



THE MUN FACTORY

School of Global Excellence — TMF 2026 Chapter

OFFICIAL BACKGROUND GUIDE

INDIA BEFORE THE PEOPLE'S HOUSE

The Voice of India • The Fourth Pillar of Indian Democracy — The Youth • Make India “Janadesh”

AGENDA

Democracy in India: Alive or Dead? Examining the Sonam Wangchuk Movement, the Right to Education, Peaceful Protest, and Democratic Accountability.

A Youth Policy Research Simulation

SECTION 1 | **Committee Introduction**

Why This Committee Exists

India Before The People's House is convened on the premise that the young citizens who will inherit Indian democracy are rarely given a structured, evidence-based forum in which to examine it critically. The committee exists to interrogate — without partisan filter — whether India's core democratic guarantees, from the right to education to the right to peaceful assembly, are functioning as the Constitution intends, or have drifted from that intent in practice.

Why This Committee Is Different From the Lok Sabha

The Lok Sabha is a sovereign legislative chamber bound by party discipline, coalition arithmetic, and electoral incentive. This committee has none of those constraints and none of that power — it cannot pass a law. What it can do is what the Lok Sabha structurally cannot always afford: slow, evidence-first deliberation, uncoupled from re-election pressure, in which delegates are asked to represent institutional logic and public interest rather than party position.

Why Youth Voices Matter

Approximately half of India's population is under the age of 25, making it home to the largest youth population of any country in the world. This demographic is simultaneously the primary subject of the Right to Education Act, the primary participant in recent protest movements from anti-CAA demonstrations to the 2024 competitive-examination protests, and the generation that will operate India's democratic institutions past 2047. Their structured deliberation on democratic accountability is not a symbolic exercise but a direct rehearsal for future civic responsibility.

Purpose of the Committee

To produce a rigorous, evidence-based assessment of the health of Indian democracy through three linked lenses — educational rights, protest rights, and institutional accountability — using the Sonam Wangchuk-led Ladakh and examination-reform movements as the connecting case study.

Expected Outcome

Delegates are expected to produce a reasoned committee document assessing the current state of democratic accountability in India, grounded in constitutional text, judicial precedent, and verifiable data — not a resolution seeking to legislate, but a diagnostic and forward-looking policy analysis in the tradition of a think-tank white paper.

SECTION 2 | Understanding Democracy

Representative Democracy

Citizens elect representatives who exercise governing authority on their behalf between elections. India's Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies are the primary vehicles of this model, with accountability enforced periodically through elections rather than continuously.

Participatory Democracy

Emphasises direct citizen involvement beyond voting — public consultations, gram sabhas, and civil-society engagement in policy formation. India's 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments, which empower Panchayati Raj institutions and urban local bodies, are the clearest constitutional embodiment of this model.

Constitutional Democracy

Governing power is exercised within, and limited by, a written constitution that constrains even majoritarian legislative will. India's basic structure doctrine — established in *Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala* (1973) — is the definitive Indian expression of this principle, holding that even a constitutional amendment cannot alter the Constitution's basic structure.

Liberal Democracy

Combines electoral democracy with entrenched individual rights, independent courts, and press freedom that constrain state power irrespective of electoral mandate. India's Fundamental Rights chapter (Part III) and independent judiciary are its institutional anchors.

Direct Democracy

Citizens vote directly on specific policy questions rather than through representatives — referenda and citizen initiatives being the clearest form. India has no national referendum mechanism; Switzerland's frequent referenda are the most commonly cited comparative example.

Social Democracy

Combines democratic political institutions with a strong state role in redistributive welfare and economic regulation. India's Directive Principles of State Policy (Part IV), though non-justiciable, embed social-democratic aspirations — the Nordic countries are the most-cited global exemplars of this model in practice.

Deliberative Democracy

Legitimacy derives from reasoned public deliberation among citizens and representatives, not merely aggregated preference (vote-counting). India's parliamentary standing-committee system and pre-legislative public-consultation processes are partial, imperfect implementations of this ideal — this committee itself is structured as a deliberative-democracy exercise.

SECTION 3 | Indian Constitutional Framework

Preamble

Declares India a “Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic” securing Justice, Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity to all citizens. The words “Socialist” and “Secular” were inserted by the 42nd Amendment (1976); their retention was upheld by the Supreme Court in 2024.

Fundamental Rights (Part III)

Justiciable rights including equality before law (Art. 14), protection against discrimination (Art. 15), freedom of speech and peaceful assembly (Art. 19), protection of life and personal liberty (Art. 21), and the right to education (Art. 21A). These rights are directly enforceable in court and form the legal foundation for both the Right to Education and protest-rights debates in this guide.

Directive Principles of State Policy (Part IV)

Non-justiciable guidelines directing the state toward social and economic welfare — including Article 45's original directive on early childhood care and education, which preceded and informed the eventual justiciable Right to Education under Article 21A.

Fundamental Duties (Part IV-A)

Added by the 42nd Amendment (1976), Article 51A lists eleven duties of citizens, including to cherish the ideals of the freedom struggle and to develop scientific temper — duties frequently invoked, though not judicially enforceable, in debates over the balance between citizen rights and civic responsibility.

Separation of Powers and Checks and Balances

India follows a functional, not absolute, separation of powers among the legislature, executive, and judiciary, with significant overlap (e.g., the Council of Ministers is drawn from and accountable to the legislature). Judicial review, parliamentary oversight committees, and the Comptroller and Auditor General provide the primary checks.

Federalism

India is often termed “quasi-federal” — a strong Union government with residual powers, alongside states possessing exclusive legislative domains under the Seventh Schedule. Union Territories such as Ladakh, administered directly by the Centre without a legislature, represent the least autonomous point on this federal spectrum — directly relevant to the Sixth Schedule demand examined in Section 6.

