

## THE ARTICULATION OF RIGHTS AROUND RELIGION IN THE WAVE OF 'HINDUTVA' IN INDIA

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### Abstract

Minority rights in the context of the new wave of the 'Hindutva' (the Hindu Right wing) is devised and articulated both as an identity and a status concern. Question about implications of Hindutva for people belonging to religious minority communities or working to protect the human rights of these populations needs to be answered. The pressing concerns seem to address the human rights discourse on minorities and individual freedom which reflect upon what it is to be a minority in India in the wave of 'Hindutva'.

**Keywords:** Minority, Rights, Hindutva

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The freedom to assert religious identities can sometimes be extraordinarily limited in the eyes of the other. In the Islamic world, the Westernised world or the Hindu world the decisive power of classificatory priority is implicitly used to place people firmly inside a rigid box. History and background are not the only way to look at one-self or others. One can belong to a number of categories at the same point in time. Identifying with others, in different ways can be extremely important as much as it is important to not enforce a single monolithic identity on another person; because identity can be flexible and not an unbending singular construction. Thus, enforcing a singular religious identification on an individual is not only limiting but also detrimental for the individual and the society. This article uses concrete case history to analyse effects that 'Hindutva' has had on minority in the past and how it led to the violations of human rights in India. It makes the point that "being minority" in the Indian context becomes the target of Hindutva's political project suggesting a secular re-construction of India and demands a critical combat with the institutionalised communalism embedded in a range of societal and state institutions. The prospect of a regime that will create and enforce a culture of narrow conceptions of India, both in social, economic and religious terms is worrying. This clearly demonstrates a larger point; that a state that fails to guarantee the minorities their rights, not only fails the human rights discourse but also the country as a whole.

#### 1.1 RIGHTS ARTICULATION

India has well-established framework of rights, applicable through the Constitutional framework. The Indian judiciary system has played a significant role in expanding the understanding of rights in the Indian context.

While acknowledging some admirable and progressive features of the Constitution, the paper highlights that its Hindu bias in a secular country like India must be read as symptomatic of the depth of institutionalised communalism in India aggravated by the shallowness of the Hindutva foundations. The existence of institutionalised Hindu communalism means that the power of Hindu communal sectarianism is greater than that which is merely represented by Hindu nationalist organisations.

The Indian Constitution provides religious freedom to both individuals and association of individuals. Article 25(1) of the Indian constitution states, "subject to public order, morality and health and to the other provisions of this part, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion."

Along with this, Article 15(1) says that the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, birthplace or any of them. This applies to every person including the Christian. In

addition of article 27, article 29 & 30, articles 347,350,350(A) and 250(B) of the Indian constitution contain provisions relating to safeguards for the linguistic minorities<sup>1</sup>. The late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had in 1983 announced a 15 point programme for the welfare of minorities which included their overall and wholistic development. Its objective was providing security to their life and property and special thrust in the area of education and public employment. In May, 1992, the National Commission for Minority Act, 1992 was enacted giving it statutory status and it was further reconstituted in January 2000.<sup>2</sup>

However, the question whether minorities can benefit from this constitutional enunciation of the right to freedom remains unanswered. Will their "minority status identity" remain to stand as an obstacle to accessing public resources? In this context, the answer may be found in an understanding of some of the issues that the diverse range of identities and practices described as queer face in India today. Also this article doesn't elaborate impact on all religious minorities and doesn't refer to other minority groups like Dalits, LGBT, Adivasis.

## 2. RELIGION AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN INDIA

Issues of religion have always remained closely related to identity formation and human rights. In the Indian context, discourses in the environs of religion and politics impacted on the human rights of "religious minorities". Cogitation of the rights discourse becomes important under the frame of international human rights and individual freedom at one level. At another level, the wave of the 'Hindutva' in a secular country like India, constantly targeting the vulnerable populations like Muslims has opened up spaces for discussion and questions around human rights and freedom of expression. There has been a form of polarisation that has taken place with the wave of religion-based nationalism, Hindutva.

