



AN APPEAL TO INDIAN CITIZENS



**Justice
Movement
of India**

Educate. Empower. Encourage. Engage

THE STORY

Why do we now need the **Justice Movement of India**?

Our nation's founding members and freedom fighters poured their blood and sweat for our motherland, the fruits of which are the Independence of India in 1947. Since then, we have been able to lead life freely, respectably, and democratically. Our freedom fighters dreamed of a Progressive India that is free of Social Discrimination, Economic Inequality, Environmental Damage, and Political Injustice. To live by these principles in a liberal society, we adopted a constitution in 1950 and made amendments when deemed necessary.

Let us ask ourselves an important question. Today, do we truly live in a Progressive India? Since its independence in 1947, India has been navigating through economic uncertainties and political and policy changes. India has tremendous potential to be a leading global economy; however, we have struggled to attain holistic growth and development as a country. While we only focus on GDP or building robust roads and infrastructure, we are turning a blind eye towards quality of living and choosing to deprioritize the increasing poverty levels.

Retrospecting the 75 years journey of post-independence India, it is evident that we need to work rigorously towards the progressiveness our founding members envisioned in 1947. How do we get there? Before we answer this question and discuss potential solutions, let us first understand history. Because to create historical change, we should first know and understand our history.

Get ready for a journey through India's post-independence era to learn about implemented policies. We shall also look at how business ecosystems evolved in the 1990s after the emergence of liberalization.



THE STORY


Chapter 1: Is India a progressive nation?

Soon after achieving independence, the political class swiftly took control of India from founding members and leaders. Politicians had many opportunities to transform our country progressively; significant developments, such as establishing educational and research institutions, space research centers, and tremendous agricultural growth. From 1947 to 1990, India followed a policy framework called License and Permit Raj. This policy framework is also known as planning-based policy, inspired by the USSR (then Russia). The policy states that the government's permission is mandatory for any and every action.

It was during this period that the first five-year plan started (1951). The primary concern was to mitigate hunger and reduce severe poverty because 80-90% of the population's livelihood depended only on agriculture. India could attain these goals but only partially. In this phase, people's choices were strictly controlled.

The progress in agriculture resolved the hunger crisis. The green revolution played an instrumental role in this crisis resolution. However, the policymakers could not see the fact that poverty is a multifaceted phenomenon; to alleviate it, we need quality of work, quality of living, a reduction in malnutrition level, and an increase in income level. Therefore, working towards increasing the income level alone was insufficient to uplift the people below the poverty line. But the population was growing at a high rate, and GDP stagnated; the annual average was at the rate of 3-4%, and the government too was unable to meet the needs of the poor. Resultantly, poverty levels skyrocketed further.





THE STORY

During this period, entrepreneurs want to avoid establishing businesses because of massive taxes, and most industries were established and run by the government. For example, there was only one car company, and the government manufactured the cars. The public sector alone could not provide jobs, and thus unemployment increased. All these factors led to a crisis in India, resulting in liberalizing our economy, with the government's withdrawal of control on markets and private entities taking over. The year 1990 marked the beginning of Liberalization.

In the following chapter, we shall glimpse the post-liberalization era.

THE STORY

Chapter 2: Liberalization, is it a true breakthrough?

In the last chapter, we have seen an overview of India's political, economic, and social status after independence. The government-controlled most actions of citizens, including their wants and choices. Businesses could not boom because of the government's involvement in all key sectors. Although the hunger crisis was resolved through the green revolution, but poverty rose due to low quality of life and income level and stagnated GDP. 1990 marked the beginning of liberalization; private entities took over with the government's withdrawal of control of markets.

From 1990 to present-day India, the policy framework followed is Neoliberalism inspired by the USA. The Indian market was open to foreign investors and received FDI (Foreign direct investment). This led to a massive boom in the IT sector in cities like Hyderabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, and Kolkata. We have been moving towards an interconnected and globalized world as a country.

Our priority today is to eradicate poverty and achieve industrial growth. The state's control is out of the picture, and our wants have increased tremendously; we have various choices. On the other hand, the middle-class population has been growing continuously; but 60 % of the population still relies on agriculture for a livelihood. The GDP has increased, and the annual average is at the rate of 6-7%. However, this rapid economic growth did not result in employment. This era became an advantage to entrepreneurs due to tax reductions. Resultantly, startups flourished.



