



WWJMRD 2019;5(10):124-127  
www.wwjmr.com  
International Journal  
Peer Reviewed Journal  
Refereed Journal  
Indexed Journal  
UGC Approved Journal  
Impact Factor MJIF: 4.25  
E-ISSN: 2454-6615

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## Nationalism under the wings of false democracy in the perspective of India

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### Abstract

This paper focuses on a moment of rapture and termination of the democracy and the beginning of the genocidal and violent nationalism in the present era of political obstacles. This paper investigates the expected moment when the democracy ruptured and nationalism fell pray in the light of present political events taking place in India. It also focuses on the lack of substantive democracy which is a crucial problem of our nation and is usually not addressed by the political parties and the media personnel. This paper will also focus how media hoax has also lead to birth of communalism amongst the citizens in the nation.

**Keywords:** Democracy, Nationalism, Political Hooliganism, Extremists, Islamophobia, Communalism.

### Introduction

An important reason why a strict separation of church and state is deemed necessary in democracies is out of the fear that the presence of religious political parties will radicalize the political agenda and threaten the stability of plural and multi-religious societies. This raises the question of whether religious political parties should be allowed political space in a liberal democracy. Fox's study of 152 states between 1990 and 2002 has shown that a strict separation of church and state is not an essential element of democracy. While there is a growing literature on religion and democracy, a hiatus exists in the literature on the impact of religious political parties on liberal democratic politics. In this paper we look at religious political parties in India to determine how their inclusion in democratic politics actually affects the status of democracy in India and the meaning of nationalism in the nation. In particular, we look at the emergence of the Extremists and its impact on secularism, domestic politics and national policy.

Where BJP (Bhartiya Janta Party) has the "Extremist" views about nationalism and democracy whereas the Gandhi-Nehru view emphasizes state "neutrality" between India's many faiths, even as it proposes a civic idea of citizenship. We study the impact of Hindu nationalism on the India's democratic secularism by assessing several important issues in Indian domestic politics. These include the Uniform Civil Code, the Ayodhya controversy and the abolition of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution which gives Kashmir special status within the Indian union. For the most part, the BJP has learned to play by the rules of democratic politics within the Indian institutional setting out of rational self-interest. It must be noted that "Extremists" have a long-term ideological agenda to redefine Indian national identity that has remained unaffected by the constraints of coalition politics. The threat that the BJP poses is to Indian secularism and to the continuation of a democratic state in India. Nationalism in India emerged as a reaction to British colonialism. India's Nationalism took birth with the vision of the Indian National Congress (Congress party), which was established in 1885, and centered on the creation of a modern secular democratic state along Western lines. The other vision of Nationalism in India was centered on religion and included the creation of either a Hindu polity and/or an Islamic polity in the subcontinent. Religion and religious self-identification had started playing a significant role in the development of nationalism in colonial India. For legal and administrative purposes, the

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British classified the population of the subcontinent into religious- and caste-based categories in the first census of 1872. This gave rise to a very diffuse sense of “belonging to a pan-Hindu community” among the educated elite from the upper castes of the Hindu society.

### **Indian Nationalism and its Democracy:**

Nationalism is the term that stands to denote patriotism and fight for democracy and freedom. If we look back to our history we see big examples on nationalism, but the question is “is it the same as it was then or is it different in today’s era?”

Nationalism in India emerged as a reaction to British colonialism. India’s Nationalism took birth with the vision of the Indian National Congress (Congress party), which was established in 1885, and centered on the creation of a modern secular democratic state along Western lines. The other vision of Nationalism in India was centered on religion and included the creation of either a Hindu polity and/or an Islamic polity in the subcontinent. Religion and religious self-identification had started playing a significant role in the development of nationalism in colonial India. For legal and administrative purposes, the British classified the population of the subcontinent into religious- and caste-based categories in the first census of 1872. This gave rise to a very diffuse sense of “belonging to a pan-Hindu community” among the educated elite from the upper castes of the Hindu society. Whereas The Congress party espoused a version of nationalism that promoted an inclusive and plural vision of the Indian state irrespective of religious or other identities. The Congress party consciously cultivated itself as an umbrella organization to lead the Indian nationalist movement that could accommodate India’s heterogeneous society, including different religions, languages and castes. On the other hand the Hindu nationalist narrative of the nation is the notion that posits “Muslims as foreign invaders and marauders.” Their solution to India’s current problems lies in the “recovery” of a mythic “Golden Age” in the country’s pre-Islamic past.

