org/web/20231024103844/https://www.friends-of-democracy.net/post/india-spent-61-2-billion-on-russian-fossil-fuels-since-the-start-of-the-ukraine-war>



Credits: Friends of Democracy website

Respublica, and Ricken Patel

Respublica is a British independent public policy think tank, founded in 2009, by English political philosopher, and Anglican theologian, Phillip Bond. “*Res Publica, a global civic advocacy group, and Moveon.org, an online public policy advocacy group*” funded by George Soros’ Open Society Foundations.¹²⁸

The chair of Friends of Democracy, **Ricken Patel** is a Canadian–British activist and the founding President and CEO of numerous organizations including **Respublica**,¹²⁹ and **Avaaz**. Ricken Patel is also the founding executive director of ResPublica.¹³⁰ Patel co-founded in 2006 along with **Tom Pravda, Eli Pariser, Andrea Woodhouse, Jeremy Heimans, and David Madden** and Moveon.Org while being associated with Respublica.¹³¹ Patel stepped down in 2021. Patel was also on the Board of Directors of Namati which George Soros is part of as one of the network members.¹³² Besides, Ricken Patel has previously worked for the International Crisis Group, the Rockefeller Foundation, the International Center for Transitional Justice, and Res Publica. Ricken Patel also served on the advisory board of

¹²⁸ https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/grants/past?filter_keyword=moveon.org

¹²⁹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20121120184938/http://therespublica.org/AboutUs.htm>

¹³¹ <https://www.rickenpatel.net/about>

¹³² <https://namati.org/people/ricken-patel/>

Access Now.¹³³ Founded in 2009, Access Now is a nonprofit organization that claims to defend and extend the digital rights of users around the world.¹³⁴

Note:

Access Now's name surfaced in October 2023 when it was endorsed by Apple, in their alleged "state-sponsored" security threat notifications to opposition political leaders in India. Besides, individuals from Access Now including Ben Grazda have been seen peddling the narrative of Pak-Jamaat-backed anti-India Islamist fronts (exposed in the previous reports by DisinfoLab- Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC), Foundation the London Story (FTLS), and South Asia Solidarity Group among others. Grazda was also one of the speakers at the three-day event 'India on the Brink Summit' held in February 2021, which insinuated that India was on the verge of genocide.

Access Now and Avaaz

Executive Director and co-founder of Access Now, Brett Solomon previously served as Campaign Director at Avaaz. Notably, Brett Solomon transitioned from his role at Avaaz to co-found Access Now, indicating a shared ethos across these organizations.

To summarize, Ricken Patel is a go-to man for projects funded by George Soros.

- He was on the board of directors of NAMATI, which George Soros is part of.
- Ricken Patel is one of the founding members of Respublica.
- He also cofounded Avaaz and served on its board until 2021.
- He served on the advisory board of Access Now.

And, all these fronts- Respublica,¹³⁵ Avaaz, and Access Now have been funded by **Open Society Foundations (OSF)**.

NAMATI

Established in 2011, Namati is a legal advocacy non-profit organization headquartered in the US, on the advisory board sits George Soros who donates hefty funds to the organization via OSF.¹³⁶ Namati is essentially a legal empowerment partner of OSF.

¹³³ <https://web.archive.org/web/20110223054201/https://www.accessnow.org/about>

¹³⁴ <https://www.accessnow.org/about-us/>

¹³⁵ https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/grants/past?filter_keyword=Res+Publica

¹³⁶ <https://namati.org/people/george-soros/>

OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS		WHO WE ARE	HOW WE WORK	WHAT WE DO	Q	≡
▼	Namati, Inc.			2022		\$4,000,000
Description	to provide general support	Theme	Justice Reform & The Rule Of Law	Term	2 years	
		Region	Global	Funder	Foundation to Promote Open Society	
▶	Internship			2019		\$9,970
▶	Namati, Inc.			2019		\$9,670,000
▶	Namati, Inc.			2016		\$180,000

Namati is also a recipient of the Henry Luce Foundation funding, apart from receiving funding from several other organizations like the US Department of State, Luminate group, American Jewish World Service, and UK Aid among others.¹³⁷ On March 10, 2022, Henry Luce Foundation donated \$300,000 to Namati for the purpose of “supporting grassroots policy development activities related to democracy, ethics, and public trust.”

