

The Rise of Hindu Nationalism and the Debates on Secularism and Democracy in India

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Abstract: *The beginning of this century has seen a paradigm shift in Indian politics-the BJP and the Hindu nationalists have emerged as a formidable force. This article analyses the origin and development of BJP as a Hindu nationalist right-wing political party, and how its rise along with Sang Parivar could be attributed as a threat to the founding pillars of secularism and minority rights in India. It content the growth of the BJP to the events related to the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid movement. The scope of this article is to analyze secularism in the Indian context and how secular parties apply religion for electoral gains. The article focuses on the Neo-Hindutva since the ascent of Narendra Modi at the helm of national politics, Hindutva as a powerful tool of political participation and political mobilization, and its impact on India's democracy.*

Keywords: Hindutva, secularism, Minorities, Political parties, Democracy

1. Introduction

The BharatiyaJanata Party-led NDA government has amazed us by revoking the contentious farm laws that were a matter of debate for nearly one year. Scholars attributed this move to which the BJP had never resorted during the CAA-NRC debate and the movement associated with the reading down of Article 370 (special status for Jammu & Kashmir). BJP-Modi combo won an unprecedented victory in 2014 first since the 1984 general election. Political scientists called it the result of a populist repertoire of Narendra Modi, his ability as a strong leader to attract both online warriors and the traditional foot soldiers as Chhibber named them as "Vote Mobilizers-individuals who campaign for the party" (Chhibber & Ostermann, 2014). SanjayaBaru called Modi's election campaign and his style of politics a "second republic"(Baru, 2014). In Modi's case, the question of dynasty politics or any kind of diktat from the high command was non-existent-the humble background of Modi and a pro-poor campaign had bolstered the national electioneering. Ashutosh Varshney argues "under Modi's leadership BJP under all practical purpose abandoned any pretense of upholding India's constitutional commitment to the values of secularism, political pluralism, and intellectual freedom"(Varshney, 2019). The current socio-political movement in India under the pretext of Sang Parivar dates back to a long survival for a majoritarian ethno-religious identity in India and it could be dated back to the writing of Savarkar's "Hindutva: Who is a Hindu" (Savarkar, 1923) supporting the vision of ethnic nationalism. Savarkar and Hindu nationalist ideas of ethnic nationalism could be related to the theory developed by Sammy Smootha, who had developed the theory of Ethic nationalism in his famous essay "*Ethnic Democracy: Israel as an Archetype*". For Smootha 'Ethnic democracy is a product of ethnic nationalism, the ideology of groups that considers itself bound by racial, linguistic, religious, or other cultural characteristics and derives from this bound a strong sense of belongings often of superiority"(Jaffrelot 2021). "The existence of a threat to the ethnic nation that requires mobilization of the majority in order to preserve the ethnic nation"(Smootha, 1997).

The series of political development in India since the Babri Masjid-Ram Janmabhoomi movement had focused more on

the emerging influence of the Hindu right-wing groups and their ideologies. Since 2014 the movement became more legitimized under the helm of Narendra Modi. Politically and electorally fragmented opposition in India gives the Hindu groups a suitable platform to implement their ideology as Sumit Ganguly argues "With a demoralized and anemic opposition in Parliament, a once-feisty press largely cowed, and judicial independence under threat, little now stands in the way of Modi and his ideological fellow travelers making India an illiberal democracy"(Ganguly 2020). This Article begins with a discussion on Secularism in the Indian context, India as a case study of treating all religions equally and how this equal treatment has been challenged and manipulated first by the Congress and now under the BJP right-wing rule, I then move towards detailing the rise of Hindu nationalist movement from the debris of the Babri Masjid, Anti-Muslim Pogrom in Gujarat and the victory in 2014, finally, I conclude the shift of India towards illiberal democracy, quoting incidents of violence unleashing against the minorities, Sang Parivar's unrestricted access to the government machinery and how the anxious Hindu movement uses its resources to unite all Hindus to create a sense of belonging.