Hansen describes the emergence of popular Hindutva as a largely "unintended consequence of the structural transformations of the Indian polity during the 1980s" that shape the BJP's political stances in two ways<sup>3</sup>. BJP developed three central parts in its Hindutva agenda over the past several years. Commitment to developing a Uniform Civil Code as an affirmation of India's secular democratic ideals, and the removal of Article 370 of the Constitution which granted special status to Kashmir, are two of three core issues on the grounds that it prevents nationalist integration by calling India's claim to the state irredeemably into question. These are policy items that speak directly to a post-independence context, in sharp contrast to the third issue on the BJP agenda: the distinctly culturalist claim to compensatory justice in the pledge to build a Rama temple on the site of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya.

### 2.1 IDEOLOGY OF HINDUTVA

The agenda of the Hindutva, sometimes working in collusion with the mechanism of the nation-state, can be seen to operate at two levels. First, there is the persuasive approach, which entices minorities to renounce their cultural and religious differences and embrace the all-encompassing Indian identity in its Hindu visage. Dalits and Adivasis (Christians included) are the targets of a well-orchestrated campaign.

There is a systematic effort to educate them at the grassroots level of their religion and cultural space within Hinduism. The RSS has started village-level educational units that enable teachers well-versed in the ideology of Hindutva to live with and instruct minority communities about their nation, heritage, and civilization.

According to recent estimates, there are at least 2.4 million pupils and 80,000 teachers in Vidya Bharati schools run by the RSS-VHP coalition. And "much of the text being taught" in such schools "is designed to promote bigotry and religious fanaticism in the name of inculcating knowledge of [Indian/Hindu] culture in the younger generation."<sup>4</sup>

### 2.2 MINORITIES IN MODERN INDIA

Muslims have been marginalized in the economic arena, and due to lack of any affirmative action for them

<sup>1</sup> Government of India, Constitution of India

<sup>2</sup> Beittelle, A. (2009). Beyond Minority Rights. The Times of India (October 12)

<sup>3</sup> Jaffrelot, C. (1993). Hindu nationalism: strategic syncretism in ideology building. Economic and Political Weekly, 517-24

<sup>4</sup> The Asian Age. (2000). August

they have been lagging further behind in economic fields. Most of them who opted and stayed in India at the time of partition of the country, belongs to lower socio-economic conditions. In popular perception, they were regarded as responsible for the partition and denied employment and economic opportunities. This left them marginalized and made their condition further vulnerable. The major political parties ignored their plight and the Muslim community leadership could not face up to the challenge.

The Sachar committee report and surveys conducted revealed continuing disparities between the Muslims and the rest of Indian society, particularly upper castes Hindus<sup>5</sup>. In a country where social prejudice is widespread, advocates of minority rights have found it natural to attribute the plight of Muslims to the practice of discrimination against them. It is difficult to demonstrate that those Muslims who have fallen behind in the competition for education and employment have been individually the victim of discrimination, or that prejudice was the sole reason why they fell behind<sup>6</sup>.

It was engineered by the Hindutva militant organization allegedly at the behest of the State Government and it continued in 20 districts out of 24 for three months. But on 24 September, 2002, nearly fifty people were killed in the famous Akshardham temple by Muslim terrorists who had allegiance with Islamic fundamentalists. They were on a larger game plan to avenge communal killings of Muslim in Gujarat. Hindu extremists have threatened and intimidated victims, witnesses and rights defenders who are fighting for the prosecution of those responsible for the killing and injury of Muslims during the riots. Instead of pursuing the perpetrators of violence, the state government—formed by the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) under Chief Minister NarendraModi—has nurtured a climate of fear. Officials have targeted those seeking justice with selective investigations by state tax authorities or the police<sup>7</sup>.

The Krishna Commission in the Bombay riots of 1992 has found that the communal political groups play a role in organizing communal riots. Even controversial legislations like POTA and TADA have been vehemently criticized as draconian measures by the state for violating, in most cases, the human rights of the minority community. Demolition of Babri Masjid has brought a new language in the political discourse, which has different meanings<sup>8</sup>.