HENRY LUCE FOUNDATION		LUCE SCHOLARS	OUR WORK	OUR PROGRAMS	GRANTS	NEWS	ABOUT	SEARCH Q
To support grassroots policy development activities related to democracy, ethics, and public trust.								
Namati								
AMOUNT	\$300,000							
AWARD DATE	March 10, 2022							
LOCATION	Washington, District of Columbia, United States, Mideast Region							
PROGRAM	Democracy, Ethics, and Public Trust							
WEBSITE	https://namati.org/							

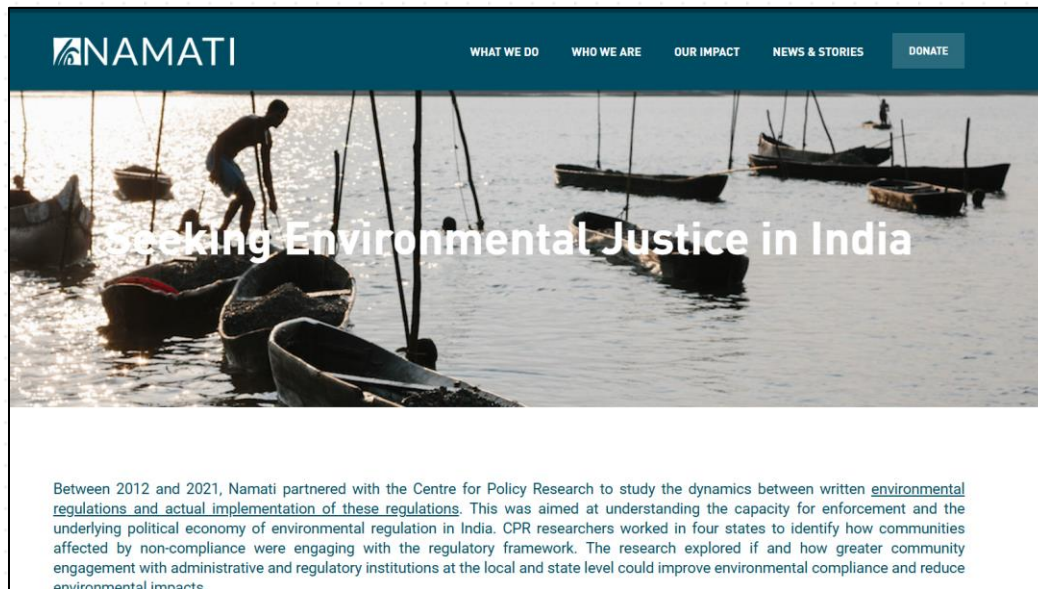
NAMATI & CPR

In December 2022, the Income Tax Department sent a 33-pager show cause notice to CPR alleging that the think tank was in violation of being involved in activities that were “*not in accordance with the objects and the conditions subject to which it was registered*”.¹³⁸ The I-T notice asked for an explanation from CPR for receiving donations from a Washington DC-based organization, **Namati**, for allegedly using the funds to litigate and file cases. Namati

¹³⁷ <https://namati.org/who-we-are/our-supporters/>

¹³⁸ <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/delhi-hc-seeks-centres-stand-on-plea-by-think-tank-against-fcra-licence-cancellation/articleshow/108795830.cms?from=mdr>

is a legal empowerment partner of the George Soros-led and funded Open Society Foundations.^{139 140}



Finding discrepancies, the following year on February 27, 2023, the Government of India canceled the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) registration of CPR was suspended for 180 days on grounds of violations found during the IT Department proceedings.¹⁴¹ Subsequently, CPR lost its Tax exemption status to the Income Tax department on June 30, 2023.¹⁴² On January 10, 2024, the FCRA license of CPR was canceled for allegedly mis-utilizing foreign funds to affect India's economic interests, and aid protests and legal battles against development projects.¹⁴³