2. Secularism in the Indian Context

Secularism is a broad concept and it needs more clarification particularly at a time when it has been widely contested under the current ruling regime. 'India was born a secular country "A sovereign democratic Republic", as was written into the Preamble to the Constitution. In 1976 "socialist" and "secular" were added under Indira Gandhi, thus it became "a sovereign socialist secular democratic Republic'(Battaglia, 2017). Indian subcontinent historically was vulnerable to various invasions, because of the foreign invasions multiple religions started to take roots in India along with the indigenous religions of the land-Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism. 'According to the Pew research center, India has the second-largest Muslim population in the world with 14.9% of it belonging to the Islamic faith'(Diamant, 2019). Christian minorities consist of multiple denominations such as the Catholics, Protestants, Syrian Christians, Goan Christians, Baptist church, Naga Christians, and other small denominations and according to the 2011 national census they comprise 2.3% of the whole

population. Small communities include Jewish and Zoroastrian which are present in small pockets of the country. The percentage of the population has been clearly mentioned in table 1.

Indian secularism is different from the western version of secularism. Western countries follow a strict separation of state and religion, in India framers of the constitution adopted to treat all religions equally. To understand the Indian form of secularism, at first one has to take a look at the freedom movement, leadership pattern in the Indian national congress, and the debates that took place in the constituent assembly of 1946. "The national movement was from its early days, fully committed to secularism. Its leadership fought hard to inculcate secular values among the people and opposed the growth of communalism and despite the partition of India and the accompanying communal holocaust, it did succeed in enshrining secularism in the constitution of free India"(Chandra, Mukherjee, Mukherjee, & Panikkar, 1989). The debates in the constituent assembly were fought between liberal and nationalist camps under the leadership of Nehru and Sardar Patel respectively. 'As Pakistan endorsed Islam as the state religion, and was created as an Islamic state, some Hindus argued that the Indian constitution should be based on Hindu culture. One of the reasons why the secular solution was nevertheless adopted was the gradual acceptance of liberal, socialist and general progressive ideas'(Berglund, 2004).

Table 1: Religion data

Religion	Percent (%)
All Religion	100.00%
Hindus	79.80%
Muslims	14.23%
Christians	2.30%
Sikh	1.72%
Buddhist	0.72%
Jain	0.37%
Other Religion	0.66%
Not stated	0.24%

Source: Census of India

India not only does not endorse any official religion but it warrants freedom of religion in the constitution particularly in the part of the fundamental right, 'Article 15 (1) prohibits religious discrimination; Article 16 (2) prohibits religious discrimination to public services; Article 25 (1) "Freedom of conscience and free profession, practice, and propagation of religion"; Article 30 (1) stipulates minorities including religious minorities to establish education institutions'(Basu, 2015). The study of Indian secularism will be incomplete without the writings of Amartya Sen and his famous essay on "Secularism and Discontent". Sen would rather prefer to use "Equidistance" between all religions and state institutions. "What is needed is to make sure that, in so far as the state has to deal with different religions and members of different religious communities, there must be a basic symmetry of treatment. In this view, there would be no violation of secularism for a state to protect everyone's right to worship as he or she chooses, even though in doing this the state has to work with and for the religious community"(Sen 2005). The equidistance of Sen raises the question of what form of distance should the state take, at the time when the food consumption and the personal laws

of the Muslims have been questioned, complete separation is not possible in India because of its Multi-religious nature, so governments always showed a different degree of treatment of religious communities "Indian Muslims were allowed to keep their Civil Code based on Sharia, while Hindu civil laws were reformed, hoping that the Civil Code would become the common Code for all the Indians"(Battaglia, 2017). In the 1980's the controversy of the 'Shah Bano' case is an example of the tension between the state and religious groups. "The Supreme court ruled that Muslims were subject to maintenance provisions under the Indian code of criminal procedure. In order to render this decision void, Rajiv Gandhi initiated the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act 1986 passed by the Indian parliament"(Pardesi & Oetken, 2008). In this instance, BJP blamed congress as a Pseudo-Secular party that has always desired to preserve minority votes.

Since 2014 the Pro-Hindu BJP under Modi started to promote Hinduism in the public arena. Christophe Jaffrelot argues 'Because they lack a majority in the upper house of the parliament (Rajyasabha), BJP has never resorted to changing federal laws. Modi did promise during his 2014 election campaign to amend the Citizenship Act to fast track citizenship to any Christian, Hindu, Jain, Parse, or Sikh refugees from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan and omitting Muslim migrants but he has never brought such legislation during the first tenure'(Jaffrelot 2017). After successfully getting the majority in the parliament in 2019, BJP pushed through the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) which goes against the fundamental system of India. The Hindu center studies "it is a situation where the Act is being presented to the public portraying it as intended to protect those who suffer religious persecution, but in effect, it simply makes a discriminatory religious classification for all migrants"(Seshadri, 2020). In 2014, the NDA showed restraints towards passing contentious laws against religious minorities at the national level but states where BJP ruled passed hostile legislation against religious minorities. 'In Maharashtra BJP along with the coalition partner Shiv Sena passed a law which forbids possession of beef and slaughter of all bovines except water buffalos'(Shaikh, 2017), 'Haryana and Gujarat toughened its anti-slaughter legislation and states such as Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh tightened inter-religious marriage by passing anti-conversion laws'(Jaffrelot 2021).