NGO “Navchetan” from the Ahmedabad suburb of Naroda works to prevent inter-religious love marriages, and if such a wedding has already taken place, it works to break the union. When a marriage between a Hindu woman and Muslim man gets registered in a court, within a few days the marriage documents generally end up on desk of Bajrangi, leader of that organization. The girl is subsequently kidnapped and sent back home; the boy is taught a lesson. “We beat him in a way that no Muslim will dare to look at Hindu women again. Only last week, we made a Muslim eat his own waste – thrice, in a spoon,” he reveals with barely concealed pride. All this is illegal, Bajrangi concedes, but it is moral. “And anyway, the government is ours. I am meeting Modi in a while today.”<sup>9</sup>

A high-level committee appointed to study the economic, educational and social status of Indian Muslims revealed that most public and private banks were declining loans to Muslims. Moreover, it said Muslims were facing social boycott at some places and it was becoming increasingly difficult for them to sell and purchase residential properties.

The aggressive Hindutva campaign has created a sense of insecurity among Muslims and Christians. Fearing the loss of their collective identities they have responded by trying to be better or more pious Muslims or Christians and have been keen on asserting the differences that set them apart<sup>10</sup>. In response to

<sup>5</sup> Sachar Committee Report. Retrieved from <http://www.minorityaffairs.gov.in/sachar>

<sup>6</sup> Singh, V. (1993). Communal Violence. Jaipur: Rawat Publications

<sup>7</sup> Human Rights Watch. (2004). Discouraging Dissent: Intimidation and Harassment of Witnesses, Human Rights Activists, and Lawyers Pursuing Accountability for the 2002 Communal Violence in Gujarat

<sup>8</sup> B. Satapathy. (2006). Human Rights of Marginalized Groups: Dalits, Adivasis, Women, Minorities and Unorganized Workers in Dr. T. Biswal (ed.) Human Rights, Gender and Environment. New Delhi: Biva Books, Pvt. Ltd

<sup>9</sup> Jha, P. (2006). Gujarat as another country. Retrieved May 24, 2014, from HimalSouthasian: <http://old.himalmag.com/himal-feed/53/1566-gujarat-as-another-country-the-making-and-reality-of-a-fascist-realm.html>

<sup>10</sup> Panini, M. N. (2012). Hindutva Discourse and Sanskritisation Syndrome: Understanding the Implications of Globalisation in India. New Delhi: Centre for the Study of Social Systems, Jawaharlal Nehru University

aggressive Hindutva propaganda fundamentalist trends in Islam are gaining popular support. Similar trends are noticed in Christianity as well.

The realm of activism, the struggle for public legitimacy depends more on people willing to stand for minority concerns. At this moment, there are still quite of few people identifying themselves as belonging to 'other' religious groups and not willing to associate or take forward Minority issues. In large part, this silence and inactivity is result of social attitudes both towards Muslims in general and towards minority rights.

### 2.3 HINDUTVA OPPOSED TO MUSLIM IDENTITY

The nationalist ideology of Hindutva is based on the inconsequential assumption of juxtaposed identities: monolithic 'civilised' Hindu against a monolithic 'villainous' Muslim identity. BJP manipulate with the ideology of Hindutva that rests on historical and religious reconstructions of the Hindu and Muslim communities on the basis of communal identities. Party used it to mobilise upper caste and recently lower caste Hindus for support of dominant Hindu nationalist agenda, representing a Hindu India as opposition to the demonised Muslim Pakistan.

BJP may utilise this ideologically constructed dichotomy between the Hindu Self and the Muslim Other, collective or otherwise, in order to recreate and sustain postcolonial insecurities by reconstructing Pakistan as a threat to India.

The events of the past decade, started with the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1991 and culminated with the supposed state sponsored genocide in Gujarat in 2002, have shown that aggressive Hindu nationalism is poised to challenge secularism, which is a part of the basic structure of the Indian Constitution.

The fall of the Babri Masjid was not just the mindless destruction of a historical monument, but the turning point in the Indian polity for worse. Economic reforms are directing the new system of governance, where political parties, as represents if big moneyed interests, increasingly utilize criminalisation and communalisation to capture or to retain power. Remaining irresponsible to the voters who elected them, politicians are fallen into corruption and contest for taking over various business interests.

These historical theories of political vulnerability consist with another modern sense of weakness. According to most of Indian historians, Hindu society was unable to resist Islamic invasions due to own internal conflicts, both political and caste based. From this second linkage of the historical with the contemporary comes the need to incontrovertibly unify a historically caste-fractured community into one that is a genuinely secular socio-political force to reckon neither with, vulnerable neither to Islamic threats nor to political corruptions, confidently *swadeshi* in an age of global economic liberalization<sup>11</sup>.