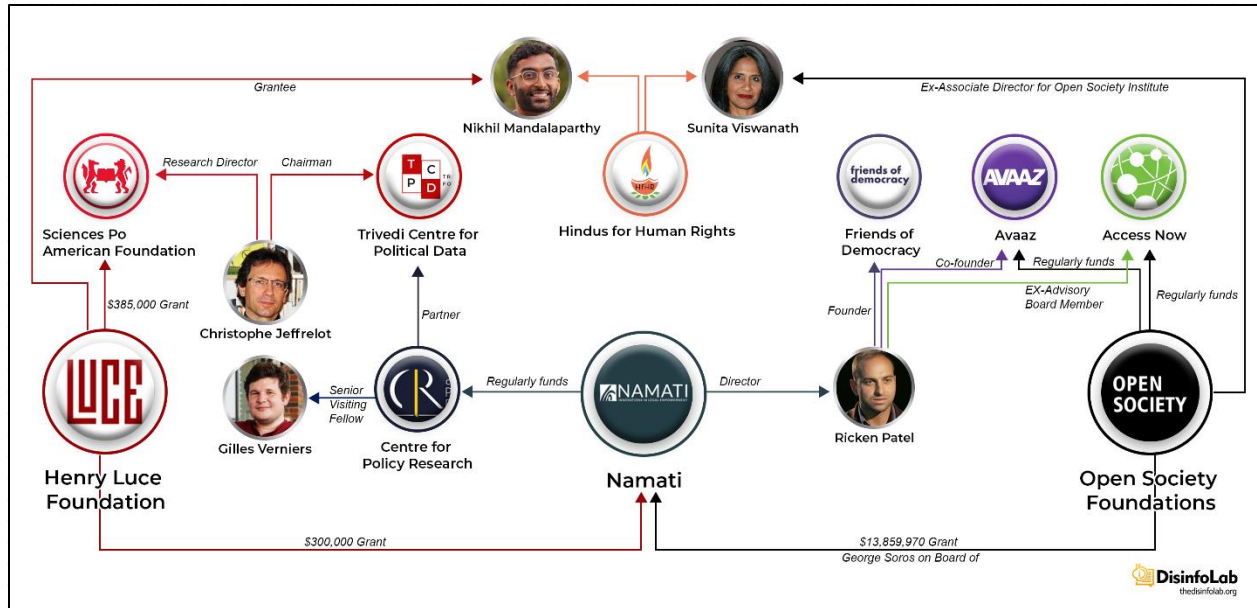
¹³⁹ <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/centre-for-policy-research-says-its-donors-include-over-30-organisations-among-them-the-government-of-india/article66573297.ece>

¹⁴⁰ <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/centre-for-policy-research-loses-tax-exemption-status/article67042741.ece>

¹⁴¹ <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/centre-for-policy-research-says-its-donors-include-over-30-organisations-among-them-the-government-of-india/article66573297.ece>

¹⁴² <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/centre-for-policy-research-loses-tax-exemption-status/article67042741.ece>

¹⁴³ <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/fcra-licence-of-think-tank-centre-for-policy-research-cancelled-9112869/>



Between 2012 and 2021, Namati partnered with CPR for an environmental justice programme. Namati paid CPR a total of Rs 11.55 crores between 2016-17 and 2020-21 alone.¹⁴⁴ In the notice to CPR, the IT Department had asserted that the purpose of this program was for litigation purposes and filing complaints rather than any educational purpose.

¹⁴⁴ <https://www.newslaundry.com/2023/07/17/layoffs-pay-cuts-inside-cprs-financial-crisis-after-fcra-funds-tax-exemption-axed>

Chapter 11: Friends of Democracy & Indian Elections

Prior to the start of the Lok Sabha Elections in India, Friends of Democracy conducted a series named “**Conversations on Indian Democracy**” between March 22, 2024, and April 12, 2024.¹⁴⁵ During this period, Friends of Democracy organized four webinars/ online events:

- a. **March 22, 2024:** Tiruchi Siva (Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament for Tamil Nadu) in conversation with Dr. Vineeta Yadav (Associate Professor, Penn State University).
- b. **March 29, 2024:** Tikender Panwar, Former Deputy Mayor of Shimla and member of CPIM.
- c. **April 5, 2024:** Dr. Manoj Jha (Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament - RJD - for Bihar) in conversation with Dr. Poulomi Chakrabarti (Assistant Professor at Queen's University and visiting scholar at Harvard University)
- d. **April 12, 2024:** Dr. Angana Chatterji (Research Anthropologist and Founding Co-chair, Political Conflict, Gender and People’s Rights Initiative at the Center for Race and Gender at the University of California, Berkeley)¹⁴⁶



Recent events of Friends of Democracy

¹⁴⁵ <https://www.friends-of-democracy.net/post/a-glimpse-into-the-indian-political-process-as-we-approach-the-2024-elections>

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.friends-of-democracy.net/post/a-glimpse-into-the-indian-political-process-as-we-approach-the-2024-elections>

Friends of Democracy Moderators

While not many faces have been made public by FoD, the events it organized were being moderated on the device of the Hindus for Human Rights (HfHR) Communications Director, **David Kalal**. Whereas, FoD events were also promoted by HfHR on social media, including by Sunitha Vishwanath.¹⁴⁷



(To know more about HfHR and Sunitha, please refer to our report ‘**HfHR: Hindus For Hire Heads they win/ Tails you lose**’)¹⁴⁸

Modi Mirage

While the elections were underway in India, on May 6, 2024, Friends of Democracy sponsored a report titled, “**The Modi Mirage: New study indicates decline in India’s global reputation under BJP**”.¹⁴⁹ The report has been curated and co-authored by Professor **Irfan Nooruddin** from Georgetown University, US, **Dr Subir Sinha** from London University's School of Oriental and African Studies, UK, and **Dr Ritumbra Manuvie** from Groningen University, The Netherlands. “Modi Mirage” relies on a synthesis of recent research by the Pew Research Center in the US, V-Dem, **Carnegie Endowment for International Peace** in Washington, Canadian consultancy GlobeScan, US poll firm GQY, and UK’s YouGov.

