RISE OF HINDU NATIONALISM: IMPLICATIONS FOR SECULARISM IN INDIA

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DEDICATION

With utmost devotions, I dedicate my whole work to my beloved and affectionate Parents, Brother, Friends and Respected Staff of International Relations Department who have always been source of encouragement, knowledge, illumination and wisdom for me, whose prayers and guidance showed me the right path and made the blessing of Allah shower on me.

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List of Acronyms

BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
BJS	Bharatiya Jan Sang
VHP	Vishva Hindu Parishad
CCA	Citizenship Amendment Act
NRC	National Register of Citizens
IOK	Indian Occupied Kashmir
AJK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir
JA	Janata Alliance
UP	Uttar Pradesh
CP	Central Pradesh
CPEC	China Pakistan Economic Corridor
OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
SAARC	Multiple independently targetable reentry vehicle
USCIRF	US commission for International Religious Freedom

ABSTRACT

There is a rapid rise of Hindu Nationalism in India especially under the regime of Narendra Modi. This rise of Hindu Nationalism is against the Secular and liberal values of the Indian State and, therefore, it is damaging the secular and liberal image of India at international level in front of international community. Moreover, it is also causing severe problems for the Indian minorities especially Muslims, Christians and Dalits. This rapid rise of Hindu nationalism is not only a threat for Indian minorities but it is also making regional stability and peace at stake, so the study has also discussed the threats for regional peace and stability due to rise of Hindu Nationalism in India. Further, this study has mainly discussed the recent developments in India during the BJP government under Narendra Modi especially the situation after the annexation of State of Jammu and Kashmir, CAA and NRC bills, Ayodhya verdict, pro-Hindu policies of the BJP and other issues which are against the fundamentals of Secularism. The Secular Indian State has been taken over by the followers of Hindutva ideology. Now they are trying to transform the Secular State of India into the Hindu Majoritarian Nationalist State. The Hindu majoritarian nationalists under the umbrella of BJP government are threatening the fundamentals of secularism. The rise of Hindu nationalists has sever implications for Indian minorities as well as for the future of secularism in India. This has also affected secular image of India at international level. Additionally, the strong influence of the ideology of RSS over PM Modi and its government is creating regional security further threatening the stability of the region. Today, Indian State is facing criticism over its discriminatory dealings with the minorities as the RCA and CAA acts attract severe criticism across the globe. Further, the UN Security Council, EU, the UN commission for Independent Religions and many other important international organizations are raising concerns on the violations of human rights especially in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. All these events indicate that secularism is at stake in India under BJP government and it is continuously destroying its image due to its harsh policies.

Rise of Hindu Nationalism: Implications for Secularism in India

1.1- Introduction

Today the world is witnessing the rise of right-wing ultra-nationalist popular leaders across the globe like Donald Trump in the US (2017-21), Boris Johnson in the UK and Emmanuel Macron in France. India is also facing this kind of situation with the rise of right-wing Hindu nationalist party Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The BJP has its agenda to shift Secular India into a majoritarian Hindu nationalist State under the leadership of right-wing Hindu nationalist Narendra Modi.

Hindu nationalists believe that Hinduism is the prime religion of India, which is polytheistic in nature and has traditionally been open to acceptance of a variety of societies. Nearly 80% of Indians are Hindus, so the Hindu nationalists argue that "Hindu belief and culture should shape the State and its policies.[1] The BJP and other "Hindu nationalist forces" are nervous with the strength and harmony of Hindus as a "political community"; they have accused religious minorities for divided devotion and exercises mass forcefulness against minorities.

Although, the concept of Hindutva politics in India is not a new concept; it is the concept of post-independence. The Hindu reform movements were started in the 19th century. These movements have their roots in the 19th century, in resistance to the liberal Hindus reformers, colonialism, Islamic influence and Christian missionaries. Similarly the Hindu nationalist organization "Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh " (RSS) was formed in 1925. Its basic purpose was to unite the Hindus at one platform against the growing influence of Muslims and Christians. The Hindu nationalist forces have been gradually developing their power and impact under the umbrella of RSS and Sang Parivar. Even though the RSS has not declared itself a political force, its influence over the Hindu nationalist political parties Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Bajrang Dal and BJP is not secret. Most of the leaders of BJP and other Hindu nationalist political parties including Vajpayee, Advani and Manohar Joshi had been the volunteers of RSS and Sang

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[1] Yogesh Snehi, "Hindutva as an ideology of cultural nationalism," *Social Change* 33, no. 6 (2003), https://www.academia.edu/822476/Hindutva_as_an_Ideology_of_Cultural_Nationalism.

Parivar. They take influence from RSS and follow its ideology which is based on the concept of Hindu majoritarian nationalism.

The Hindu nationalist forces were present even after the independence of India but after losing the debate with the secular forces over the issue of Indian nationalism or ideology, these forces became weak. Their influence on common Indian people was very strong but their influence on electoral politics was very less until the death of Nehru. The Congress and other secular forces became weak after the death of Nehru. It provided the opportunity to the Hindu nationalist forces to gain space in electoral politics. Further, the emergency of Indira Gandhi paved the way for the Hindu nationalist forces to come into power under the Hindu nationalist alliance Jana Sang in the elections of 1977. Most of the leaders of Jana Sang were the member of RSS and they had dual membership. The issue of dual membership created problems for Jana Sang and it was banned from politics on this issue.

Therefore the BJP separated itself from the Jana Sang under the leadership of former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee on the issue of its dual membership and its affiliation with RSS in 1980. Bad governance and corruption made the ruling party Congress unpopular in the masses and hence the BJP availed itself of this opportunity and started the politics of Hindu nationalist identity. The BJP came into power first time in 1996, under Atal B. Vajpayee for just thirteen days and then 1998 for a full term. After this, again Congress and its allies managed to defeat BJP and they remained in power until 2014. During this time period, the Congress government disappointed the people with its corruption, economic crisis and bad governance. At the same time, the BJP increased its strength and influence under the leadership of Narendra Modi (a lifetime member of RSS) and won the elections of 2014 and again of 2019. The victory of BJP in 2014 and then in 2019 under Narendra Modi as Prime Minister has been made possible with the help of Hindu right-wing nationalist forces especially the RSS and VHP.

The PM Narendra Modi, is a Hindu nationalist and spent his early years working for the "Hindu majoritarian nationalist group" RSS. The first term of the Modi government has been full of tragedies and disasters for minorities, secularism, Dalits, Atheists and liberal forces in India. Muslims which are 14% of total Indian population face severe socio-economic and religious discriminations by the BJP government as they are labeled as terrorists. There is ban on slaughter

of cow meat by the BJP government as cows are the holy animal for Hindus. These events show the footprint of Hindutva Ideology in India during the first term of BJP under Narendra Modi.

But when Narendra Modi-led BJP came into power for the second time in May 2019, it became the hub of right wing Hindu majoritarian nationalists and RSS goons. There is an increase in religious, socio-economic and political violence by the Hindu nationalist in an overt way. Moreover on August 5, 2019, Indian government revoked the special status of Muslim majority State Jammu and Kashmir fulfilling the dream of his extremist organization RSS. Today the Kashmiri Muslims are living their lives under the curfew and under the shadow of thousands of Indian troops. Moreover the BJP government started ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Muslims in order to convert Muslim majority into minority which is the agenda of BJP and RSS.

