ETHNO-RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS IN INDIA: ANALYSING THE INDIAN MUSLIM MINORITY UNDER MODI'S ADMINISTRATION

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Abstract

India claims to be a secular state but acts contrary while dealing with minorities. This study examines the implications of social, political, and religious inculcation of constructive identity (Hindutva) in leading towards nationalism and extremism under the right-wing Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) Narendra Modi's regime on Muslim minorities. This qualitative study draws on Majoritarianism theory in providing research questions, i.e., preferring the majority over the minorities. It measures the socioeconomic vulnerability of Muslims and India's endangered democracy surrounded by the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) Hindutva ideology. Findings imply that Modi is making roots in the government through authoritarian activities and discrimination against Muslims. Moreover, without legitimising and indoctrinating Hindutva, gaining audience approval on prejudiced acts, such as the Gujrat killing, the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), and the National Register of Citizens (NRC), would not have been possible. Hence, RSS Saffronised the media and preached Hindutva ideology to develop public opinion favouring their aggressive acts, indicating that Majoritarianism has trashed minority rights and challenged the basic principles of democracy. Finally, this study presents pragmatic solutions for addressing ethnoreligious harshness without unrealistically hoping for a prompt resolution. India should learn to integrate diversity to avoid further social polarisation and impeding constructive social transformation.

Keywords: CAA, Hindutva, RSS, Indian Democracy, Modi Administration, NRC, Majoritarianism, Muslims in India.

Introduction

India claims to be a secular state, but its politics always involve religion and anger. It is socially turning bleak for continued chauvinism under the auspices of the RSS activist Modi's regime. Nationalistic "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" ideology, lifting Article 370, CAA, a ruthless crackdown on unarmed The Jamia Millia Islamia University (JMU) students, abuse on Dalits and beef sellers, construction of Ram Temple on the site of Babri Masjid (Maryam, 2020), and "death of Rohith Vemula" is among the few examples. Hindutva abuses the minority's human rights and directly contradicts democratic principles. The pan-Indian relatively supra-religious Hindutva's "Hindu Rashtra" doctrine clashes with "the goal of the

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Indian National Movement, which aimed at secular democratic India." Hindutva disseminates India is of Hindus, and Modi is infamous for unleashing the Hindutva agenda. He is pointed out as "narcissistic and is running a one-man presidential government, the direction of which was dangerous for India" (Puniyani, 2016).

His administration has intensified the vilification of Muslims, e.g., labelling areas where Muslims are in the majority as "mini-Pakistan." Muslims are also labelled anti-nationals and Jihadi (Sengupta, n.d.). RSS systematically developed an anti-Muslim public opinion. It led to segregating Muslims economically (livelihood) by "reducing their opportunities to access development policies" and socially "by excluding them from the possibility of sharing the Gujarati ethos."

However, the economic performance of the Modi administration is outstanding. Modi's "neo-liberal reforms" or economic openness started back in 1991 when he got into the twin effort, i.e., continuing the modern and free-market economic notion while adhering to religious and nationalistic politics of identity. This combination attracted investors and served to boost the economy. He has successfully worn two faces and thus is titled "the face of India's rising aggressive capitalism" (Bobbio, 2013). Modi aims to emerge as a global power by emphasising Hinduism under the umbrella of a "majoritarian society" (Maryam, 2020). Modi has support from the "Corporate World" (Puniyani, 2016), but his soft-power diplomacy often fails, as evident from the international community's concern over India's discriminatory behaviour towards Indian Muslims (DAWN, 2020) (Ganguly & Blarel, 2020).

In 1995, India ratified a "Citizenship Act," which was radically amended by the Indian Parliament under the Modi administration in 2019. It also revoked "Article 370," which granted the autonomy of the Muslim-majority state of Jammu and Kashmir. Under CAA, citizenship is granted to particular minority groups, including "Hindus, Parsis, Buddhists, Jains, and Christians, arriving before 31 December 2014, from India's neighbouring countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan." However, the alleged belligerent anti-Muslim arrangement excluded Muslim sects of Shia, Ahmadi, and Rohingya Muslims. It ignited intense demonstrations countrywide, resulting in criticism from the international community for attacking JMU students. India's old image of a "multi-religious" and "multi-cultural society" is getting overshadowed. It is becoming known as a caste and religion-ridden country (Maryam, 2020).