THE STORY

According to experts, India's primary achievement during this period was the poverty level reduction (which was true until the Covid-19 pandemic). However, these experts should have noted that the mere uplifting of people above the poverty line via a rise in the income level doesn't address multiple other facets of poverty, and these issues remain unattended. The neoliberal policy framework worked well to an extent, but it produced unprecedented problems such as:

- 1) Income Inequality; according to the Time to Care Oxfam report released in 2020, 42.8 % of total national wealth is in the hands of the Top 1% of the population, and the bottom 50% only own 2.8% of total national wealth.
- 2) Increase of monopoly power of big private companies with the help of politicians due to crony capitalism.
- 3) Violations of labour rights, unreasonably low wages, and punishing work hours.
- 4) Damage to the environment, the drain of natural resources, and climate change due to the irresponsibility of government and private companies.

This period saw a roadblock by the Global recession in 2008 (caused by the flaws of neoliberal policies practiced in the USA). Since then, this policy framework did not work well in any country; politicians and the media were all aware of this, yet masked the harsh truth and hard facts with layers of false emotions to divide the country to attain votes during elections.



THE STORY

That situation can be noticed in the United States and, unfortunately, very much in today's India. Even after 12 years of the downfall of the neoliberal policy framework, we are still working around failed policies and accelerating toward the privatization of everything. It fulfilled the wants and needs of only the top 1% of the population, and the remaining 99%, i.e., the middle class and the poor, are still struggling to meet basic needs. According to the recently released CMIE May-August report, the unemployment rate in India is 7.43%, which stands highest among graduates at 17.4%. These figures are comparable to those before the Covid 19 pandemic because India's economic crisis started in 2019.

The critical lesson to learn here is how a policy-making framework implemented by politicians is essential for the nation and community development. The current definition of development for our politicians is only GDP growth. The United Nations, in the year 1990, analysed and reported that GDP could not be an indicator of the quality of living in a country. Hence, the UN conceptualized the Human Development Index (HDI) to replace the GDP. The HDI is designed based on people's education, income, and health in a particular country. In 2022's Human Development Index report, India stood at 132nd Rank out of 191 recognized countries. That indicates that our country is in crisis due to the past 30 years of neoliberal policies.

In a democratic country like ours, people elect representatives to formulate policies for the welfare of the people. But our politicians are implementing policies & laws considering corporate interests and profits but not people's needs. Any voice raised against policies not focused on citizens' welfare is suppressed, threatening the constitutionally granted freedom of speech and freedom of expression.





THE STORY

That reduced India's ranking from 27th in the democracy index in 2014 to 46th in 2021. To be known as the largest democracy in the world and be labeled as flawed democracy is truly painful; every Indian citizen should know that we live in a broken democracy today.

In the following chapter, we shall look at a framework that has always been in place but has yet to implement effectively. Simultaneously, let us learn about the rise of a new spirit to build grass root level democracy in India.

THE STORY

Chapter 3: A new framework towards progressive India

In the last chapter, in detail, we understood the loopholes in neoliberalism and privatization, where we learned that superficial changes could not address grass-root level problems. What India needs to become a progressive nation is a new framework. A framework that does not require reinventing the wheel but the one that our freedom fighters and leaders advocated even before independence. In this chapter, let us look at the new framework.

The failure of Neoliberalism and privatization shows a need for a new policy framework in India; there is also an immediate need for change in politics because our political class, irrespective of political parties, has failed our country in many areas of development from 1947 till date. We have always hoped that responsible citizens, young and educated minds, would enter into politics and revolutionize the system. However, that did not happen, and as a society, we adjusted to the existing system and with corrupted politicians. It is now high time to change our thought process, politics, and policy framework as a whole.

The crisis in India can only be solved by bringing change in our political system and introducing a policy framework that is inherently crafted for the welfare of the people. Many leaders and experts view local self-governance as one such framework as the best; even our founding members have strongly advocated it before and since independence. So, let us now understand what it means and its implications.



