

Hindu Nationalism: Punitive Political Ideology of the Modern State of India

Aiysha Safdar

Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore, Pakistan.

Shireen Mushtaq

Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore, Pakistan.

ABSTRACT

The paper examines the rise of Hindu nationalism from both theoretical and practical perspectives. The polarization of Indian politics between the Hindutva right wing and secular left wing has created a divide among the Indian people. The overall targeting of minorities in the society especially Muslims has intensified communal violence and greater rivalry between different religious communities. This ideological division violates the very essence of multi-culturalism of which India raises loud slogans. Multi-culturalism necessitates recognition of a number of political, social, cultural, religious and social rights of minorities living in a country. India has always been vocal of supporting plurality and acknowledging diversity as its strength. But the reality is otherwise. In this backdrop, the article suggests an all-inclusive approach adopted by India in order to justify itself being purely secular and truly democratic through its actions (and not just by words).

Key Words: **Hindutva, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Political Ideology, Cultural Nationalism**

Introduction

With some glitches here and there India has actually fared quite well in the race among the decolonized states. Today India has one of the fastest growing economies of the region, a mature IT sector, efficient R&D sector, a fully functional nuclear program, good diplomatic and economic relations with regional and extra-regional players. India has been modernizing herself socially, culturally and industrially over the decades. India enjoys steady growth rate and a presence in the international community. The Indian domestic and foreign policy has played a significant role in shaping India's international image. It is therefore interesting to analyze how India has attained this status in the international community, focusing on various factors that shape the Indian foreign and domestic policies of the state. India has a population of 1.3 billion, with religious communities such as Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Zoroastrians (Parsis) and 114 languages of which the constitution recognizes 18 that are spoken within the state (Gurpreet, 2016). India has a carefully knitted constitution that caters to the needs of the population by providing them rights based on a multi-level federalism

modeled on ethnic, linguistic and religious affiliations especially after the amendments.

This presents a very rosy picture of external political orientation of India towards the international community. The internal political dynamics under the current fascist leadership reveals the gloomy picture of conservative Hindutva India as it tries to impose an aggressive cultural nationalism on the minorities. Hindu nationalism has swept the Indian politics off its feet. The insistence on calling every Indian, a Hindu man or woman, attacks on mosques and churches, the killings of Muslims on sacrificing cows, oxen and buffaloes by Hindutva forces unveil the true face of intolerant India.

The Indian society is fragmented between Hindutva practitioners and the ones advocating a secular atmosphere. The conservative majority rules India today and unfortunately they are the ones who breed hate politics. This paper analyses the Hindu Nationalism from theoretical and practical perspectives. Section I discusses the historic political ideology of modern India and its practitioners in different phases. Section II analyses the Hindutva doctrine of Nationalism, its historic lineage and modern incorporation into Indian politics. Section III focuses on comparative ideologies in Indian politics and their impact. Section IV concludes the discourse.

The political ideology of modern India

In the post-independence era the Indian political landscape has went through several evolutionary stages. The following are the core ideologies that framed the Indian state after 1947:

Gandhi's political ideology

The Architect of the state of India Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948) introduced the ideology based on three principles Ahimsa (Nonviolence), Satyagraha (truth- power) and Swadeshi/sarvodaya (economic equality). Additionally, the Gandhian policy also focused on non-exploitative, non-materialistic and non-hierarchical world order that eventually assured justice and freedom for all. The principle of just peace (ahimsa) is deep rooted in society as Gandhi's basic ideals. This "utopian" world view though unrealistic is still seen to be a reference point for all policy and academic discourse, the unique character of this thought gives life to the views presented by Gandhi. Additionally, Gandhi's policy was based on the belief that negotiations can achieve political goals, and that non-cooperation can have a profound effect on government. Therefore, violence is not needed; this philosophy along with non-cooperation was used to pressurize the British Empire during the independence struggle. Later it became an example of how a domestic and foreign policy should be framed. Gandhian discourse encourages cooperation among friends and foes, promotion of peace and stability in the world and eventual attainment of global peace (Husar, 2016).

