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## Governance researchers ask: 'Can we still call India a democracy?'



Los Angeles/DNA (ots) -

Los Angeles (DNA) - India, the world's largest democracy, is increasingly less democratic, according to a report issued by an international group of governance researchers.

The 2024 Berggruen Governance Index (BGI) recorded a steep drop from 2010-2021 in the South Asian giant's measurable features of democracy. In the BGI's 100-point Democratic Accountability Index, India lost 18 points to a score of 62, which is below the average of the 145 countries analysed in the report.

The report, titled "Democracy Challenged", was presented Wednesday by the Luskin School of Public Affairs at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), which collaborated on the project with the Berggruen Institute, a think tank headquartered in Los Angeles, and the Hertie School, a German university.

"Can we still call India a democracy?", BGI lead author Helmut Anheier asked on the occasion of the report's launch event in Los Angeles. "At best it's an illiberal democracy.

"The report describes an increasingly authoritarian "drift" in India under Hindu nationalist Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has ruled since 2014. He is expected to win a renewed mandate in ongoing Indian elections, with final results due June 4.

India's score on the BGI's Public Goods Index rose significantly from 2010-2021, a 13-point gain to 61 on the 100-point scale, even as the report's measure of Indian state capacity, which looks into the quality of government, declined a bit. The BGI's Public Goods Index measures the quality of public goods delivered by a state in terms of life expectancy, health care, education, and ecosystem protection.

"What we have in India is, of course, a strange mixture of economic success with Hindu nationalism, and nationalism in a multi-ethnic country is never a good idea," Anheier said. "How stable India's going to be in the next 20 years, I just don't know. If it continues to go down the non-democratic path, I don't think the country's going to be stable."

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#### Medieninhalte



*People stand in a queue to cast their votes at a polling station as voting starts in the first phase of India's general election in Chennai, capital of India's Tamil Nadu. The country has recently seen a decline in democratic accountability, according to the 2024 Berggruen Governance Index. (Photo by R. Satish Babu / AFP) / More information via ots and [www.presseportal.de/en/nr/174021](http://www.presseportal.de/en/nr/174021) / The use of this image for editorial purposes is permitted and free of charge provided that all conditions of use are complied with. Publication must include image credits.*

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