Judicial Review

The power of courts to invalidate laws or executive actions inconsistent with the Constitution, rooted in Articles 13 and 32. It is the principal legal mechanism through which contested legislation — including protest-related prohibitory orders and citizenship legislation — has been tested.

Constitutional Morality

A judicially developed principle holding that constitutional values — equality, liberty, dignity — must guide governance even where they diverge from prevailing social or political majority sentiment; invoked prominently in judgments on individual liberty and minority protection.

SECTION 4 | Right to Education

History

India's constitutional commitment to universal education traces to Article 45 of the original 1950 Constitution (a non-justiciable directive), through the *Unni Krishnan v. State of Andhra Pradesh* (1993) judgment recognising a limited right to education under Article 21, culminating in the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act (2002), which inserted Article 21A as a justiciable Fundamental Right, operationalised through the RTE Act, 2009.

Indicator	Detail
Constitutional basis	Article 21A, inserted by the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002
Enabling legislation	Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009
Coverage	Free and compulsory education for children aged 6–14 years
National literacy rate	~77% (latest Census/NSS-based estimates), with a persistent gender and rural-urban gap
Higher education GER	~28% Gross Enrolment Ratio, below the NEP 2020 target of 50% by 2035
Learning outcomes	ASER-type surveys have repeatedly found large shares of primary-grade students unable to read grade-level text or perform basic arithmetic
Education spending	Public education expenditure has generally remained below the 6% of GDP recommended by the Kothari Commission (1966) and reaffirmed in NEP 2020
NEP 2020	National Education Policy 2020 proposes a 5+3+3+4 structure, foundational literacy/numeracy mission (NIPUN Bharat), multidisciplinary higher education, and vocational integration from Grade 6
Private vs. government schools	A substantial and rising share of enrolment, including among lower-income households, has shifted to low-fee private schools, reflecting perceived quality gaps in government schooling

Challenges

- A persistent gap between enrolment (near-universal at the primary level) and actual learning outcomes.
- Teacher vacancies and multi-grade teaching in under-resourced government schools, particularly in rural and remote regions including Ladakh and the Northeast.
- Infrastructure gaps — functional toilets, electricity, and digital connectivity remain uneven across states.
- The RTE Act's 25% private-school reservation for economically weaker sections faces implementation and reimbursement disputes between states and private schools.
- Digital-divide effects, sharply exposed during pandemic-era remote schooling, continue to disadvantage rural and low-income students in a system increasingly reliant on digital resources.

Global Comparisons

Finland guarantees education as a universal public good with no private-school fee structure and among the world's highest learning-outcome equity; South Korea combines high public investment with an intense private coaching (“hagwon”) culture, a comparison frequently drawn to India's own coaching-centre phenomenon (Section 7); Germany's dual vocational-education system integrates work-based learning far earlier than India's proposed NEP 2020 vocational track.

SECTION 5 | Public Protest in India

Historical Arc of Peaceful Protest

The Freedom Movement (1885–1947) established satyagraha and civil disobedience as legitimate, internationally influential forms of political protest under Gandhi. Post-independence, the Jayaprakash Narayan (JP) Movement (1974–75) mobilised student and civil-society opposition against alleged corruption and authoritarian drift, directly preceding the 1975–77 Emergency. The Anna Hazare-led India Against Corruption movement (2011) used hunger strikes to press for the Lokpal (anti-corruption ombudsman) Bill, contributing to its eventual passage in 2013.

More recently, protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA, 2019–20) drew sustained student and civil-society mobilisation around questions of religious criteria in citizenship law; the farmers' protests (2020–21) against three since-repealed farm laws became one of the longest sustained protest movements in independent India's history; and women's movements (from the 2012 Delhi gang-rape protests onward) and student movements across university campuses have repeatedly tested the boundaries of peaceful assembly.

Legal Framework Governing Protest

- Article 19(1)(b) guarantees the right to assemble peaceably and without arms, subject to reasonable restrictions under Article 19(3) in the interests of public order and sovereignty.
- Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (now substantially reproduced under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023) empowers district magistrates to prohibit assembly in anticipation of public-order disturbance.
- Internet shutdowns are authorised under the Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services Rules, 2017, framed under the Telegraph Act; India has recorded more state-level internet shutdowns in recent years than any other country, according to internet-freedom monitoring organisations.
- Police powers to detain, disperse, or use force during protests are governed by state police manuals and the CrPC/BNSS, subject to constitutional proportionality review.

Key Supreme Court Judgments

Case	Holding
Himat Lal K. Shah v. Commissioner of Police (1973)	Affirmed that the right to hold public meetings on public streets is part of the freedom of assembly, subject to reasonable regulation.
Anuradha Bhasin v. Union of India (2020)	Held that indefinite internet shutdowns are impermissible and that suspension orders must be proportionate, temporary, and subject to judicial review.
Amit Sahni v. Commissioner of Police (Shaheen Bagh, 2020)	Held that public ways and spaces cannot be occupied indefinitely, and that protest, however legitimate, must be balanced against the rights of other citizens to use public space.

Balancing Protest and Public Order

Indian jurisprudence has consistently affirmed peaceful assembly as a constitutional right while permitting restrictions that are reasonable, proportionate, and time-bound. The unresolved tension — tested

repeatedly in the case studies above and in the Sonam Wangchuk movement below — is where legitimate public-order regulation ends and disproportionate restriction of dissent begins.

SECTION 6 | The Sonam Wangchuk Movement

Background

Sonam Wangchuk is a Ramon Magsaysay Award-winning engineer and education reformer from Ladakh, internationally recognised for education-innovation work (including the Students' Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh, SECMOL) before becoming the most prominent public face of Ladakh's post-2019 constitutional-status movement. His father, Sonam Wangyal, had himself undertaken a hunger strike for Ladakh's political status decades earlier, giving the movement an intergenerational character.

