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**People's  
Manifesto**

**For Lok Sabha Elections 2014**







# People's Manifesto

By



**WADA NA TODO ABHIYAN**

Holding the Government Accountable to its Promise to  
End Poverty, Social Exclusion & Discrimination

# Background and methodology

Even as political parties table their promises and script a roadmap for the next five years in preparation for the Indian General Elections, 2014, the People's Manifesto is an effort to give voice to the demands, concerns and aspirations of the poor and excluded across the country. Through an inclusive and localized process of consultation and dialogue, more than 4 lakh citizens have come together to create a national agenda for development, rights, services, governance and accountability. This effort has provided an opportunity for the citizens to directly engage with the upcoming elections and voice their demands for the future agenda of the country.

Undertaken by Wada Na Todo Abhiyan the consultative process was spread over 210 parliamentary constituencies across 24 states through our state partners. Constituencies were selected on the basis of political importance (Rae Baerelli, Amethi, Varanasi, UP) and poor performance of development indicators (Kalahandi, Odisha).

A vast network of civil society organisations, people's networks, women's organisations, trade unions, student groups, dalit and tribal groups and other networks representing various marginalized sections contributed to this massive mobilization and participatory discussion. 'Charter of Demands' was developed through public meetings held in villages, Panchayats, town halls, across districts for each constituency. At the state and national level, the manifesto is being shared with representatives of all political parties, standing and aspiring candidates for Lok Sabha elections and members of the drafting committee as direct inputs from the citizens to shape their political commitment.

The process has been led and orchestrated by Wada Na Todo Abhiyan (WNTA), a national campaign consisting of more than 4000 CSOs and People's Organizations working on 'holding the government accountable to its promise to end Poverty, Social Exclusion & Discrimination'.

# People's Voice

The People's Manifesto clearly reflects an urgency to address inequalities and calls for a greater commitment to fulfilling the promise of basic services – particularly, health, education, water and sanitation and food security. The poorest and most excluded are systematically deprived of the benefits of development and economic progress. Welfare schemes and policy reforms are not enough. People have demanded structural adjustments that would overthrow deeply entrenched hegemonies and put an end to discrimination. Key emphases emerging from the people include the need for greater regulation of the private sector particularly in health, education, land rights and in preservation of forest and natural resources, a strong justice delivery system, protection of rights and entitlements across all sections of marginalized and vulnerable

groups including women, children, dalits, muslims, adivasis, persons with disability and the LGBT community. The People's Manifesto tables an extremely constructive critique of the policy instruments and large social sector investments by pointing out critical flaws that compromise their efficacy and impact. Recommendations on governance, decentralized planning and resource allocation, are important inputs that could frame the political and social commitment of the forthcoming government in an effective way. The manifesto prioritises upholding national integrity and simultaneously protecting the rights of the excluded, with emphasis on local and specific development needs. On various urgent matters such as health, it has called for time bound commitments.



## People's review of India in the past decade

India has embarked on an intensive economic and social reform in the past two decades. Various pro-poor and progressive reforms have been initiated with budgetary allocations for a number of large flagship programs. Yet economic growth and policy reforms have failed to reduce wide disparities in income and standards of living exist across states and social groups, rendering progress or social protection ineffective for a large majority.

## Exclusion is the central dimension of poverty in India

In a country which houses the second largest population of the poor, discrimination of the poorest and most marginalised across caste, religion, tribal groups, women and girls, remain as the biggest impediment to an equitable and just society. In a country of 1.2 billion people, the excluded groups – dalits, adivasis, muslims and other minorities – constitute 38 per cent of the population – a large percentage of the world's most marginalized.

The main causes of inequality are the practices of discriminatory employment and historic deprivation of assets and this is directly linked to lack of choice resulting in exclusion from healthcare, education and decent employment i.e. access to a better and empowered life.

## Discrimination against women: the multiplier effect

Despite legal safeguards, violation of women and girls continue unabated. In the recent decades, India has passed several legislations, particularly those that address violence against women in the public and domestic spheres including laws on female foeticide, dowry, bigamy, domestic violence, rape and sexual assault. Yet the safety net has failed to improve the lot of women who continue to be vulnerable and are relegated to the margins of benefit and empowerment.