Literature Review:

Hindus were historically known as tolerant and hospitable "to all creeds and sects." Similarly, the Mughal emperor Akbar introduced the "inter-religious concord," namely the "Suhl e Kul (universal peace)." The situation did not remain unchanged as time passed, with former friends turning hostile towards each other. The founder of Pakistan, Jinnah, attempted co-existence with the Hindu majority of India but ended up calling "the Indian National Congress a Hindu Raj (Hindu Regime)" and advocated Muslims' freedom under the two-nation doctrine. Conversely, Nehru and Gandhi advocated a secular state that should justly treat all creeds. Many Muslims endorsed secular India over separatism, including "Maulana

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Abdul Kalam Azad, who became India's first minister for education and Dr Zakir Husain, India's third president."

At present, there are two broad factions in the Hindu religion. The first group is tolerant and non-dogmatic and thus sees Hindutva as an unacceptable doctrine (de Gourdon, 2018). This group declares such practices as a constructed myth.

> *"Brahmanas, ate fish, meat, and even beef. A distinguished guest was honoured with beef served at a meal. Although the Vedic Aryans ate beef, milch cows were not killed. One of the words that designated cow was Aghnya (what shall not be killed). But a guest was a Goghna (one for whom a cow is killed). It is only bulls, barren cows and calves that were killed"*
> (Puniyani, 2016).

On the other hand, the other group is more nationalist and views "religion as nation-building" and "unifying factor." A liberal Hindu author, Ambedkar, regards Hinduism "as a discriminatory, oppressive, superstitious and unjust religion." He might be known as a conflicted figure, but Nehru and Gandhi are mostly undoubted. They were "suspicious of Hindu revivalism," which also allegedly caused Gandhi's assassination. These two eminent figures are criticised in recent research, "some by supporters of the BJP," for allowing Muslims to get a Muslim state and abstaining India from establishing a Hindu state (de Gourdon, 2018).

Democracy is widely regarded as the most favourable system, guiding towards prosperity, human rights, freedom of speech, and freedom of religious practices. Abraham Lincoln defines the "ideal democracy" as "a government of the people, for the people and by the people," whereas Gandhi describes it as "the rule of unadulterated nonviolence." It yields tolerance, rationalism, humanism, pluralism, and secularism. Democracy in South Asia succumbed to violent disruptions through "military coups d'état, civil wars" and "territorial disintegration." Despite having an imperfect democracy because of the caste system, nepotism, religious uprising, "bureaucratic red tape and judicial slowness," India made roots and prospered from the democratic continuity.

India is the world's largest democratic state. Its vast and diverse population could not have survived without democracy. However, Modi's regime shook the pillars of democracy through "coercion, militarisation and authoritarianism." Indian Muslims face lynchings from Hindu hardliners under the moniker of extremism and terrorism (Alam, 2019). Pakistan came into existence after facing the same discriminatory exclusion. By following the same track, history is more likely to repeat itself and may disintegrate India. It is already dealing with around "135 different separatist movements." Some of them have recently become active owing to BJP's discriminatory policies. For instance, secessionist movements in the Northeast areas, the Indian Held Kashmir, the Naxalite insurgency, and the Khalistan movement (Sehgal & Robotkais, 2019).

RSS is also known as the "National Volunteer Organization" or the "mother" of all Hindu fundamentalist associations" (Bobbio, 2013). It "was formed in 1925 by a group of radical Hindus headed by Dr Keshav Baliram Hedgewar (Britannica, 2018), who adored fascist Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini. In 2006, RSS publicly disowned itself from

Golwalkar's heinous ideology and formula, which continued until he died in 1973 (Mukul, 2006). Golwalkar's scandalous book "We or Our Nationhood Defined" (1940) presents a cruel formula for treating Indian Muslims. He states:

> *"In Hindustan, the land of Hindus lives and should live the Hindu nation, all others are traitors and enemies to the Hindu cause, or to take a charitable view, idiots. Foreign races in Hindustan may stay in the country wholly in support to the Hindu nation claiming nothing, deserving no privileges far less any preferential treatment not even citizen's rights"* (Roy, 2019).