The Ladakh Issue

Ladakh was separated from the former state of Jammu and Kashmir and reconstituted as a Union Territory without its own legislature following the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019. While welcomed by many in Ladakh at the time as freeing the region from Kashmir-centric politics, the subsequent absence of legislative representation, combined with concerns over land, jobs, and environmental protection, catalysed a sustained demand for stronger constitutional safeguards.

The Sixth Schedule Demand

The Sixth Schedule of the Constitution provides for autonomous district and regional councils with special legislative, judicial, and land-protection powers, currently applied to designated tribal areas of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram. Wangchuk and allied groups — principally the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) — have demanded Ladakh's inclusion under this Schedule, alongside statehood, arguing it is necessary to protect land rights, tribal identity, and ecological fragility from outside commercial and demographic pressure.

Environmental Concerns and Himalayan Ecology

Wangchuk has consistently framed the movement in ecological terms, citing glacial retreat, water scarcity, and the environmental fragility of a cold-desert, high-altitude region under rising tourism, military infrastructure, and proposed industrial activity. This framing connects the movement explicitly to broader Himalayan climate-change concerns beyond Ladakh's borders.

Timeline

Period	Development
2019	Abrogation of Article 370; Ladakh becomes a Union Territory without a legislature.
2020–2023	Formation and consolidation of the LAB–KDA alliance; multiple rounds of dialogue with the Union Home Ministry through a High-Powered Committee.
October 2024	Wangchuk and Ladakhi volunteers march on foot to Delhi; detained at the border; undertake a 16-day hunger strike at Ladakh Bhawan after being denied a Jantar Mantar venue; ends after government assurance that talks would resume.
August–September 2025	Talks stall again; Wangchuk begins a 35-day hunger strike in Leh (later extended toward an indefinite “fast unto death” framing), demanding Sixth Schedule

Period	Development
	status, statehood, and a CBI inquiry into the Ladakh administration.
September 2025 (violence)	Clashes between youth groups and police in Leh result in four deaths in police firing and dozens of injuries; public property and a political party office are damaged. Wangchuk calls off his fast and appeals for calm.
Following weeks, 2025	The central government attributes the violence in part to Wangchuk's rhetoric during the strike, which he denies; he is briefly detained under the National Security Act; institutions he founded face regulatory scrutiny.
2026	Wangchuk extends his moral and public profile to a separate, youth-led protest movement in Delhi over alleged examination irregularities (including NEET-related concerns), undertaking a further hunger strike at Jantar Mantar demanding accountability from the education ministry.

Government Response

The Union Government's stated position has been that dialogue through the High-Powered Committee and its sub-committee has already yielded concrete gains — an increase in Scheduled Tribe reservation in Ladakh's councils from 45% to 84%, one-third women's reservation in council seats, official-language status for Bhoti and Purgi, and the commencement of recruitment for 1,800 posts — and that these represent good-faith incremental progress rather than the need for a full Sixth Schedule/statehood grant.

Supporters and Critics

Supporters, including much of Ladakh's civil society and cross-party regional leadership, view the movement as a legitimate, Gandhian, non-violent assertion of constitutional safeguards for a historically underrepresented Himalayan frontier region. Critics, including sections of the central government, have characterised aspects of the 2025 rhetoric as provocative and contributing to unrest, a claim Wangchuk has denied, attributing the violence instead to spontaneous youth frustration.

Youth Participation and Media Coverage

Youth-led groups have been central both to the peaceful phases of the movement and to the September 2025 unrest, reflecting broader themes in Section 8 on youth political mobilisation. The movement has received sustained national and international media coverage, in part due to Wangchuk's pre-existing public profile as an education innovator and the subject of popular cultural references.

Current Status

As of this guide's preparation, Ladakh's Sixth Schedule and statehood demands remain unresolved through the formal dialogue mechanism, while Wangchuk's public role has expanded to encompass the separate national examination-reform movement, illustrating how a regional constitutional-status campaign and a national education-accountability campaign have become linked through a single, high-profile protest figure.

Delegate Note

This case study intentionally spans two distinct grievances — Ladakh's constitutional status and national examination integrity — connected only by a shared leading figure. Delegates should analyse each on its own institutional merits rather than treating them as a single undifferentiated cause.

SECTION 7 | **Education Crisis in India**

Government Schools

Chronic teacher vacancies, particularly in rural and hill districts; multi-grade classrooms; wide inter-state variation in infrastructure quality despite central schemes such as Samagra Shiksha.

Higher Education

Gross Enrolment Ratio remains below NEP 2020's 2035 target of 50%; significant quality disparity between a small set of elite public institutions (IITs, IIMs, central universities) and the much larger base of state and private institutions.

Dropout Rates and Learning Poverty

Dropout rates rise sharply at the secondary and higher-secondary transition points, disproportionately affecting girls, rural students, and economically disadvantaged households. “Learning poverty” — the inability of a ten-year-old to read and understand a simple age-appropriate text — has been flagged by the World Bank as a critical, internationally comparable metric on which India shows significant gaps.

Teacher Shortage and Infrastructure

National pupil-teacher ratios mask large intra-state and rural-urban disparities; many schools lack functional science laboratories, libraries, and reliable electricity.

Digital Divide

Uneven smartphone and broadband access, sharply exposed during pandemic-era remote learning, continues to shape unequal access to digital-first educational resources, test-preparation content, and, increasingly, AI-based learning tools.

