

Outlook

Read · Think · Understand

Thou Shalt Not Dissent

O.L.(E)
736

The foe fears the poet;
Incarcerates him, and
Tightens the noose around the neck
But, already, the poet in his notes
Breathes among the masses

—From *The Bard* by poet Varavara Rao, 85, who was detained in the Bhima Koregaon case. Released in 2021, he struggles with stringent bail conditions

Political prisoners face long trials and their rights are curbed under anti-terrorism laws for voicing their dissent

RNI NO. 7044/1961



EDITOR Chinki Sinha

MANAGING EDITOR Satish Padmanabhan

FOREIGN EDITOR Seema Guha

CREATIVE HEAD Manpreet Romana

DIGITAL EDITOR Aashesh Sharma

DEPUTY PHOTO EDITOR Tribhuvan Tiwari

NEWS COORDINATORS Anumeha Saxena,

Vidya Ramamurthy

WRITERS Apeksha Priyadarshini, Ashlin Mathew, Ashwani Sharma, Avantika Mehta, Debanjan Dhar, Fozia Yasin, Ishfaq Naseem,

Lalita Iyer, Md. Asghar Khan, Mohammad Ali, N. K. Bhoopesh, Priyanka Tupe, Sakshi Sailil Chavan

COPY DESK S.S. Jeevan, Swati Subhedar, Vineetha Mokkil

PHOTOGRAPHERS Dinesh Parab, Sandipan Chatterjee, Suresh K. Pandey, Vikram Sharma, Yasir Iqbal

RESEARCHERS Animikh Chakrabarty, Anupam Prashant Minz, Subhashree Rath

DESIGN Champak Bhattacharjee, Anupam Sai Bollaboina

ILLUSTRATORS Saahil, Vikas Thakur

SOCIAL MEDIA Anwiti Singh, Humayun Kamran, Jagisha Arora



Outlook issue
January 21, 2026

BUSINESS OFFICE

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER Indranil Roy

PUBLISHER Sandip Kumar Ghosh

DIRECTOR BRAND & MARKETING Shrutika Dewan

VICE PRESIDENT Diwan Singh Bisht

SR GENERAL MANAGERS Debabani Tagore,

Shallender Vohra

GENERAL MANAGER Shashank Dixit

CIRCULATION & SUBSCRIPTION Gagan Kohli

HEAD, SALES OPERATIONS Manisha Mishra

HEAD OFFICE

AB-10, S.J. Enclave, New Delhi - 110 029

Customer Care: 9266855837 / 9266855636

Office Hours: 10 am to 6 pm

e-mail: yourhelpline@outlookindia.com

Printed and published by Indranil Roy on behalf of Outlook Publishing (India) Pvt. Ltd. Editor: Chinki Sinha. Printed at MP Printers (A Unit of DB Corp Ltd) B-220, Phase-II, Noida 201305, Gautam Budh Nagar (UP) and published from AB-10, S.J. Enclave, New Delhi-110 029

Published for the period of

January 22-February 1, 2026

Released on January 21, 2026

Total number of pages 76 including covers

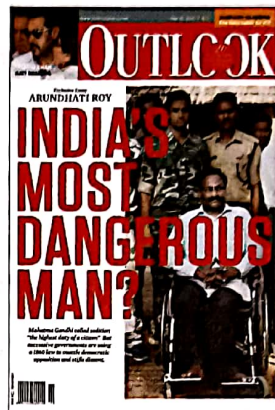


POINT AND SHARE

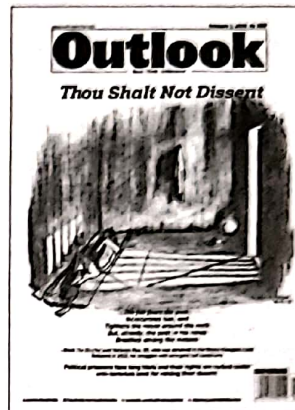
Now, open Outlook magazine on your smartphone instantly. Point your phone's scanner on the code and align it in the frame. You will be guided instantly to our website, www.outlookindia.com This is useful to share our stories on social media or email them.

ABOUT THE COVER

It is always a difficult task to make a cover for an issue like this. We came across an artwork, *Blind Curve*, by artist Felix Lucero, made at San Quentin State Prison as part of California's Arts-In-Corrections program on the Internet and in an act of solidarity with expression of those who documented their prison life through their art, we decided to use it as an inspiration for our issue on voices from prison. This cover of a faceless person is for all those who wait for justice. Their names are scribbled as a tribute to their undying spirit and their relentless pursuit of freedom.



May 18, 2015 Outlook's cover story on G.N. Saibaba



Cell Alone Artwork by Arun Ferreira

8 | THE DETENTION LEGACY

Since Independence, a number of laws have been enacted that allow preventive detention which have been widely used by all regimes against their political opponents
By Snigdhendu Bhattacharya

12 | IRON IN THE SOUL

"The operative word in mainstream media's discourse for me is no more 'anti-national'; it's 'terrorist'"
—Umar Khalid

36 | THE STING OF THE BAR

India today has more than 4.3 lakh undertrial prisoners. A significant number of them are linked to political cases
By N.K. Bhoopesh

44 | "THIS COULD HAPPEN TO YOU"

The Bhima Koregaon case is not only about those who were imprisoned. It is also about the fate of democracy itself
By Alpa Shah



66 | THINK INK

In 2026—the 'year of analog'—how will our relationship with literary festivals evolve? **By Vineetha Mokkil**

70 | JOY WORDS CLUB

Lit fests are defined by their audience. Organisers, speakers, curators are all replaceable but not the readers, not the audience **By Shinie Antony**

74 DIARY

COVER:
Outlook Team

Subscribe Now