Democracy on other hand means “right”- which includes right to speech, think and practice. Basically it is right to live on your own terms under the line of order. And nationalism in India has its base in democracy. India’s constitution grants its citizens; individual as well as group rights. For example, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and Parsis have separate personal laws (related to marriage, divorce, inheritance, etc.) even as they share common fundamental (individual) rights as citizens in India. As such, India’s secularism tends to emphasize the “neutrality” of the state in religious affairs as opposed to a strict “separation” of the state from religion. According to Sen, the roots of Indian secularism can be traced back to its long and diverse multi-faith history Further According to Sen, the first view requires the state to be “equidistant” with respect to all religions – meaning that the state treatment of different religions and religious communities will be symmetrical. The second view requires that the state has absolutely no relationship with any religion. But what kind of democracy are we speaking of as described above is what is being practiced today???? Who will answer this??? The so called media which was once the voice for nationalism the light bringer or the fire to the urge for Democracy but today just the mere puppets in hands of our Political Hooligans.

It was our nationalist feeling of togetherness that paved way for our freedom and nationalism, but did we really won the war were we really free from the bonds and chains of division, the seed that the Britishers have already sown deep in our ideologies. The answer to this question may be no because looking at today’s scenario it’s hard to accept that the answer would be yes. May be partition is the answer to it or may be not???

Today the terms nationalism and democracy is completely different meaning in India than dating back in 1947. For India of today Democracy is not abstract, but it’s a property which can only be owned by a particular set of people and it will be decided by another particular set of people who are the Political Hooligans. And now let’s talk of today’s Nationalism and the nationalists of today, they are the once who have been certified by our reputed “sold” media personals and of course the protectors of our Preamble and constitution “the politicians”. The rest out of 1.3 billion populations is categorized under Islamophobic and minors. The essence of democracy is long lost under the narcissism of the politicians named as islamophobia and castism. Now since we are talking about the terms like islamophobia and castism lets throw light on them briefly.

Islamophobia was the vocabulary created in the year late 2019, but its essence and route goes back to the period of Partition in our country. It’s basically a fear of Islam or fear from Muslims which is real, fake or sketched its judge is no one, but it has led to a particular religious group to lose all the rights that is defined in our Preamble and constitution or simply say lose their democracy. Now about castism so yes we are well versed with it as it dates back to the time when we became a civilization.

Now the question is when all this bud in the country liked India, a country which once fought to be free from all these atrocities and got the freedom, the answer is India never got free from it. India was just freed from the colonization but not from these deep dark secrets of communalism which grew into tree all through almost 7 decades since our freedom and which was nurtured by our politicians. Because if these beasts die out then how will the politicians grow their wings of hatred and colonize us with their illiterate thoughts in the expense of our democracy .this is what false democracy is.

### **The End of Substantive Democracy and Nationalism of Independent India:**

Let’s see some examples that lead to certain waves of nationalism under the false democracy. The first wave was paved when in the name of bringing back the black money of the nation on November of 2016 demonetization took birth and spread through our fastest growing economy as a plague or an omen and who was at the worse receiving end the poor the providers who make the rich “rich” and our nation that lost the tag of fastest growing economy with drastic fall in its GDP (gross domestic product). But oh was it the black money that we Indians were expecting well let it be you to decide what should be the answer for it, but yes we kept mum so yes it’s the first wave that hit our democracy badly and added few more feathers under the wings of our Political Hooligans.

Then it was followed by next wave the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave it was that of mob lynching and riots and yes the “namkaran”-renaming of states like Allahabad to Prayagraj since Allahabad has Allah in its name and yes we were still mum

because oh yes this much is only what our democracy has allowed us to be and that is to be quite and indifferent to what happens around us, until and unless it hits back to our normal life we stay care free.

