



MOOT PROPOSITION

1. The Republic of Vedanta is a federal democratic republic comprising twenty culturally diverse states. Its north-easternmost territory, Akranta, is a mountain frontier zone inhabited by several indigenous linguistic groups. For decades, Akranta has voiced demands for greater fiscal and administrative autonomy, citing infrastructural neglect and limited political representation.
2. These demands have never taken the form of any officially recognised separatist movement. However, fringe online collectives occasionally circulate slogans such as “Akranta Self-Rule” and “Akranta for Akrantians”, which were routinely dismissed by the government as mischief by anonymous actors.
3. Mr. Kalyan Vardhan, aged 52 years, a resident of Wazirganj (Capital of Vedanta), is a two-term former Member of Parliament from the People’s Development Party (PDP). After losing his seat in the 2024 elections, he publicly distanced himself from the PDP leadership and gradually associated himself with the opposition coalition Front for Federal Justice (FFJ), though he holds no official post within the alliance. Wazirganj functions as a Union Territory, akin to a capital region, similar to the National Capital Territory of Delhi in India, and has its own High Court with territorial jurisdiction over the capital.
4. Mr. Vardhan is known for strong views on federalism and decentralisation. During his previous tenures as MP, he was vocal about the need to reform centre-state financial allocations. His speeches often criticised what he termed “hyper-centralisation”, leading to a polarised public perception; admired by some for intellectual clarity, criticised by others as undermining national cohesion.
5. On 11th January, 2026, NationView 24, a leading news channel, hosted a live prime-time show titled, “The Federal Faultlines Debate”. The theme of the episode was: “Has Vedanta’s Federal Policy Failed Our Borderlands?”
6. The panel included:
 - a. Mr. Kalyan Vardhan (Guest of Honour)
 - b. Mr. Ravi Kukreja (Sitting MP from the ruling PDP)
 - c. Prof. (Dr.) Shashi (A constitutional law scholar)
 - d. Ms. Jaspreet Gill (A retired civil servant)
 - e. Mr. Rishabh, The Anchor
7. During the broadcast, the anchor asked Mr. Vardhan whether “stronger central control is necessary to maintain national unity in Akranta.”
8. In response, Mr. Vardhan made the following remarks:



“Unity cannot be built by command. For more than four decades, the people of Akranta Region have lived with infrastructural neglect, economic exclusion, and an enduring sense that decisions about their lives are taken hundreds of miles away by people who never set foot on their mountains. When a community feels unheard for so long, their demand for greater administrative control over their land is not an act of sedition; it is a plea to be treated as equal citizens.

A nation as diverse as ours cannot be held together by a singular narrative of nationalism that ignores lived realities on the periphery. If the centre continues to respond to legitimate demand with suspicion, the message it sends is simple: that your aspirations do not matter. And when the aspirations are repeatedly denied, history shows us that people will eventually decide their own path, whatever form it may take politically”.

9. The anchor attempted to interrupt, asking whether he was “suggesting that Akranta should break away from Vedanta”.

10. Mr. Vardhan continued:

“Let me be clear before anyone minces my words. What I am saying is that identities that are ignored for generations will, sooner or later, assert themselves in ways that the State, as a collective entity, may find uncomfortable. This is not rebellion; this is basic political science. When central institutions repeatedly fail to engage with a marginalised region, the alienation becomes so deep that people begin to imagine futures that do not depend on the Centre’s benevolence.

My point is simple: engagement builds unity. Suppression builds fracture.”

11. The full remarks aired live for approximately six minutes and did not contain any calls to violence, armed action, or unlawful assembly. Following the broadcast, the complete episode was archived on NationView 24’s website and social media platforms.

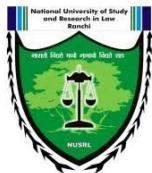
12. However, within an hour of the broadcast, a selectively edited 32-second clip began circulating on *Socialgram* (a widely used social media platform). The clip excluded the clarifying statements and only showed the phrases *“And when the aspirations are repeatedly denied, history shows us that people will eventually decide their own path, whatever form it may take politically”* and *“the alienation becomes so deep that people begin to imagine futures that do not depend on the Centre’s benevolence.”*

13. The clip was posted by Mr. Terzim, a 21-year-old university student from Akranta, residing in Wazirganj, with the caption:

“At last, someone says it aloud. #VoiceOfAkranta #SelfRuleDebate”