As far Muslim community is concerned, it has a historical baggage which comes in the way of its economic uplift. From its inception, Hindutva ideology has defined Muslims not as infidels or aliens, but as invaders; 'virile' Muslim men who raped and molested Hindu women<sup>12</sup>. After independence and particularly in the context of the post-1980s Hindutva, the invader image was contradictorily interwoven with the systematic depreciation of Muslims as backward, illiterate, procreating an excessive number of children, depleting resources, and failing to produce enough for the society.

### 2.4 THE RISE OF THE RIGHT WING

Safety and secularity of liberal ideas in India were put into question over the past few years with the rise of right wing forces. There are numerous examples of right wing excess. Renowned painter MaqboolFida Husain renounced his Indian citizenship and left country to live in Dubai and England after being pressured by right wing Hindu forces. Mumbai University was forced to withdraw the book *Such a Long Journey* from its syllabus because it contained 'unpalatable' references to the Hindu group Shiv Sena.

At the same time, civil activists who fight for secular and liberal ideas in India fail to campaign consistently

<sup>11</sup> Biswas, S. (2004). To be Modern but in the 'Indian' way: Hindu Nationalism. In: Mary Ann Tetreault and Robert A. Denemark (eds.), *Gods, Guns, and Globalization: Religious Radicalism and International Political Economy*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Reiner

<sup>12</sup> Swamy, A. (2003). *Hindu Nationalism – What's Religion Got to Do with It?* (Occasional Paper Series ed.). Honolulu: Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies

against such rightist groups, which are using the civil rights movement to further their own political agendas. For example, single-minded devotion to their campaign against corruption led the social activist Anna Hazare and her team to indirectly accept tactically offered help of Hindu rightist groups like the RSS, Vishwa Hindu Parishad and others. Problem of cross-pollination between civil rights movements and the Hindu far right remains unsolved since its creation. As noted by English daily The Hindu, "today's right wing intolerance is a product of the failure of past anti-corruption campaigns to recognise the dangers of communalism". The RSS was an integral part of the anti-corruption movements of 1977 and 1989, and the Anna campaign too suffers from the perception that its ranks have been permeated by RSS foot soldiers.

Human rights campaigners in Gujarat state have criticized school textbooks which praise Hitler, as they claim. But State education department argue that book was poorly translated from Gujarati into English, and such words are quoted out of context. The books that include chapters such as on the "internal achievements of Nazism"<sup>13</sup> are issued by the Hindu nationalist state government. Despite protests from parents, peace activists and educationists, school books, although updated for this academic year, still contain the same objectionable text.

## 2.5 RULE OF THE BJP

During the 1990s, the Hindu nationalist BJP grew from a small, marginal party to become a major challenger to the Indian National Congress; the BJP even headed the national coalition government from 1998 to 2004. A secular country with an immense variety of religions, India faces the real possibility of being ruled again by a political party with a religious extremist agenda.

Modi's BJP was the main opposition party for last 10 years and it was widely expected to win recent elections, but no one could ever presume that their result would be larger than any of the polls had predicted. This is the first time since 1984 that one party has majority of seats in Indian Parliament.

BJP spent more than 85 million dollars and that was their campaign budget just for advertising and for successful effort to change Modi's image of very strong authoritarian politician to leader who strives for economic development and benefits to everyone. As a result, Modi consolidated his power, weakened opposition and very consciously created a cult of personality around him.

The Economist described NarendraModias "a man who is still associated with sectarian hatred"<sup>14</sup> and represent very strong Hindu nationalism, sometimes violent against religious and other minorities.

BJP's convincing win doesn't mean that they will now incite riots, such as in the past, but they have power to change personal laws and a lot of other to re-create society.

Political analysts claim that BJP will run up against the falseness of its propaganda, but it will be very clearly evident that they can't deliver on those promises. BJP were actually promising advantages that accrue to a very small segment of the population. They are pessimistic in the short term, but don't think that the BJP will be the dominant power for the next several decades.