## Education has overlooked issues related to quality, access and employability

India is poised to meet the MDG targets on education by delivering on the target of 100% enrolment in primary education and an equal enrolment ratio of boys and girls up to Class V. While advancements have taken place, quality of learning, equitable access and high drop-out rate particularly in girls are significant impediments. Basic literacy is not enough as it does not translate to employability or lift people out of poverty and deprivation.

The government's commitment to universalisation through the landmark Right to Education Act, is considered a good start but an inadequate one as the praxis has been beset with challenges of planning and infrastructure. Below par quality of teaching is punctuated by caste and religion based discrimination. Children of dalit, tribal and other minority groups, particularly girls, often face severe harassment at school from peers and teachers, forcing them to drop out. Girls drop out of school commonly due to lack of separate toilet facilities, demands of surrogate parenting and increased pressure of domestic chores brought on by water scarcity and other causes.

## Healthcare, sanitation and access to safe drinking water

Health care is a pressing concern, particularly slow progress on improvement in conditions of maternal health, maternal mortality, infant and under five mortality and malnutrition. Lack of infrastructure, trained medical practitioners in difficult to access parts of the country are some of reasons, aggravated by social practices, prejudice against women making it difficult for them to access health benefits, lack of awareness, escalating food prices. Privatisation of healthcare and medicine patents have driven up costs, resulting in health shocks that deplete the meager income of poor families or force them to opt out of treatment. The primary area of concern in case of children is the struggle to im-

prove their survival chances one month after birth and malnutrition.

People's living conditions are worsened by lack of sanitation facilities and availability of clean drinking water. In rural as well as urban part of the country, health conditions are severely affected as alarmingly large sections of people survive on unsafe water and live amidst absent sanitation facilities.

### **Growth and progress led by access to decent jobs and economic opportunities have eluded the poorest and most marginalized.**

GDP led growth is not sufficient to lift people out of poverty, to reduce inequalities and to improve social conditions. Inflation, rising food prices and lack of jobs have marred progress, particularly for the bottom 20 per cent of the population. Various factors such as lack of decent and fair employment opportunities, vulnerable working conditions particularly for women, continuing practice of child labour and a slow agricultural sector, plagued by lack of incentives and safeguards, have resulted in large pockets of income inequality.

### **Rising prices and market dynamics have brought about a food crisis**

Staple food crops such as rice and millet have been replaced with cash crops. More and more people are sliding into food insecurity and have reduced access to nutritional food.

Conflict, corruption, crime and coalition politics emerge as challenges to India's impressive record as the world's largest democracy, calling for a greater commitment to human rights, accountability and freedom from violence.

Coalition politics has resulted in an unstable federal system with long hours at the parliament wasted on partisan debates, pushing back important legislations and amendments. Gaps in governance, lack of accountability and commitment to human rights have emerged as challenges to India's impressive record as the world's largest democracy. It has resulted in a lack luster implementation of basic services and perpetuated an overall environment of corruption that undercuts all social protection programs and progressive reforms. Indifferent governance is also linked to peace and human rights particularly in conflict affected parts of the country such as the North Eastern states and Jammu & Kashmir.

# Key Demands

## 1. ENSURE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF HEALTHCARE ACCESSIBLE TO AND AFFORDABLE BY ALL, UPGRADE THE PUBLIC HEALTH FACILITIES AND ADDRESS AS A PRIORITY HEALTH EMERGENCIES SUCH AS MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH AND MORTALITY.