The decision of Supreme Court of India on Babri Masjid on 9 November 2019, in the favor of Hindu Nationalists is a clear example of the influence of RSS on the top institutions of India. This shows how Narendra Modi and BJP are converting secular India into a Hindu Nationalist State. Moreover, the Citizen Amendment Act (CAA) and National Register of Citizens (NRC) are highly anti-Muslims and discriminatory towards Muslims. Today there are a series of anti-government protests by the Indian (Muslims, Dilats and other minorities) and due to controversial CAA and NRC bills and even the Hindus are criticising these bills as anti-Muslims. These all events show that today there is a practical manifestation of the Hindutva's majoritarian nationalism and also it shows how secular India is becoming the Hindu majoritarian nationalist State. According to Milan Vaishnav who leads the South Asia program at the Carnegie Endowment in Washington DC,

 "India's future as a secular republic that embraces pluralism and, you know, kind of adheres to the founders' notion that India's unity is strengthened by its diversity. And over the past five years, we have seen the rise of Hindu nationalist party and the spread of this kind of nationalist ideology.[2]"

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[2] Vilan Vaishnav, "Nationalism, not Hindutva Will be the big Theme For 2019," *REDIF NEWS*, Feb. 17, 2019, https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/02/11/nationalism-not-hindutva-will-be-big-theme-for-2019-pub-78344.

The Hindutva majoritarian Nationalism is a threat for Secularism and liberalism. Secularism has some basic fundamentals i.e. separations between religion and State, political system can make and practice civil codes without influence of religious codes, people of different religions has freedom to live together, protects the rights of religious minorities, promotes democracy and fairness and it protects freedom of expressions and other human rights.

Now in the case of India, all these fundamentals of Secularism are under severe threat due to the rise of Hindu Nationalism. Firstly, Indian State is unable to treat all its citizens equally as in the case of Muslims they are facing discriminations due to the significant influence of Hindu Nationalists on State's Institutions under the BJP government. The incidents of Ayodhya and Gujarat are the clear examples of this. Secondly, under the BJP government there is a ban on the selling of cow meat across the Indian State as cow is the holy animal for Hindus, so clearly the State is favoring one particular religion. Thirdly, the passing of two bills from Indian Parliament i.e. CAA and NRC can also be taken as an example that Indian government is not treating its minorities equally regardless of their religion.

Fourthly, recently, the Indian parliament got involved in the religious matters of Muslims by passing controversial Muslim Diverse bill 2019, which is a severe attack on the core fundamental of secularism which prohibits the State to influence in the religious matters of its citizens. Fifthly, the influence of Hindu Nationalists of State's affairs is not allowing the State to function without the influence of Hindu religion. This is a severe challenge for Secularism in India especially under the BJP government. Finally, due to the Rise of Hindu Nationalism under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi, the minorities of India are unable to enjoy their social, political, economic and cultural rights; this has become a serious challenge to the basic principles of secularism in India.

The elements of Hindu majoritarian or Hindutva nationalism were present during the government Congress party. The local leaders of Congress also used the religion for their political or electoral interests.[3] Moreover, there were also attacks on the worship places of minorities i.e. Golden temple, Babri mosque and burning of churches of the Christians. But under the government of BJP the influence of Hindu nationalist increased as compared to the previous Congress

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[3] Dibyesh Anand, *Hindu nationalism in India and the Politics of Fear,* (New York: Palagrave Macmillan Press, 2011), 5-15.

governments. Today, all key institutions of the State are influenced by the RSS and other Hindu majoritarian nationalist organizations, even the key decisions related to the foreign policy and security made with the consensus of the RSS and its leaders. The other key difference between the Congress government and BJP is the strong relation and the influence of RSS over the current PM of India Narendra Modi. The current PM of India is the life time volunteer of RSS while former PMs of India were not the life time member of RSS.

Moreover, during the regime of Narendra Modi the minorities of India are going through the worst social, economic and political situations as today they have to prove their nationality even after CAA and NRC. The attacks on the worship places of the minorities have increased under the current government. More importantly the Hindu nationalists are running the campaigns to change the religions of the minorities. It is clear that the Congress government was also working on the same agenda covertly but after the BJP government this agenda became the policy of the Indian State. They are working on the agenda of Hindu majoritarian State overtly and the intensity of the completion of this agenda increased. The BJP government is openly working against the minorities to either expel them from the State or convert them into Hinduism. PM Modi and his government are working on the agenda of majoritarianism by favoring the Hindu majority group.

The Rise of Hindu Nationalism: Implications for Secularism is a very important issue to study because India is famous for its multi religion and culture and its unique quality of being a Secular State. But the Hindu Nationalists are rapidly eradicating its uniqueness of being Secular State by eliminating its secular Status. Further this rise of Hindu Majoritarian Nationalism is impacting the regional security, rights of the minorities as well as they are defaming the Secular Indian State.

1.2- **Statement of the Problem**

The influence of a majoritarian Hindu nationalist group on Indian government and its policies raises several questions about the future of Indian Secularism as well as the status of minorities. The BJP government is making its efforts to make India as a Hindu Majoritarian Nationalist State by weakening the fundamental principles of Secularism. Since the BJP coming into power in 2014 under the leadership of Narendra Modi the Hindu Majoritarian Nationalism

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increased significantly in India. These Hindu Nationalists backed by the BJP government are openly threatening Secularism in India by attacking the fundamentals of Secularism. The radicalization in India increased as a result the riots between Hindu Nationalists and other minorities are increased. The minorities of India are facing social, religious, economic and political discriminations. These Hindu Nationalists are converting the Secular State of India into Hindu Nationalist State.

This shows how Secular India is being converted into Hindu Majoritarian Nationalist State by the Hindu Nationalists. The politics of BJP is highly influenced by the ideology of RSS, which is a religiously motivated ideology. This ideology is against Secularism in India, and now its political wing in the form of BJP is in power. They are fulfilling the agenda of their parental organization which is to make India a Hindu Nationalist State. Moreover, this will damage the secular image of Indian State at International level. Rise of Hindu Nationalism in India under the umbrella of the BJP government is challenging the existence of Secularism in the country. The Hindu Nationalist BJP government created hatred among the Indian society through its pro-Hindu policies.

This research aims to explain the rise of Hindu majoritarian nationalism and footprint of Hindutva ideology in India especially with the rise of BJP under the leadership of Narendra Modi.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1- To discuss the reasons for the rise of Hindu Nationalism in India.

2- To explain the threats for Secularism in India due to the rise of Hindu Majoritarian Nationalism.

3- To elaborate the anti-minorities policies of BJP government and their impacts on minorities of India.

4- To describe the impact of the rise of Hindu nationalism in India on regional security.

1.4 Research Questions

1-   How Hindu Nationalism is rising in India?

2-   How rising Hindu Majoritarian Nationalism led by BJP is affecting the minorities in India?

3-   How Hindu Majoritarian Nationalism is damaging the secular image of India at International level?

