



A Critical Conversation on Indian General Elections 2019

From the 11th of April to the 19th of May, Indians will be asked to choose their next government. It is a high stakes election taking place in a highly charged and polarised atmosphere. Typically, Indian elections become an exercise in result prediction or a demonstration that the world's largest democracy is alive and well. However, elections are also a useful site to deliberate, revisit and rethink wide-ranging political, economic and cultural issues.

Over the past five years, India has witnessed an unprecedented scale of violence and unrest. This includes politically motivated forms of mob vigilantism and police targeting, as well as an exacerbation of structural inequalities, leading to unemployment, a rising rate of suicides, and a growing population of dispossessed poor. There has also been a marked increase in cross-border violence as Kashmir continues to serve as a key node for the assertion of national pride, or for anti-nationalist denunciations- needless to say, the lived reality of Kashmiris is never taken into account. Whilst popular media outlets busy themselves by adding increasingly shrill, jingoistic fervour to an already hyper-saffronised nation, the ongoing injustices experienced by marginalised communities is excluded from the picture.

As an independent group of LSE students, we seek to use the elections as a way to highlight injustices in India. We see this platform as an opportunity to create meaningful conversations where we can both debate and learn about the state of affairs outside and beyond media and state narratives. Finally, we hope that this event will serve as a platform to show our solidarity with various people's movements that seek to assert democracy from below.

Speakers include Gita Sahgal; Edward Simpson; Dibyesh Anand and Nitasha Kaul. The event will be chaired by Dr. Mehroosh Tak.

For further information on the event e-mail: desaffroniseindianow@gmail.com

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