THE STORY

In 1992, through the 73rd and 74th amendments to the constitution, local government bodies- Panchayati Raj system (rural self-governance) and Municipalities (urban self-governance) were made mandatory to be implemented by every state. Today, in India, we see power division in only two levels: Central and State. While we all know there is local self-governance, it is only nominal. The state government allocates less to no power to local government bodies. This hinders the decentralization of power needed to solve local problems like sanitation, improper roads, healthcare accessibility, education, electricity issues, etc. In fact, having power at community levels to solve local problems is what makes a grass root-level democracy.

Even though we have municipalities, municipal corporations, gram panchayats, Mandal, and Zilla Parishad entities, they need more resources and capacities. This is because state governments actively make a choice not to allow power, funds, staff, and policymaking to be decentralized. After more than 30 years of amendments, our state governments have conveniently ignored the effective implementation of local self-governance ; this led to urban flooding, inaccessibility of healthcare in rural areas, lack of employment, unsustainable development, and many more issues.

As we know, in 2015, the United Nations released 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) and set a target for every country to reach these goals by 2030. The UN recently released the 2022- SGDs Index, in which India stands 121 out of 166 countries. This index shows how we are lagging behind in all the developmental goals. Still, not very surprisingly, our politicians believe that development is only better roads and infrastructure and conveniently ignore the quality of education, healthcare, employment, quality work, sewage system, and environment.



THE STORY

Many social, economic, and political scholars and experts firmly believe we can achieve all 17 Sustainable Development Goals through grass root change and community sustainability. To build sustainable communities and make India a progressive nation, it is time for a new policy framework that replaces Neoliberalism, which has led to the current crisis in India. Solving this crisis is possible only through local self-governance. Decentralization and sustainable communities lead to the country's development as a whole. Moving from a centrally imposed market system to local markets is necessary. We must create community-based entrepreneurial ecosystems to solve local problems and create jobs. We need to safeguard our people and environment to aspiring for sustainable development. Sustainable community development and local market economy are alternatives to Neoliberalism and centralized Market economy.

Therefore, raising our voices against anti-people laws is necessary to restore and sustain democracy; however, still, the power is with the political class to make or break the country. To fight for progressive policies, there is another pathway in democracy, a road less travelled by the common people that is through contesting in the elections.

Aiming at grass-root level problem resolution, conserving nature, social harmony, and political & economic equity, we have started the **JUSTICE MOVEMENT OF INDIA** (JMI). The JMI envisions making India a progressive nation by making our local communities just, resilient, inclusive, and sustainable. That involves educating and encouraging citizens to realise their constitutional rights and fulfill their responsibilities fully. Most importantly, JMI aims to work towards empowering and engaging citizens in establishing sustainable communities where humans, nature, and other species' rights are protected.




THE STORY

The Founding members and freedom fighters have remarkably noted that India lives in villages, the country's backbone. This is where we have to start building the nation. Local self-governance is the long overdue framework that is needed to develop communities. This is only possible through decentralizing power, funds, staff, and policy-making to local government bodies to establish grassroots level participatory democracy.

The time has come; suppose you are a teacher, doctor, farmer, engineer, lawyer, activist, or responsible citizen. In that case, this is our request to you, now is the time to change our politics which is possible only when we stand united. Today, we are fighting for our welfare in the streets, but we must fight for our future on the ballot box (or EVM machines). We need a justice movement in India to see the development our freedom fighters have dreamed of before independence. Here is my appeal to fellow Indians: wherever you are in India, let us unite and change the politics and policy-making.

“Democracy becomes alive from the place where citizens live and breathe. Thus, Local self-governance and community sustainability are the way forward for implementing true democracy.”