4-   How will the rise of Hindu Nationalism in India impact regional security?

1.5 Literature Review

The book *Hindu nationalism in India: The Rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party* was written by Yogendra K. Malik and V.B. Sing, published in 1994 by Westview Press, Inc., USA. The book explained the ideological struggle of Indian State after the independence from "British Raj." After independence there was a tug of war about the Indian Nationalism between the Hindu fundamentalists and liberal class of India who were educated from the West and influenced by the Western culture and values. The Hindu Nationalists wanted to establish the ideology of Indian State on the principles of Hindu Dharma (religion) while the liberal class including Nehru wanted to establish the ideology of Indian State on the fundamentals of Secularism, Socialism and liberalism mainly called the Pan-India. Eventually after the Constitutional struggle the liberal class won the battle and the Indian State emerged as a Social Republic Democratic State.

Until the death of the first Prime Minister of India, Nehru, the Indian State had practiced Secularism. The death of PM Nehru created a leadership crisis in the Congress due to the internal crisis and corruption of the Congress government was unable to deliver properly. The bad governance, corruption of the Congress government has created the space for the Hindu Majoritarian Nationalist forces to exploit the situation. Although these forces were present in Indian politics they were unable to gain electoral support but the decline of Secularism due to the monopoly of Congress provided the opportunity for these forces to gain electoral support. Hence today the Hindu nationalist political party BJP is ruling Secular India. This is all because of Congress and other secular political parties who were unable to implement the true spirit of Secular values. These parties have not protected the rights of minorities and hence they created a space for Hindu fundamentalist forces to gain power in Indian State.

This book supports the central argument of this thesis that the failure of secular forces to deliver and convey the actual meaning of Secularism to the masses led to the emergence of Hindutva Majoritarian nationalism in India.

The book *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India*, written by Christophe Jaffrelot explained how Hindu nationalist political parties and organizations i.e. RSS, BJS and BJP used religious cards for their political and electoral interests. Apparently the BJS and especially the BJP is claiming that they are here to protect the Hindu culture, values and the rights of the Hindus while the Congress party wanted to turn Hindu majority into a minority by promoting the concept of Secularism. But it is evident that the BJP and other Hindu nationalist parties have a hidden agenda which is influenced by the ideology of RSS which is based on Hindu supremacy and hatred against the minorities especially against the Muslims. Moreover, BJP is the party for the upper class of Hindus as after coming into power in 2015 and 2019, the BJP showed the discriminatory behavior towards the lower class of Hindus i.e. Dalits.

The proponents of right-wing Hindu nationalism have nothing to do with the true Hindu religion because the Hindu culture promoted by Mahatma Gandhi teaches peace and harmony among the people of all communities. Further, the ideology which the current PM and government are following is the threat for the country having multi religion and cultures. This ideology is dividing the Indian people on religions and races as a result the communal violence in India increased during the last seven years. If the secular forces, writers, academicians and have not raised their voices against this type of hatred ideology the Secular status of India will be completely eradicated which is shrinking rapidly.

The book supports the central argument of this research by explaining the contradictions and hatred of Hindu BJP government and other Hindu nationalist parties. Moreover, it also explained the hidden agenda of the BJP government and threats for Secularism in India.

The book *The BJP in Power: Indian Democracy and Religious Nationalism*, written by Milan Vaishnav, editor with contributions from Christophe Jaffrelot, Gautam Mehta, Abhijnan Rej, Rukmini S., Rahul Sagar, and Rahul Verma and published in 2019. Although the Hindu nationalism is not a new concept but the Hindu nationalism first time arrived during the movements of Aryan and Samaj. Initially the Hindu Nationalists were worried about the future

of "Hindu dharma", because of the influence of both Muslims and Christians. The Hindus at that time were forgetting their norms and values, so for this purpose the both these movements were started. In 1925 the Hindu nationalist organization RSS was formed, the basic purpose of that organization was also the same. But after that both movements i.e. Aryan and Samaj were converted into hatred movements against the people of other religions. The RSS also converted into a militant Hindu nationalist wing which started its activities against the Muslims of the Subcontinent. There was also a wing within the Congress party who was there to influence the policies of Congress against Muslims and in the favor of Hindus.

After partition when the secular forces won debate over Hindu nationalism, initially the role of Hindu nationalist force was limited to religious matters. However, after the death of Nehru and the crisis within the Congress in 1978, these forces started their influence in the electoral process of Indian politics. First the BJP came into power under the leadership of Atal B. Vajpaye, and then finally Narendra Modi became its leader. The future of Secularism in India is really dark under the government of BJP due to the relation of BJP with RSS. The Indian Secularism since the BJP government is losing its ground. The BJP alone is not responsible for this but the secular forces more importantly the Congress and its current leader Rahul Gandhi is also responsible. The Congress and Rahul Gandhi have not given the attention to strengthen his party and secular values as a result the whole Indian nation is facing the threats from this growing phenomenon of right-wing Hindu majoritarian nationalism.

This book is supporting the central argument of this study as the central argument of this research is also the same i.e. Narendra Modi and BJP are leading India towards Hindu nationalist State by eradicating the basis of Secularism.

The research journal, "A Critical Study of 'Hindu Nationalism' in India" written by Kalim Siddiqui published in the Journal of Business & Economic Policy in June 2016. The RSS which is the mother organization of the BJP has fascist ideology which is based on the concept of Hindu supremacy and anti-minority. Today the minorities of India i.e. Muslims, Christians and Dalits are facing socio-economic and political discriminations under the government of BJP. The Indian government considered the people of other religions as second class citizens. There are many Hindu nationalist organizations i.e. BJS, RSS, VHP, Bajang Dal and Shiv Sena, however

they are following the same ideology. Their agenda is the same, which is to convert India as Hindu nationalist State and compute the rights of the minorities. The current Indian government BJP started many cultural related issues i.e. cow slaughter, building of temple at Ayodhya which is the evidence that BJP is against the minorities in the support of Hindu nationalist. Further, the failure of Indian economic development increased the rivalry between different communal groups. Most of the leaders of BJP including the PM Narendra Modi are fascist and against the minorities. All these factors are harming the Indian State by creating the internal division as well as these factors are defaming the Indian image internationally. This research journal is supporting the core argument of this study.

The book *Hindu Nationalism in India and the Politics of Fear,* is written by Dibyesh Anand and published in 2011. There is a difference between the Hindu religion and the ideology of RSS; the true Hindus are not the followers of extreme ideology of RSS. The followers of Gandhi are against the militant Hindus. The followers of RSS and the BJP are exploiting the sentiments of Hindus by saying that after coming into power they will glorify the Hindu culture and values but in reality they have a hidden objective which is to implement the ideology of their mother organization RSS. The ideology of RSS is to convert the Indian State into Hindu majoritarian State by eradicating the fundamentals of Secularism and declaring the minorities' second class citizens. Most of the Hindus according to the author are not extremist, so they are not like the followers of RSS.

The author said that the concept of Hindu nationalism is exaggerated and it has nothing to do with the future of Secularism and the rights of the minorities. Most of the people are not following this ideology, so there is no threat to Secularism.