3. Hindu Nationalism as a Political Movement

Hindu nationalist from its inception tries to give a different idea of India. Social scientists attribute the origin of the Hindu nationalist movement to the arrival of foreigners especially Europeans, particularly missionaries. Christophe Jaffrelot argues "as an ideology, it was largely born in reaction to the pan Islamic inclination of the Indian Muslims"(Jaffrelot 2021). Among the acolytes of the Hindutva movement and their intelligentsia, there was a sense of vulnerability because of the foreign domination which eventually led to a kind of Inferiority complex, "Majoritarian inferiority complex"(Jaffrelot 1996). It was in this context that V. D Savarkar published his book in 1923, *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?* He codified the basic feature of Hindu nationalism to be defended, Savarkar placed more

emphasis on Ethno-nationalism than religious or spiritual identity. “Sons of the common Fatherland, they recognize and worship it as their holy land, “the best nation of Aryans”, the eternal Sindhustan (later Hindustan) which is not only a geographical entity but also a nation. In the same of ‘Holy Land’ various people and different religions, *united by the same blood*, have flourished. The same blood, the same language and culture, the shared history of resistance to invaders, the common laws and rites which unite them all.” (Battaglia, 2017)

After Savarkar, the ideological movement of Hindutva was developed by his follower K. B. Hedgewar who had founded an organization in Central India called the RSS (Rashtriya SwayamsevakSangh) in 1925. “The RSS operates through thousands of decentralized branches across India and its diaspora. The RSS posed as an apolitical civic organization for decades. Godse, who murdered Mahatma Gandhi, was steeped in this ideology, and although he left the organization before committing the crime, the rationale for the assassination remained at one with the patriotic, anti-Muslim chauvinism of the RSS”(Banaji, 2018). The current politicians and many civil servants belong to the RSS family, including the current Prime Minister and a number of Chief Ministers in various BJP ruled states. ‘The RSS movement got a new vision after the independence in order to get a parliamentary privilege, first, it established its student’s organization ABVP (Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad) in 1948, then the Trade union BMS (Bharathiya Mazdoor Sang) in 1955. In 1965 the alleged conversion and Proselytism leads to the formation of another affiliate the VHP (Vishva Hindu Parishad). In 1979 Seva Bharati was formed in order to overcome the discriminatory practice in the Hindu population on the basis of a social service organization’(Jaffrelot 2021). ‘Pandit Nehru viewed RSS as a Fascist organization in the aftermath of the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, as his assassin Godse was allegedly an RSS acolyte. The assassination led to widespread agitation, and the government of India finally outlawed and arrested RSS swayamsevaks’(Guha, 2017). Despite the crackdown against the RSS, Golwalkar formed a political hand of the Sang the BJS (Bharatiya Jana Sang). VinaySitapati writes “The fundamentals of the party manifesto promised one nation one country and one culture” “Syama Prasad Mookerjee was deliberately made the face of the party so that the light would not shine on an organization still recovering from a debilitation ban. But behind the scenes, the RSS took care to retain enough power. The all-powerful general secretary soon became an RSS man” (Sitapati, 2020).

From its inception, BJS showed a shadow presence caught under the formidable power of the congress. The Emergency of 1975 led to a coalition of anti-congress forces that collectively came to be known as the Janata Party. ‘After the election of 1977, the Janata Party evolved as the largest political force and BJS promoted a Political culture of a shadow version of Hindutva’(Sitapati, 2020). The BJS members of the coalition had backed discriminatory legislations such as the slaughtering of cows, bills aimed to curb religious conversion, and the Hindu nationalist version of History rewriting which was primarily aimed to target the left-leaning thinkers and intellects of the country. Due to the

ideological difference and the power struggle in the coalition Janata government couldn’t sustain, as Ramachandra Guha writes “deepening the rift was the question of dual membership, the growing feeling that the Jana Sang members of the Janatha Party owed their primary allegiance to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh”(Guha, 2017).