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Therefore, Gandhian approach is also referred to as the indirect approach or soft power strategy as also propogated by Liddle Hart and Sun Tzu, in which the army is not required to win a war and where the mind will achieve what weapons cannot. Cooperation and negotiations can provide acceptable and mutually beneficial outcomes. Relying heavily on the principle of Swaraj, 'Self-Rule'-a direct democracy that makes use of the panchayat system, the Gandhian view of the international system is that the state is not as important as the individual. There by stating that the real 'acting units of world politics are the people who interact and function within a society and state. Gandhi's vision is based on the rejection of liberal western democracy i.e. is "pyramidal democracy". Politics and economy go hand in hand; it becomes important to analyze the Gandhian economics in practice. It is recognized as more socialist in nature and believed in the rejection of capitalism as being an imperialist practice. International economic interaction was therefore limited; the aim was to pursue a mercantilist policy by which the people of India could benefit economically. The promotion of Swadeshi that is the self-reliance, became a major domestic and foreign policy for India in which the people were encouraged to do 'themselves'. Another goal set was the Sarvodaya "welfare for all", since a mercantilist system entails selective international economic interaction thus not allowing India to go into complete isolation (Husar, 2016).

Nehru's political ideology

A seasoned politician under the umbrella of the Indian National Congress was Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru who became the first Prime Minister of India from 1947 – 1964. Nehru's era marked the next major policy discourse that unraveled under his premiership. Building initially on what Gandhi had started Nehru also focused on peace, anti-racism and equality in the world order. With this Nehru focused on the liberal order the promotion of institutions and multilateralism. These principles known as "the Directive principles of State policy" were also added to the constitution of India. These principles highlighted the promotion of international peace and security, maintaining relations among states, respect of international law and treaty obligation and encouraged settlement of international disputes. These directives effectively corresponded to the working of international system. Consequently, owing to the time and place, India's foreign policy changed drastically in the post Gandhi era as Nehru internalized the Indian economy and opted to a staunch nationalist, anti-colonialist, anti-imperialist approach. Therefore, the promotion of industrialization and development became a priority, by internationalizing investment and business and adopting stricter 'self-reliance' as suggested by Gandhi. Nehru also laid the foundation and embarked on the pursuit of an Indian nuclear program which became a major shift from Ahimsa- an idea that Gandhi strongly advocated in his time(Husar,2016). In an era of increasing cooperation in trade and economy Nehru opted for isolation from the rest of the world, declaring imperialism and globalization as such a threat, an enemy. Nehru went far enough to say that the Hindustani word 'loot' became a

part of the English language, therefore possessing a different meaning to Indians and to Westerners (Nilekani, 2009).

The secular school of thought in the state of India

The political ideologies of Both Gandhi and Nehru became incorporated in the politics of Indian National Congress (INC). The INC became a supporter of Secular school of thought in India to separate state and religion, in the effort to provide equality of rights and duties to the multiethnic, multi religious and multi-cultural society in India. The INC became the torch bearer for this school of thought that remained in full swing whenever the Congress was in power. However, within the realm of secularism, Hindu nationalism crept back into the Indian society.

The propagation of the conservative ideology

In the state of India, like any other nation-state, nationalism is at the core - a nation requires nationalism, without it the nation cannot exist. There are many forms of nationalism that can be classified as religious, ethnic, cultural and social, and all these represent the respective inclination of the people in a state. The historic basis of this nationalist ideology can be traced back to centuries. However, in contemporary India the ethnic, cultural and religious form of nationalism are incorporated into the political ideology i.e. Hindutva nationalism, which is used as an umbrella term. This political ideology is associated with the conservatives, namely the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The promotion of this as a social and political ideology is the self-proclaimed responsibility of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). The process of 'Saffronisation' as is referred to, is the re-telling of Indian nationalist stories, by completely sidelining the contribution of other religions or races living within India. This Saffronisation pollutes the young minds in narrating the glorious past of Hindu nationalist leaders in the subcontinent and highlighting the countless sacrifices that these people made for the creation of Hindustan. By practicing cultural nationalism to this extent the most damage has been done to the secular policies adopted by the predecessors. This conservative party still shows resentment towards achievements like the Mandal Commission Report that provides opportunities to the lower classes and scheduled tribes that are 400 in India.

Indian nationalism is based on primordialism – an ideology of nationalism that is based on ancestral roots and religious bases. Indian nationalism identifies “India as an ever-ever land – emerging from an ancient civilization, united by a shared history, sustained by pluralist democracy” (Tharoor, 2012). However, it is important to note that Hindu nationalism has greatly hampered the pursuit of social pluralism and religious pluralism, because its activities have not been thwarted by the state structures. Their consistent intolerance and the growing support of the Hindutva ideology has allowed the conservative political parties namely the BJP to

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establish a strong political base (Subramanian, 1999). The policies being followed by the current Modi regime favor only the Hindu majority and not the minorities of India that are as ancient to these lands as the soil. The sharp turn in Indian domestic politics has left the notion of inclusive pluralist nationalism in shambles.