¹⁴⁷ <https://www.instagram.com/p/C5BVWyGOBS0/>

¹⁴⁸ <https://thedisinfoLab.org/hfhr-hindus-for-hire/>

¹⁴⁹ <https://www.friends-of-democracy.net/post/the-modi-mirage>

Subir Sinha

Subir Sinha is the Director of the South Asia Institute of SOAS University of London and one of the members of George Soros' **Open Society University Network (OSUN)**.^{150 151}

Note: The Open Society University Network (OSUN) was launched by George Soros on January 23, 2020, as a project to create a network of universities with a seeding funding of one billion dollars.¹⁵² The founding institutions of OSUN are the Bard College, New York, U.S., and Central European University, Vienna, Austria. Notable members of OSUN include Sciences Po in Paris, SOAS University of London, Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, and London School of Economics among others.¹⁵³

In June 2023, Subir Sinha led an 'independent panel of inquiry' into the communal violence that broke out in Leicester between August and September 2022.¹⁵⁴ The Open Society Foundations exclusively funded the project of the London School of Economics (LSE).¹⁵⁵ Eventually, the LSE painted the entire incident as a result of rising Hindu nationalism under the under-ruling party of India, as evident from the articles it published or shared pertaining to the Leicester, while also echoing the narrative of "Hindu supremacism".^{156 157}

Between July 15-20, 2024, the Open Society University Network (OSUN) is organizing a six-day summer school crash course '*Demographic Imaginaries: Soft Authoritarianism, Majoritarian Identity Politics and Demographic Anxieties.*' The six-day course is being convened jointly by the Soft Authoritarianisms Research Group, University of Bremen along with OSUN.¹⁵⁸ One of the faculty members of the course is the former CPR member and Professor of Anthropology at the London School of Economics and Political Science, Mukulika Banerjee.

Irfan Nooruddin

The second co-author of Modi Mirage is **Irfan Nooruddin**, Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani Professor of Indian Politics at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. He has a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Michigan, and a B.A. in Economics and International Studies from Ohio Wesleyan University.¹⁵⁹ He was the Director as well as a nonresident

¹⁵⁰ <https://www.soas.ac.uk/about/news/new-director-named-soas-south-asia-institute>

¹⁵¹ <https://opensocietyuniversitynetwork.org/about/members/>

¹⁵² [George Soros Launches Global Network to Transform Higher Education - Open Society Foundations](#)

¹⁵³ <https://opensocietyuniversitynetwork.org/about/members/>

¹⁵⁴ <https://www.soas.ac.uk/about/news/soas-support-independent-commission-inquiry-leicester-violence>

¹⁵⁵ [Research Projects \(lse.ac.uk\)](https://www.lse.ac.uk/research-projects/)

¹⁵⁶ <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/religionglobalsociety/2023/12/hindutva-and-the-leicester-disturbances/>

¹⁵⁷ [Hindu supremacism, 'anti-gender' politics, and feminist resistance | Engenderings \(lse.ac.uk\)](#)

¹⁵⁸ <https://yisares.uni-bremen.de/>

¹⁵⁹ <https://www.irfannooruddin.org/me.html>

senior fellow of the South Asia Center at the Atlantic Council.¹⁶⁰ On September 20, 2023, Nooruddin attended the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) hearing on Advancing Religious Freedom within the U.S.-India Bilateral Relationship.¹⁶¹ He also submitted his written testimony on Manipur Conflict, and Islamophobia, and raised concerns about religious freedom in India.¹⁶²

Ritumbra Manuvie

The third co-author of Modi Mirage is Ritumbra Manuvie the co-founder of the Netherlands-based **Foundation the London Story (FTLS)**. As exposed in our earlier reports, FTLS, is essentially an extended front of the US-based Jamaat nexus in Europe. As per its website, FTLS claims to “investigate human rights violations and abuses, analyze and document governmental and non-governmental action that perpetuates or ignores human rights abuses and violations, and advocate for justice, peace, and collective action against grave human rights violations.” However, under the pretext of this has been targeting and lobbying against India, peddling narratives against India, including Islamophobia, “Hindu nationalism and Majoritarianism”, collaborating with Pak-backed fronts Justice for All, Indian American Muslim Council, Hindus for Human Rights, etc.