Skill Gap and Coaching Culture

A widely cited employability gap between higher-education output and industry requirements has fuelled a large parallel coaching-institute economy (competitive examinations for engineering, medicine, and civil services), concentrated heavily in a small number of coaching hubs, raising concerns about cost, equity of access, and student mental health.

Mental Health and Examination Pressure

Intense competition for a limited number of seats in premier institutions and government jobs has been linked by public-health researchers and parliamentary committees to elevated student stress and, in the most severe cases, suicide, particularly in coaching-hub cities — a recurring subject of parliamentary and judicial attention.

Unemployment, Brain Drain, and AI Impact

Youth unemployment, especially graduate unemployment, remains structurally elevated relative to overall unemployment; a longstanding outflow of high-skill graduates to overseas study and employment persists alongside an emerging concern that generative AI tools may further disrupt entry-level white-collar job pathways before the education system has adapted its curricula accordingly.

SECTION 8 | **Youth and Democracy**

Voting and Political Participation

India's voting age is 18; youth (18–29) turnout and formal party membership trends are closely watched indicators, though enthusiasm for formal party politics coexists with rising informal, issue-based youth mobilisation outside party structures.

Digital Activism and Social Media

Social media platforms have become primary organising tools for youth-led mobilisation — from anti-CAA protests to the 2024–26 examination-reform movement — enabling rapid coordination but also raising concerns about the speed and scale of disinformation during politically sensitive moments.

Campus Politics

Student unions and campus elections remain an important, if regionally uneven, training ground for future political leadership, with some states restricting or suspending student-union elections over public-order concerns.

Disinformation and Influencers

The growing role of individual social-media influencers in shaping youth political opinion — sometimes with limited editorial accountability compared to traditional media — has become a distinct governance and media-literacy concern flagged by the Election Commission and civil-society researchers.

Future of Youth Leadership

Structured youth-engagement mechanisms (youth parliaments, NITI Aayog's youth fellowships, this committee itself) represent an attempt to channel youth political energy into structured deliberation rather than solely protest-based expression — the central tension this committee is designed to examine.

SECTION 9 | **Democratic Accountability**

Election Commission of India

A constitutional body (Article 324) responsible for the superintendence, direction, and control of elections; its independence and the transparency of electoral-roll and funding processes remain recurring subjects of public and judicial scrutiny.

Parliament

The primary institution of legislative accountability, exercising oversight through Question Hour, Zero Hour, and Department-Related Standing Committees, though declining sitting days in recent years have raised concerns about the depth of scrutiny applied to major legislation.

Judiciary

Exercises accountability through judicial review of executive and legislative action; the collegium system governing judicial appointments and the pace of case disposal are themselves subjects of accountability debate (Section 3).

Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG)

An independent constitutional authority (Article 148) auditing the accounts of the Union and state governments, whose reports feed into the Public Accounts Committee process.

Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005

Empowers citizens to request information from public authorities; enforcement has been uneven, with reported delays in Information Commissioner appointments in several states affecting timely disposal of appeals.

Media, Civil Society, and Universities

A free press, independent civil-society organisations, and universities collectively form an informal accountability layer outside the state apparatus; concerns about press-freedom rankings, foreign-funding restrictions on NGOs (FCRA), and academic-freedom constraints are recurring themes in accountability assessments of Indian democracy.

Public Consultations and Whistleblowers

Pre-legislative consultation policy (2014) recommends public disclosure of draft bills before introduction, though compliance is inconsistent; the Whistleblowers Protection Act, 2014 remains substantially unimplemented in practice, limiting its deterrent effect.

SECTION 10 | Comparative Analysis

The table below compares India's peer and aspirational reference set across education, governance, and youth-participation dimensions relevant to this committee's agenda.

Country	Education Model	Governance Character	Youth Participation
Finland	Universal, high-equity public education; no high-stakes standardised testing culture	High trust in institutions; strong local-government autonomy	Structured youth councils feeding into municipal policy
Singapore	High-performing, streaming-based system; strong teacher training	Highly centralised, technocratic, low-corruption governance	Limited formal youth political participation outside state-channeled platforms
South Korea	High academic performance alongside intense private coaching (hagwon) culture and acute exam stress	Strong state capacity; vibrant, sometimes confrontational protest tradition	High digital and campus political engagement
Germany	Early vocational-academic tracking; strong dual-education industry linkage	Federal, coalition-based governance with strong constitutional court oversight	Structured youth parliament and apprenticeship-linked civic participation
Japan	High-equity outcomes; declining youth population raising system-capacity questions	Long-dominant single-party governance with strong bureaucratic continuity	Comparatively low youth voter turnout relative to older cohorts
United Kingdom	Marked public-private (state/independent school) attainment divide	Parliamentary sovereignty; judicial review without a codified constitution	Active student-union and campus protest tradition
United States	Highly decentralised, locally funded school system with wide quality variation	Strong constitutional rights protection; significant partisan polarisation	High digital-activism intensity; campus protest as a recurring political feature
Canada	Provincially administered, generally high-equity system	Strong multicultural federalism; high public-consultation practice	High formal civic-education integration in curricula
Australia	Federally coordinated with significant private-school enrolment share	Compulsory voting; strong electoral-administration independence	Structured national youth parliament programme

SECTION 11 | Data Section

Delegates should treat the figures below as committee reference points and verify against the cited primary source for the most current release, as several of these indicators are updated annually.