The incident of Meenaxipuram religion conversion when, i.e., Hindus converted to Islam or Christianity due to discriminatory practices against the lower castes (untouchable Dalits). In reaction, RSS banned conversions and started forcible conversions under the "Ghar Vapasi" mission. However, they are assigned the same "caste from which they converted," continuing the discriminatory caste structure. BJP government desires the religious minorities in India to adopt "the Brahminical Hindu norms." They explicitly declare that since "all Indians are Hindus," "under Modi, India will become a Hindu Rashtra," i.e., "Muslims are Ahmadiya Hindus, Christians are Christi Hindus and Jains-Sikhs-Buddhists are also Hindus." The ultimate agenda is to proclaim, "since you are a Hindu, you must practice Hindu norms" (Puniyani, 2016).

India's cordial relations with the Gulf states have chains from the past, but with no surprise, they continued under Modi's Hindu nationalistic regime owing to economic realities. It also verifies India's successful diplomacy with Muslim states, even better than that of Pakistan – a Muslim state. For instance, the Gulf dusted the Kashmir question off and declared it a regional issue between India and Pakistan. Not only that, but the United Arab Emirates (UAE) also invited Modi as a "guest of honour" at the OIC and bestowed him with the "UAE's highest civil decoration." However, the Princess of UAE and OIC recently voiced against India for Muslim prejudices. They urge India to stop spreading hatred and Islamophobic rhetoric, putting its long effort of engineered diplomacy at stake.

India was aware of coming up with emergency diplomacy to appease the Gulf. Nevertheless, society nurtured with Hindutva ideology is unleashed and is more likely to continue communal discriminatory practices and hateful tweets (Ganguly & Blarel, 2020). Besides, Modi's hyper-nationalist leadership is laying grounds to reclaim its professed Hindu lands. Warmongering statements against Pakistan are common in India, but belligerence has expanded even further under the Hindutva-led government. For the first time, it switched from "No-Fist-Use" (NFU) to "First-Use" (FU) nuclear doctrine, having both interstate and intrastate effects (Jaspal, 2020).

Methodology:

This qualitative study uses a purposive sampling technique to derive data from secondary sources, i.e., scholarly articles, books, and news. The researcher typed keywords such as Hindutva, Populism, Indian Muslims, and Radicalization to search for relevant literary work. During the random selection of trending projects, the researcher attempted to

target authors from various continents to prevent biases or a one-sided view and ensure a well-rounded perspective.

Theoretical framework:

Arend Lijphart defines Majoritarianism as a democratic character that upholds the majority rule. The incumbent's policies must resonate with the majority's expectations. This is understandable because that is why the public has given a mandate to the elected representatives. Whenever the government needs to deal with policy choices conflicting with the majority's inclinations, protecting minorities takes the lowest rank on the priority list. Sidelining minorities is justified as essential for the larger good (Lijphart, 1999). However, in the case of India, it does not assure any national stability or social progress.

The Hindu majority dominate the minorities in India, such as Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Jains (Puniyani, 2016). The actions of the Modi administration substantially favoured the Hindu majority, which affected the social cohesion between intergroups. Although the basic principle of Majoritarianism favours policy formations per the interests of the majority group, the Hindutva movement, Gujrat killing, CAA, and NRC are dodging the democratic principles of inclusivity, secularism, religious freedom, and protecting minority rights. The findings indicate that the policies of the Modi administration do not align with India's constitutional and democratic principles. It has contributed to further eroding tolerance and pluralism in society. Given this challenge, how can India resolve the issue of a socially constructed identity crisis? Further studies on Hindutva as a constructed identity would assist in finding ways to solve ethnic-based discriminatory violence against Indian Muslims.

Findings:

There are contradictory opinions towards Modi as an agent. One acclaims him as a saviour for epoch-making in Gujrat's economic growth (Bobbio, 2013), e.g., some experts see Modinomics as policies that focuses on participatory development, guaranteeing "everyone's participation" for "everyone's progress" (Ito et al., 2019). Therefore, Modi's economic ambitions or development are meant for all, regardless of religion. Muslims also adore him, but his image is falsely tarnished by portraying him as a villain and Muslim hater through a prejudiced campaign played by media and opposition politicians (Kishwar, 2014).

While others bluntly label him a fascist narcissist politician. His dangerous and antidemocratic style of governing entitled him a fascist (Bobbio, 2013). The opposition criticises his business-friendliness approach that led towards "growth without development, resulting in great social polarization." Gujrat massacre is an unfortunate illustration of his strategy that records "the biggest number of Muslim deaths since Partition" (Jaffrelot, 2015). Gujarat's traditional political culture is infamously termed a "laboratory of Hindutva" for looking up to authoritarian figures. So, Modi's personality was adored for reviving such a tradition in politics (Bobbio, 2013).