Different shades of nationalism in India - Hindutva ideology

The ideology of Hindutva is a reoccurring discourse in Indian political landscape. Since ancient times this ideology has engraved the Hindu mindset. The revival of the same has occurred whenever Hindus have felt their Hindu-ness being threatened by an emperor, colonizer or political party. The nation predates the state, and nationalism is the binding force among members of a nation. "Kohn defined nationalism as an idea that fills a man's brain and heart with new thoughts and new sentiments, and drives him to translate his consciousness into deeds of organized action. Kohn argued that the growth of nationalism is the process of integration of the masses of the people into a common politicized form. Nationalism therefore presupposes the existence, in fact or as an ideal, of a centralized form of government"(Smith, 2009).

Keeping in view the concept of a nation-state as explained by Kohn the Hindutva is a major unifying factor as it favors and reinforces the idea of natural linkages, ethnicity and the cultural ancestry, that become a binding force. Theories of nationalism classify this as primordialism based on the works of Pierre van den Bergh. According to this theory of nationalism, there are two divisions when it comes to primordialists the sociobiological and cultural divisions, the first one is based on the maximization of the gene pool through nepotistic activities, extended kinships and promotion of common goods such as foods, clothes and speech. It also includes ethnic, religious and racial ties. On the other hand the cultural approach explained by Edward Shills and Clifford Greetz focuses on the use of culture to create a secular order in which cultural givens of language, customs, religion, race and territory are important. In India we see the propagation of both forms of primordialism, with the sociobiological approach earning more social capital. In India nationalism was renewed in the post-independence era like in all other decolonized states. India embarked on the road to pursue statist nationalism/civic nationalism as the main stream politicians focused more on inclusive politics rather than discrimination based on caste or creed, during this period ethnic nationalism/cultural nationalism was territorialized. The process of territorial affiliation and attachment of Hindu-ism with India can be explained through the ethno-symbolic approach. It caters to the self-defining of communities that find affiliation to the land based on the values, traditions, myths and memories that are attached to the historic territory. The sharing of land solidifies the unity of the nation (Smith, 2009). In this case Hindutva strongly established the base of territorial affiliation to the land to ensure the uniting among the Hindu nation. The kinds of nationalism that are commonly seen in practice in contemporary times are:

Statist nationalism/ Civic Nationalism focuses on the creation of a homogenous national culture, which is all inclusive culture in a state and not exclusive to a single culture. The values of a homogenous culture may include democracy, economic welfare, and distributive justice.

Ethnic nationalism/ Cultural Nationalism focuses on loyalty towards one's own culture in which a person was born. Therefore, the sharing of a common ancestry and societal norms are significant in shaping the behavior of the individual.

Gradually in India, ethnic nationalism has gained popularity among the population that identified with the Hindutva ideology being taught to the masses, the appeal of Hindu-ness and the purity of the Hindu lands. On the other hand, statist nationalism has largely declined.

The national political doctrine: the Hindutva doctrine

The concept of "Hindu-ness" as defined by Vinayak D.Savarkar became a term synonymous with Hindu nationalism in India before her independence. This embodied the cultural nationality of Bharat (India) that is Hindu, and whosoever lives in the State. Those who reject this notion will be considered traitors (Hardgrave & Kochanek, 2008). The revival of Hindu nationalism can be traced back to the 19th century through the movement known as the Arya Samaj in 1875 by the extremist congress leader Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Later, in the 20th century, in reaction to the formation of the Muslim League in 1906, a movement was founded in 1914 known as the Hindu Mahasabha, under the leadership of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. Though, this party's political philosophy was not in consonance with Congress party as they were opposed to the inclusion of minorities under the Lucknow Pact of 1916. They wanted to "Hinduize all politics and militarize Hinduism" (Hardgrave & Kochanek, 2008). Later in 1923 the definition of a Hindu was given by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar who wrote: "A Hindu means a person who regards this land . . . from the Indus to the seas as his fatherland (*pitribhumi*) as well as his holy land (*punyabhumi*)." His definition of a Hindu nation included Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists and excluded the Christians, Jews, Parsis and the Muslims. Those included in the nation were considered to be already assimilated or non-threatening (Varshney , 2014).

