

# INCAA Invited Lecture Series 2024-25



Indian National Confederation  
and Academy of Anthropologists

## BULLETS, BLOOD AND BODIES: THE STATUS AND POTENTIAL OF ANTHROPOLOGY OF POLITICS AND VIOLENCE IN INDIA



### Dr. Suman Nath

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## SYNOPSIS

With the increasing realisation of the political nature of their work, anthropologists for the last four decades have renewed focus on political anthropology resulting in two major traditions, first, the one that looks at the political institutions and their operationalisations and the second one influenced by French post-structuralist theory, explores at the ways in which history is written, and how everyday can be seen as political. There is a loose third trend that explores politics as a social category experienced and documented through practice, often inspired by Bourdieu. Looking at the rich tradition of ethnographically inspired works, India has a diverse array of studies on political anthropology primarily by anthropologists, sociologists and political scientists. The lecture captures the essential nature of Indianness in Political Anthropology from the contextualisation of power in traditional categories such as caste, tribe and religion. It shows, excepting a few, anthropologists have virtually disappeared in studying politics and violence in India for about two decades now. In the meantime, the country has undergone several key political changes, which requires urgent anthropological investigation. With an overview of the theorisation of power from the Indian experience, I show how the ideas generated through ethnographic works in India have wider connotations and how we need to continue the tradition rather than abandoning it. With a brief reflection of some of my recent works on politics and violence, the talk will end with an attempt to show the possible future of Indian political anthropology, the voids which need to be filled and the challenges the discipline would face.

**20 December 2024 | 7.00 pm to 8.30 pm IST**

**Please join via Google Meet**

**<https://meet.google.com/faw-azpb-npc>**

*Suman Nath did his PhD jointly under faculties from the Indian Institute of Management Calcutta and the University of Calcutta in Anthropology. He teaches anthropology at Dr.A. P.J. Abdul Kalam Government College, Kolkata, India. Since 2007, he has been researching on issues of politics of resource allocation, communalism and political violence which includes a stint as Research Associate at Public Policy and Management Group, Indian Institute of Management Calcutta, India. His books include a couple of monographs, titled People-Party-Policy Interplay in India (2020, Routledge), Democracy and Social Cleavage in India (2023, Routledge) a co-authored volume on Sexuality, Identity and Health (2014, Aswin Anokha) and a collection of essays co-edited with Debraj Bhattacharya (2022, Routledge). He has published in international journals on issues of politics, corruption and governance. He is awarded by the UNDP, Planning Commission of India and SasiWATERs. Suman has been invited to deliver talks at different European Universities including Gottingen, Oslo, and Amsterdam. Apart from his academic publications, Suman runs a couple of internationally recognised blogs and writes popular articles in web platforms like Wire, Print, and Outlook Magazine, and also in Little Magazines and Bengali dailies.*

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## PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

7.00 pm to 7.10 pm	Welcome and Introductory Remarks Prof. Subho Roy, Member Secretary, INCAA
7.10 pm to 7.15 pm	Chairperson Remarks Prof. Shalina Mehta, INCAA (Former Chairperson, Dept. of Anthropology, Panjab University)
7.15 pm to 8.00 pm	Speaker: Dr. Suman Nath Department of Anthropology Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam Government College, Kolkata  Title of Lecture: <i>Bullets, Blood and Bodies: The Status and Potential of Anthropology of Politics and Violence in India</i>
8.00 pm to 8.20 pm	Q&A - Discussion All Participants
8.20 pm to 8.25 pm	Chairperson Concluding Remarks Prof. Shalina Mehta, INCAA (Former Chairperson, Dept. of Anthropology, Panjab University)
8.25 pm to 8.30 pm	Thanks and Way Forward Dr. Kanhu Charan Sathapathy, INCAA