How far the Indian Muslims are vulnerable surrounded by Hindutva ideology?

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Muslims have always been at the frontline of being marginalised since partition. They are often labelled as extremists, terrorists, and the cause of the division of United India. These labels were affixed to them following the 9/11 incident. However, the Modi administration is intensifying the socioeconomic inequalities through its Hindutva ideology, which is mounting numerous intrastate conflicts. For instance, Muslim-dominated India-held Kashmir portrays a miserable image of an open-air prison. Moreover, comparing the socioeconomic statuses of Indian Muslims pre- and post-Modi regimes gave a better insight into the current scenario. Data shows that the Muslim Indians under the Modi administration have substandard educational conditions compared to other religious groups in India. The credit goes to preceding the persistent injection of Hindutva ideology into society. Academic qualifications are intertwined with one's economic conditions. Since Muslims in India fall behind in the human development of the educational sector, an extensive sense of deprivation is prevalent among them (Khan & Butool, 2013).

RSS has effectively intensified the series of anti-Muslim clangs in Gujrat by manoeuvring the media that assisted Modi's administration in attracting more Hindu supporters with his political rhetoric and took the lead in the 2002, 2007, and 2012 elections respectively. He used slogans such as "Gujaratis are violent" and that the Congress offended "Gujarati Asmita (self-consciousness)" and "Gaurav (pride)" throughout his election campaign. He convinced the public to be the sole guardian of Gujarati Asmita and Gaurav (Bobbio, 2013). Besides, cows are worshipped and considered holy in the Hindu religion, but cow trading and consumption have taken an ugly turn under the Modi regime. Cow protection groups called "Hindu Vigilantes" attack both cow traders and beef eaters. National sincerity is attested by mandatorily chanting "Barat Mata Ki Jai" (means bowing to Goddess Mother), something that Muslims cannot say. Whoever dissents must confront "anti-national abuse" (Puniyani, 2016).

RSS justifies cow politics by creating an analogy of pig with beef. They believe that since pig's meat is forbidden in Muslim states, beef should not be eaten in India either (*India Divided*, 2020). Another analogy is Ayodhya's sanctity (the birthplace of the Hindu god), which is similar to that of Jerusalem and Makkah. Therefore, it is legal to demolish the Babri mosque (Al Jazeera English, 2020). This also explains the Modi regime's nationalistic superiority against the rest, including the "revocation of Article 370," the Supreme Court decree for granting the disputed site of the Babri Masjid to Hindus, and the increase in "targeting Muslims and the Dalit minorities" (Maryam, 2020).

Hindutva has also preached at schools that extended beyond the parallel existing schools and college system, inculcating that those who exist beyond their defined territory, i.e., "undivided India," are "non-Indians or enemies." Even the actual map of India is, therefore, denied by them. Indian culture is portrayed as superior, while offensive references are attached to the rest, particularly to Muslims. Their textbooks offer a reason for revenge by underpinning the partition of Hindu land with Muslims. Another example is from the syllabus of Class IV, which declares Muslims as "butchers and killers of cows" and exhorts the Hindu students to take action to the extent that there is nothing wrong "if the Hindus kill and butcher the Muslims" (Sengupta, n.d.). Muslim Bollywood stars are considered the ambassadors of

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India for promoting India's soft image on a global scale. However, they were not exempt from religious discrimination. Even Muslim children are victimised on several occasions, such as being excluded from Hindu children's birthday parties.

Moreover, RSS officials link the outbreak of the virus to "Corona Jihad" or "Corona terrorism" conducted by "Tableeghi Jamaat" gathered in Delhi. Assigning derogatory labels to Indian Muslims for outbreaking the disease has furthered their socioeconomic exclusion. Indian Muslims had to deal with dual challenges during COVID-19, i.e., Hindu nationalism and pandemic-related problems, such as discriminatory healthcare treatment and poverty. Whereas the authorities are reacting two-facedly: first, by denying the blame and demanding to act in unison in fighting the virus while simultaneously blaming Muslims for spreading it. In certain alleged cases, hospitals have rejected treating Muslim patients. Several allegedly fake videos went viral, projecting that Muslims were not adhering to the precautions, which exacerbated ethical hostility in the shape of "Islamophobic social media trends and hashtags" (Krishnan, 2020). It grew concern among the international community, e.g., USCIRF condemned such acts (DAWN, 2020).