This book is not supporting the core argument of this research because the central argument of this research is that, "Hindu nationalism is a threat to Secularism." But according to this book the Hindu nationalism is not going to replace Secularism in India. Nevertheless, this book exposed the agenda of RSS and other Hindu nationalist forces as well as how they used the Hindu religion for their political interests.

The book *Gujarat Files: Annatomy of A Cover Up,* written by Rana Ayyub and published in 2016. This book explained the nexus between the BJP and Hindu nationalist organization RSS,

the book gives the detail of how Hindutva forces and RSS are supporting the BJP and it also explained the extremist mindset in police, bureaucracy and other government institutions towards minorities especially towards the Muslims. The BJP led government in Gujarat facilitated the killings of nearly 2000, Muslims in Gujarat State in 2002. The Hindu nationalist forces organized a campaign to build a temple on the place of "Babri Masjid " by demolishing the mosque for their political interests. The killings of Muslims in Gujarat under the Chief minister Narendra Modi, increases the popularity of BJP and especially the popularity of Modi. He emerged as a strong leader of Hindu fundamentalists and RSS due to his role in Gujarat riots and his affiliation with RSS. The affiliation of Modi with RSS and his extremist views about the minorities make him differ from the previous leadership of BJP i.e. Atal B. Vajpayee and this affiliation was also an important source for him to win the election of 2015 to become PM of Secular India.

Now the same person who was involved in the killings of Muslims is now the Prime Minister of India, so it will have severe implications for Secularism. Furthermore, today the influence of RSS and Hindutva forces has increased more than in the past, which is a sign of threat for secular India and its minorities. The future of Indian minorities and Secularism under the current government is very dark due to their pro-Hindutva policies.

This book is supporting the core argument of this thesis that the pro-Hindutva policies of the current government will convert the Secular Indian State into Hindu majoritarian State. The minorities of India are facing the insecurity and uncertainty under the government of BJP which is not a good sign for the world's biggest democratic State.

The book *Wheel of Law INDIA'S SECULARISM IN COMPARATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT,* written by Gary Jeffrey Jacobsohn published in 2003. This book explained the Constitutional flaws in Indian Secularism. There are many Constitutional hurdles in "Indian Constitution" which are creating problems for the complete implementation of Secularism. The Indian concept of Secularism is different from the Western Secularism as according to Indian Constitution the State has not completely separated itself from the religion. According to the Indian Constitution the Indian Secularism is dominated by the Hindu religion; it gives the freedom to the followers of all religions to practice freely according to their own religion. It does

not separate the State and the religion like that of Western Secularism i.e. US, UK and France. The Congress government remained unsuccessful to implement secular values when it came to Muslims i.e. Shah Bano case is the clear example of this when the Congress government was blackmailed by the Muslims.

Moreover, it is very difficult for a country like India to implement the concept of Secularism where religion plays an important role in the lives of people. Further, the South Asian people take influence from their religion and for them religion came first here it is very difficult to detach the religion from the lives of the people. The book also explained that communal violence is not a new concept in India; it was present even during the colonial era. There is not just Hindu nationalism in India, Muslims, Sikhs and Buddhists have also promoted nationalism based on their religion. It is unfair to blame just Hindu nationalism for communal violence.

This book does not support the central argument of this thesis as it explains that the growing Hindu nationalism in India is not going to eradicate Secularism in India. Further, it explained that the minorities are not facing any discrimination in India.

The research Journal "Ayodhya and the Politics of India's Secularism: A Double-Standards Discourse" written by Ramesh Thakur, published in Asian Survey in 1993. The Ayodhya event shows the hatred of BJP against the minorities' especially against the Indian Muslims. There was involvement of BJP in the demolishing of the "Babri mosque" in 1992. The workers and the leaders of BJP along with the workers of RSS were responsible for this event. The RSS and BJP burned the "Babri mosque", because they believed that mosque was built on the birth place of "Ram god". However, there are no history of this and proofs about the temple on the site of the mosque. The BJP became popular among Hindu nationalist forces due to this event. After gaining popularity due to Ayodhya, the BJP used this popularity in electoral politics and as a result the BJP won State elections in five important States of India including Gujarat and Utter Pradesh.

This communal violence is the result of the plan of the "British Raj", they followed the policy of divide and rule in the Sub-continent. The British Raj followed this policy for their political interests. It was in their favor that the people of the Sub-continent should not unite against them, so they divided the people of this region into castes, races and religions. Due to this ethnic and

religious division they ruled the Subcontinent. This communal violence did not come to an end even after the partition of the Sub-continent and the people are still suffering due to religious politics. The Hindu nationalist forces used these communal sentiments in their favors. The unsuccessfulness of Secularism in India lies in its Constitution because it is not properly defined and also it is not like the Western concept.

This research journal is at some point supporting this study by explaining the linkage of BJP and the RSS and their use of religion for their interests. At the same time this research journal is not supporting this research in any way by explaining that the communal violence in India is not because of Hindu nationalism.

The research journal "Neo-Hindu Fundamentalism Challenging the Secular and Pluralistic Indian State", written by Gino Battaglia and published in October 2017. The secular State is supposed to separate itself from religious matters completely but in the case of "Indian Secularism" there is some sort of soft approach that has been left in the Constitution. This soft approach towards religion is the root cause of today's Indian social and political problems and illogicalities. The era of Moghuls and the British Raj gave rise to the concept of militant "Hindutva nationalism" in India. The Moghuls regime created the strong Islamic concept of nationalism in the Sub-continent while the British rule created the concept of Secularism and sort of Christian nationalism. These two factors created the fear among the Hindu fundamentalists, so as a result they started the struggle for "Hindutva nationalism", which later converted into a militant Hindu wing.

After the independence the tug of war between the proponents of both Secularism and Hindutva nationalism started. The proponents of Secularism said that for the country which is multi-religion and multicultural only secular system can be best to unite the nation. They were of the view that the after the industrial revolution the economy will dominate the religion and the caste system and the country will united. At the other hand the Hindu nationalist assert that the Hindutva is the soul of Indian society, so it should be based on Hindutva nationalism.

Today the Hindutva forces are much stronger than the past due to the government of BJP; these forces are influencing the State's matter, especially its foreign policy. This influence is visible on

the key institutions of the State including the Supreme Court of India and media. They are destroying secular values and the future if Indian Secularism and its minorities.

This article is supporting the central argument of this thesis as the BJP government helped the Hindu nationalist forces to emerge and increase their influence. All the key decisions related to the foreign and securities are done by the advice of Hindu fundamentalists. This is a dangerous trend which the BJP government is following which is affecting Indian Secularism as well as creating internal division among the masses.

The research journal "The Hindu Nationalism: What's the Religion Got to Do With It?" written by Arun R. swamy. The increasing Hindu nationalism in India is not just a threat for the Indian secular or its minorities but it is a severe threat for the stability of the South Asian region. The Hindu nationalist especially RSS and BJP have a hidden agenda which is to expand of Indian Territory beyond its borders. It included the territories of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, Nepal and Bhutan. The followers of RSS influence the decisions related to the security and foreign affairs, so they are compelling the Indian State towards the bitter relations with its neighbors. This situation is going to disturb regional security. Moreover, it is the election manifesto of BJP, to revoke the special status of the State of Jammu and Kashmir to make demographic changes in the State. This situation will further make the security situation within the region as well as the relations between two biggest States of South Asia i.e. India and Pakistan becoming more hostile. The Hindu nationalists have a hard stance about Pakistan, so their influence can lead towards the war between two States. Their influence over the Indian State is not a good sign for regional security. Moreover, most of the ministers of BJP have strong relations with RSS and BJS which is a direct threat for the region as well as for Secularism.

