

A New Era

For

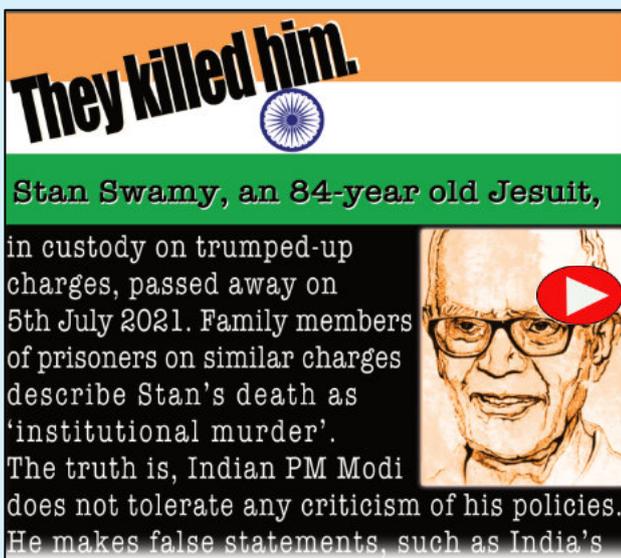
JUSTICE

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Justice is the voice of a coalition of organisations and networks in the UK who stand up against injustice.

In India, 2021 ended with events, carefully orchestrated by the ruling regime and its associates, that only showed how [India is spiralling downwards on all indices](#), from declining democracy and the rule of law to shrinking free press and religious freedom, increasing hunger, unemployment, poverty and illiteracy and a dismal public health.

Justice shares the spirit of new year, the hope that justice will prevail in India. That citizens in the UK will join our call to the UK government not to enter into trade deals with India, until it renews its



They killed him.

Stan Swamy, an 84-year old Jesuit,

in custody on trumped-up charges, passed away on 5th July 2021. Family members of prisoners on similar charges describe Stan's death as 'institutional murder'. The truth is, Indian PM Modi does not tolerate any criticism of his policies. He makes false statements, such as India's

pledge and work towards implementing the democratic norms and processes that it promises all its citizens and [not just a select few](#). We impress upon organisations and networks across Europe to join hands to bring the violators in India to the European Court of Human Rights.

The December issue highlighted the case of [Father Stan Swamy](#)'s death in custody, which history will remember as one of the greatest tragedies of this still young nation. The [Bhima Koregaon case](#) continues to raise questions (see below) and alongside this, more incidents of communal violence and targeting of Muslim women, killing of innocent civilians from

marginalised and poorer sections, and displacement of indigenous peoples through corrupt implementation of laws is also continuing.

We greatly appreciate the solidarity shown by many human rights defenders across the world and in India on 10 December 2021, International Human Rights Day (see page 4).

Update on political prisoners

After 3 years in prison Sudha Bhardwaj is granted bail but the state remains vindictive

[Sudha Bhardwaj](#) is a human rights defender, lawyer and trade unionist who worked for cement workers and

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coal miners in the state of Chattisgarh, and with Adivasi communities forcibly displaced by mining companies. Sudha filed many cases against torture, rape and killings of innocent villagers by the police and paramilitary forces.

Sudha is also one of the “[Bhima Koregaon](#)” academics, lawyers, environmentalists, social and cultural activists, including Stan Swamy (deceased), arrested between June 2018 and October 2020 by the Indian State, currently held by India’s National Investigating Agency (NIA) on alleged charges of inciting communal violence and plotting to kill Prime Minister Modi. All charges have been made under the [draconian Unlawful Activities Prevention Activities Act](#) (UAPA), a law that assumes the accused is guilty until proven innocent. A [thorough investigation](#) of clones of two of the seized hard drives, by the internationally reputed computer forensics and information security services organisation, Arsenal Consulting, has clearly shown these [charges to have been fabricated](#).

In December 2021, after spending over three years in prison as an under-trial, and several rejected bail applications, Sudha was finally [released on bail](#) on ‘technical grounds’. The Bombay High Court noted that as argued by the lawyers, the judge who ordered her detention in the first place was not qualified to hear cases filed under the UAPA. [The NIA still pursued](#), appealing to the Supreme Court, but the three-judge bench rejected this appeal as clearly the technical error could not be discounted.

The desperation of the state to silence the voices of human rights defenders, to hold Sudha as an example to lawyers doing human rights work is clearly evident even as we celebrated her release.

Targeted violence against minorities **Controversial killing of 17 civilians in the state of Nagaland**

On 4 December 2021, members of the Assam Rifles, a paramilitary force under army command, [ambushed a vehicle and killed six coal miners on their way home](#) in the Mon district of Nagaland. The army has alleged they were acting on a tip-off and ‘mistook’ the miners for insurgents. The miners belonged to region’s predominant Konyak tribe. When local people protested outside the regiment’s camp they were indiscriminately fired upon, killing seven of them. One more person died the next day but since then [the death toll has reached 17](#).

According to independent news reports, the first information report filed by the police stated that the security forces had not requisitioned the police for a guide, [clearly indicating that](#) the ‘intention’ of security forces was to ‘murder and injure civilians’ [sic].