Is India's democracy at risk due to the abuse of human rights of Indian Muslims?

Hindutva extensively manoeuvres the media by spreading hatred and often projecting Modi as a saint. RSS politicians frequently condemned those journalists and scholars who criticise Modi (Al Jazeera English, 2020). Besides, students' demonstrations for voicing against CAA were constitutional under India's secular democratic standards for freedom of expression, yet the BJP government's crackdown is verifying that democracy is in danger. The ratification of the CAA has deteriorated India's relations with its immediate neighbours, such as Bangladesh, for fearing an unwelcoming flux of refugees. It has also sparked discomfort among India's long-time allies, including the member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) (Maryam, 2020).

Hindutva is promoting "syndicated Hinduism," i.e., "incorporating all the sects" to develop a "monolithic religion." It seems as though the Modi administration is on a mission to shred the Indian constitution by transforming it from a secular to a Hindu Rashtra. India framed its constitution "with the consultation of many modern democratic liberal states." It protects every citizen irrespective of their "caste, class, community, region or religion" (Alam, 2019). The RSS asserts that the Indian constitution is unsuitable for Indian society since foreigners constructed it to suit their states and societies. This explains why Modi emphasises the necessity of discovering the potential of constitutional amendments (de Gourdon, 2018). The Indian constitution can no longer safeguard Muslims amid the predicament of Islamophobia fueled by the widespread Hindutva ideology. Given that Indian Muslims are already vulnerable under a secular state, merely imagining the consequences of India ever transforming into a Hindu state is further intimidating them.

Regarding press freedom, RSS successfully donned the saffron garb on the media by manipulating and tampering with the flow of information by injecting fascism into a group of its followers. Media motivated the Hindutva forces to use violence, e.g., the incident of the Godhra fire in Gujrat has links with the "Teleserial Ramayan." Analysts equally contributed

to laying grounds for the BJP by providing selective news and creating pseudo-events. For instance, the pseudo-event of "claiming that hundreds of Hindu temples had been destroyed in Kashmir after the demolition of the Babri Masjid." Moreover, the Gujarati press is blamable for twisting and mangling information during the communal riots, which is understandable to see this occurring under the hardcore RSS members controlling most Gujarat media. The most catastrophic act is the alleged "secret RSS circular" that lists "ways of killing or debilitating the minorities," such as the "riot manual," which is a booklet that comprises "a list of -do-it-yourself brutalities" (Sengupta, n.d.).

In democracies, "Warfare-Welfare" go parallel to each other. Welfare increases economic strength, which leads towards increased military preparedness. This theory applies to Modi, for he elevated through his campaign centred on the economy. It would massively introduce welfare through increased economic opportunities and improved living standards. Welfare has ultimately paved the way for warfare (Ahmad & Kanungo, 2019). For instance, Modi's second campaign of 2019 revolved around nationalism, muscular India, and pristine Hindu identity – a step towards warfare.

Discussion:

Despite observing a notable prevalence of anti-Modi viewpoints while reviewing the literature, supportive stances towards Modi also exist, declaring him a peaceful patriotic and India's saviour. Either way, RSS present a weak justification or reasoning for hatred towards Muslims. It attributes it to Muslims invading their lands; however, global history is full of such invasions. If the Hindu community hold it with sensitivity, Muslims should not hesitate to acknowledge their stored anger and strive to dissolve the hatred. The grim reality is that the minority of two hundred million Indian Muslims are the easy target, living under constant fear. The organised inculcation of Hindutva exaggerated the Hindu-Muslim rift in the already divided society. Muslims are experiencing waves of violent incidents and mob brutalities, including a galore of hate crimes, forced distorted Hindu identity, stigmatisation in the workforce, and economic losses in businesses caused by both, i.e., ordinary Hindu citizens and hardliners.

Although the authoritarian policies under the Modi administration, including media manipulation, have excluded a massive portion of society merely for religious prejudices, India is a huge market and would not be disintegrated on religious grounds anytime soon. Instead, India might achieve the identity of a Hindu state, like its South Asian neighbours: Pakistan is a Muslim State, whereas Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Thailand are Buddhist States. There are also some heroic assumptions prospecting settlement of the Kashmir issue owing to Pakistan's diplomacy. Pakistan, under Imran Khan's administration, has aggressively raised international awareness of Indian aggression on Kashmiris under the rubric of the new normal – referring to claims of bringing development in Kashmir. Given the current circumstances, the Kashmir issue also appears unlikely to be settled soon.