This research journal supports this study by explaining the threats for the region and secular values from the Hindu nationalist and RSS especially their growing trend under the government of BJP.

1.5 Research Gap

Although there is sufficient literature available on the issue of Hindu Nationalism in India i.e. books and research journals. But much has been written about the emergence of Hindu

nationalism but this research has mainly discussed the recent developments in India during the BJP government under Narendra Modi especially the situation after the annexation of State of Jammu and Kashmir, CAA and NRC bills, Ayodhva verdict, pro-Hindu policies of the BJP and other issues which are against the fundamentals of Secularism. The study has explained the future of Indian Secularism due to the rise of Hindu Nationalism in India.Moreover, this research has discussed that how the policies of BJP government are disparaging the secular image of India at International level and creating internal divisions within Indian State due to rise of Majoritarian Hindu Nationalism. Moreover, the research will discuss how India is becoming the Hindu Majoritarian Nationalsit State under the BJP government. Then the study will highlight the challenges for the minorities due to this rise of Hindu majoritarian Nationalism.

Further the above all books are about the emergence of Hindu Nationalism i.e. when the Hindu Nationalism became the dominant factor in Indian electoral process, some of books i.e. The BJP in Power: Indian Democracy and Religious Nationalism", written by Milan Vaishnav is about the challenges and threats for Secularism in India during the first term of Narendra Modi's government. But this study will mainly discuss the recent developments in India during the second term of Narendra Modi, especially the situation after the annexation of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, CAA and RCA bills, Ayodhva verdict and other issues which are against the fundamentals of Secularism. The research will discuss how the decisions of top institutions of Indian State are even influenced by the Hindu Nationalists. The study will also elaborate the future of Indian Secularism in the hands of Hindu Nationalist government BJP. Moreover, the research will also discuss the silence behavior of how the policies of the BJP government are disparaging the secular image of India at International level.

1.6 Core Argument

The success of BJP under the leadership of Narendra Modi has raised severe questions for the future of Secular Indian State. After the second consecutive victory, the Modi regime is on the way of converting Secular Indian State into Hindu Majoritarian Nationalist state. This will have dangerous implications for the secular status of India, minorities living in India, regional stability as well as the secular image of the Indian State at international level.

1.7- Theoretical Framework

In the case of Rise of Hindu Nationalism: Implications for secularism in India, Majoritarian Nationalism is the appropriate theory which explains the reasons for the rise of Hindu Nationalism in India and implications for secularism. Through the lens of Majoritarian Nationalism one can understand the current situation in India under the Hindu Nationalist BJP government and its challenges for secularism as well as for minorities of India.

In today's world the ultra-nationalism (majoritarian, religious or cultural nationalism) is increasing around the globe i.e. in the US election victory of Donald Trump, rise of religious nationalism in Turkey, the exit of UK from European Union and the nationalist policies of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and French President Emmanuel Macron.

Nationalism is the soft card to exploit for many populist leaders of the world to pursue their political interests and gain power, especially majoritarian nationalism, religious nationalism and cultural nationalism in some parts of the world. The nationalist leaders present themselves anti-status quo and make promises to the masses to make them great again i.e. "Let Make America Great Again". This slogan was used by the US President Donald Trump during his election campaign. Similarly the current Prime Minister of the UK Boris Johnson is also ultra-nationalist leader and he showed his policies after coming into power by completing the Brexit deal.

The concept of Majoritaraianisn means, "The idea that the pre-existing religious, ethnic or racial group of majorities has a natural right to dominate a certain political entity." Globally the majoritarian nationalism is supposed as' 'bad-nationalism" because it proclaims the superiority of the majority community and considers the minorities as second class citizens or people of less importance. The States that practice this kind of nationalism remain unable to uphold the individual rights, the legal equality between all citizens and it is also unable to provide the political, religious, social and economic freedom to the minorities. Historically the Hitler Nazi's was based on the concept of majoritarian nationalism where they believed the dominance of Nazis over the Germany and whole European States as well.[4] The majoritarian nationalism of Nazis led to the destruction of the world. Currently, many western States including France and

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[4] Angana P Chatteri, Thomas Blom Hansen and Christophe Jaffrelot, *Majoritarian State How is Hindu Nationalism is Changing India,* (India: Harper Press, 2019), 20-35.

UK are going through majoritarian nationalism as in the form of white supremacy. Moreover the US president Donald Trump is also labeled as white majoritarian supremacist. He showed his racial and superiority ideas on many oceans publically. More recently all states of the US faced demonstrations on the issue of white supremacy i.e. the killing of black man George Floyd under the custody of the police. This shows the growing trend of white majoritarian nationalism in the United States and it is creating internal division and severe problems for the US. Moreover the Israeli State is also based on the concept of Zionist majoritarian nationalism which combines both religion and as well as cultural aspects of Jews. The Secular State Turkey is following the same pattern where the government is taking steps to favor the Muslim majority group.

The recent victory of BJP which is a Hindu majoritarian nationalist political party increases fears about the hazards and challenges to Secularism and democracy in India in the form of Hindu majoritarianism. The Indian State despite the communal violence, maintained its Secular status in the South Asian region as compared to the other South Asian State i.e. Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Bangladesh where the minorities are suppressed by the majority group. But the recent developments under the BJP government shows that the Indian State is also following the footsteps of other South Asian States by promoting and glorifying the majority Hindu group over the minorities.[5] Therefore, the minorities of India are now being marginalized and discriminated socio-economically and politically by Hindu majoritarianism

The Hindutva nationalism is based on the concept of majoritarian nationalism which associates Indian State with "Hindu population" and it is based on the idea of Hindu racial superiority over the minorities. It considers minorities i.e. Muslims, Christians, Dalits, Jews and Buddhist as second class citizens. The Muslims, Christians and other minorities are labeled as second class citizens and their loyalties with the Indian State are doubted by Hindutava majoritarian. Besides, it is the sum of cultural, political and religious framework for a dominant group in India to the way of life. This group believes that "only Hindu religion is the true religion and Indian State is belong to Hindus only hence the followers of other religions either adopt Hindu religion or they should left India. Similarly they are of the view that the people of other religions should not be given importance in mainstream politics and State' affairs".

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[5] Eviane Leidig, "Hindutva as a variant of right-wing extremism," *Patterns of Prejudice* 54, no. 3 (2002): 6-18.