Indicator	Approximate Value / Trend	Primary Source
Literacy rate (national)	~77% (persistent gender and rural-urban gap)	Census / NSS estimates
Higher education GER	~28%	Ministry of Education, AISHE report
Public education expenditure	Below the 6% of GDP benchmark recommended since 1966	Economic Survey / Union Budget
Human Development Index	Medium human development category	UNDP Human Development Report
Internet penetration	Roughly half of the population, with sharp rural-urban and gender divides	TRAI / various digital-access surveys
Youth unemployment	Substantially higher than the overall unemployment rate, especially among graduates	Periodic Labour Force Survey, MoSPI
Learning outcomes (foundational)	A large share of primary-grade children below grade-level reading proficiency in repeated field surveys	ASER-type independent household surveys
Global Innovation Index	Within the global top 40	WIPO
Internet shutdown frequency	Among the highest of any country globally in recent years	Independent internet-freedom monitors

SECTION 12 | Major Challenges

- Institutional: declining parliamentary sitting days and scrutiny time relative to legislative volume.
- Educational: the persistent gap between enrolment and actual learning outcomes across government schooling.
- Social: caste, gender, and regional disparities in both educational access and protest-rights exercise.
- Economic: graduate unemployment and a widening industry-skill mismatch.
- Political: growing use of prohibitory orders and internet shutdowns during politically sensitive protests.
- Technological: disinformation velocity on social media outpacing institutional fact-checking capacity.
- Regional disparities: Union Territories such as Ladakh lacking full legislative representation despite population and geographic significance.
- Climate: Himalayan ecological fragility intersecting directly with regional political demands, as in the Sixth Schedule movement.
- Governance gaps: uneven implementation of transparency legislation (RTI, Whistleblowers Protection Act) across states.

SECTION 13 | **Future Scenarios**

Best Case

Institutional accountability mechanisms (RTI, CAG, judicial review, parliamentary committees) are strengthened and consistently enforced; the RTE/NEP 2020 learning-outcome gap narrows measurably; protest rights and public-order regulation reach a judicially settled, widely accepted equilibrium; Ladakh's status is resolved through negotiated constitutional accommodation rather than confrontation.

Worst Case

Institutional accountability mechanisms weaken further in practice even where they remain formally intact; learning-outcome gaps persist or widen alongside rising credential inflation; protest suppression (internet shutdowns, prohibitory orders) becomes routine rather than exceptional; regional grievances such as Ladakh's escalate into recurring unrest rather than negotiated settlement.

Likely Case

Incremental, uneven progress: some accountability mechanisms strengthen while others stagnate; educational reform proceeds at a pace slower than NEP 2020's stated targets; protest rights continue to be litigated case-by-case rather than settled by clear legislative standard; Ladakh's status remains a recurring, periodically renegotiated grievance rather than either resolution or crisis.

SECTION 14 | Questions Delegates Must Think About

These questions are designed to move delegates beyond partisan framing and toward institutional, evidentiary, and comparative analysis.

1. Does the RTE Act's justiciable status under Article 21A translate into enforceable outcomes, or primarily into enforceable enrolment?
2. Is India's public education spending shortfall a resource constraint or a governance-priority choice?
3. What distinguishes a 'reasonable restriction' on assembly under Article 19(3) from a disproportionate one, in practice rather than in doctrine?
4. Should Section 144-equivalent powers require judicial pre-authorisation, given their frequency of use?
5. Does the Anuradha Bhasin judgment's proportionality standard for internet shutdowns function as a meaningful constraint, given continued high shutdown frequency?
6. Is Ladakh's case for Sixth Schedule inclusion legally analogous to existing Sixth Schedule areas, or does it require a distinct constitutional category?
7. Can incremental concessions (reservation increases, language status) substitute for the structural safeguard of legislative representation?
8. Did the September 2025 Leh violence strengthen or weaken the legitimacy of Ladakh's underlying constitutional claim?
9. Is holding an individual protest leader responsible for spontaneous crowd violence a legally sound standard, or does it risk chilling future peaceful leadership?
10. How should the state distinguish between organised political dissent and public-safety risk when the same movement contains both peaceful and violent elements?
11. Does India's coaching-institute economy indicate a failure of the formal education system, or a rational response to scarce elite-seat competition?
12. Should competitive examination governance be treated as an education-policy question or an institutional-integrity question?
13. What responsibility, if any, do social-media platforms bear for disinformation velocity during politically sensitive youth mobilisations?
14. Is youth digital activism a genuine expansion of democratic participation, or does it substitute performative engagement for durable institutional involvement?
15. Should student-union elections be uniformly protected nationally, given their uneven state-level restriction?
16. Does the persistent underuse of the Whistleblowers Protection Act indicate legislative design failure or enforcement failure?
17. Can the CAG and Public Accounts Committee accountability chain function effectively without matching increases in parliamentary sitting time?
18. Is judicial review, given case backlogs, currently a timely check on executive action or a delayed one?
19. Should Union Territories without legislatures be treated as a temporary administrative category or a permanent constitutional design choice?
20. Does India's basic-structure doctrine adequately protect federalism given the Union's power to alter a state's or territory's status?
21. What lessons, if any, does Finland's education-equity model offer a system as large and diverse as India's?
22. Is South Korea's coaching-intensive model a cautionary tale or a partially valid comparator for India's own coaching culture?

