



Dilip Kumar Pandey

Affiliate, FSI

Bio

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Dilip Pandey is a Scholar-Practitioner of Human-Centred Democratic Governance whose work explores how democratic institutions can become more ethical, participatory, inclusive, and deeply human. Bringing together experience across legislative governance, public policy, political philosophy, literature, and civic engagement, his work focuses on democratic institutions, inclusive policy and governance, public ethics, and the role of culture in strengthening democratic societies. Born into a farming family in Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh, India, Dilip began his professional journey in the international technology sector after earning a Master's degree in Computer Applications (MCA). While technology shaped his systems thinking and organisational approach, he was increasingly drawn to questions of governance, public trust, and ethical leadership, leading him to transition into public life during India's anti-corruption movement. Between 2015 and 2017, he served as President of the Delhi unit of the Aam Aadmi Party. After contesting India's 2019 General Election, he was elected to the Delhi Legislative Assembly from Timarpur in 2020 and later served as Chief Whip of the ruling party. Working across legislative strategy, institutional coordination, public policy, and multiple government committees gave him first-hand insight into the opportunities and challenges of democratic governance, transforming governance from a profession into a subject of sustained intellectual inquiry.

Today, those experiences inform his doctoral research on democratic systems through the philosophical framework of Madhyastha Darshan (Coexistentialism). His work examines how ethics, coexistence, and citizen participation can contribute to more human-centred democratic institutions, bridging political philosophy with practical governance. Dilip's engagement with democratic thought extends beyond India. He is a Stanford Fisher Family Summer Fellow and served as First Vice President of the Global Council of Political Renewal (2022–2025), an international organisation dedicated to promoting ethical political leadership, democratic cooperation, and global peace. He is also associated with the United Nations Convention against Corruption network, reflecting his longstanding commitment to transparency, accountability, and integrity in public life.

Alongside scholarship and governance, Dilip is an author, poet, lyricist, and singer. His books include *Dahleez Par Dil* (Penguin Random House India), *Khulti Girhein*, *Call Center*, *Tapki Aur Boondi Ke Laddu*, and the bestselling historical novel *Gulabi Khanjar*. He believes literature and music help societies cultivate empathy and dialogue in ways that public policy alone cannot. His commitment to public service continues through the Radhika Prahlad Foundation, which supports underprivileged patients in accessing healthcare, and *Music for All*, through which his band, *The Fakir Café*, performs for socially marginalised communities to promote inclusion through artistic expression. Across scholarship, governance, literature, and public engagement, Dilip's work is guided by a simple conviction: democracy should be judged not only by the governments it elects or the institutions it creates, but also by its capacity to uphold human dignity, strengthen trust, and enable people to flourish together.