- Enact with immediate effect the National Health Bill 2009 with a time bound public financing commitment.
- Increase tax spending on health to meet 5% of GDP in the next 5 years. Commit proportionate health investments for the rural areas.
- Establishment of strong community based accountability mechanisms under programmes such as Rashtriya Swashtya Bima Yojna, National rural livelihood mission(NRLM) and such.
- Improve with immediate effect infrastructure and resources of all public health facilities by implementing Indian Public Health Standard (IPHS) Guidelines. Fill the massive shortfall in the number of required health workers by ensuring the WHO norm of at least 23 health workers per 10,000 population. Equip every village with minimum health facilities such as mobile health clinics fully equipped to provide primary health care, skilled ASHA workers, facilities for remote medical advice, free medicines, emergency transport facilities particularly for pregnant women.
- Block level hospitals should have facilities to perform operations, administer emergency specialized care and intervention, pathological laboratories and blood bank.
- Ensure life saving and essential medicines are available free of cost to all; promote adequate production and use of generic drugs, distribution of free medicines to the remotest public health centres.
- Ensure free health care facilities and hospital care for workers, particularly women, from the unorganized sectors, those employed in hazardous work, sex workers.
- Stronger implementation of the National Urban Health Mission especially for the slum and street dwellers.
- Impose regulations on the private medical sector to mitigate health shocks and financial debts incurred by a vast majority of India. Roll out the Clinical Establishment Act in all states making it mandatory for all private establishments to register and adhere to the regulations which include free beds and treatment for the poor.
- Improve implementation and eradicate corruption in all maternal and child health related programs. Increase budgetary allocations and provide safeguards and redressal mechanisms to ensure service delivery.
- Enforce effective implementation of Janani Suraksha Yojna, increase prevalence of safe



institutional deliveries, ante-natal and neo-natal care.

- Reduce under 5 mortality rate to 42 per 1000 live births by 2018 and infant mortality rate to 27 per 1000 live births by 2020.
- Reduce maternal mortality rate to 109 per 100,000 births by 2020.
- Uphold and commit towards a broader purview of healthcare that includes social determinants such as access to safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, mental well being, non discriminatory standards for people with various kinds of disabilities.
- Institutionalize the role of civil society organisations in flagship programmes of government on basic services such as education, health and livelihood etc.

## 2. PREVENT HEALTH CONDITIONS FROM WORSENING BY ENSURING UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION FACILITIES

- Ensure availability of purified piped water in all urban areas; ensure regular maintenance of pipes, availability of testing facilities for arsenic, fluoride and other forms of contamination, prevent outbreak of water borne diseases.
- Install deep tubewells in drought prone areas with additional responsibility shouldered by local authorities to meet water needs.
- Implement a convergence roadmap across ministries and departments for better water resource management.
- Capacity building of communities for ownership and maintenance of water distribution systems and water bodies.
- Every village and urban settlement to have household level toilets, effective drainage and sanitation systems, waste disposal and recycling.
- Allocate a special budget component for hygiene and sanitation requirements of young girls and women, particularly for menstrual health.

## 3. PROTECT EDUCATION AS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT BY EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTING THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION (RTE) ACT 2009, ARREST DROP-OUT RATES AND IMPROVE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Increase funding for education to a minimum of 6 per cent of GDP and ensure the complete utilization of these resources.
- Fill existing gap of 1.18 million teachers through a recruitment drive; 50% of teachers should be women. Enforce measures related to quality of teaching such as teachers per subject, teaching equipment, learning materials, minimum working hours, qualification of teachers, IT based learning environment.
- Initiate a drive including age appropriate admission rules to bring back the millions out-of-school children.
- Set up separate toilets for girls in all schools; incentivize education for girls through measures such as crèche facilities at schools to support sibling surrogacy, enforce security measure for girls to attend school safely.
- revive the promise of nutritious Mid Day meals, available without discrimination to all and institute mechanisms to monitor safety and quality of the food.
- Improve access to schools; set up schools in adequate numbers and frequency across the country so that a child has to walk no more than 5 kms; provide mobile school facilities for children of nomadic tribes, migrant labours and construction workers.
- Extend the purview of RTE Act to 18 years, in line with the internationally recognized definition of childhood. Bring pre-school children under the purview of RTE.
- Take stringent and closely monitored steps to ensure social inclusion in all schools, including provisions for children with special needs.
- Promote teaching in mother tongue; introduce Urdu as a method of instruction.
- Ensure quality education in government schools which is missing.