4. The Ayodhya Movement, Gujarat Riots, and the Rise of BJP

In 1980 Bombay, in front of thousands of party workers, Atal Bihari Vajpayee with a new motto of ‘Gandhian Socialism’ gave rise to the Bharathiya Janata Party. The party adopted the ideologies of Deenadayal Upadhyaya and Jayaprakash Narayanan. VinaySitapati writes “The Janata party was broken, but we will not allow Jayaprakash’s dream to break. While the new party would continue JP’s legacy, it would not inherit the culture of the Janata Party. The darkness will end, the sun will rise, the lotus will bloom” (Sitapati, 2020). In 1984 the BJP won just two seats and after forty years from its formation, the BJP tally rose from a mere two to 303 in the lower house of the parliament as shown in table 2, going from a minor party to a formidable and invincible national power.

Table 2: BJP performance in general election

Year	Seats	Percentage of Votes (%)
1984	2	7.4
1989	85	11.4
1991	119	20.1
1996	160	20.29
1998	178	25.59
1999	182	23.75
2004	138	22.16
2009	116	18.84
2014	282	31
2019	303	37.4

Source: Election Commission of India

Political scientists attribute the rise from two seats to the single largest political party to BJP’s involvement in the Ayodhya movement. The Ayodhya movement was a campaign to build a temple in Ayodhya by replacing the medieval Mosque that stood in a contested place. The controversy surrounding the Masjid-Mandir dates back to the nineteenth century and this later became an important political issue and a strategy for mass religious-political mobilization. ‘BJP used the sensitive issue as a tool of political rallying to unite the entire Hindu votes irrespective of the caste and language’(Pardesi & Oetken, 2008). As the issue paid off for the BJP, it had increased its vote share as table 2 shows from 11.4% in 1989 to 20.1% in 1997. The tension of the Ram Temple gave BJP a strong electoral mobilization in North Indian states, “When the results of 1990 state elections were announced the BJP won four out of six, in Madhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh it won alone and Gujarat and Rajasthan with the support of Janata Dal” (Sitapati, 2020). In the midst of all political mobilization, hate speeches, L. K Advanis ‘RathYatra’. ‘On December 6, 1992, more than 200, 000 members of the Sang Parivar stormed the Mosque and demolished the structure’ (Hansen, 1999). The demolition of the Mosque was followed

by widespread rioting and violence across major cities in India.

The grooming of Narendra Modi as a national leader started in Gujarat. When Modi assumed power in Gujarat, BJP's influence was waning throughout the state. Just before Modi took office BJP had lost nearly 2000 municipal elections. 'Three days after Modi became the Chief Minister on February 24, 2002 clashes erupted between Hindu-Muslim in Gujarat's Godhra district'(Jaffrelot 2021). The violence erupted when a train carrying VHP activists who were returning from Ayodhya were attacked in the Godhra district of Gujarat. 'The violence resulted in killing 59 people when the compartment the activists were traveling in caught fire allegedly set by the Muslims'(Ganguly 2003). In the aftermath of the incident, 'VHP announced a total shutdown in Ahmadabad, as tensions rose Police and the administration was conspicuously missing in the violence-hit places. The youth militia of VHP, Bajrang Dal stormed the entire Ahmedabad and widespread riot broke out' (Kamath, 1994). The overall figures related to the violence were horrific, according to one official report the violence left 1, 169 dead, but estimates place the number above 2000. The Gujarat riots of 2002 led to a blame game, Vajpayee accused Modi's inefficiency to control the violence as the reason behind the BJP's 2004 defeat in the general election. But during the time Modi's popularity had increased according to India Today "Even if the prime minister may have thought Modi's resignation prudent for the sake of both his personal image and the unity of the coalition, there was absolutely no way he could go against the ferocity of the pro-Modi sentiment. " (Aiyar, 2002). It would perhaps be unprecedented in Indian politics that the prime minister confirms the authority of a chief minister.