## 2.6 THE FASCIST MOVEMENT

Coalition gathered around Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will occupy majority of seats in Indian Parliament, after winning general election by the biggest margin in last 30 years. With Modi as the new prime minister of India, country will be ruled by an authoritarian politician closely related to powerful corporations and irrespective over whatever comes in his way. In addition, Modi has profound commitment to an organisation which is founded on the idea of a Hindu Rashtra, turning India into a Hindu Pakistan. Modi's agenda is supported with the active participation of the Hindu middle class, and the few who think otherwise are silenced. This combination will guarantee the social and moral poverty of all Gujarat, even as it secedes from the rest of Indian society.

<sup>13</sup> BBC.(n.d.). 'Nazi' row over Indian textbooks. Retrieved from: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/4711475.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4711475.stm)

<sup>14</sup> The Economist. (2014). Can anyone stop NarendraModi? Retrieved May 25, 2014, from <http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21600106-he-will-probably-become-indias-next-prime-minister-does-not-mean-he-should-be-can-anyone>



According to Kanti Bajpai, University Professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University, a Modi-led India will be an India marked by soft fascism<sup>15</sup>. At its core, fascism stands for state authoritarianism, intimidation by conservative-minded extra-legal groups, national chauvinism, submission of individuals and groups to a larger-than-life leader, and a Darwinian view of social life (the strong must prevail)<sup>16</sup>. A society living under soft fascism is simply a society marked by less extreme levels of authoritarianism, intimidation, chauvinism, submission and social Darwinism.

Modi's promises of fiscal discipline and banking reforms brought much optimism in the Indian economy, but there's a lot to worry about as well. He is a member of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) a Hindu nationalist party inspired by the fascist movements of Europe. Founder of that movement's belief that Nazi Germany had manifested "race pride at its highest" by purging the Jews is not unexceptional among the votaries of Hindutva.

He managed somehow to avoid questions about his role as chief minister of the state in Hindu-Muslim riots in Gujarat 2002 that left over a 1,000 dead. Modi expressed his remorse about the incident, but he found no guilt about it, only regrets because he was unable to handle media better. Following these words, published in the New York Times in 2002, USA imposed a visa ban on Modi and Britain announced a 10-year boycott, but the Supreme Court of India vindicated him of malefaction.

Modi's violations of the minorities rights are clear example of what the social anthropologist Arjun Appadurai calls "a vast worldwide Malthusian correction, which works through the idioms of 'minoritisation' and 'ethnisation' but is functionally geared to preparing the world for the winners of globalisation, minus the inconvenient noise of its losers"<sup>17</sup>. Today, global capitalism now has no much sympathy for democracy or human rights and Modi is another politician who was inaugurated by ferocious offensives against ethnic minorities. The electorally bountiful pogrom in Gujarat in 2002, too, now seems an early initiation ritual for Modi's India<sup>18</sup>.

Modi has also ordered repression on illegal immigrants in India accusing West Bengal of being soft on this and sheltering immigrants in order to secure votes from minorities. Sujoy Dihar at LiveMint points out that Modi has said illegal immigrants should have their "bags packed" in case he comes to power (Daniel, 2014). Law Minister Kapil Sibal said that "Modi is a model of dividing India (Reuters, 2014)" and other critics reminded of the BJP's long lasting prejudice against minorities, especially for Muslims who make up more than 12% of the country's total population. Earlier this year, Modi called for Hindu migrants to come back home from Bangladesh to be assimilated into India adding that non-Hindus should be sent back to their home nations. Modi's rhetoric has raised concerns about what this could mean for neighbourhood politics.

"It is widely expected that Modi's nomination from Varanasi will positively affect the outcome for the BJP in a number of other seats in Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar which are electorally important as together the two states send 120 lawmakers to the Lok Sabha. Further, the choice of Varanasi is also symbolic in nature which indicates that the party may not have completely abandoned the Hindutva ideology."<sup>19</sup>

This fascistic turn in Indian politics has wide-ranging implications. As Aijaz Ahmed notes, "The true object of its [Hindutva's] desire is not mere Muslim submission, but state power and the remaking of India as a whole politically, ideologically, historically; and, true to form, this project of remaking India in its own image involves a great deal of unmaking, both through selective appropriation as well as outright rejection of very large parts of our past and present histories. What should worry is the prospect of a regime that will create and enforce a culture of such acquiescence to narrow conceptions of India, in both social and economic terms"<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> Bajpai, K. (2014, March 23). India: Journey towards soft fascism. South Asia Citizens Web