#### 4. ENSURE NUTRITIOUS FOOD FOR ALL THROUGH EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY ACT

- Universalize coverage of National Food Security Act; include pulses and edible oil along with the food grain entitlements to all households. Make clear provisions to cover migrant workers, homeless population, destitute people and out of school children. Set-up community kitchens in urban areas.
- Implement restructured ICDS, set up anganwadi cum crèches and extend coverage of temporary settlement to all migrant and street children; ensure nutrition rich food for pregnant and lactating mother.
- Improve delivery of mid-day meal scheme, including nutritional quality of meals.
- Encourage decentralized procurement, especially from small and marginal farmers and adopt strong measure to arrest corruption and profiteering in the Public Distribution System (PDS).
- Arrest food inflation by putting an end to and adopting strict punitive measures against corrupt practices such as hoarding of food grains, speculating etc.
- Awareness drives and legal safeguards to address deeply entrenched social practices such as discriminatory feeding of the girl child and women of the family, child marriage etc which perpetuate malnutrition particularly amongst girls and women.
- Ensure that entitlements for the BPL category are disbursed on a timely and accountable manner; prompt delivery of BPL cards, widow and old age pension.

#### 5. INCREASE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH SUSTAINABLE METHODS AND REVIVE THE FARMING SECTOR AS A LIVELIHOOD AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

- Constitute a special task force to propagate, devise and provide technical expertise on sus-

tainable farming practices.

- Promote organic farming.
- Ensure that farmers receive fair prices for their produce.
- In order to make the state self-sufficient in the production of seeds, agricultural research centers, agricultural universities and other agriculture research institutes may be strengthened with proper and adequate means and infrastructure.
- Include farm labour under the permissible list of MGNREGA works.
- Secure and improve financial assistance for the farmers; make the loan sanction process easier; regulate financial institutions to ensure that the farmer does not slip into chronic debt.
- Ban production of crops and seeds through genetic engineering; invest in state held seed banks and grain storages at the Panchayat level.

#### 6. RECOGNISE HOUSING AS A HUMAN RIGHT BY ENSURING DECENT LIVING CONDITIONS FOR THE URBAN POOR AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF DISPLACED PERSONS

- Legislate National Housing Policy and National Rehabilitation Policy. Ensure mandatory provisions of 25-40 % of land in City Development Plans (CDPs) for housing of the urban poor.
- Amend the Model Property Rights to Slum Dwellers Act 2011 to abolish punitive action against the urban poor, decriminalize settlers and slum dwellers.
- Effectively implement the Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 with particular focus on social security measures for the protection of displaced persons, resettlement in areas that are close replications of their original habitat, the consequences on women who are impacted significantly, immediate disbursement of adequate and fair compensation
- Rehabilitate people affected by natural disasters.

- Provide decent, habitable and hygienic shelters for the homeless in all cities.

## 7. STRENGTHEN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MAHATMA GANDHI NREGA (MGNREGA) ACT, COMMIT TO URBAN EMPLOYMENT, CREATE DECENT EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL ACROSS SECTORS

- Provide 200 days of employment to people in rural areas and make timely payment of wages.
- Improve accountability and efficacy of the rights based MGNREGRA Act through awareness drives, mandatory gram sabhas, corruption free Gram Panchayat, frequent social audits; ensure that the most vulnerable receive employment and wages.
- Localise planning and implementation by investing the Panchayat with more technical and human resource support.
- Extend coverage by providing two hundred days of work and entitle two members (one male and one female) of a household.
- Reduce the imperatives of financial migration by providing employment opportunities within each state.
- Promote entrepreneurship, enhance the scope and budgetary allocation of the National Livelihood Mission, revive traditional livelihood, artisan skills, provide technical and financial support to improve farming practices.
- Enact and implement legislation for urban employment.
- Amend the Inter-state Migration Act to protect labour rights and ensure safety, minimum wages, housing and social security for all migrant workers in the country.

## 8. DEFEND PEOPLE'S RIGHTS TO LAND AND FOREST AS PLEDGED IN THE RECENT LEGISLATIONS, SAFEGUARD AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY, FOREST AND OTHER NATURAL RESOURCES FROM THE PROFITEERING INTERESTS OF

## PRIVATE LAND DEVELOPERS AND EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES.

- Safeguard land rights of the adivasis by strong implementation the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006; appoint people's representative at the district and block level with immediate effect.
- Enforce non-transfer of forest land for any development purpose without the consent of gram sabha, which is mandatory under FRA.
- Prevent exploitative use of forest resources.
- Promote adivasi self rule, local planning and ownership of governance by implementing the Panchayats Extension to Scheduled Areas(PESA) Act 1996
- Empower forest dwellers through awareness drives on their rights and entitlements under the FRA. Conduct frequent social audits on implementation of the FRA and resolve all issues immediately. Maintain a database of pat-tas (land titles).
- Protect the dalits from forceful evictions, allocate specially reserved land to the landless dalits, create fast track courts for speedy resolution of land disputes.
- Implement land reforms and ensure household and agricultural land to the landless people.

