

ALL INDIA PEOPLES FORUM

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**Memorandum to the Chief Election Commissioner
on violations of the Election Code by political parties by illegal and manipulative use of
Religion in the Election Campaign, and defaming India's Defence forces
3 April 2019**

To the Chief Election commissioner
And Members of the Election Commission of India
New Delhi

Dear Sirs

The All India Peoples' Forum represents a cross section of the people of India, specially the urban and rural poor, the farmers, the working class, the youth, students and the marginalised groups including Tribals, Dalits and the Religious Minorities. In recent years, we have brought to the attention of governments and political parties impacting on the daily life and future of these sections of society. We have held conventions and rallies across the county in defence of Constitutional values and the secular and plural ethos of the country. On the eve of the General Elections, we have prepared a Peoples Charter bringing the issues of the common citizens to the notice of the leadership of the political parties participating in the polls.

We are closely monitoring the progress of the General Elections 2019. We congratulate the Election Commission for its management of the largest exercise in the world by the people electing a national government through universal adult franchise in a peaceful process. We appreciate your efforts at ensuring that the electoral process, specially the election campaign by political parties and their leaders follows the guidelines and Election Code, and the voting will be without fear and coercion.

We are therefore deeply disturbed at the abuse and violation of the Election Code by a Constitutional Authority, the Governor of a State of the Union, and by the Prime Minister of the country as also the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, among others, right in the beginning of a long-drawn campaign calendar.

A seven-judge constitution bench of the Supreme Court headed by Chief Justice T S Thakur on 2nd January 2017 ruled: "Seeking votes in the name of religion, caste or community amounted to corrupt practice and election of a candidate who indulged in it can be set aside."

<https://t.co/puPmJBW0i>

We list a very few of the instances of violations of the Election Code for your consideration and action. There are more than one dozen instances in few dates since campaigning began in the First Phase.

1. We are happy the Commission has found that the Governor of Rajasthan, Mr. Kalyan Singh, was in violation of the Code of Conduct when he addressed a political meeting in Uttar Pradesh, where he a once chief minister, and called for Mr. Narendrabhai Damodarabhai Modi to be re-

elected Prime minister for a second term. Mr. Kalyan Singh has issued no apology and the President of India is so far silent.

2. Mr. Modi's election campaign deserves the Election Commission's close monitoring and scrutiny. We are deeply disturbed at his direct rousing of the Hindu population of the country, the majority population, and his barked references to minority communities.

3. Just example will suffice. In UP in a campaign he spoke a sentence which has since then become his template and has been used often by the BJP's other campaigners. According to the Media, Mr. Modi makes it clear to the voters he alone represents the Hindus and can save them against terrorism and international enemies.

4. One representative headline says: Modi urges voters to punish Congress for Hindu terror slur, targets Rahul

https://www.business-standard.com/article/elections/modi-urges-voters-to-punish-congress-for-hindu-terror-slur-targets-rahul-119040100638_1.html

5. Mr. Modi has systematically brought in the Indian Defence Forces into his campaign rhetoric. The photographs of defence forces and martyrs as also the portrait of the IAF pilot, Wing Commander Abhinandan, who was shot down by Pakistan and who later was repatriated, were used in the BJP leader's campaign materiel. Mr. Modi has painted the Opposition leaders and the civil society as anti-national, anti-patriotic, and surrogates of Pakistan.

6. One of his major campaigners, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has gone the limit and reduced the brave Indian Army with a distinguished history and a proud heritage, to a feudal force commanded by Mr. Modi. The newspaper headlines say it:

Yogi Adityanath Calls Indian Army 'Modi ki Sena', Mamata Says Soldiers Belong to All

<https://www.news18.com/news/politics/yogi-adityanath-calls-indian-army-modi-ki-sena-mamata-says-soldiers-belong-to-all-2084667.html>

7. Addressing a rally in Ghaziabad, Adityanath said, "Congress ke log aatankvadiyon ko biryani khilate the aur Modi ji ki sena aatankvadiyon ko goli aur gola deti hai (Congress fed terrorists biryani while Modi's army feeds them bullets and bombs)."

8. This a most dangerous trend and does not augur good for the security of the country. We, therefore, urge the Election Commission to examine each of these speeches quoted here, and others, and to take the strictest action under the law of the land.

9. We would also urge the Election Commission to examine the issue of government departments conducting test in space, as also other developments which are not critical to the day to day governance of the country till a new government takes office at the culmination of the democratic electoral process now underway.

10. This is specially so in space sciences where ISRO, the space agency, has held the national flag high ever since it was established in the hopeful and exciting years after independence.

11. The All India People's Forum also requests you to examine the abuse and circumventing of existing rules and regulations governing satellite television channels, and the mushrooming of

channels such as NaMo TV which are coming into our households even though we have not subscribed to such channels. This aggravates the existing situation created by news channels who are one-sided and often. Communal coverage of news and events already vitiated the political and public environment.

12. Every Indian is justly proud of the major space achievements of the country. That we did all this often in the face of US and western non-cooperation and hostility because India was neutral in the Cold War, and a part of NAM, makes it an achievement specially something to cherish as a tribute to Indian genius.

We rejoiced in the first launch on the sands in Trivandrum.

We rejoiced when Sq. Leader Rakesh Sharma became the first Indian cosmonaut. We rejoiced when the Mangalyaan reached Mars and scored several Firsts despite western and Russian dominance in this area. We are looking to the day when the second Indian will go to space on board an Indian spacecraft.

We are proud of India in near self-sufficiency in missile and payload technology.

India and its space and military scientists have nothing more to prove to anyone. There is no use to display prowess in space and missile technology.

That verges on a violation of the election code.

We, with fellow citizens, await your decisions, and your action.

With regards,

On behalf of the AIPF,

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