¹⁶⁰ <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/expert/irfan-nooruddin/>

¹⁶¹ <https://www.uscirtf.gov/events/hearings/advancing-religious-freedom-within-us-india-bilateral-relationship-1>

¹⁶² <https://www.uscirtf.gov/sites/default/files/230920%20Nooruddin%20-%20USCIRF%20Testimony.pdf>

In 2021, FTLS Indian Solidarity Finland, The Liberal Indians- France, IAMC, InSAF, South Asia Solidarity, Peace Vigil, Hindus for Human Rights, India Civil Watch International, Scottish Indians for Justice, amongst other organizations organized the EU India People’s Summit from May 1-8.¹⁶³ Through this summit, these groups (many of which are documented as exposed by DisinfoLab) aimed to influence the policymakers in the European Union (EU) in its relation with India.¹⁶⁴



These groups were also active in the Indian elections, On May 5, 2024, the South Asia Solidarity Group (SASG) organized a protest outside Parliament Square in London over the reasons it claimed as ‘unprecedented attacks on democracy in India’. The protest was co-organized by Unau Welfare International, Unau Welfare UK, UK Indian Muslim Council, StriveUK, Peace in India, Scottish Indians For Justice, Justice Campaign South Asia, Women Against Caste UK, The Rights Collective, Nijjor Manush, Hindus For Human Rights-UK, Movement For People’s Struggle (SL)-UK, Indian Labour Solidarity.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³ <https://euindiasummit.com/>