23. Should India adopt a formal pre-legislative public consultation requirement with legal force, rather than the current advisory policy?
24. Does declining voter turnout among certain youth cohorts indicate disengagement from democracy or dissatisfaction with its current mechanisms?
25. How should 'learning poverty' be weighted against enrolment statistics when assessing RTE Act success?
26. Is the RTE Act's 25% private-school reservation provision achieving integration, or creating a parallel reimbursement dispute without proportional benefit?
27. What is the appropriate constitutional threshold for using the National Security Act against a protest leader?
28. Does media coverage concentration on high-profile leaders like Wangchuk help or distort public understanding of broader regional grievances?
29. Should India establish a permanent, empowered institutional mechanism for negotiating Union Territory status disputes, rather than case-by-case High-Powered Committees?
30. How should the tension between environmental protection and infrastructure/economic development be resolved in ecologically fragile regions like Ladakh?
31. Is India's current internet-shutdown practice consistent with its own Supreme Court jurisprudence in letter, in spirit, or in neither?
32. Does the coexistence of a free press and declining press-freedom rankings indicate an accountability mechanism under strain or one still functioning adequately?
33. What would a genuinely deliberative-democracy mechanism look like at the scale of the Indian Parliament, if this committee's format were extended nationally?
34. Should youth representation in formal legislative bodies be structurally guaranteed, and if so, how?
35. Is the current balance between free speech protections and public-order restrictions calibrated correctly for a digital-first protest environment?
36. What single reform, if implemented, would most improve the alignment between India's constitutional guarantees and their practical exercise?

SECTION 15 | **Committee Simulation**

How Discussions May Evolve

Early sessions are likely to surface competing framings of the core agenda question — whether India's democratic architecture is fundamentally sound but unevenly implemented, or facing a more structural erosion. Later sessions will likely narrow toward specific sub-disputes: the legal standard for protest restriction, the adequacy of RTE enforcement, and the appropriate constitutional remedy for Ladakh's status.

Possible Crisis Situations

- A sudden escalation in a live protest scenario requiring delegates to weigh public-order response against protest-rights protection in real time.
- New data release (e.g., an ASER-equivalent survey or unemployment figures) that shifts the evidentiary basis of an ongoing debate mid-committee.
- A judicial ruling handed down during committee that reframes the legal status of a discussed issue (e.g., an internet-shutdown case or a Ladakh-related petition).

Possible Policy Conflicts

- Tension between decentralised, locally responsive education governance and the need for uniform national learning-outcome standards.
- Tension between the state's public-order responsibilities and its obligations under Article 19's assembly protections.
- Tension between Ladakh's demand for autonomous constitutional status and the Union's preference for incremental administrative concessions.

Stakeholder Disagreements

Delegates representing constitutional, administrative, and civil-society portfolios (Section: Portfolio Intelligence) should expect genuine, unresolved disagreement rather than a converging consensus — the committee's purpose is rigorous deliberation of these tensions, not their premature resolution.

SECTION 16 | Research Sources

The following are official and authoritative sources delegates should consult directly. Click any link to open it in your browser; the full URL is also printed for reference.

Constitutional and Legislative

- [Constitution of India — Ministry of Law and Justice](https://legislative.gov.in/constitution-of-india/) — <https://legislative.gov.in/constitution-of-india/>
- [Supreme Court of India — official website](https://www.sci.gov.in/) — <https://www.sci.gov.in/>
- [PRS Legislative Research](https://prsindia.org/) — <https://prsindia.org/>
- [Law Commission of India](https://lawcommissionofindia.nic.in/) — <https://lawcommissionofindia.nic.in/>
- [Parliament of India — Lok Sabha](https://sansad.in/l) — <https://sansad.in/l>
- [Election Commission of India](https://www.eci.gov.in/) — <https://www.eci.gov.in/>

Government and Policy Bodies

- [NITI Aayog](https://www.niti.gov.in/) — <https://www.niti.gov.in/>
- [Ministry of Education, Government of India](https://www.education.gov.in/) — <https://www.education.gov.in/>
- [Department of School Education and Literacy](https://dsel.education.gov.in/) — <https://dsel.education.gov.in/>
- [Comptroller and Auditor General of India](https://cag.gov.in/) — <https://cag.gov.in/>
- [Reserve Bank of India — Publications](https://www.rbi.org.in/) — <https://www.rbi.org.in/>
- [Press Information Bureau](https://pib.gov.in/) — <https://pib.gov.in/>

Data and Research Organisations

- [ASER Centre — Annual Status of Education Report](https://asercentre.org/) — <https://asercentre.org/>
- [National Family Health Survey \(NFHS\)](https://main.mohfw.gov.in/nfhs) — <https://main.mohfw.gov.in/nfhs>
- [AISHE — All India Survey on Higher Education](https://aishe.gov.in/) — <https://aishe.gov.in/>

Multilateral and International

- [UNESCO](https://www.unesco.org/en) — <https://www.unesco.org/en>
- [World Bank — India](https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/india) — <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/india>
- [OECD — India](https://www.oecd.org/en/countries/india.html) — <https://www.oecd.org/en/countries/india.html>
- [UNDP — Human Development Reports](https://hdr.undp.org/) — <https://hdr.undp.org/>
- [World Health Organization](https://www.who.int/) — <https://www.who.int/>

Think Tanks and Independent Research

- [Observer Research Foundation \(ORF\)](https://www.orfonline.org/) — <https://www.orfonline.org/>
- [Brookings Institution](https://www.brookings.edu/) — <https://www.brookings.edu/>
- [Carnegie Endowment for International Peace](https://carnegieendowment.org/) — <https://carnegieendowment.org/>

SECTION 17 | Portfolio Intelligence Briefs

Each brief below is a confidential-style intelligence document prepared for the corresponding committee portfolio, summarising constitutional grounding, strategic posture, and negotiation considerations.

Union Ministry of Education

Constitutional Role: Executive ministry responsible for school and higher education policy under the Union List/Concurrent List framework of the Seventh Schedule.

Powers: Framing national policy (NEP 2020), administering central education schemes (Samagra Shiksha), regulating higher-education bodies (UGC, AICTE), and overseeing national examinations.

Current Responsibilities: Implementing NEP 2020 targets, managing public perception following examination-integrity controversies, coordinating with state governments on centrally sponsored schemes.

Key Interests: Demonstrating measurable progress on foundational literacy (NIPUN Bharat) and higher-education GER without appearing to concede systemic failure.

