



# The Indian Journal for Research in Law and Management

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Editor-in-Chief – Dr. Muktai Deb Chavan; Publisher – Alden Vas; ISSN: 2583-9896

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## WHY ARE BIHARIS STILL FIGHTING FOR DIGNITY IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY?

- *Jhilik Gupta*

A few months ago, a video<sup>1</sup> was posted on Reddit by a user named r/PahadiTalks, which allegedly shows a few Bihari youth attacking Kashmiri owned shops. This was most probably right after the Pulwama Attack. Instead of criticising the attack and the violence it caused, the comment section took a different turn and quickly developed into a platform for vitriolic attacks against Biharis, thus reflecting the common mindset of the people against a specific sect. “*These Biharis are also a burden to every state Wherever they go. They act like baap ka jaydat in public space*”<sup>2</sup>, “*these racist biharis deserve this treatment from other regions*”<sup>3</sup>, “*Bihar has one of lowest per capita outputs and what’s even more disgusting is that they contaminate water sources by dumping stuff and even use drains to worship chhatt!!*”<sup>4</sup>, “*Typical Dehati Bimaru Behaviour.....Ek Bihari, =10 Bimari, 10 Bihari = Seher Khali*”<sup>5</sup> - these are just a few of the hundreds of comments targeted against Biharis. Biharis often face this kind of deep-rooted prejudice in educational institutions,

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1 Glum\_Video2575, *Biharis Protesting Kashmiri Owned Shops. I Don't Think There Is Any Kashmiri in This Sub but Look at the Audacity of These People, These Are the Same People Who Will Slam Other States' Regionalists* 🤔, r/PAHADITALKS (2025),

[https://www.reddit.com/r/PahadiTalks/comments/1idkrta/biharis\\_protesting\\_kashmiri\\_owned\\_shops\\_i\\_dont/](https://www.reddit.com/r/PahadiTalks/comments/1idkrta/biharis_protesting_kashmiri_owned_shops_i_dont/).

2 *These Biharis Are Al...*, r/PAHADITALKS (2025),

[https://www.reddit.com/r/PahadiTalks/comments/1idkrta/biharis\\_protesting\\_kashmiri\\_owned\\_shops\\_i\\_dont/m9zwwa6/](https://www.reddit.com/r/PahadiTalks/comments/1idkrta/biharis_protesting_kashmiri_owned_shops_i_dont/m9zwwa6/).

3 *These Racist Biharis...*, r/PAHADITALKS (2025),

[https://www.reddit.com/r/PahadiTalks/comments/1idkrta/biharis\\_protesting\\_kashmiri\\_owned\\_shops\\_i\\_dont/m9zxnzq/](https://www.reddit.com/r/PahadiTalks/comments/1idkrta/biharis_protesting_kashmiri_owned_shops_i_dont/m9zxnzq/).

4 Dismal\_Animator\_5414, *Biharis Are Some of ...*, r/PAHADITALKS (2025),

[https://www.reddit.com/r/PahadiTalks/comments/1idkrta/biharis\\_protesting\\_kashmiri\\_owned\\_shops\\_i\\_dont/ma3vvyi/](https://www.reddit.com/r/PahadiTalks/comments/1idkrta/biharis_protesting_kashmiri_owned_shops_i_dont/ma3vvyi/).

job markets and even in the social circles. This blog explores the discrimination faced by Biharis and analyses them through the lens of the Constitution of India and human rights.

Bihar- once a hub of world class education, religion, culture, art, literature, politics, Bihar- the birthplace of *Mata Janaki*<sup>6</sup>, Bihar- the land where the first residential university of the world (Nalanda)<sup>7</sup> was constructed, Bihar- home to the ancient city of Vaishali, believed to be the world's first republic<sup>8</sup>, Bihar- once known worldwide for its rich heritage- has now been reduced to the reputation of being the state that harbours 'illiterates', 'job snatchers' and 'uncivilised migrants'. But what led to the downfall of Bihar's honor and the ever increasing hatred towards Biharis? The answer is simple - The economic progress in Bihar was slower as compared to the other states of India. Bihari migrants who move to other states in search of job opportunities and better lifestyle are often met with the stereotypical judgement of being criminals, rapists and thieves. As a result, Biharis become a victim of inequality, discrimination and violence. Employers refuse to hire them, local residents protest against housing them, children face similar discrimination in educational institutions, many societies sideline them during community gatherings, some political figures like *Manoranjan Byapari*<sup>9</sup>, even go to the extent of openly campaigning against Biharis, thus stimulating violence among the locals against Biharis.

The use of the term 'equality' in the Preamble of the Constitution implies that equality is one of the foundational ideas upon which the Indian State was formed<sup>10</sup>. Article 14 guarantees 'equality before law' and 'equal protection of law' to the people, both of which have been used in the

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5 dantanzen, *Typical Dehati Bihar...*, R/PAHADI TALKS (2025),

[https://www.reddit.com/r/PahadiTalks/comments/1idkrt/biharis\\_protesting\\_kashmiri\\_owned\\_shops\\_in\\_dohar/](https://www.reddit.com/r/PahadiTalks/comments/1idkrt/biharis_protesting_kashmiri_owned_shops_in_dohar/)

6 *Exploring Sitamarhi, the Sacred Birthplace of Sita*, THE TIMES OF INDIA,

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/travel/destinations/exploring-sitamarhi-the-sacred-birthplace-of-sita/articleshow/107061220.cms> (last visited Jul. 11, 2025).