<sup>16</sup> Bajpai, K. (2014, March 23). India: Journey towards soft fascism. South Asia Citizens Web

<sup>17</sup> Mishra, P. (2014). Narendra Modi and the new face of India. Retrieved May 16, 2014, from The Guardian: <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/may/16/what-next-india-pankaj-mishra>

<sup>18</sup> Mishra, P. (2014). Narendra Modi and the new face of India. Retrieved May 16, 2014, from The Guardian: <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/may/16/what-next-india-pankaj-mishra>

<sup>19</sup> Saharasmay. (2014). Digvijaya Singh against Narendra Modi in varanasi. Retrieved May 24, 2014, from <http://www.currentnewsofindia.com/digvijaya-singh-against-narendra-modi-in-varanasi/>

<sup>20</sup> Narrain, A. (2004). The articulation of rights around sexuality and health: Subaltern Queer Cultures in India in the Era of Hindutva. Harvard College

Liberal intelligentsia, such as historian Ramachandra Guha and political scientist Ashutosh Varshney, have dismissed this scenario as 'alarmist'. Both of them claim that resilience of Indian democratic institutions will automatically prevent any such repressive scenario. But then WE have true Liberal Guha, 'a Hindu and a patriot', as he insists, opine condescendingly that 'alarmist critics' worry too much about the advent of Hitler or Mussolini-style Fascism. He goes on to generously concede that such 'fears are not entirely invalid' since Modi is, in fact, quite intolerant of dissent and has intimidated artists and writers in Gujarat.

Another incident happened in 2004, when Gujarat state police killed Ishrat Jehan and three of her acquaintances but minister Ahmed Shah hasn't been charged, although parents of one of the victims tried to press charges on him. According to two police officers accused in the case, the attack has the approval of Modi and Shah. After faced with murder charges, Shah was forced to resign in 2010, arguing that it's all part of a wider "political conspiracy" against him. Journalist Mamta Badkar claims that "behind the public projection of Modi's claims to be the source of unprecedented development in the state, it is believed that the two men dominated through intimidation and force."<sup>21</sup> As Modi takes the lead of the world's largest democracy, it's important for Indians and the international community to watch extension of relationship between him and Shah.

Meanwhile Giriraj Singh, a BJP leader in the Indian state of Bihar, caused a storm by saying "those that oppose Modi should find themselves a home in Pakistan, not India"<sup>22</sup>. A comment that the BJP distanced itself from though Modi didn't outright condemn.

At this moment, India still has no reasons for hopelessness, because the discontented vision of authoritarianism will have to calculate with increasing potential of the underprivileged and voiceless people. But for now some Indians have dreamed collectively, and they have dreamed a man accused of mass murder<sup>23</sup>.

### 3. THE ECONOMIC DREAM

Rise of Narendra Modi was closely related to Gujarat's economic success during his time as prime minister of the state. Opponents however claim that Gujarat's economy was strong long before he came to power.

Also, economists have many other reasons to be fearful: "Gujarat" model brought much-proclaimed promise of development and great enthusiasm to the middle and elite classes, instead to the whole population of India. In addition, in the last decade, Maharashtra, Bihar and Tamil Nadu had larger economic growth than Gujarat.

The fact remains that economic growth is not the only measure of success, because lot of people still are marginalised and suffer on many other ways. At this moment, there is no political power in India that can provide answers important to minorities: Will their voices be heard in an economic model driven above all by corporate policies? Will there be any focus on social measures that are so crucial for the underprivileged? Will the 'development' be inclusive and for all?