¹⁶⁴ <https://euindiasummit.com/home/the-eu-india-peoples-roadmap/>

¹⁶⁵ <https://x.com/SAsiaSolidarity/status/1784525301449462034>

VIGIL FOR DEMOCRACY IN INDIA

Join a protest against the
unprecedented attacks on democracy
in India

3 PM onwards | Sunday
5th May 2024
Parliament Square, London

sign up at tiny.cc/IndiaVigil

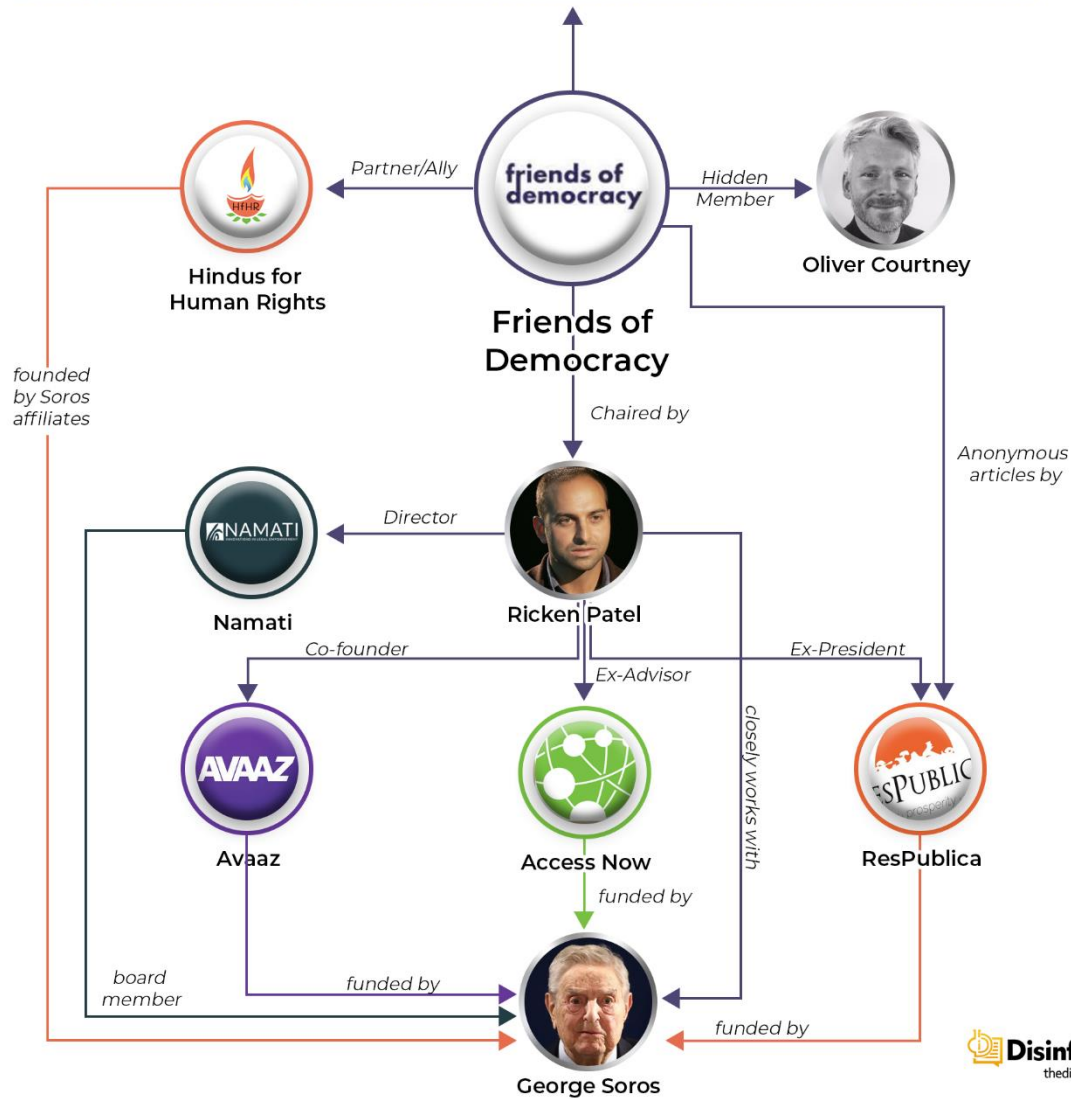


On April 17, 2024, Foundation London Story (FTLS), and members from several organizations staged protests outside Meta’s London headquarters alleging that the tech giant had been complicit and had been profiting from the hate-inciting posts on Facebook and for enabling the spread of misinformation ahead of India’s 2024 general elections.¹⁶⁶ FTLS outlined 10-pointer measures for Meta to undertake during the Indian elections which was supported by 38 other organizations including Friends of Democracy, India Civil Watch International, The Humanism Project, amongst others.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁶ <https://maktoobmedia.com/world/activists-create-crime-scene-before-metas-london-hq-protesting-its-complicity-in-hate-crimes/#:~:text=Meta's%20London%20headquarters%20was%20stormed,election%20that%20starts%20on%20Friday.>

¹⁶⁷ <https://thelondonstory.org/wp-content/uploads/Letter-to-Meta-by-38-CSOs-on-Indian-elections.pdf>

Friends of Democracy or Friends of Soros



Chapter: 12 – The Long-term Game

One may wonder about the purpose of this exercise. After all, no one seems to attend these events, no one bothers to read their reports – and above all – these are mostly discredited individuals. Then what motivates these ‘philanthropy’ fronts to keep funding them, other than the fact that the dollar could be printed at will?

The one evident output seems to be a long-term narrative. These ‘scholars’ and experts are involved in circuitous quoting each other’s work and thereby giving legitimacy to each other. Over time, they become part of news articles, research papers, Wikipedia, and now AI. The biases of AI have been established repeatedly but they do not create any impact. The propaganda continues.

For instance, Audrey Trushcke has co-authored a chapter in the book **‘Global Islamophobia and the Rise of Populism’** launched on May 23, 2024, and published by the Oxford University Press.¹⁶⁸ The book has been authored and edited by Sahar F Aziz and John L Esposito. Audrey’s chapter titled *‘Displacing and Disciplining Muslims in India’s Burgeoning Hindu Rashtra’*¹⁶⁹ focussed on topics such as Hindutva & Islamophobia in India, India and its settler colonial agenda in Kashmir, and a misleading section dedicated to how India’s Citizenship Amendment Act & National Register for Citizens (NRC) is “*endangering the citizenship of Indian Muslims*” deeming the anti-CAA riots in 2020 as pogrom.

While these were the narratives pontificated by Audrey, much of her chapter’s content referenced the works of Christophe Jaffrelot a total of 31 Times. This implies that the base of her 18-page chapter was primarily the literature published by Jaffrelot. This gives a fair idea as to how Jaffrelot, over the years has been established as an academic authority for commentary and research papers on India.

Both ‘independently’ funded by HLF on similar themes on India!