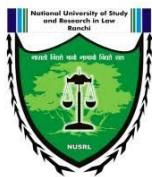


14. The shortened clip quickly went viral, garnering over 89 million views in 48 hours. Various student groups shared it alongside expressions of support for “Akranta identity”. At the same time, commentators aligned with the ruling party accused Vardhan of “intellectualising separatism”.
15. On 14 January 2026, the ruling PDP’s spokesperson held a press conference alleging that Mr. Vardhan had “implicitly encouraged secessionist thought”, his remarks “posed a danger to national unity,” and a “thorough investigation” was warranted.
16. On 19th January 2026, Mr. Raghav Sethi, the district vice-president of the PDP youth wing, Wazirganj, filed a written complaint before the Cyber Crime Cell alleging that the statements made by Mr. Vardhan during the televised debate, when viewed together with their subsequent viral circulation on social media platforms, amounted to a *deliberate provocation towards separatist sentiment* among the citizens of the Akranta Region.
17. Based on the complaint (CC/2026/13A/109), the police, on 20th January, registered FIR No. 14/2026, invoking Section 152 of the Vedanta Nyaya Sanhita (VNS) for “acts endangering the sovereignty, unity, and integrity of Vedanta”. No other offences were mentioned.
18. On the evening of 20th January, at approximately 6:45 PM, a team from the Cyber Crime Cell arrived at Mr. Vardhan’s residence in Wazirganj. He was taken into custody. The arrest was carried out in the presence of several neighbours who had gathered after noticing police vehicles.
19. The police claimed that an arrest memo *had been prepared* at 6:45 PM, bearing the signatures of the Investigating Officer and one independent witness. However, the memo was not provided to the family until late in the following morning. According to Mr. Vardhan’s family members, no copy of the arrest memo was shown or handed over at the time of arrest. They allege that the officers merely stated that “he is required for questioning” and did not specify the statutory grounds of arrest, despite repeated requests. The Investigating Officer later emailed a scanned copy of the arrest memo at 10:18 AM on 21 January 2026.
20. On 21 January 2026, at approximately 10:05 AM, Mr. Vardhan was produced before the Judicial Magistrate, First Class, Wazirganj, marking his first judicial appearance following his arrest.
21. At the hearing, the Investigating Officer submitted a written remand application seeking ten days of police custody, stating that detailed custodial interrogation was necessary to ascertain whether Mr. Vardhan’s televised remarks were connected to any online groups



advocating “Akranta Self-Rule”, to trace the origin and circulation pattern of the viral 32-second clip, to determine whether any coordinated or foreign-backed activity was involved in amplifying the clip, and to investigate the possibility of a larger network encouraging separatist tendencies in Akranta. The defence opposed the request, contending that the allegations arose entirely from a publicly broadcast political debate and that custodial interrogation was unnecessary. They further submitted that the police had already seized all relevant material from the news channel and possessed the complete telecast. According to the defence, seeking access to Mr. Vardhan’s personal electronic devices in a speech-related case amounted to an excessive and intrusive measure.

22. After hearing both sides, the Judicial Magistrate observed that the allegations pertained to an offence “serious in nature, involving potential implications for national unity”. The Magistrate held that a “limited period of custodial interrogation” was required for the “effective and purposeful progress of the investigation”. Accordingly, the Magistrate granted seven days of police custody of Mr. Vardhan to the Cyber Crime Cell.
23. Aggrieved by the registration of the FIR, the manner of his arrest, the alleged procedural irregularities in the preparation and service of the arrest memo, the overnight detention prior to production, and the order granting seven days of police custody, Mr. Vardhan filed a petition before the High Court of Wazirganj under Section 528 of Vedanta Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (VNSS).

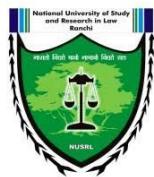


Suggestive Issues:

1. Whether the statements made by the petitioner during the televised debate attract criminal liability under the Vedanta Nyaya Sanhita, or stand protected under the Constitution of Vedanta.
2. Whether the arrest of the petitioner and the circumstances of his detention complied with the mandatory procedural safeguards under the Vedanta Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita.
3. Whether the order of the Judicial Magistrate granting police custody in a speech-based offence violates the statutory requirements and thereby warrants interference by the High Court.
4. Whether the allegations, taken at face value, disclose the commission of a *prima facie* offence and if not, whether the High Court ought to quash the FIR in the exercise of its inherent powers.
5. Whether, taken cumulatively, the arrest, detention, and remand orders passed against the petitioner are sustainable under the Vedanta Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita.