The ancient roots of Hindu nationalism

Hindu nationalist thought finds roots in the ideological emphasis of the book Arthashastra written by Kautiliya, a work that is often compared to Niccolò Machiavelli's 'The Prince' as both books promote the same ideas for state craft, pursuit of self-interest and skepticism regarding international cooperation. The same works are also compared sometimes to the Chinese's strategist Sun Tzu for his work the 'Art of War'(Arndt, 2013). The text of Arthashastra was rediscovered in 1904, that is 2400 years after it was produced, it was published in

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English in 1915. This book highlights the realist principles of state craft, self-help and anarchy. In Arthashastra the international system is framed as the natural order in which “the bigger fish eats the smaller one”. This book also referred to power as being a relative concept in which a balance can never actually be achieved, therefore enemies within the international system will strive to find weakness in their enemy to exploit. The same book elaborates the geographical fate of a state by explaining the Mandala System in which the State in the center is surrounded by concentric circles, the ones in the second circle are considered as enemies because of shared border, whereas those in the third circle are presumed as allies because there is no shared border. In other words, the enemy of the enemy is a friend. Subsequently this depicts a lack of trust towards immediate neighbors because of the state of anarchy in the international system (Arndt, 2013). Bharad Karnard noted that “these texts also conceptualize a Hindu Machtpolitik that is at once intolerant of any opposition, driven to realize the goal of supremacy for the nation and state by means fair and foul, and is breathtaking in its amorality”. Consequently the Hindu Nationalist discourse is based on a ‘Golden Hindu Past’, ‘Foreign invaders’ (colonialism), pursuit of a ‘glorious future’ and aversion from a secular state (Husar, 2016).

The author Rasheed uz Zaman (2006) points out in his 2006 article that Kautilya recommended the following foreign policy principles based on this school of thought. The author summarized them as:

1. Sandhi (peace) the inferior in power will make peace.
2. Vighraha (war) the superior in power will make war.
3. Asana (neutrality) relative power can ensure neutrality.
4. Yana (march) to March against the enemy when they have enough means.
5. Samsharaya (seeking alliance) those who do not possess strength will seek protection and alliances.
6. Dvaidhibhava (double policy) is having peace with one and war with the other

The above stated six principles clearly highlight the violent streak in this school of thought, with a hint of arrogance and pride. It also provides the context and mind set of the practitioners of this school. However, the author Rasheduz Zaman highlights the facts that every actor in a given system, acts based on a cost benefit analysis, arriving at a rational conclusion that serves his interest best. Hence considering Arthashastra as the only text that explains Indian strategic behavior will be a shortsighted approach (Zaman , 2006).

The work of Kautilya is not the only an ancient text on international relations theory but in fact provides a foreign policy approach that is a reflection of popular realist thought at that time, which focused primarily on gaining territory through conquests to enhance regional influence. Eventually, the Hindutva followers are proponents of violence as opposed to Nehruvian and Gandhi’s school of thought. They portray violence positively, whereas peace is considered to be only achieved if there is a military and cultural backing between the states or civilizations, with

the acceptance of Hindu way of life. Therefore, they legitimize violence as a means to an end. Subject to radical reinterpretation, the Hindutva favors the Gandhi's economic outlook of a socialist system and rejects the liberal economic thought. Adhering to staunch economic nationalism, they raise the slogan "India shall be built by Indian", promotes heavy industrialization and favors protectionism. It is also focused on the promotion of political Hinduism (Arndt, 2013).

The politics of Hindutva in the state of India

The domestic and foreign policy discourse of the Hindutva is primarily associated with the umbrella organization Sangh Parivar, prominently the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), that remained in power from 1998-2004 and presently since 2014. Throughout India's post-independence history, the Indian National Congress (INC) has dominated the political scene; the INC was in power for at least 13 years of the sixty-seven years. On the other hand, the BJP's landslide victory in 2014 was a major victory secured by the party after decades of struggle. With BJP's in power, the most immediate and genuine concern that arose was for the minorities of India, particularly the Muslims that are 13.4 percent of the population of India, BJP is the torch bearer of the Hindutva ideology. It is worth noting that the relations of Hindus and Muslims have not been peaceful even in the post-independence era, with incidents like the Babri Mosque and the Gujrat riots being the most prominent ones. As BJP's candidate, Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to power, it was expected that communal riots would become a norm between Hindu and Muslims, and such has been the case(Varshney, 2014). With incidents like force feeding a Muslim in Ramadan and the staged conversion of 57 Muslims in Agra which was labeled as the "homecoming" are many of such examples. The aims of BJP are the prevention of globalization by becoming a dominant force in India and making India a global economic power by the means of a Swadeshi approach as pointed out by Rajnath Singh in the BJPs' National Executive meeting in 2009 (Pande, 2017).