The third wave the amendment of our constitution by bringing changes in article 370 and Kashmir being colonized by center by taking all its democratic fundamental rights such as cut off of rest of the world, end of access of internet and media and yes house arrest without any warrant and crime. So what did our nationalists do what did the nation do what did we the people do oh yes the job of remaining mum and indifferent.

Then came the fourth wave and by now our Political Hooligans are more stronger than ever and the nation no less weak than ever. It was CAA and NRC and no one question that who are they to decide who the Indian is and who is not a mere piece of paper will give justification for it. But yes people kept mum as if it is what they have wanted for long but the water was brimming up on the other side they were the “the light bringer” who have read about democracy in books and for them the picture of democracy in books and what they experienced was quite different and it agitated them since the first wave but it was until fourth wave that they haven’t been active. But fourth wave was different it was bringing in the same spirit of nationalism as once was felt during the British colonization of India. But who knew it would give birth to the fifth wave.

The fifth wave came as a slap to nationalism and democracy it began with thrashing of students with lathis, pelting of stones on them, gunshots and burning down their education institutions leaving them wounded and bleeding fearful fighting for lives and all this for what because they stood against the goons and false democracy that was enforced in the name of CAA and NRC. But yes did it remind you of the nationalist movement that was led by our freedom fighters seven decades back. So, here for the first time it felt like India is trying to breathe freedom and nationalism is slowly being freed from the claws of false democracy. But it was too early to decide it at this stage.

For fifth wave it was the media who acted as the pups for the chowkidaars so that people would be engulfed in communism and these Political Hooligans would again steal the show.

Yea our false democracy is standing high and shining bright as our Political Hooligans continue to polish it well and feed well to the beasts such as islamophobia which serve them well by keeping the spirit of nationalism alive but yes under the wings of false democracy. Jaffrelot has shown that the Hindu nationalist movement’s strategies include both radical and moderate elements. But in today’s scenario the so called political Hooligans nationalist movement is more radical in nature than moderate one. Coalition politics does not necessarily guarantee compromises across all fronts. For instance, in spite of their coalition with ideologically different parties, the BJP succeeded in promoting a Hindu nationalist version of Indian history by implementing changes to the National Curriculum Framework. The BJP had retained control of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, which includes the Department of Education and Department of Culture. Today’s Political parties are more of a “pseudo-secular.”

Indian newspapers and academic journals assault their

readers with stories of large-scale communal violence and of the communalization of India's political institutions. These stories are frequently accompanied by pious editorials which enact the well-known Indian ritual of paying lip-service to the concept of 'secularism'. To the end, we examine the practical underpinnings of India's dominant nationalist creed, of which secularism has been a central plank.

### Conclusion:

Though Extremists nationalist ideology has been present since the late nineteenth century, it came into the political mainstream only in the 1980s. It was not the Hindu nationalist ideology, per se, but the political and institutional contexts that explain the rise of False Democracy and false Nationalism. My analysis has also shown that the explicitly religious BJP has, for the most part, learned to play by the rules of democratic politics within the institutional setting of Indian politics. This dynamic demonstrates that religion and democracy have always been in dialectic in the Indian context. As such, this equilibrium between religion and democracy needs to be constantly negotiated.

For the most part, the Political Hooligans does pose a threat to the functioning of Indian democracy. In fact, it appears that India’s predominant religiously affiliated party has raced its radical agenda after emerging in the political mainstream in the early 2000s. As the Extremists continue to enjoy electoral success, the party must work within the confines of India’s democratic political institutions. In particular, the constraints of coalition politics have necessitated pragmatic compromises on the part of the Political Hooligans. For example, we have shown that the removal of some of the more radical issues on the Extremists agenda while leading a coalition government was a contingent outcome of self-interested political strategy. As such, the Extremists militant and violent agenda against minorities, especially Muslims (as demonstrated by the 2002 Gujarat violence) remains intact. The Extremists’ single major success has been the communalization of Indian politics by changing the discourse on secularism.

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