

## LETTER PETITION

**Date: June 13, 2024**

To:

**Dear Shri N. Chandrababu Naidu,**  
Hon'ble President, Telugu Desam Party

**Sub: APPEAL FROM CONCERNED CITIZENS TO TAKE REQUISITE STEPS TO STAY THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE NEW CRIMINAL LAWS**

**Respected Sir,**

Hearty congratulations to you on being sworn in as the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh.

We, the undersigned, are also glad to note that the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) is destined to play a major role in national politics.

Under the circumstances, we are hopeful that the TDP will use the opportunity to firmly uphold the basic principles enshrined in the Constitution of India and will do everything in its power to defend democratic rights that are guaranteed in the Constitution.

**Sadly, as the situation stands now, there is a grave threat that is hanging over the nation in the form of three new criminal laws, namely, 'Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023', 'Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023', and 'Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam, 2023', which were hurriedly pushed through Parliament on 20th December 2023 without a debate.**

These laws are scheduled to come into effect from 01st July 2024 and **Sir you need to act immediately**

Our **major concern** is that the amendments made in the then existing laws are such that they are mostly draconian in nature. They deal exclusively with matters of life and liberty and criminal harm that can be caused to an individual in other multiple and various ways. They also (adversely affect) deal with civil liberties of citizens more particularly in the matter of **freedom of speech, right to assembly, right to associate, right to demonstrate, and their other civil rights, which can be criminalized** as part of the law and order provisions of these three laws.

Essentially, these new criminal laws would **equip the government with adequate power to hollow out our democracy and transform India into a fascist state** – should the government choose to deploy the new laws to their fullest extent.

**The proposed new laws would enable the government to dramatically scale up arrest, detention, prosecution and imprisonment of law abiding democratic opponents, dissidents and activists.**

**Some of the chilling features of the new Criminal Code as requiring special attention are:**

- (1) the criminalisation of legitimate, lawful, non-violent democratic speech or action as ‘terrorism’;
- (2) the broadening of the offence of sedition in a new and more vicious avatar (what could be called “sedition-plus”);
- (3) the expansion of the potential for “selective prosecution” — targeted, politically-biased prosecution of ideological and political opponents;
- (4) the criminalisation of a common mode of political protest against government through fasting;
- (5) encouraging the use of force against any assembly of persons;
- (6) exponentially enhancing ‘police raj’ by criminalising “resisting, refusing, ignoring or disregarding to conform to any direction given by [a police officer]”;

- (7) enhancing handcuffing;
- (8) maximising police custody during investigation;
- (9) making the recording of a FIR discretionary for the police;
- (10) dialling up the pain of imprisonment;
- (11) compelling all persons (even those not accused of any crime) to provide their biometrics to the government; and
- (12) shielding of some of the Sangh parivar's activities.

It is this impending threat to the democratic structure of this nation that has compelled us to seek your immediate intervention to **stay the implementation of these questionable laws until their implications are thoroughly reexamined by a team of legal experts and debated on the floor of the Indian Parliament.**

Since there are still **seventeen days** left before the said criminal laws go into effect, we earnestly urge you meet a team of legal experts from our side, who could brief you on the implications of the new criminal laws, which would enable your Party to take appropriate decision to prevent an impending blow to civil liberties.

We do hope you would respond positively to this appeal and take the requisite steps to stay the implementation of the said criminal laws.

Sir, once endorsed, we hope to send this **Letter Petition** to all Opposition Leaders .

Thanking you,  
Yours sincerely,