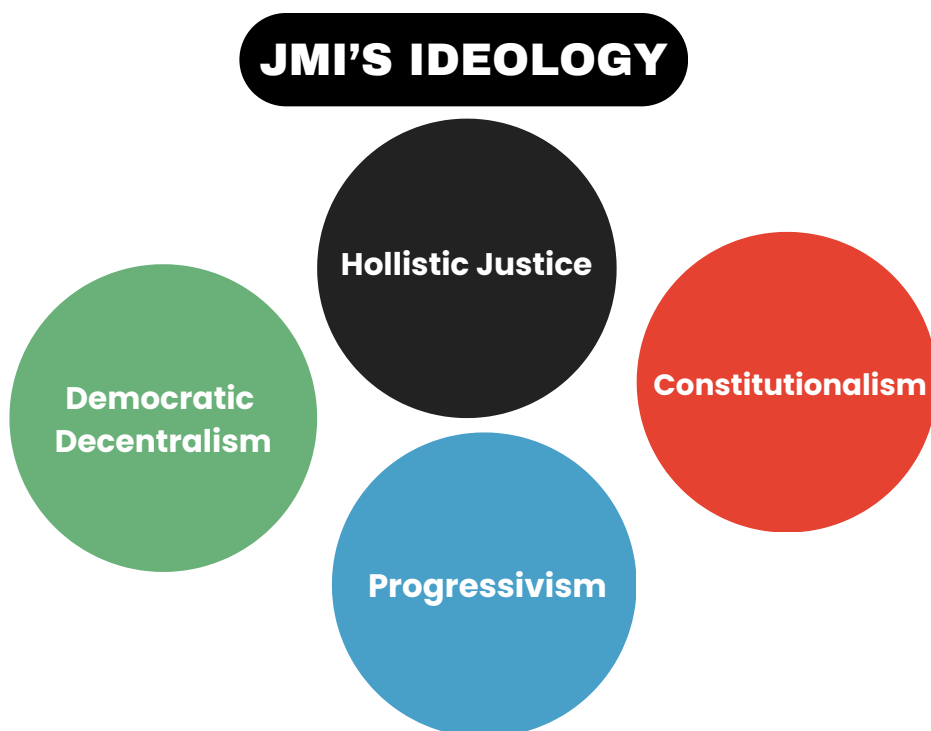




The JMI's Action Plan to Imagine and Build Our Nation for the Next 75 Years

The social action plan has been designed to foster a more informed and responsible citizenry. To achieve this, we seek to educate people about constitutional values that should govern individual & collective behaviour and to empower people by raising awareness about their rights and duties. Through these measures, the plan aims to create a more cohesive and harmonious society where everyone is aware of their responsibilities and committed to upholding them, regardless of any unforeseen situations that may arise.

The political action plan aims to flourish local communities by promoting the active involvement of citizens in the political process. The plan involves encouraging individuals from villages and wards to step up and become Responsible Political leaders, thereby strengthening the concept of Local Self-Governance. This will help foster a culture of transparency, accountability, and fairness in decision-making by actively engaging local citizens in Governance. Ultimately, this approach will pave the way for a more inclusive and participatory democracy where everyone's voice is heard and taken into account.



MOVEMENT PURPOSE

‘Justice Movement of India’ is a citizen-led movement that aims to educate, empower, encourage and engage Indian citizens to achieve a world of justice.

We envision a World of Justice where no citizen will be discriminated against based on religion, color, caste, creed, sex, gender, etc. We work for a world where income, wealth, resources, and opportunities are equitably shared amongst all citizens. We extend the concept of justice not only to humans but to nature and other species, so we emphasise that citizens are primarily responsible for protecting our ecology and biodiversity.

As a movement, the systemic change we aspire for is fourfold: Social, Economical, Political, and Environmental. We wish to bring social change through grass-root level campaigns, economic change by focusing on equitable and inclusive development, political change through policy-level innovation, and environmental change through safeguarding the rights of nature.



**Social
Justice**



**Environmental
Justice**



**Economic
Justice**



**Political
Justice**






VISION

- Make India a progressive nation by making our local communities just, resilient, inclusive, and sustainable regarding social, economic, political, and environmental fronts.
 - Educate and Encourage citizens to fully realise their constitutional rights and fulfil their responsibilities.
 - Empower and Engage citizens in establishing local self-governance and wellbeing-based communities where humans, nature, and other species' rights are protected.
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MISSION



- Initiate a discourse on systemic change, which can be achieved through progressive, clean, and green politics, where every citizen has the accessibility to participate in the policy-making process and become a people's representative.
 - Organise citizens around grass-root level issues and launch campaigns to influence relevant stakeholders in order to execute sustainable solutions.
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**IF NOT YOU, THEN WHO ?
IF NOT NOW, THEN WHEN ?**



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Website : <https://justicemovementofindia.org/>



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