These cross references are then used to create stable narratives. Much of the Wikipedia search over topics ranging from Hindutva and even the History of India quotes or references Jaffrelots or Audreys. To put it in perspective, hyperlinks comprising CJ’s literary works and interviews have been used over 290 times, demonstrating the level of impact on the dissemination of narratives he has on Wikipedia, one of the most widely portals to extract information from cyberspace. Likewise, Audrey Truschke has been referenced over 82 times

¹⁶⁸ <https://academic.oup.com/book/56394>

¹⁶⁹ https://www.academia.edu/120217030/Displacing_and_Disciplining_Muslims_in_Indias_Burgeoning_Hindu_Rashtra?auto=download

on the portal. This goes on to show how the game of narrative seeding is made successful by quantifying the literary works to legitimize their narratives. And this is done with ease on one of the largest repositories of Information- Wikipedia.

Type	All	Direct	Indirect
Wikilinks (#)	290	290	0
Redirects (#)	1	–	–
Transclusions (#)	2	2	0

Type	All	Direct	Indirect
Wikilinks (#)	82	80	3
Redirects (#)	7	–	–
Transclusions (#)	2	2	0

Need collage of topics which have referenced Jaffrelot

Creating Synergies: Dismantling Global Hindutva

It would be pertinent to say that a few months after the funds were doled out by HLF to fronts that had Angana and Audrey respectively, an event known as “Dismantling Global Hindutva” was organized in September 2021. The first announcement of the DGH event was made on August 14, 2021, by its official Twitter handle created in August 2021.¹⁷⁰ The three-day event was organized from September 10-12, 2021. Over 1100 Academics including Audrey Truschke, Arjun Singh Sethi (lawyer), Gregory Stanton (Genocide Watch), and Apoorvanand (Professor) signed in support of the event, which was co-sponsored by 49+ universities and 60+ departments across the US.¹⁷¹

Subir Sinha is also a known voice in fueling the rhetoric of Hindu majoritarianism. In 2021, he was one of the signatories of the letter defending and supporting the event “Dismantling Global Hindutva. The three-day online event was convened by Audrey Truschke, Suchitra Vijayan, and co., wherein the speakers included the likes of Christophe Jaffrelot, Kavita Krishnan, and Meena Kandasamy.¹⁷² The event was also promoted by organizations including IAMC and HfHR.¹⁷³

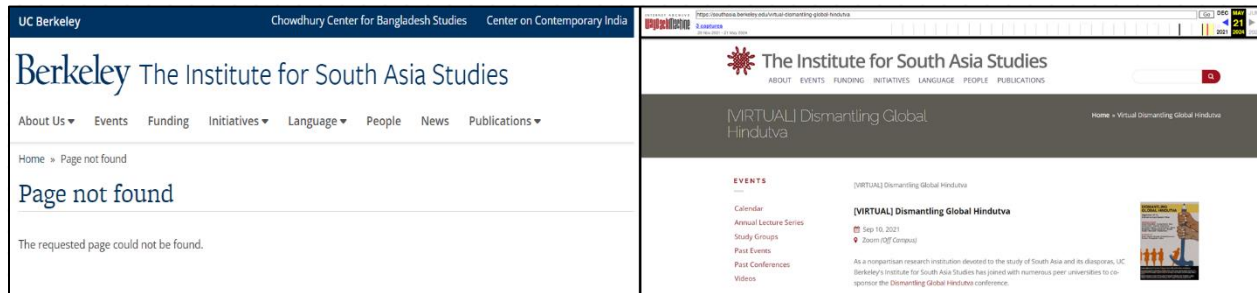
¹⁷⁰<https://web.archive.org/web/20210814180219/https://twitter.com/dghconference/status/1426564751585419272>

¹⁷¹ <https://dismantlinghindutva.com/academics-in-solidarity/>

¹⁷² <https://salc.uchicago.edu/dismantling-global-hindutva-september-10-september-12-2021-virtual-event>

¹⁷³ <https://www.hindupedia.com/images/e/e7/LettersFrom1100AcademicsInSupportForDGHConference.pdf>