Nota Bene:

1. *The issues identified above are illustrative in nature, and the parties retain the discretion to propose additional issues as they deem appropriate.*
2. *The legal framework and socio-political context are pari materia with those of India.*



Annexure A

Mr. Terzim
@terzim

At last, someone says it aloud.
#VoiceOfAkranta #SelfRuleDebate

NATIONVIEW24

0:32 30 M

11/01/2026, Sun

89M views 30M Likes

Comment Share Like

**Annexure B****FORM – IF3 - (Integrated Form)****ARREST / COURT SURRENDER MEMO**

(Separate Memo for each accused)

1. *Dist Wazir Gary *P.S. CC *Year 2026 *FIR No. / Proceeding No. 14/26 *Date 20/01/26.
* Alphanumeric code of the Accused A1 (Write A1 to A9 for the first 9 persons, B1 for 10th persona and so on)
2. Date & Time of Arrest / Surrender: *Date 20/01/26 Time 6:45 G.D. No.
3. Name of the Court (if surrendered):
4. *Acts and Sections: 8.152, VNCS
5. *Arrested and sent up / Arrested and released on bail / Surrendered in court and bailed out / Surrendered in court and sent to judicial custody / Surrendered in court and remanded to Police custody (tick ' ' applicable portion).
6. Particulars of the Accused:
 - (i). *Name: Kalyan Vardhan
 - (ii). *Father's / Husband's Name Dr. Amay Vardhan
 - (iii). *First Alias:
 - (iv). *Second Aliases:
 - (v). *Other Aliases:
 - (vi). *Nationality: Indian (vii) (a) *Passport No.
(b). *Date of Issue: (c). *Place of Issue
 - (viii). *Religion Hindu (ix). *Caste / Tribe:
 - (x). *SC/ST (xi) *Occupation:
 - (xii). *Permanent address:
..... Distt. P.S.
7. Injuries, cause of injuries and physical condition of the accused person (Indicate if medically examined):
NA.



8. The accused, after being informed of the grounds of arrest and his legal rights, was duly taken into custody on 20/01/26 (date) at 6:40 P.M. (hours) at..... (place). The following article(s) was / were found on physical search, conducted on the person of the accused, and were taken into possession for which a receipt was given to the accused. **

1 Laptop 2 Cellphone (Apple iPhone 17)
3 Personal Diary 4
5 6

Necessary wearing apparels were left on the accused for the sake of human dignity and body protection.

The accused was cautioned to keep himself / herself covered for purpose of identification.

Intimation given to (Relationship)

** If no article found, 'Nil' may be indicated in the blank space provided below:

9. Physical features, deformities and other details of the accused:

*Sex	*Date / Year of Birth	*Build	*Height in Cms.	*Complexion	*Identification Marks
1	2	3	4	5	6
<u>Male</u>	<u>10/01/74</u>	<u>5'7"</u>	<u>5'7"</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

(For Modus Operandi offences only)

*Deformities / peculiarities	*Tech	*Hair	*Eye	*Habit(s)	*Dress habits
7	8	9	10	11	12
<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>

*Languages / Dialect	PLACE OF				
	*Burn Mark	*Leucoderma	*Mole	*Scar	*Tattoo
13	14	15	16	17	18
<u>Hindi/ English.</u>					



*Other features (19)

10. Whether finger-print taken or not? : NA

11. Socio-economic profile of the accused showing:

(a). *Living Status: Living alone or with Family / Relation / Associate in Pucca House / Hotel / Hostel / Kachcha House / Thatched House / Slum or is homeless.

(b). *Educational qualification(s): Master's / P.G.

(c). *Occupation: Self / Ex- M.P.

(d). *Income Group:

- (i). Lower Income (Below Rs. 500/P.M.)
- (ii). Lower middle Income (From Rs. 501 to Rs. 1000)
- (iii). Middle Income (From Rs. 1001 to Rs. 2000)
- (iv). Upper Middle Income (From Rs. 2001 to 3000)
- (v). Upper Income (above Rs. 3000) ✓

12. Whether the accused person, as per the observations and known Police records:

- *(a) Is dangerous ✓
- *(b) Previously escaped any bail ✓
- *(c) Is generally armed ✓
- (d) Operates with accomplices ✓
- (e) Has past criminal records ✓
- (f) Is recidivist ✓
- *(g) Is likely to escape bail ✓
- *(h) If released on bail, is likely to commit another crime
Immediately or threaten the victims / witnesses. ✓
- *(i). Is wanted in any other case ✓

- Yes/No ✓
- Yes/No ✓
- Yes/No ✓
- Yes/No ✓
- Yes/No ✓
- Yes/No ✓
- Yes/No ✓
- Yes/No ✓
- Yes/No ✓

Signature of the Investigating officer with:

Name: Ankit Singh
Rank: SI
Number, if any:
Date: 01.01.26

Place Wazir Ganj