The leaders of Hindutva majoritarian nationalism claim that they are the true representatives of the Hindu majority population and they are the custodian of Hindu culture and values. Therefore they seek the political and electoral support from Hindu community against the secular forces i.e. Congress and other leftist and communists political parties. The Hindu majoritarian nationalists strive to transform the numerical majority of Hindus into "political dominance" by mobilizing the masses in the name of Hindu dharma. According to them Secularism is a conspiracy against the Hindu nation through the concept of Secularism that Muslims, Christians and other minorities are getting equal status like Hindus.[6] The Hindu majoritarian nationalists feel threats from Secularism, socialism and liberalism Moreover, according to them the Secularism is destroying their culture, values, religion and Hindu civilization. Further, they argued that as Hindus are in majority in Indian states, therefore it's their right to convert India into a pure Hindu nationalist State.

The Hindu majoritarian nationalists yield influence from the ideology of RSS which is based on the concept of Hindu supremacy. The Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi is the creation of RSS and he is highly influenced by the ideology of RSS and Sang Parivar and he is the lifetime member of this organization. Therefore, he is fulfilling the commitments of Hindu majoritarianism by promoting the Hindu dominance in the Indian State after coming into power. His commitment with the RSS and Hindu majoritarianism is also evident from the fact that his party nominated very few candidates from the majority group in elections. Moreover, after coming into power he nominated the Hindu supremacist Yogi Anand as Chief Minister of the UP state where there is a Muslim majority.

The Hindu majoritarian nationalist organizations i.e. RSS, VHP, Shiv Sena and BJP are of the view that if the Hindus will be reduced into the minority in their own land. In order to save the Hindu culture and values the Hindu nation should support the religious Hindu majoritarian political parties.

The Islam and the Christianity were always the threats for the Hindus in Sub-Continent according to the followers of Hindutva. The Hindutva organization RSS was formed because the Hindus were forgetting their culture and religion out of the influence of Islam and Christianity.

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[6] Nitasha Kaul, "Rise of the Political Right in India: Hindutva-Development Mix, Modi Myth, and Dualities: Rise of the Poitcal Right In India," *Journal of Labor And Society* 20, no. 17 (2017): 15-20.

The followers of Hindutva majoritarian nationalism politically wanted to capture central power in Indian State in order to implement their agenda which is based on "Maha Baharat" and Hindu majoritarian State. According to them they are awakening Hindu nation from the threats which it is facing due to the Secularism as Secularism is providing the opportunities to the minorities i.e. Muslims and Christians to enjoy the equal privileges and opportunities like Hindu who are 80% of the country.

The Hindu majoritarian nationalists work under countless organizations in India but the prominent organizations are Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sang (RSS), Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VJP) and Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP). BJP is the right-wing political party of the Hindu majoritarian nationalist which is currently in power in India.

After the death of Nehru the Hindu majoritarian nationalist slowly became dominant in the electoral process of India with the emergence of BJP. These forces challenged the Secular status of India because the followers and the leaders of BJP were of the view that India belongs to Hindus hence it should be led by Hindu majoritarian nationalist. These Hindu majoritarian nationalists are influenced by the ideology of RSS, which is based on the agenda of Hindu supremacy, anti-secular, anti-minorities and Hindu majoritarian State.

The current Indian ruling party (BJP) and its leaders are the life time members of RSS are highly influenced by the ideology of RSS. Once they were the members of BJS (Hindu nationalist political party), so with the coming of BJP in power these Hindu majoritarian nationalist forces became highly influential in Indian society, politics and State's institutions. Furthermore, the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi is also the life time member of RSS and who has the track record of anti-minorities activities as, "over two thousand Muslims were killed under his Chief minister-ship in Gujarat in 2002". Moreover, BJP under the leadership of Modi has taken steps which are highly against the spirit of Secularism i.e. revocation of the special status of State of Jammu and Kashmir, ban on cow meat, controversial Muslim women divorce bill, Ayodya verdict, burning of Churches and CAA, RCA bills.

BJP's election manifesto is based on the concept of turning India into Hindu majoritarian nationalist State because these Hindu majoritarian nationalist forces that are currently supporting BJP were against the secular Status of India. They have opposed the Secular Indian Constitution

and also they opposed the special status of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. This shows how Secularism is facing threats with the coming of these Hindu fundamentalist into power.

Moreover, BJP after coming into power second consecutive time passed the Citizen Amendment Act (CAA) and National Registration Act (NRC) which is a practical manifestation of the idea of Hindu majoritarian nationalist State. Further, these Hindu majoritarian nationalists have become so strong that the Chief Minister of the biggest state of India (UP) is running a campaign "Ghar wapsi" which is to convert Christians, Muslims and other minorities into Hindus. These all events are evident that the BJP is converting the Indian State into Hindu majoritarian nationalist State by eradicating Secularism in India. The Indian PM Narendra Modi has proudly announced all of his ant-minorities and pro-Hindu policies in a public gathering and he said it is just a beginner. It shows that he is completely moving towards making India a Hindu majoritarian nationalist by favoring a single community that is Hindu community.

This rise of Hindu majoritarian nationalism in India is not only eradicating Secularism in India but also it is creating more and more communal violence in India. Similarly the policies of Hindu majoritarian nationalists i.e. Amith Shah, Narendra Modi and other leaders of the ruling party are damaging the secular image of Indian State internationally. Today, "the New York Times, The Washington Post, BBC News are writing articles against Modi's regime. Likewise, the British Parliament and the US Congress are passing resolutions against the BJP and Modi because of the pro-Hindu and anti-minorities policies of the BJP government. Recently, Canada has issued an advisory for their citizens that they should not visit India as currently the whole India is going through a chaotic situation due to the controversial CAA and RCA bills. The US commissions for free religions declared the Indian State the worst for the minorities and demanded that the US government should push the Indian State to treat minorities equally by using diplomatic channels. The United Nations commission also put India in the list of world's worst countries for minorities. It shows how policies of the Hindu nationalist government are creating a mess and defaming the secular image of Indian State globally.

1.8- Research Methodology

This research is conducted for academic purposes as the rise in Hindu Nationalism in India is weakening the fundamentals of Secularism which will badly affect the people of India especially

the Indian minorities, so it's a very important subject to research. Further, the study is qualitative and explanatory in nature. This study aims to discuss the reasons for the rise of Hindu Nationalism in India and its implications for Secularism in India

Qualitative Research

This study is based on qualitative research as the study used data in several forms i.e. documents, interviews, observations and policies of the current government instead of relying on a single source of data. The study aims to investigate the complex issue of Hindu Majoritarian Nationalism and its implications for Secularism in India. Then the study has given some recommendations to overcome this complex issue related to Hindu Nationalism in India. Further the study will evaluate the problems of minorities living in India under Hindu majoritarian government. Finally, the study has discussed the problems for the South Asian region under the Hindu nationalist PM Modi and his government. The study has further discussed how the rise of Hindu Majoritarian nationalism is defaming the secular image of India as well as how India is being isolated within the region due to Hindu nationalism.

Sources of Data

The sources used in this research are mainly Primary, secondary and tertiary i.e. government reports, UN reports, books and research journals. Secondary sources are mainly information collected by the person who has not experienced that issue or problem; they usually include the books and research journals written by the different authors while primary sources include the government official reports, UN Security Council reports and the US commission for independent religions. This study used some books i.e. Hindu Nationalism in India and the Politics of Fear, The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India are related to the history of Hindu Nationalism in post and pre-independence era. These books are written by India authors as well as Western authors while some of the books i.e. The BJP in Power: Indian democracy and Religious Nationalism and Majoritarian State: How Hindu Nationalism is changing Indi? are based on current developments about the rise of the concept of Majoritarian Hindu nationalism under the BJP government. Similarly some research journals are related to the history of Indian politics while some are based on current developments. Likewise, some edited books have been

used for this research. Secondary sources are very important in research because they facilitate the communication of what is known about a topic.