In India, political parties use communal riots to polarize society, particularly before elections. BJP resorted to this particular strategy immediately after the Gujarat riots. Modi dissolved the assembly to seek a new mandate from the people. During the election campaigns Modi invoked populist rhetoric such as 'Populists claim that they embody the people, they are the people, and they are anti-elitist, the debate of us versus them?'(Chatterjee, 2019). Modi made the exact appeal put forward by Partha Chatterjee, Modi appealed to the Gujarat people that he is the savior of the Gujarat identity against the English-speaking media and from the western society. Throughout the campaign Modi's speeches were filled with Anti-Muslim remarks, BJP campaign portrayed Islam as a treat, as Christophe Jaffrelot quotes incidents of Anti-Muslim rhetoric made by Modi from Gujarat campaign "On September 9, in Mehsana district, he claimed Muslims philosophy is an allusion to polygamy '*hum paanch, hamare pachchees*' i. e. we are five we will have twenty-five, it was open criticism of the high Muslim birth rate"(Jaffrelot 2021). Quoting Pakistan was a significant strategy of Modi; its anti-Hindu position and fuelling terrorism on Indian soil especially a plot to target Gujarat soil. 'The BJP got 126 seats out of 182 constituencies, with more than 50% of the popular vote, study shows BJP gained the maximum seats in places most heavily affected by the riots'(Jaffrelot 2021). The BJP's direct support in both the communal events the Babri Masjid demolition and the state-authorized communal violence in

Gujarat demonstrated the BJP-Sang tendencies to divide society based on communal lines. The distinguished American philosopher Martha Nussbaum analyzed this trend in Indian politics and observes "the violent values of the Hindu right are imports from European fascism of the 1930s, what is happening in India is a serious threat to the future of democracy in the world"(Nussbaum, 2007)

5. Since 2014 towards an illiberal democracy

Democracy as a political ideology and a concept is contested. Heino Nyssonen and Jussi Metsala argue "the concept of 'illiberal democracy' to be dynamic, and, from a nominalist point of view, highly contested. Thus, non-democrats are naturally seeking to expand the definition of the concept to suit their personal power arrangements and present these as legitimate alternatives, playing to an electoral disillusioned by their experience of 'democracy' (Nyssonen & Metsala, 2020). India experienced its first form of authoritarianism under Indira Gandhi, particularly during 1975-1977 when she declared a national emergency. People associated with Mrs. Gandhi called the "Emergency as a social revolution" (Jaffrelot and Anil 2021). Despite the first experiment with an authoritarian rule under Mrs. Gandhi, Indian democracy courageously overcame the populist repertoire of Mrs. Gandhi by defeating the mighty congress with the people's mandate given to the first non-congress government the Janata Party. The short-lived coalition of the Janata government was a transition from authoritarianism to democracy, it revived the parliamentary democracy and repaired the fractured constitution. Distinguished historian Bipan Chandra argues "JP movement and the emergency proved to be mere passing interludes in the long march of Indian democracy ...India's 'political miracle' has continued"(Chandra 2003)

Since 2014 India under Modi's leadership shows a worrisome trend by striding towards illiberal democracy. The BJP's Hindu majoritarian, anti-secular, intolerance visions threaten India's illiberal democratic foundation. Sumit Ganguly observes this trend as "If the party implements this vision, India will probably remain an electoral democracy, but its claim to be a liberal democracy a country of freewheeling debate and discussion, robust checks and balance institutions, and solid safeguards for rights and freedoms will become a thing of the past"(Ganguly 2020). Illiberal tendencies started budding during Modi's first term, this period showed a series of attacks towards the dissenters, attacks on minorities accusing them of cattle trading, and seducing Hindu girls to convert to other religions. RSS from its inception used vigilante groups to fulfill its mission, many vigilante groups specialized in targeting alleged religious conversion, and "cow protection" has developed since Modi's rise to power in 2014. There are debates among social scientists to understand the relationship between the vigilante groups and the state machinery. Some authors such as R. G Abrahams support 'the existence of a link between the vigilante groups and the state particularly with the police' (Abrahams, 1998), Christophe Jaffrelot observes vigilantism in India as a specialized movement 'since 2014 among the groups associated with the Sang Parivar, Bajrang Dal, Hindu Yuva Vahini, and Gau Raksha Dal sanctioned specific