## 9. AMEND DOMESTIC ENVIRONMENT LAWS AND GLOBAL POSITIONS, PUT AN END TO OVER EXPLOITATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES TO ENSURE ENVIRONMENT JUSTICE FOR THE POOR AND INVEST IN TECHNOLOGY FOR SUSTAINABILITY.

- Stop indiscriminate environment clearance to the development projects proposed in eco-sensitive zones. Proper and independent EIA (Environment Impact Assessment) should be done to assess the damage any development project would cause to environment before going ahead to approve a project.
- Adopt a climate resilient approach to development with strategies specific to different ecological regions, agro climatic zones, human de-

velopment indices and livelihood sources.

- Strengthen existing adaptation and mitigation strategies through greater investment in R&D.
- Promote environment friendly technology and innovation; implement a time bound roadmap to substitute fossil fuel based energy with renewable sources.
- Declare water as an endangered resource; review, strengthen and implement Central Water Commission guidelines.
- Make it mandatory for state governments to harvest rainwater in rural, urban and industrial areas.
- Enforce environment sensitivity and compliance as the core of responsible business practice in the private sector.
- Enact a Disaster Management Law to enforce an adequate response mechanism and allocate budget and accountability; ensure decentralized resource distribution including personnel, technology and capacity building.

#### **10. ENSURE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN BY PROTECTING THEIR ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS, ENSURING POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND ADOPTING A ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY FOR VIOLENCE.**

- Pass the Women's Reservation Bill with immediate effect.
- Ensure fair and equal resource distribution, employment and income opportunities for women. Mandate equal employment opportunities in all sectors, enforce safe employment conditions and a strong implementation of Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2013. Allocate 50% of all funds from the Scheduled Caste Sub Plan and Tribal Sub Plan for SC and ST women.
- Protect women and girls from all forms of violence by rigorous implementation of legal safeguards such as the Domestic Violence Act,

2005, 498A of the Indian Penal Code, Dowry Prohibition Act.

- Sensitise and reform enforcement; set up police stations and chowkis staffed by women and legal aid cells in every village; train the police on dealing with violence against women and initiate a stringent penalty for any harassment or mishandling of those seeking protection and justice.
- Ensure faster delivery of justice; set up fast-track courts for a speedy disposal of cases across the country.
- Set up District Forensic Laboratory in District hospitals to expedite forensic examination of rape and domestic violence cases; ensure supervision of such facilities by local NGOs and the State Commission for Women.
- Recognise and strictly enforce social, human and labour rights of sex workers. Protect them from exploitation and violence, provide support for rehabilitation, economic assistance, access to all government schemes and employment opportunities.
- Create awareness about rights and entitlements under MGNREGA, ensure safe and equal employment opportunities. Provide support such as on-site crèche and childcare facilities, work to home transport, universal maternity benefits (minimum six months wages).
- Protect land, forest and property rights of women through stronger enactment of existing laws.
- Make enforcement and judiciary gender sensitive. Mandate 33 % reservation for women in all police forces.
- Create women cell in all police stations and special women police stations in all district head quarters.
- Protect land, forest and property rights of women through stronger enactment of existing laws.
- Promote women's control over natural resources and adopt a gender sensitive climate change policy.