This research is based on descriptive and document analysis technique as the problem of Hindu Majoritarian Nationalism exists in India, so this study will find out the challenges for secularism in India due this existing problem. This research is exploratory and descriptive in nature as study will gather available secondary and tertiary data about rise of Hindu Nationalism and then the study will find out the implications for secularism in India.

Document Analysis

Document Analysis is a systematic method for reviewing or evaluating documents (printed and electronic i.e. computer-based and internet transmitted) material. Document analysis method requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to draw meaningful, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge. In short, document analysis provides background and context, additional questions to be asked, supplementary data, a means of tracking change developments and verification of findings from other data sources. Furthermore, documents may be the most effective means of gathering data when events can no longer be observed or when informants have forgotten the details. The study has analyzed documents like the election manifesto of BJP, the UN reports on Indian minorities and more importantly the recent report of the UN commission for religions about Indian State.

This research has analyzed the primary, secondary and tertiary data i.e. government reports, UN reports, books and research journals on the Hindu nationalism as well as the written texts of Hindu nationalists, their ideology and the speeches of the Hindu nationalist. The study also used the interviews of PM Modi and the ministers of BJP about the Hindu nationalism, minorities and secularism. The research analyzed the policies of the BJP government, especially the BJP government under Vajpayee and the BJP government under PM Narendra Modi and their impacts on minorities, Indian society and regional security. The research also examined how PM Modi is working on the agenda of Hindu Majoritarian State by preferring the majority Hindu group.

This research is based on qualitative methods as the research is conducted to analyze the problems and implications for Secularism due to the rise of Hindu Nationalism in India.

1.9- Significance of the Study

This research is very important because it will discuss the future of Indian minorities under Hindu Nationalist (BJP) government. This research will also give some recommendations to tackle this issue. The research is conducted for academic purposes and it will be beneficial for the academicians and policy makers. Moreover, this research will highlight the issues due to the rise of Hindu Nationalism in India after the 2019 elections, so it will give some new knowledge to the academicians.

Additionally, this research will be helpful for the students of IR, to understand this important issue.

1.10- Delimitations

The focus of the study is on the current developments in India especially i.e. revocation of the special status of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, citizens amendment bills CAA and NRC, Ayodhya verdict and current growing influence of RSS and Hindu Nationalists on State affairs and the top institutions. The study restricted itself to the policies that are driven by Hindutva ideology and have implications for secularism in India. However, the study has also discussed how the politics of Hindutva became the dominant factor in Indian politics by analyzing some historical events.

1.11- Organization of the Study

Introduction, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, literature review, research gap, core argument, theoretical framework, research methodology, the significance of the study, delimitations, and organization of the study followed by the 1st chapter.

Chapter 1 consists of the Historical Background of Hindu Nationalism. In this chapter, the historical background of Hindu Nationalism during the pre-partition and post-partition eras has been discussed.

Chapter 2 is about the reasons of rising of Hindu Nationalism in India. In this chapter, a detailed discussion about the reasons of rising of Hindu nationalism has been discussed i.e. political reasons, economic reasons, post-colonial and colonial reasons.

Chapter 3 has explained the future of Indian minorities especially Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, and Dalits under the government of BJP.

Chapter 4 has explained the implications for regional stability and peace due to the aggressive approach and policies of the BJP government. This aggressive regional approach is mainly due to the influence of Hindutva ideology on PM Modi.

Chapter 5 has comprehensively described that how the Rise of Hindu Nationalism is defaming the secular image of the Indian state in the eyes of the global community.

Chapter-1

Historical Background of Hindu Nationalism in India

The Hindu Nationalism is basically a majoritarian nationalism referring to the thoughts of Indian culture, values and Hindu religious beliefs but the element of extremism is making it dangerous. The term Hindutva was propagated by the Hindu Nationalist named Vinayak D. Savarkar in 1923, and it is supported by the right wing Hindu nationalist organization RSS and its political wings BJS, BJP and Vishva Hindu Parishad. The roots of Hindu majoritarian nationalism can be traced during the British Raj under the Hindu reforms movements Brahmo Samajh (1828) and Arya Samaj (1875). These organizations were of the view that with the rising influence of Islam and Christianity in Sub-Continent is an excessive threat for Hindu culture and religion, thus Hinduism required some sort of reforms. These reform movements eventually became the pressure group within the Indian National Congress against Muslims especially as one of the leaders of this pressure group created Hindu Mahasabha in 1914 within the Congress and later a separate political party.[7] Hindu Mahasabha(Hindu nationalist) started to influence the Congress that its policies should be against the Muslims and in favor of Hindus. This group was not just against the Indian Muslims but it also opposed the demand of Indian Muslims for separate elections and later opposed partition of Indian Subcontinent. In 1925 Dr. Keshav Barliram formed Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) . The primary purpose of the formation of RSS was to revise the Hindu values and culture but it set a platform for the Hindu Nationalists to use religious Nationalism for their political purpose. The RSS is a religiously motivated ideology which believes in Hindu supremacy and strongly activist Hindu majoritarianism. The basic belief of RSS is that Indian land only belongs to Hindus; hence the rest of the people should either adopt Hinduism or leave Indian land.

After the partition of Sub-continent the RSS and Bharatiya Jan Sang (BJS) opposed the idea of Secular status for Indian State as proposed by the founders of India i.e. Nehru and Gandhi. During that period these Hindu Nationalist political groups have not achieved considerable success in the electoral process as compared to Indian National Congress which was

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[7] Yogendra K. Malik, V.B.Sing, *Hindu Nationalists in India: The Rise of Bharatiya Janata Party,* (New Delhi:Vistaar Publications, 1994), 15-20.

successful in uniting the Indian voters on "Pan-nationalism". In early 1960s the Hindu nationalist political groups i.e. BJS and RSS have not got enough political support. But during the Congress government of Congress under Indira Gandhi in 1975, there was an emergency in Indian State for almost two years to counter the demonstrations against the Congress government. It provided political space for the Hindu majoritarian Nationalists to attract the public to achieve success in the electoral process. Therefore 1977 elections were the first in the Indian history when the alliance of opposition parties (Janata alliance) came into power and BJS was the main group of that government. It was the first time when Hindu majoritarian nationalist forces came into power in India.

1.1-The Ideological Background of Indian Politics

In order to understand the role of Hindu Majoritarian Nationalism in Indian politics, it is very important to understand the two different dominant ideologies in Indian politics before and after independence i.e. Nehru version Indian Nationalism and Hindu Rashtra Nationalism.