Major Policy Priorities: NEP 2020 implementation pace, digital-learning expansion, examination-reform response to public pressure.

Expected Stance on Education: Publicly supportive of RTE enforcement and NEP targets; likely to frame gaps as implementation lag rather than policy failure; sensitive to direct criticism over examination irregularities.

Expected Stance on Protests: Cautious of protests directly targeting the ministry (e.g., NEET-related demands); likely to favour institutional/committee-based redress over public concession under pressure.

Possible Allies: State education departments pursuing similar reform goals; higher-education regulatory bodies (UGC, NTA).

Possible Rivals: Civil-society groups demanding examination-system overhaul; state governments resisting central curricular standardisation; opposition parties highlighting spending shortfalls.

Negotiation Strategy: Emphasise data on enrolment and scheme rollout; redirect examination-integrity criticism toward procedural reform commitments rather than personnel accountability.

Red Lines: Will resist public admission of systemic examination-integrity failure or ministerial resignation demands.

Questions to Prepare

- What specific NEP 2020 targets are behind schedule, and why?
- What is the ministry's position on NTA/examination-body reform post-2024–26 controversies?
- How does central scheme funding reach states with weaker administrative capacity?

Key Acts: RTE Act 2009; NEP 2020 (policy, not statute); UGC Act 1956; AICTE Act 1987.

Relevant Constitutional Articles: Articles 21A, 45, Entry 25 of the Concurrent List (Seventh Schedule).

Important Statistics: Higher education GER ~28%; public education spend below 6% of GDP benchmark.

Recent Developments: Continued public pressure over examination irregularities into 2026; NIPUN Bharat foundational-literacy mission ongoing rollout.

Union Ministry of Home Affairs

Constitutional Role: Executive ministry responsible for internal security, public order coordination with states, Union Territory administration, and centre-state relations.

Powers: Directing Union Territory administration (including Ladakh), coordinating law-and-order response, authorising National Security Act detentions, overseeing internet-shutdown approvals in coordination with the Department of Telecommunications.

Current Responsibilities: Managing the Ladakh dialogue process, maintaining public order during large-scale protests, balancing devolution demands against administrative control.

Key Interests: Preserving Union Territory administrative structures where deemed necessary for security or governance reasons; avoiding precedent-setting concessions that other regions might invoke.

Major Policy Priorities: Incremental concession strategy (reservation quotas, language status) rather than structural constitutional change.

Expected Stance on Education: Secondary interest; defers substantially to the Ministry of Education except where protests affecting education intersect with public order.

Expected Stance on Protests: Primary portfolio for protest management; favours negotiated dialogue mechanisms (High-Powered Committees) over open-ended concession; will authorise prohibitory orders or NSA action where public-order risk is assessed as high.

Possible Allies: State home departments; security establishment; Union Territory administrators.

Possible Rivals: Regional political alliances (LAB, KDA) and civil-society groups demanding structural constitutional change; human-rights organisations critical of NSA use and internet shutdowns.

Negotiation Strategy: Offer administrative and representational concessions incrementally; frame Sixth Schedule/statehood demands as requiring broader multi-region constitutional review rather than case-specific resolution.

Red Lines: Will resist granting Sixth Schedule status or statehood as a direct concession to protest pressure or hunger strikes.

Questions to Prepare

- What is the legal and political precedent risk of extending Sixth Schedule status to Ladakh?
- How does the ministry justify NSA use against a protest leader without a violence conviction?
- What criteria govern internet-shutdown authorisation, and how are they reviewed?

Key Acts: Government of Union Territories Act 1963 (as amended); National Security Act 1980; Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act; CrPC/BNSS Section 144-equivalent provisions.

Relevant Constitutional Articles: Articles 239, 239A, 356; Sixth Schedule provisions (paras 1–20).

Important Statistics: ST reservation in Ladakh councils raised from 45% to 84%; 1,800 recruitment posts initiated.

Recent Developments: September 2025 Leh violence and its aftermath; ongoing High-Powered Committee dialogue with LAB/KDA.

Supreme Court of India (Judicial Perspective Portfolio)

Constitutional Role: Apex constitutional court exercising judicial review under Articles 32 and 136, final interpretive authority on Fundamental Rights.

Powers: Adjudicating disputes over protest restrictions, internet shutdowns, RTE enforcement, and Union Territory status where petitions are filed.

Current Responsibilities: Maintaining institutional independence, managing case backlog, ensuring consistent application of precedent (e.g., Anuradha Bhasin proportionality standard).

Key Interests: Doctrinal consistency, protection of the basic structure, calibrated deference to executive public-order judgment balanced against rights protection.

Major Policy Priorities: Enforcement of Article 21A litigation where filed; generally reactive rather than policy-initiating on education matters.

Expected Stance on Education: Central adjudicator of protest-related disputes; expected to apply established proportionality and reasonableness standards rather than take an ideological position.

Expected Stance on Protests: Constitutionally, no formal allies; functions as an independent check on both Union Home Affairs and Ministry of Education positions where litigated.

Possible Allies: Any party found to have acted disproportionately or unconstitutionally in a given case, irrespective of political alignment.

Possible Rivals: Operates through case-by-case adjudication rather than negotiation; committee delegates representing this portfolio should reason from precedent, not political preference.

Negotiation Strategy: Will not endorse any resolution proposing to override binding constitutional text or established basic-structure doctrine.

Red Lines: What precedent would govern a hypothetical Ladakh Sixth Schedule petition?, How has the proportionality standard from Anuradha Bhasin been applied in subsequent shutdown cases?, What is the current state of RTE-related public interest litigation?

Questions to Prepare

Key Acts: Articles 13, 14, 19, 21, 21A, 32, 141, 226.