## 11. PROTECT THE RIGHT OF EVERY CHILD TO SURVIVE, BE HEALTHY AND SAFE

- Increase investment for child protection, education, health and nutrition. The budget for children should be increased up to 10% of the total union budget.
- Raise the public expenditure on health to 5% of GDP, as per WHO standard, on education to 6% of GDP and to combat increasing violence against children increase the union budget allocation from 0.03% to at least 0.15%.
- Rigorous and effective implementation of Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act, 1994 to prohibit gender based selection. Establish a dedicated cell with appropriate budgetary allocation within the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to for stricter enforcement of the law.
- Amend the Child Labour (Prohibition and regulation) Act to ensure all children avail of RTE provisions and harmonize the age definition of all child related legislations in line with the National Policy for Children 2013, where every individual below 18 years is recognized as a child.
- Establish an independent, convergent body that will anchor nutrition at the national level, develop a national nutrition policy, and issue orders for conducting a comprehensive periodic survey on nutrition to track progress in eliminating malnutrition. Establish Nutrition Missions in all states with high levels of malnutrition.
- Elevate the Ministry of Women and Child Development to the status of the Cabinet Ministry to strengthen the focus for child development and protection.
- Ensure children's voices and participation in the democratic process through neighbourhood children's parliament, children gram sabhas across India, participation in developing and auditing all policy, program and legislative matters relevant to them.

## 12. ELIMINATE ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION AGAINST DALITS, ADIVASIS, MUSLIMS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

- Bring a legislation on SCP and TSP to give legal sanction to the plan allocation to SCs and STs.
- Ensure non-discriminatory access to rights and entitlement for socially excluded groups
- Close the development gap by effectively implementing Special Component Plan for dalits and the Tribal Sub Plan with a particular focus on education, income generation and access to basic amenities.
- Set up an institution at the centre and state level to allocate funds to various ministries, ensure timely disbursement and oversee implementation and monitoring.
- Allocate and utilize budget to Ministry of Minority Affairs and other such focused efforts to address exclusion of muslim communities in keeping with community needs and aspirations, employing mechanisms that ensure their engagement.
- Implement the recommendations made by the Rangnath Misra Commission and Sachar Committee for development and empowerment of muslims.
- Ensure land patta allocation for muslims.
- Include dalits from muslim community within the Schedule Caste and Backward Class.
- End discrimination against children of dalits, adivasis, muslims and other minorities in schools and institutions of higher education by stringently adopting the Right to Education Act and enforcing structural corrections that challenge the elite order perpetuating exclusion.
- Guarantee access to employment opportunities by enacting equal opportunity laws that prohibit discrimination in capital markets, hiring decisions and processes at the work place and by ensuring a reservation in the private sector.



- End all forms of discrimination in employment; enact and stringently adopt the Unorganised Workers Security Bill.
- Enforce Bonded Labour System Abolition Act 1976 to rescue millions of dalits and adivasis in bondage and protect communities vulnerable to bondage. Establish strong and effective measures for rehabilitation through convergence of central and state schemes.
- Ensure minimum wages adjusted for inflation and economic assistance under Manual Scavenger's Act (1993), rehabilitation through vocational training, access to decent and permanent housing, sanitation and drinking water facilities.
- Defend the rights of the socially excluded by addressing disparities in access to healthcare, particularly maternal health, access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities; ensuring access to and non discrimination in food entitlement, housing and a decent standard of living.
- Protect women and children of the marginalised groups as they are the most vulnerable. Enforce without exception the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act and other laws to end impunity for violence against dalit women, prosecute and punish perpetrators.
- Pass the Prevention of Communal Violence and Targeted Violence (Access to Justice and Reparation) Bill, 2011. Ensure that victims of communal violence receive timely compensation, are allowed to return safely and with dignity to their previous residence and jobs, receive care and protection from the state.
- Declare all the people of fishermen community as sea tribes and water tribes and give them their rights over fishing in water and sea.
- Pass the Disability Bill (2009) and enforce its recommendations immediately.
- Allocate budget for the rehabilitation, healthcare, skills training and special education needs for persons with disability.
- Make it mandatory for all public infrastructure, transport systems, hospitals and schools to be accessible.

- Improve the functioning of statutory institutions such as commissions for women, dalits, adivasis, minorities and Person with Disabilities particularly at state level; establish clear and transparent set of criteria for appointment of Chairperson and Members of the Commission and mandate the commissions to prepare a five year plan with deliverables and budgets.

### **13. REPEAL WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT SECTION 377 OF THE INDIAN PENAL CODE THAT CRIMINALISES HOMOSEXUALITY, CREATE APPROPRIATE SAFEGUARDS TO PROTECT THE LESBIAN GAY BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER (LGBT) COMMUNITY FROM CRUELTY AND ENSURE THEY LEAD A LIFE OF DIGNITY, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY.**

- Provide equal opportunities and entitlements to all sexual minorities with special provisions and financial assistance for the poor, including housing.
- Legal, social and economic recognition to the 'third sex'. Bring back the significant population of transgenders into the social fold, by ensuring economic entitlements, employment, access to education and health, skill development and legalising sex change operation.