In brief, the rights of minorities are endangered due to Majoritarianism under the Modi administration's Saffronised Hindutva ideology. It has impeded the constructive

transformation of society. Nonetheless, conflictive or peaceful political interests are crafted through identity in India, while individual agencies have a part in either mobilising conflicts or defusing violence. This argument propels a hefty responsibility for peace on individual agency, which also requires an identity shift approach to soothe the ethnic and religious harshness, something challenging for Modi to accomplish.

The way forward:

History proves that the perils of conflicts over ethnic identities are far more severe than those of conflicts over ideological differences, leading to chaos if left unaddressed. Observing the gravity of Indian ethnic havoc, the Indian government should formulate a strategic framework for peace by experimenting with multiple types of community-based diplomacy to overcome its ethnic challenges, such as facilitating inter-ethnic dialogue and economic cooperation. There is a three-phased journey to peace, i.e., conflict resolution, conflict transformation, and peacebuilding. George Lakey presented eight techniques to complete this journey, some of which can be utilised to pacify ethnic clashes in India, such as "ending repression," "encouraging sustainable economic development," "engaging in strategic nonviolent action," "reducing marginalisation through respecting culture," "educating and training for nonviolent conflict," "negotiating," and "establishing post-terror recovery programs" (McElwee et al., 2009).

Discriminatory policies can never find justification and have long-term repercussions. Therefore, voicing dissent should be normalised and, above all, conducted in a well-informed and educated manner. Long-term developments require consistent training. *Negotiation* is the key that the Indian government necessitates to espouse for swapping all its wrongs into rights. *Mediation* can facilitate bringing core changes among the disputants through negotiations, which ultimately *transform* their relationships with each other. Combining the identity shift strategy may potentially yield more favourable outcomes in alleviating ethnic conflicts, i.e., when political elites "hold a certain identity in a context yet switch to another one in different political or social circumstances" (Andrei, 2017).

The Modi administration should go through a multileveled process in dealing with identity, i.e., holding on to its identity in the social domain, while in political and economic domains, it should explicitly adhere to liberal democracy for every community's good. Finally, the Modi administration should also consider utilising material gains to mobilise antagonism based on cultural and social identity grounds. Mutual gain-based economic engagement of Hindu-Muslims is more likely to push society towards rationality and choosing cooperation over violence.

Conclusion:

Biased employment of words and phrases inculcates a divide within society. However, Modi's cow politics, galore of hate speeches, and violent Gujrat experiment against the Muslim minority was a success, for it brought him to the incumbent as Prime Minister. Since such actions were successful, the Modi administration decided to continue with it and did not bother to tarnish the democratic fabric of India. Thucydides' assertion is accurate:

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"The strong will continue to do what they can, and the weak shall continue to suffer what they must" (Thucydides, 1972) – Exactly the same is trending in India. Just as some in the West adhere to the deeply rooted notion that the white race is superior in the US, Hindu hardliners (the sons of lands) hold a similar stance in India.

Delhi is unfazed by sanctions for having a huge market. The global community desires to engage in business with India, and recognising this, it capitalises on it to its advantage. However, it would consistently endeavour to revive its self-image to the world, and Modi's populist regime is known to be dexterous in extending diplomatic relations. Taking this into consideration, it is anticipated that the government would initiate associatory efforts to mitigate the prevailing communal and ideological disputes, yet the social damage is profound to the core. Hatred and discrimination built over decades cannot vanish overnight. Substantial time and work with flexibility and prospective compromises are required to remove the bone of containment of the identity crisis because even if the nationalist leadership goes, the nationalist society remains.

Hence, despite infusing visible cooperative mechanisms, the Hindutva narrative persists deeply within and would keep spawning back by RSS hardliners and their supporters. The future of the diverse Indian society is like a rolling dice. It is a composite of socio-religious, cultural, linguistic, ethical, and caste system levels. Will India ever become a united Indian civilisation? Winston Churchill said: "The longer you can look back, the farther you can look forward" (Ratcliffe, 2017), but there is another school of thought that believes history never repeats itself and only moves forward. The course of directing the Indian citizens is to be decided by the statecraft, without disregarding the fact that moving forward in developing an identity is a long journey for India to go on.

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