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Guha: Political interference responsible for corruption

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THE corruption Indians face in everyday life is linked to the political interference at all levels, said author and historian Ramachandra Guha.

Taking part in a discussion on the topic, 'Indian democracy: looking forward, looking back' organised by the Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Education, Jain University, and Lokniti of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi, Guha said politicians have a role in everything, like the appointment of a police chief, the Secretary in the Home department and other posts.

"Even in the appointment of a Superintendent of Police, the MLA and MP play a crucial role," he said. In a proper democracy,

the judiciary and bureaucracy should have no relation with politicians but India has "excessive political interference" at all levels, he said.

Speaking of corruption that has seeped into the police department and the judiciary, Guha said, "Supreme Court judges nearing retirement curry favour with politicians for a good post-retirement post."

Ashutosh Varshney, a commentator on Indian democracy, said social media can aid all kinds of causes, not just populism. The ef-



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Ramachandra Guha, Historian

fective utilisation of social media by the Aam Aadmi Party to come to power in Delhi is an example, he said. Pointing out that high growth is often accompanied by corruption, Varshney said that the 7 to 8% growth rate in India meant that some sectors grew at rates between 16% and 22% while a sector like agriculture could grow only by 3%. "The opportunities that high growth provide can create billionaires overnight just through deals struck between politicians and bureaucrats among others," he said.

Stating that the Constitution offers protection for minorities, Varshney said over half of the whites in the United States were anti-Hispanic. "The Donald Trump campaign tapped into the prejudices of White Americans. By 2040, every fourth American will be a Latino," he said.