7 *History and Revival*, NALANDA UNIVERSITY, <https://nalandauniv.edu.in/about-nalanda/history-and-revival/> (last visited Jul. 11, 2025).

8 *History | Official Website of Vaishali District | India*, <https://vaishali.nic.in/history/> (last visited Jul. 11, 2025).

9 Shiv Sahay Singh, *Trinamool MLA Courts Controversy with Rant against Biharis*, THE HINDU, Mar. 14, 2022, <https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/kolkata/trinamool-mla-courts-controversy-with-rant-against-biharis/article65224366.ece>.

10 *Preamble to the Indian Constitution: Meaning, Significance & More*, (Jan. 14, 2025), <https://www.nextias.com/blog/preamble-to-the-indian-constitution/>.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights<sup>11</sup>. Article 14 guarantees that all people shall be treated equally by the State. Discrimination against a person is unconstitutional and can attract severe punishments. Article 15 prohibits any kind of discrimination against any citizen on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. Therefore, it means that no person shall be discriminated against on the basis of their place of birth<sup>12</sup>. Article 16 talks about equal opportunity in terms of public employment<sup>13</sup>. Article 19 guarantees the right to move freely throughout the territory of India, to reside and settle in any part of the territory of India, and to practice any profession, trade, business or occupation. Thus, a person can move freely and reside in any part of the country under Articles 19(1)(d) and 19(1)(e) respectively<sup>14</sup>. Article 21 guarantees the right to live with dignity to all the people<sup>15</sup>.

Furthermore, the Supreme Court, time and again, has affirmed that discrimination on the grounds of place of birth is unconstitutional. In the landmark case of *State of Madras v. Champakam Dorairajan*, 1951<sup>16</sup>, the Supreme Court struck down a government order that involved caste based discrimination. It emphasized that admission should be based on merit and not on place of birth. Then, in 1952, in the case of *Kathi Raning Rawat v. State of Saurashtra*<sup>17</sup>, the Court examined whether the establishment of special courts in the state of Saurashtra was discriminatory, as it applied to the residents of a specific sect. Thus, the court held that while territorial distinctions are allowed, they should not be arbitrary and must be reasonable. Again, in 1968, in the case of *Minor P. Rajendran v. State of Madras and others*<sup>18</sup>, the Court criticized the district-wise seat allocation in medical colleges based on population, and thus upheld that discrimination on the basis of place of birth is a violation of the Constitution.

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11 United Nations, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, UNITED NATIONS, <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights> (last visited Jul. 11, 2025).

12 *Article 15 in Constitution of India*, <https://indiankanoon.org/doc/609295/> (last visited Jul. 11, 2025).

13 *Article 16 in Constitution of India*, <https://indiankanoon.org/doc/211089/> (last visited Jul. 11, 2025).

14 *Article 19 in Constitution of India*, <https://indiankanoon.org/doc/1218090/> (last visited Jul. 11, 2025).

15 *Right to Life – Article 21 of Indian Constitution*, <https://www.lloydlawcollege.edu.in/blog/right-to-life-article-21.html> (last visited Jul. 11, 2025).

16 *The State Of Madras vs Srimathi Champakam Dorairajanandthe ... on 9 April, 1951*, <https://indiankanoon.org/doc/149321/> (last visited Jul. 12, 2025).

17 Admin, *Kathi Raning Rawat v. State of Saurashtra - Legal Vidhiya*, (Jun. 16, 2023), <https://legalvidhiya.com/kathi-raning-rawat-v-state-of-saurashtra/>.

18 *Minor P. Rajendran vs State Of Madras & Ors on 17 January, 1968*, <https://indiankanoon.org/doc/1342109/> (last visited Jul. 12, 2025).

In spite of such landmark constitutional reforms and judicial developments, the ground reality is that violence and discrimination against Biharis continue, which raises a serious concern and also highlights the absence of effective legal recourse in such cases. Section 153A, 504 and 506 of the Indian Penal Code, which penalize promoting enmity between different groups, intentional insult and criminal intimidation, can be used to combat such communal hate. However, there is barely any improvement in the situation of Bihari migrants who move out of their birth place in search of better opportunities. It is important to note that such discrimination not only violates the constitution but is also against international human rights principles. The ill-treatment of Bihari migrants in other states raises serious questions on India's global image as a federal democracy and an advocate of pluralism and human rights.

It is the need of the hour to introduce statutes that strictly and solely focus on discrimination and similar prevalent prejudices, whether it is on the basis of caste, religion or place of birth. It is important to call out those, who by any act, speech or gesture, ignite and abet others to continue the practice of discrimination. Law enforcement officers must watch out for any violation of the laws that prohibit discrimination. The society must grow out of the orthodox mentality of being superior to others, and accept people, regardless of their ancestral background. Discrimination against Biharis is a deep-rooted social evil that can only be removed by promoting fraternity as India cannot afford to build invisible walls between its people. When we Indians take pride in our diverse culture and the unity in such diversity, that unity must go beyond just slogans, it should also be reflected in policy, policing, and public discourse. Only when a Bihari feels as safe and dignified in any other part of the country as in Bihar, can we truly say that the Constitution lives in practice, not just on paper.