Constitutional constrains in the practice of Hindutva

The constitutional constraints of India are major reasons why the outright implementation of the Hindutva has not materialized, though BJP has been in power since 2014. The previous governments similarly of BJP during 1998-2004 were not able to make changes to the constitution (Varshney, 2014). The core documents for the provisions of rights to minorities such as The Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and Chapter III of the constitution of India have sometimes clashed like during the case of Shah Bano in 1997, where the court ruled that the constitution of India has precedence over the UCC (Bose, 2009). Thus, giving secondary status to minority laws and primacy to state laws. The existence of these

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laws allows minorities to function within their realm as long as the minority laws do not clash directly with the state.

Decline of liberal politics in India

The INC represents the liberals that favor federalization within a secular state. The Congress for the first time in the elections of 2014 took a dip below 20 percent and settled at a 19.3 percent with only 44 seats in the Lok Sabha. The BJP continued its tradition of coalition politics and kept promises with National Democratic Alliance with whom they campaigned during the elections and also provided them with prominent cabinet seats. The BJP's vote bank has steadily increased, due to which the BJP won the upper caste voters with an unprecedented 54 percent as opposed to 12 percent of the Congress. The BJP won the Dalit's votes with a striking 24 percent as opposed to 18.5 percent of the Congress's votes. In case of scheduled tribes, the 37.5 percent votes of BJP surpassed the 28.3 percent votes of the Congress. Similar dynamics were manifested in case of middle class voters as BJP secured about 33.6 percent votes as compared to the 15.1 percent votes of the Congress. As for Muslim voters, while the BJP won an 8.5 percent of the votes, the Congress won a 38 percent of the Muslim vote; however both were not able to attain the support of all 140 million Muslims residing in India. Therefore, the steady decline of the liberal politics in India has paved the way for the conservatives, who have convinced the voters of the credibility of their cause. Hence the rise of BJP's is credited to the decline of Congress (Varshney, 2014).

Competitive ideologies: liberal vs. conservatives

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) was formed in 1925 and it is the foremost organization that follows the Hindu ideology. Its purpose is not limited to political gains but in fact to generate volunteers and the campaigners for the BJP candidates. Both the BJP and RSS have been a major support for each other. The RSS has been involved in retelling the story of India by focusing on the contribution of Hindus, and excluding all others in the ideological, philosophical, political and colonial past. This retelling of history with a Hindu nationalist perspective allows the youth to focus to the glorious past of the Hindu in the fatherland. According to Anuja Bose, "as part of its efforts to regulate what and how Indian's learn, the RSS often seeks a ban on books that present disagreeable views of Hinduism". Therefore, RSS and its sister organizations are intent upon silencing anyone representing an opposing view. Resultantly, wherever the BJP is in power, the Hindu nationalist views prevail (Bose, 2009).

Before becoming the Bahartiya Janata Party, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh was out of the five political parties that had attained their status as a national party after the first elections of 1951 in which 14 political parties had participated, although Congress had won a clear victory. The monopoly of the Congress lasted for two decades in which the party became popular for its federalization policies. The