Elsewhere, in the weeks preceding this incident paramilitary forces had resorted to [extra-judicial killing of 26 citizens](#) including local Adivasi tribal people, claiming they were ‘anti-nationals’. Adivasi people have for generations fought for their forest lands in state of Chhattisgarh.

**Join us our struggle so that the New Year brings
peace, justice and happiness for all.**

Write to: justice.coalition-uk@protonmail.com

Worsening communal violence

Hindu mob burn houses and mosques in the state of Tripura prior to local election

In November, in the neighbouring state of Tripura, home to relatively peaceful multi-religious communities, right-wing Hindutva organisations responded to alleged attacks on Hindus in Bangladesh by vandalising several mosques and burnt down Muslim homes across the state.

[Two journalists covering the violence in north Tripura were arrested](#) on the complaint made by Hindutva groups that their news coverage was spreading communal hatred. The [Editors Guild of India condemned the arrest](#). The journalists went through harrowing time before being released on bail as recounted by them at a [US congressional hearing](#) organised by diaspora groups.



Hate speeches and violence against Muslims is becoming the norm

The [orchestrated violence on minorities](#), particularly the Muslims, has become more and more visible in recent months. [Open calls to genocide](#) were made by so-called Hindu religious leaders at a religious summit in the holy city of Haridwar in the state of Uttarakhand on 17-19 December 2021. Similar events are planned in the future while the police stands aside.

Public intellectual Professor Apoorvanand has [pointed out that](#) this obvious hate speech is



also evident between the lines of the political speeches being made by Narendra Modi and the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, Adityanath, ahead of state elections. They remain silent on the calls heard at the summit. [Apoorvanand writes](#): 'We must make it clear in our heads that there is nothing organic or spontaneous about the events organised to call for genocide; it stems from great organisational work, planning and state impunity.'

As the year ended, [an app began circulating](#) with images of over 100 Muslim women, including senior journalists and lawyers were seen on the Indian internet as 'bought and sold'.

Climate injustice opinion is unlawful Rampant environmental destruction for corporate gain

Alongside the social problems noted above, India continues to [ignore international concerns](#) over the widespread clearance of forests and [forced eviction](#) of the tribes living therein for the purpose of 'development', often through a [twisted use](#) of the very laws meant to protect them (e.g. the [Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers \(Recognition of Forest Rights\) Act, 2006](#)).

Innocent villagers and activists are languishing in jail in the thousands as under-trials following crackdowns and [staunching of protests and movements](#) demanding the implementation of the special governance rights for tribal

communities and their lands in legal instruments such as the Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996.

Lands under cultivation by the historically marginalised Dalit groups have also been targeted for 'industrial development' by corporate mafia with the collusion of the state.

Indian Dalit Women's Fight for Land

The right to own land is a basic right. Land where one can live, sleep and raise a family. A land where one can grow food, to feed one's family. In the absence of the state providing decent jobs, with a living wage, Dalit women of Gujarat have been tilling previously barren land for over a decade. They have succeeded to the extent of producing two crops a year and providing for their household. But the same land, still noted as unproductive wasteland by the government, and snaking along the River Sabarmati River in Gujarat is now up for sale, destined to go to the corporate land mafia. [This is a heart-wrenching story of Dalit women](#) defending their right to life and their right to justice.



UK remains silent

Call out the UK government for remaining silent

Earlier in July this year, at [a debate at the House of Lords on 'the human rights situation in India'](#), Lord Harries started the debate asking 'Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the human rights situation in India; and in particular, of the impact it is having on (1) academics, (2) non-governmental organisations, (3) Muslims, (4) Christians, and (5) marginalised groups, such as the Dalits'.

The government however remains silent because of their trade and political interests with India.

Furthermore, many conservative Hindu organisations in the UK, such as the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh, the Hindu Council UK and the National Hindu Students Federation, [in multiple ways](#) are using the more recent version of the supremacist strategy of conferring the status of victimhood on the dominant group itself: that (imagined) 'Hinduphobia' is spreading in Britain.

Global action

10 December 2021, International Human Rights Day

We thank [all the people and organisations](#) that came out [on the streets across the world](#) on 10 December [to speak out](#) against the anti-democratic forces in India. Join us to stop this anti-democratic virus from spreading further afield.

The posters making the day also found their way to Punjab, India, where the Kirti Mazdoor Union Punjab also signed up. A big rally to commemorate the day was held in the town of Nawansher in Punjab, where Professor Jagmohan Singh (nephew of one of India's most respected revolutionary leaders, Bhagat Singh) and well-known advocate Daljit Singh, both members of the Association for Democratic Rights in India, addressed the gathering. Another rally was held in village of Heon, Banga, Punjab.



On 10th December 2021,

Human Rights Day,
the message to India
from around the world -

**SPEAKING UP IS NOT
ANTI-NATIONAL
SILENCING PEOPLE IS!**

A Joint Protest Action
by global actors against growing
human rights violations
in India!

International Coalition for Justice in India UK
Indian Workers Association GB
Anti Caste Discrimination Alliance UK
Indian Scheduled Caste Welfare Association UK.
Kirti Mazdoor Union Punjab