relation with the state machineries' (Jaffrelot 2021). Here I have taken examples of Maharashtra and Haryana to show how the vigilante groups have emerged up to take the law into their hands. A campaign sprung up and maintained its momentum since 2014 to defend cows as sacred animals, constitutionally Article 48 in the directive principles of the state policy states the prohibition of cow slaughter and many states 'have made Article 48 active by passing legislation prohibiting cow slaughter. States like Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, and Maharashtra completely banned the slaughter of cows. Only Kerala, Nagaland, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Sikkim, and Mizoram have no laws prohibiting the slaughter of cows and other bovines'(Deol, 2021). In the heated rhetoric of cow protection, the Hindu nationalists created a militia known as 'GauRaksha Dal'. 'In Maharashtra and Haryana, the state governments subcontracted the implementation of the beef ban to the GRD militias. Maharashtra created the post of "Honorary Animal Welfare Officer" and appointed one in each district. The majority of the applicants publicly known for these posts have been various militia engaged in checking vehicles in the highways to stop cow trafficking' (Nair 2016). Ishan Mervel writes "In Haryana where the gauraksha dal claims to have five thousand activists, it wielding field hockey sticks patrol kilometers of highway between Chandigarh and Delhi, halting trucks that they believe might hold beef or live cows. These enforcers generally belong to Hindu nationalist organizations" (Marvel, 2016).

Since 2019, Christians are witnessing a sharp rise in attacks especially in states ruled by the BJP. Indian government's decision to block accounts of the Missionaries of Charity was widely condemned. German news channel DW reports "at least nine Indian states have planned anti-conversion laws, Karnataka was recent to pass the controversial anti-conversion legislation, early in December Catholic-run school was vandalized in Madhya Pradesh, and the mob chanted 'Jai Shri Ram' while barging into the school, on Christmas day Hindu right-wing groups burned effigies of Santa Claus in Agra Uttar Pradesh, protesters entered a Presbyterian church in Assam on Christmas night, in Haryana the Hindi vigilantes group disrupted Christmas prayers in Pataudi Haryana" (Silk, 2021). The year 2021 turned to be the worst month for the religious minorities, hate speeches and attacks prevailed "at least 300 act of violence directed across religious minorities in India"(Ganguly 2021). The worst among the hate speeches were at the Hindu hard-liner religious gathering at Haridwar, during the 17-19 December religious conclave, repeated calls were given by speakers to wage a war against Muslims and reduce their numbers in India. "In the meeting Yati Narasinghanand called on to replicate the campaign against the Rohingya Muslims minority in Myanmar in effect, calling for a genocide" (Ganguly 2021). In many global surveys, the decline of democracy in India has been well recorded. Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy index showed that 'India had slipped to 53rd position, it dubbed India as "flawed democracy" because of India's democratic backlash and crackdowns on civil liberties had led to the further decline of countries decline' (Times, 2021). In the same year, the freedom house democracy index pointed out that "India, the world's most populous democracy, dropped

from Free to Partly Free status in Freedom in the World 2021" (Repucci & Slipowitz, 2021)

6. Conclusion

In this article I have shown the two alternative ideas of secularism, it is pretty sure that it is difficult for the Hindu nationalist view of India to coexist with the secular foundation of India. BJP for the major part until 2014 did not pose a serious threat to the democracy, but as a predominant religion affiliated party it has demonstrated its Hindu right-wing agenda by piloting the Ram Mandir agitation and for electoral benefits, polarizing the society on religious line like in the case of the Anti-Muslim pogrom in Gujarat 2002. The BJP-RSS militant ideology against the minorities particularly against the Muslims and Christians remains intact since 2014. Along with the suppression of the minorities, the BJP's major success lies in its successful attempt to communalize politics by changing the debates on secularism and trying out a majoritarian mobilization strategy. The militant ideology started on a point of prejudice and vulnerability, overtime the movement attracted mass support by polarizing the society, as in the case of Narendra ModiHindutva became integrated with a form of hyper-nationalism and pro-poor populist repertoire to secure its electoral outputs. The ideological footing of the sang parivar and the Hindutva advocates remained intact, the ideology along with the electoral advancement had allowed the BJP to make a series of legal changes such as the CAA-NRC, anti-conversion laws, anti-cow slaughter acts, reading down of Article 370.

The growing authoritarianism causes a serious threat to the minorities but even more challenging is how the BJP-RSS have weakened or made inroads into the principle institution of the country. Under Modi the decline of the Judiciary has been evident from various incidents, such as the pending of habeas corpus pleas related to the abrogation of Article 370, post-retirement jobs, bypassing the seniority to appoint judges. Judiciary failed on many occasions to resist the authoritarian nature of the state. Another important institution, parliament has experienced a decline, introduced a record number of ordinances, dwindling quality debates, bypassing parliamentary traditions to pass legislation, such as the Farm laws in 2020.

The burgeoning influence of the BJP, the sang parivar's deeply rooted social fabric, and the charisma of Modi may remain in Indian Politics to push the RSS-BJP agenda of a majoritarian Ethno-religious state.

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