Relevant Constitutional Articles: Case backlog exceeding several tens of millions across all court levels nationally.

Important Statistics: Anuradha Bhasin proportionality standard continues to be cited in post-2020 shutdown litigation.

Recent Developments: undefined

Apex Body Leh / Kargil Democratic Alliance (Regional Civil-Society Portfolio)

Constitutional Role: Non-state civil-society and political alliance representing Ladakhi regional demands; not a constitutional organ but a recognised negotiating counterpart to the Union Government.

Powers: Coordinating the Sixth Schedule/statehood campaign; representing Leh and Kargil interests jointly despite historical religious and political differences between the two districts.

Current Responsibilities: Securing legislative representation, land-rights protection, and ecological safeguards for Ladakh.

Key Interests: Sixth Schedule inclusion, full statehood, protection of local employment and land from outside commercial pressure.

Major Policy Priorities: Not a primary focus, though connected via Wangchuk's parallel involvement in the national examination-reform movement.

Expected Stance on Education: Primary vehicle of protest; committed publicly to Gandhian non-violent methods, though the movement's 2025 experience shows the risk of losing control over spontaneous unrest.

Expected Stance on Protests: Cross-party Ladakhi political representatives; sympathetic national civil-society and environmental groups.

Possible Allies: Union Ministry of Home Affairs on the pace and scope of concessions; internally, occasional Leh-Kargil coordination strain given differing regional priorities.

Possible Rivals: Maintain unified Leh-Kargil front; use sustained, escalating but nominally peaceful pressure (hunger strikes, marches) to force renewed dialogue.

Negotiation Strategy: Will not accept administrative concessions alone (reservation, language status) as a substitute for legislative representation and Sixth Schedule inclusion.

Red Lines: What specific legal mechanism would extend Sixth Schedule status to a Union Territory rather than a state?, How does the LAB-KDA alliance manage internal Leh-Kargil political differences?, What lessons does the 2025 unrest hold for future protest strategy?

Questions to Prepare

Key Acts: Articles 19(1)(b), 244, Sixth Schedule provisions.

Relevant Constitutional Articles: 35-day and 16-day hunger strikes in 2025 and 2024 respectively; four deaths in September 2025 police firing.

Important Statistics: Continued advocacy following the September 2025 unrest and Wangchuk's NSA detention.

Recent Developments: undefined

Election Commission of India

Constitutional Role: Independent constitutional body (Article 324) superintending elections to Parliament, state legislatures, and the offices of President and Vice-President.

Powers: Conducting free and fair elections, regulating political-party registration and campaign-finance disclosure, maintaining electoral rolls.

Current Responsibilities: Preserving institutional independence and public trust in electoral integrity amid periodic controversy over electoral-roll accuracy and campaign conduct.

Key Interests: Electoral-roll transparency, model code of conduct enforcement, management of increasingly digital campaign environments.

Major Policy Priorities: Indirect interest, primarily where youth voter registration and turnout intersect with civic-education outcomes.

Expected Stance on Education: Indirect interest in protest activity only where it affects electoral conduct or candidate safety; not typically a direct party to protest-management disputes.

Expected Stance on Protests: Judiciary on matters of electoral dispute adjudication; state election machinery.

Possible Allies: Political parties disputing roll accuracy or campaign-finance transparency.

Possible Rivals: Maintain strict procedural neutrality; respond to disputes through documented rule-based process rather than public negotiation.

Negotiation Strategy: Will not compromise on core procedural independence or perceived partisan alignment.

Red Lines: What reforms govern current campaign-finance transparency requirements?, How is youth voter registration trending relative to overall registration?, What is the Commission's stance on social-media disinformation during campaigns?

Questions to Prepare

Key Acts: Article 324.

Relevant Constitutional Articles: India has the world's largest electorate, exceeding 900 million registered voters.

Important Statistics: Ongoing debate over electoral-roll revision processes in several states.

Recent Developments: undefined

Civil Society and Media Portfolio (Press Bodies, NGOs, Academic Representatives)

Constitutional Role: Non-state actors exercising informal constitutional accountability functions through reporting, advocacy, and research rather than binding legal authority.

Powers: Investigative reporting on education and protest issues; policy research and advocacy; monitoring RTI compliance and whistleblower protections.

Current Responsibilities: Preserving press freedom and civic space; securing funding and operational independence amid FCRA-related regulatory scrutiny of NGOs.

Key Interests: Transparency in government data disclosure, protection of protest and press rights, sustained coverage of regional grievances such as Ladakh's.

Major Policy Priorities: Strong advocacy for RTE enforcement transparency and public education-spending accountability.

Expected Stance on Education: Generally protective of protest rights and critical of disproportionate restriction (internet shutdowns, prohibitory orders); frequently a primary documenter of protest-related incidents.

Expected Stance on Protests: Judiciary on rights-protective jurisprudence; opposition parties on transparency demands; international press-freedom and human-rights organisations.

Possible Allies: Government bodies resisting information disclosure; regulatory authorities overseeing NGO foreign funding.

Possible Rivals: Use documented, evidence-based reporting and legal RTI channels rather than direct political negotiation to press for accountability.

Negotiation Strategy: Will not concede editorial independence or agree to self-censorship as a negotiated outcome.

Red Lines: What has been the trend in India's press-freedom rankings and what factors are typically cited?, How has FCRA enforcement affected NGO operational capacity in recent years?, What RTI compliance gaps are most frequently reported by information commissions?

Questions to Prepare

Key Acts: Article 19(1)(a).

Relevant Constitutional Articles: RTI appeal backlogs persist in multiple state information commissions.

Important Statistics: Continued scrutiny of NGO regulatory compliance and press-freedom conditions through 2025–26.

Recent Developments: undefined