The strong sweep by Modi and his allies suggests there's a chance that economic reforms won't be stymied every step of the way, as they were during the Congress's fractious rule<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> Badkar, M. (2014). There's A Dark Side To The Prime Minister Who Just Won India's Election By A Huge Landslide. Retrieved May 24, 2014, from <http://www.businessinsider.com/concerns-about-modis-rise-to-power-2014-5>

<sup>22</sup> Badkar, M. (2014). There's A Dark Side To The Prime Minister Who Just Won India's Election By A Huge Landslide. Retrieved May 24, 2014, from <http://www.businessinsider.com/concerns-about-modis-rise-to-power-2014-5>

<sup>23</sup> The Economist. (2014). Can anyone stop Narendra Modi? Retrieved May 25, 2014, from <http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21600106-he-will-probably-become-indias-next-prime-minister-does-not-mean-he-should-be-can-anyone>

<sup>24</sup> Badkar, M. (2014). There's A Dark Side To The Prime Minister Who Just Won India's Election By A Huge Landslide. Retrieved May 24, 2014, from <http://www.businessinsider.com/concerns-about-modis-rise-to-power-2014-5>

#### 4. CONCLUSION

There are many reasons for concern regarding Modi's religious intolerance, his ambiguous stance on women's issues, and the implications of his rule on Indian press freedom (especially as Hindu nationalists take to the internet to intimidate Modi critics). It is really unclear does Modi's supporters are aware of what his rule could mean for a democratic nation. The Economist commented a month ago, "He (Modi) will probably become India's next prime minister. That does not mean he should be. He is still associated with sectarian hatred"<sup>25</sup>.

Is the moral line crossed and have incidents in 2002 been forgotten and forgiven and is it our turn to say sorry to the world is over? We should if we believe democracy is not just about electoral arithmetic. For concepts like human rights, civil liberties, rule of law, constitutional governance, democracy to have any meaning, they must have universal jurisdiction, respect no national boundaries<sup>26</sup>.

As important, question whether Modi's economic policy will have measurable results or not, and for whom, still remains. The real secret of Modi's success lies in a happy coalition of those who adore him for what happened under his watch in Gujarat in 2002 and those who simply "don't care" what he did then because he promises unbridled growth, the shining India (Anand, Sorry, world, we tried, 2014).

At this moment, the greatest fears of all human right activists are permanent attacks on freedom of expression. One of the basic principles of democracy is respecting differences that enable people to change their minds and governments and voice their dissent in ways that are civil and democratic. Using censorship, violence and vandalism, was manner of the BJP and its supporters in order to silence critics and even smallest appeal to vote for secular parties was declared as a threat to Modi and the party. It is alarming that citizens of this country, although proclaimed, have no real rights to diversity, flexibility and differencing opinions.

Immense psychological effects of this social intolerance are manifested in the social attitudes of minorities that still have various forms of fear as part of their everyday life: the fear of being caught by the police, the fear that sooner or later one's freedom of expression will be curbed and may even be arrested, and so on. The emotion of fear is closely related with the feeling of insecurity about possessing what the Government insists are against Modi and the BJP (Guardian).

People who produce the dangers of fascism are, in basic, seriously authoritarian regimes emerged from democratic processes combined with long periods of discriminating minorities and valorising both absolutists and growth rates. If these warnings are overdoing it, then those who blithely insist that fascism has no currency in the current context are culpable of wilfully minimising danger signs<sup>27</sup>.

Despite activism of human right defenders and independent intelligentsia, India today is severely religious and politically militarised by an authoritarian rule on minorities in the name of major community, accompanied by a cult of personality. Dramatization and complete spectacle that the leader produced during the elections campaign are way too much fascist and should evoke deep consternation rather than admiration.

Without any doubt, empowered activists, with moral and material integrity, will have to face the opposition in many fields: religion, sexuality, health, and, increasingly and most disturbingly, a religious nationalism. They have to build effective strategies and form coalitions in order to respond to the increasingly contentious and politically charged context.

<sup>25</sup> The Economist. (2014). Can anyone stop Narendra Modi? Retrieved May 25, 2014, from <http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21600106-he-will-probably-become-indias-next-prime-minister-does-not-mean-he-should-be-can-anyone>

<sup>26</sup> Anand, J. (2014). Sorry, world, we tried. Retrieved May 25, 2014, from The Indian Express: <http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/editorials/sorry-world-we-tried/99/>

<sup>27</sup> Gopal, P. (2014). Look who's romancing the autocrat. Retrieved from: <http://www.openthemagazine.com/article/nation/look-whos-romancing-the-autocrat>



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