political scene in India changed rapidly in the 1970s when the Congress, after the death of Jawahar Lal Nehru experienced a popularity decline. Although Indira Gandhi stepped in to take control of things, the situation only deteriorated to the extent that Congress dismissed its own ministers on charges of corruption and enacted the emergency of 1975 – 1977. The non-congress parties supported the Bharatiya Jana Sangh. This Party also suffered a division due to membership issues of the RSS and Bharatiya Jana Sangh, their two year experiment ended with the downfall of the government and return to power of Indira Gandhi with an overwhelming majority. The 1980 was the year when the dual membership issues were resolved and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came into existence. The decade of 80's was marked by the rule of the Congress, that faced significant setbacks including the assassination of Indira Gandhi, anti-Sikh riots, the Khalistan movement, the eventual rise of Rajiv Gandhi on the political scene and the eventual destiny that he shared with his mother. The period of 1989 – 96 was the years of coalition governments. With support from the leftists and the BJP, this was the period of political awakening of the socially under privileged classes of India. Later from 1996-98 the National Front (a coalition of thirteen parties) remained in power, after the fall of this government BJP entered another coalition called the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) that lasted only a year. The NDA and BJP then struggled to achieve majority vote in the elections of 1999. According to Satriveer Kesula, "If we analyze the polling data and voting patterns of 1990's elections, there is clear indication of voter's preference for regionally based socio-culturally located parties with distinct economic and caste grouping in society and broadening base of BJP in rural voter, which was earlier seen as urban party" (Kesalu, 2013). This led to the steady rise of BJP in both the urban and rural political landscape.

In 2013 the European Union ended the ban on Narendra Modi that stemmed from 2002 after the Gujarat Riots when Hindu mobs killed at least a 1,000 people, most of them were Muslims. It was alleged by human rights groups that Modi, supported by the BJP, in fact encouraged the attacks, however the latter denied these allegations. Narendra Modi was a polarizing figure due to his role in the Gujarat riots (Hardgrave, Kochanek, 2008) that led to his infamous status as conservative Hindu nationalist leader in BJP. The Gujrat Riots 2002 were the most televised riots in India, and the largest since partition. The government of Gujrat claimed that 700 lives were lost but unofficial record states that some 2000 people died as a result of these communal riots. This however, was not the first time that Hindus and Muslims clashed. Prior to this, Hindu nationalism played a prominent role in the demolition of Babri mosque in 1992 after years of conflicting views. Throughout his 10 years as a Chief Minister, the growth rate of Gujrat was on a 10 % increase a year. Modi labeled his success as "engine of India's economic growth". However, some economists state that the Modi economic model had less to do with the growth, because the state of Gujrat had been doing well with a long tradition of entrepreneurship. Whatever the condition be, the efforts of mobilization by the RSS and the charismatic orator ship of Modi for the

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conservative majority who shared his views, allowed him to win an unprecedented victory in 2014. Modi had joined the RSS as a teen; he joined the BJP in 1987. He gradually rose up the ranks because of his administrative skills. The BJP won a hallmark victory after some thirty years, as it secured a single party majority with 51.7 percent of seats out of the 545 in the Lok Sabha. The BJP wave or the Modi wave is attributed to the support of the upper caste Hindus and lower backward classes. The victory for single party also signals the era of single party government and the decline for coalition governments in India (Colvin & Bhattacharjya, 2013). Prime Minister Modi's ascent to power has sparked a debate among many in the economic, political, social and international circles on the impact of his premiership on the foreign policy and domestic politics of India. Since 1984, winning a single party majority was unsought for until 2014 when the BJP won majority, the same Hindu nationalist party was credited in the past.

Modi's rise to power allowed him to materialize his mandate promises based on restructuring national security thus giving the foreign policy of India a new direction. Modi is a strong believer of Hindutva (Hindu nationalism). Therefore, the reflection of his domestic policies will undoubtedly cast a shadow on his foreign policy. Some scholars like Rajesh Basrur, Miller, Sullivan de Estrada counter reinforce that the leader can directly impact the foreign policy of India arguing that given the realities of the international players, security and power structures, India will not opt for any drastic change in the foreign policy making, and will continue to seek partnership with countries like United States and BRICs countries (Miller, Chatterjee & Estrada, 2007).

On the domestic front, the BJP interferes in the daily lives, beliefs and religions of the minorities in India, thus disrupting India's own intricate web of cultural, lingual and most importantly religious rights provided by the constitution of India. The BJP is attempting to knit Hinduism with nationalism. The party has employed the concept of banal nationalism to infuse Hinduism in the minds and hearts of people, by organizing 'Tiranga Yatra' and Public Yoga sessions. The BJP and the RSS are prioritizing 'Saffronisation', which is challenging the principle of secularism framed in the Indian constitution (Hardgrove & Kochnaek, 2008).