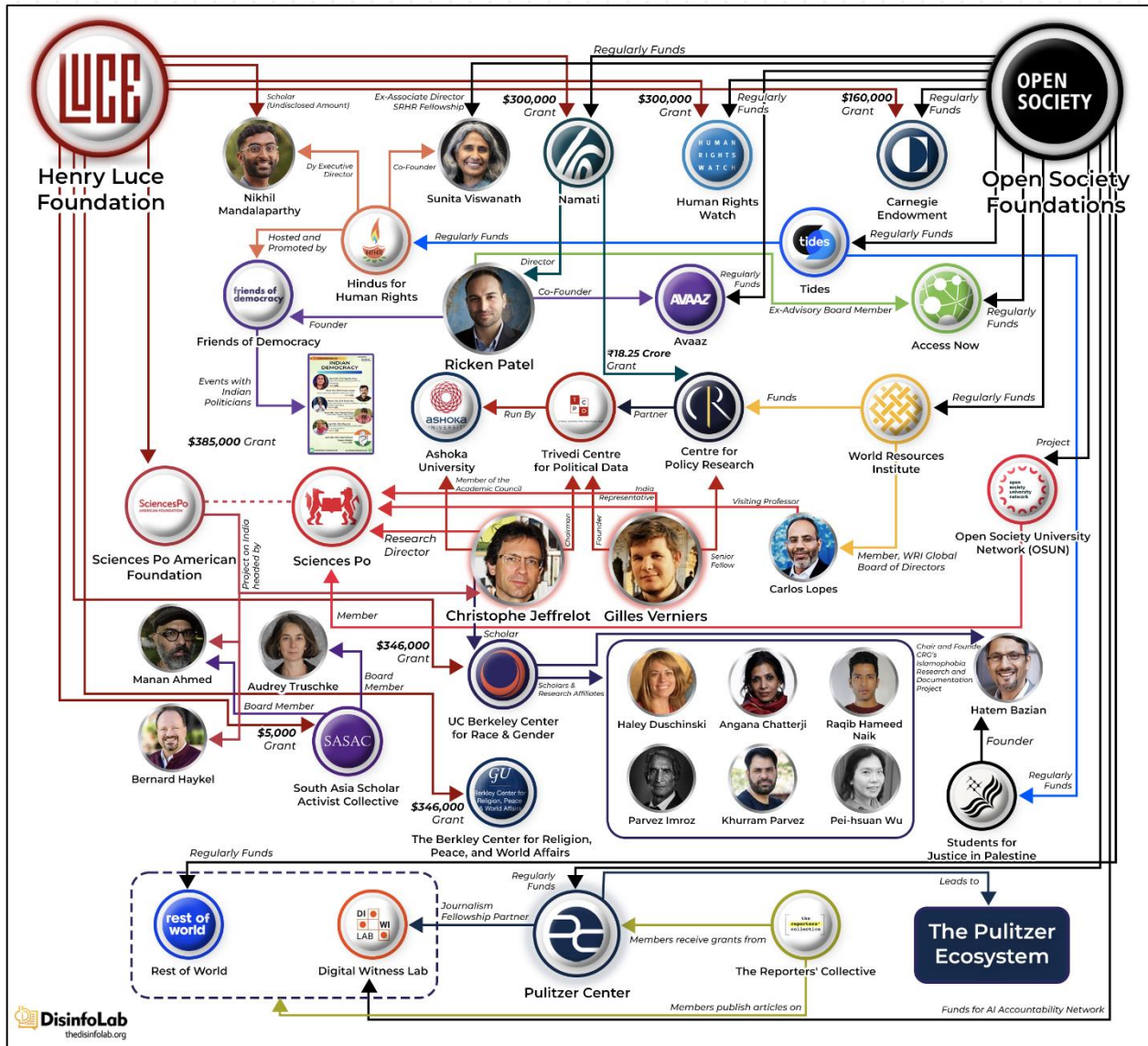
At the time of our investigation, Dismantling Global Hindutva was listed officially as the event on the South Asia section of the UC Berkeley website, which to our utter surprise was deleted within a week of our draft process.¹⁷⁴ The page of the DGH event was removed from the website of UC Berkeley the very next day we visited the particular webpage. We must be hallucinating, after all, the ‘big guys’ don’t do transnational repression.



¹⁷⁴ <https://web.archive.org/web/20240521010421/https://southasia.berkeley.edu/virtual-dismantling-global-hindutva>

Conclusion

In a world of about 7 billion people with at least a million experts/academics, it is surprising that one set of people keeps appearing in one front and another. The only constant – their funding and their agenda. The agenda is blatant anti-India and funding from ‘you know who’.



One actually marvels at the sheer brazenness of the nature of propaganda, which has outshined communist propaganda. The communist propaganda is said to be crude and brazen – in your face – type. However, the communist agenda is domestically driven. They need to make the domestic audience feel ‘hopeless’.

You know they are lying. They know they are lying; they also know that you know they are lying. They would still lie.

What was one to make of this communist-level propaganda from the land of capitalism? Is it meant to feel the 'third world' countries as hopeless as communists made their people? In other words, does the empire think of the rest of the world as its domestic turf, hopeless in the face of propaganda and capabilities to print endless currencies?

Well, hope not. As Rahim Saheb has said:

**अति का भला न बोलना, अति की भली न चूप,
अति का भला न बरसना, अति की भली न धूप।**