### **14. PLEDGE TO INVEST IN THE YOUNG, CREATE AN ENABLING AND ASPIRATIONAL ENVIRONMENT TO UNLEASH THEIR FULLEST POTENTIAL.**

- Place youth at the heart of politics, legislation and governance. Mandate 35 % reservation of youth representation in legislative assemblies and cabinet equivalent bodies of which 50 % reservation will be for women.
- Make education relevant and impactful.
- Create viable employment options for all. Guarantee respectable and rewarding employment at the home town; create special job opportunities for rural youth from class 10 onwards; provide an unemployment allowance for the unemployed youth

## 15. COMMIT TO GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY IN GOVERNANCE AND ADEQUATE BUDGETARY ALLOCATION

- Separate Grievance Redressal Law to strengthen grievance redressal on public services.
- Financial and operational details of all government programs are to be made readily and regularly available in the public domain.
- Strengthen mechanisms for public participation and monitoring such as through the Right to Information, Social Audit and Vigilance Committees.
- The centrally sponsored Flagship Programs should be made aware through the active involvement of civil society to the public and beneficiaries and accountability structures should be legally enforceable rights.
- Resource mobilization through progressive taxation to fund public spending for social sectors. Increase direct tax rates and reducing the indirect tax rates which have adverse impact on poor and marginalised.
- Appoint Social Justice Committees (SJs) chaired by a member of the dalit or adivasi community in every village; ensure proper allocation of budget
- Enforce accountability of the gram panchayats, hold regular gram sabha and committee meetings with proper maintenance of reports.
- Make it mandatory to constitute well functioning panchayat and block level vigilance committee to monitor progress of welfare schemes.
- Institutionalize the role of civil society organisations in flagship programmes of government on basic services such as education, health and livelihood etc.
- Mobilise greater public spending through progressive taxation policies such as increased direct tax rates. Reduce indirect tax rates which adversely impact the poor and marginalised.
- Reintroduce Wealth Tax to finance the deficits of basic services budget.

## 16. PRIORITISE AND STRENGTHEN HUMAN RIGHTS AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE

- Abolish all anti-people, anti-democratic laws such as Armed Forces (Special Power) Act (AFSPA), engage politically with conflict regions and initiate police and judicial reforms to uphold peace and human rights.
- Police and judicial reforms to be undertaken with focus on responsiveness to marginalized groups and speedy redress of appeals. The D K Basu Guidelines to be implemented to ensure prevention of unlawful arrest and torture.
- Prioritise national integration and communal harmony.
- Stop criminalizing the social workers working in maoist dominated areas where there are rampant instances of them being falsely implicated to have maoist connections by police.
- Stop criminalizing the anti-corruption crusaders by state and effectively implement the Whistleblowers Act and put in place a witness protection program.
- Recognise and protect the right to self-determination of people from areas of armed conflicts and insurgency such as the North East, Jammu and Kashmir and the Maoist dominated districts.
- Constitute a Peace Building Commission to implement and oversee an inclusive, transparent and sustainable peace process in the conflict ridden areas.
- Prevent racist attack on the youth from North East in metro cities; provide protection as outlined by the International Convention on Elimination of Racial Discrimination ratified by the Government of India in 1968.
- Establish rehabilitation measures and a welfare fund for victims of violence and conflict particularly women and children, conflict widows and orphans, victims of sexual assault, victims of human trafficking and other marginalized, excluded communities generated by the ongoing armed conflict.

## 17. STRENGTHEN THE FUNCTIONING OF GRAM SABHA AND LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENTS

- Respect the decisions of Gram Sabha in its assertion of rights over natural resources
- Ensure devolution of power to the Panchayats and urban local governments as per the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendment of Constitution and provide make budgetary allocation
- Merge of parallel bodies formed under central programmes/acts with the local institutions to prevent overlapping and for clarity of responsibility.
- Provide adequate human resource support to Panchayats and undertake capacity building programmes with help of Civil Society Organisations.









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