Execution of foreign policy in modern India

For any state, external and internal variables command the foreign policy. These variables reflect in the position of a respective state being weak or powerful. Though foreign policy is not only in the foreign domain anymore; it directly affects the people of the state. India has also gone through the influence of these variables that have eventually shaped her foreign policy. In the book *Pax Indica*, Shashi Tharoor describes the contours of the Indian foreign policy in which he states that Richard A. Falk provided a criterion for an effective foreign policy that is having following features: as desirable, effective, legitimate, under domestic and

international law and equitable. Consequently, Tharoor states that this yardstick is one that India has been able to abide (Tharoor, 2012).

The Indian foreign policy discourse is divided between extremes of both ideology and religion. The ideological division of idealism and realism, respectively taught by Gandhi and Kautiliya are the two basic strands from which the Hindutva, Nehruvian and Neoliberal foreign policy is generated. Within this division the Indian state tried to balance between by keeping up with the neoliberal international forces whilst practicing realism and maintain idealist religious beliefs. The foreign policy of India thus became a reflection of domestic political party ideology that has a majority in the Lok Sabha. This reflection, be it religious or neoliberal will always be based on a realist assumption with very little space given to idealism. The whole structure of the Indian state functions as a means to support the ends of foreign policy. There have been several phases that have led to stabilize policy in international affairs. India like other countries has also experimented with conservative, ideological, isolationist and liberal foreign and domestic policies. However, now India's foreign policy choices are clear but they are a reflection of past Indian policies. As we come towards examining the Indian foreign policy it is interesting to see that in every era, Indian foreign policy has been following a different ideological base but with one shared objective-state interest as a priority.

India to the rest of the world

India emerged out of 45 years of isolation from international trade and investment and stepped into the era of globalization. The Indian world view summarized in the ancient dictum 'Vasudhavia Katumbakam' (the world is a family) has never been truer" in today's world. India has established itself a globalized state, a fast emerging economy, a hub of tech industry with its flourishing Silicon Valley and myriad labor force. These successes are associated with decades of efforts from the state of India, their relentless diaspora, foreign direct investment and governments fiscal and monetary policies all helped bring them out of the shadows and into the light. So much so that India is now seen as a major player in international politics. No more is India a country suffering and struggling with its colonial past. India has convinced the international community of its modernity and success. However, the current political scene of India is walking a very thin line between religious nationalism and religious tolerance. The liberal image is but rhetoric a camouflaged reality.

Conclusion

As a multi ethnic and multi-cultural society India has managed to rise up to the standards of a multicultural state, with several ethnically, linguistically and culturally diverse groups residing in India. The basis of Indian nationalism was established by pioneers like Gandhi and Nehru who accepted the diversity of India

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as its strength. This diversity was utilized in the Cold war era in which India's new nationalism and post-colonial statism under the umbrella of modernism flourished. Subsequently, though this statist nationalism, could not sustain, as ethnic nationalism revived its already established political base. In the post-cold war the liberal nationalist school of thought steadily began its decline and ethnic nationalism made its way in to the mainstream.

In India, the Conservative nationalist ideology manipulated the already existing notion of ethnic and religious nationalism, which became the largest unifying factor of Indian nationalism. Ernest Gellner states that the nationalism creates nations where they do not exist. The utilization of this policy by Narendra Modi to forward his person and political goals is obvious. The rise of Hindutva in India is credited to the BJP; the awakening of the 'Hindu' mindset has brought to light centuries old conflicts that have forever plagued the Indian society. The diversity of India that was once claimed its strength by leaders like Nehru has become a major threat in the contemporary scenario.

India being a multiethnic society is only using the label of 'multi-culturalism' and not providing the true essence needed to achieve this status.

The Hindutva is deep rooted and cannot be eradicated from society; it is the ground upon which the Hindus stand, but one has to identify the demographic reality of the state. India is multiethnic and multicultural, therefore an all-inclusive approach is much needed to allow the state to function and progress. As for now, the Hindutva nationalism continues to rise in India unmitigated and uncontrolled. This will not just leave a domestic impact, the foreign policy of India and her international image is now also at stake. The international community has seen in the beginning of the year 2019, the tensions were instigated by India when she violated the sovereign air space of Pakistan. The post Pulwama 2019 standoff at the time has shown that Pakistan is a peace promoting country, geographically locked with the hostile state of India. Thus the politics of Hindutva has shattered the years of positive image building by previous Indian leaders and brought forward a true face of India that she had been hiding for long.

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Biographical Note

Dr. Aiysha Safdar is an Assistant Professor, International Relations Department, Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore, Pakistan.

Shireen Mushtaq is Lecturer, International Relations Department, Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore, Pakistan.