Indian politics is dominated by two versions of nationalism. The first version is derived from the concept of Secularism and second Nationalism is based on the idea of Hindu majoritarianism. The proponents of nationalism based on Secularism were mainly influenced by Western culture and liberal values including Indian elite class Nehru. These people were secular in their method and they wanted to develop a political system based on liberal and secular values where people should not be marginalized due to their religious affiliation.[8] India is a multi-religion and multi-cultural country, so according to the proponents of secularism nationalism based on liberal values and secularism is the only platform where masses will be united. According to them, the ideology based on Hindu culture and values is a disaster for the country where people of different religions are living. These people right from the beginning distance themselves from Nationalism based on Hindu religious values, and always opposed this kind of Nationalism. This nationalism is known as "Nehruvian Nationalism", as Nehru was the main founder of this nationalism in India. According to Nehru, "Having its base on anti-traditional, liberal democratic, secular and politically

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[8] Yogendra K. Malik, V.B.Sing, *Hindu Nationalists in India: The Rise of Bharatiya Janata Party,* (New Delhi:Vistaar Publications, 1994), 15-25.

oriented concepts of the nation," the primary nationalism built on this ideology could properly include all religions and Indian culture."

The second Nationalism emerged as a reaction to the "Secular Nationalism", this nationalism was based on Hindu dominance, Hindu religious values and culture. The Hindu Nationalism has its roots in Hindu revival and social movements i.e. Bhurmo and Aryan movements. These movements came in late 19th century to make reforms in Hindu religion but at the end these movements were converted into political platform for Hindu Nationalists

The concept of Hindu majoritarian Nationalism emerged from Hindu identity, Hindu culture and Hindu religious values. The proponents of this nationalism are of the view that the Nationalism based on the concept of Secularism is an insult to the majority of Indian people who are Hindus. They rejected the Western concept of Secularism and liberalism, and considered it a conspiracy against Hindus and favor for Indian Muslims. Among the proponents of this type of Nationalism Swami Vivekananda became the most prominent figure. According to him, the Western concept of materialism, Secularism and liberalism cannot inspire Indian nation.[9] It is the Hindu religion which is the main backbone of Indian society as well as for Indian identity. The Hindu culture and religion is the backbone of Indian national identity.

According to another proponent of this nationalism Aurbino Ghosh, who was closely associated with the early Hindu Nationalism movement, has closely linked nationalism with the teachings of "Sanatan Dahrama", Orthodox form of Hindu religion. He further defined Indian nationalism as "Nationalism is simply the passionate aspiration of the Divine Unity in the nation", for him nationalism is religion and as India is dominated by the Hindu religion, so the Indian identity is Hindu Rashtra. This nationalism based on religion and feelings of Hindu majoritarianism was further promoted by the Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak and his followers in the Congress movement and by the writings of local authors in local Indian languages i.e. Gujarati and Bengali, which spread across the Northern India at that time.

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[9] J.R. Wilson and Dennis Dalton, "The Concept of Politics and Power in India's Ideological Traditions," *The States of South Asia: Problem of National Integration* (London, C. Hurst and Co. 1982), 117-124.

The nationalism based on this ideology will not only glorify the Hindu cultural and religious values, but also the nationalism based on Hindu culture will provide the progressive future for coming generations. This concept of national identity was rooted in Hindu religion and culture. They thought that nationalism based on this ideology would unite the Hindus across Indian State. Basically this nationalism i.e. Hindu Rashtra like former nationalism is pan-India in its approach.

Finally, after the debate after Independence, Nationalism based on the Nehruvian concept was dominated in Indian politics and it became the national identity of Indian state.

1.1.2- Post-Independent Dominant: Nehruvian concept of Nationalism

As India is multi-cultural, multi-language and host of many religions i.e. Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism and Sikhism, considering this fact many political leaders, philosophers and intellectuals felt that the ideology based on concept of secularism will unite the people. The nationalism based on Hindu Rashtra will divide the society and it will create communal violence and chaos. It gave rise to many separatist religious base movements, so they adopted Nehruvian Nationalism.

Jawaharlal Nehru and his mates were Western educated and they were influenced by Western ideologies of Secularism, liberalism and Socialism. They developed nationalism based on the concept of Social Democratic Secular State. This school of thought was of the view that society like that of India (which is multi-ethnic and culturally plural), needed a nationalism which should be above religion, ethnicity, racism and culture. According to them such nationalism will unite the plural Indian society at one platform which is pan-India, so they developed this alternate ideology against religious based nationalism i.e. Hindu Rashtra.

The proponents of this school of thought Nehru and his companions were of the view that the concept of industrialization will overcome the religious sentiments. Once economic development will take place the ethnicity, cultural and religious differences will be replaced by class identity and then the society will not be polarized and exploited on religious and ethnic bases. Nehru was of the view that all the religious, cultural, ethnicity polarization in India is mainly due to the weak economic and political system. According to him, once Secularism becomes the practice in

Indian, then the politics after industrialization and economic development will become dominant in Indian society.[10] Nevertheless, Nehru respected the Indian culture but he was against the extreme Hindu nationalists.

However, the Hindu nationalists argued that Nehru and his mates were against Hinduism. They wanted to spread Western values in India which will damage the identity of India which according to them is Hindu Rashtra. But at the end the Nehru led nationalism became the dominant in Indian State after independence and they were the driving force to lead the country. Thus India emerged as a Social democratic State with Secular principles; it became the national identity of Indian State. Nehru wanted to build Indian identity based on the concept of modernization through economic industrialization. But Hindu nationalists criticized this concept of Indian identity by saying that Hindu religion cannot be separated from Indian people, so as Hinduism is the dominant religion in India thus it should be given a central role in Indian national identity.

The true process of secular values calls to raise the people above their religion, culture, race and ethnicity in plural societies. Nehru was well aware of all these problems, so he called to develop national consensus and objected to the use of religion, sectarian and culture for political favor. However, despite the objection of Nehru local leaders of Congress were involved in the use of religion for their political gains. The spirit of a true secular State is that the State considers religion as the personal matter of people and hence it does not interfere in the religious matters of people. But in the case of India the Nehruvian nationalism remained dominant up to 1964, but after the death of Nehru the policies of Congress government were not according to his concept.[11] The shadow of Hindu religion slowly started to influence the State's institution i.e. Shah Bano case Supreme Court of India interfered in the religious matters of Muslims by interfering in Muslim women divorce law. The Congress could not maintain the true spirit of Secular State and started to favor the Hindu religion for their political benefits.

1.1.3- Gandhi Version Concept of Nationalism

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[10] Johanna Ray Vollhardt, "Lessons From the Past for the Future: The Definition and Mobilization of Hindu Nationhood by the Hindu Nationalist Movement of India," *Journal of Social and Political Psychology* 5, no. 2 (2017): 4-10.

[11] Gray J Jacobsohn, *Wheel of Law INDIA'S SECULARISM IN COMPARATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEX,* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2003), 150-160.

The Gandhi version of nationalism was different from the Nehruvian Nationalism. It was acceptable for Hindu Nationalists because it was more close to Hindu culture, norms and beliefs. Gandhi was not influenced by the Western culture and Western liberal and secular values; he was more close to local Sub-continent culture. Therefore he has taken part in many religious and social movements, so he was influenced by the Hindu values and culture.[12] He has not detached himself from Hindu traditions, norms and culture. He even used the symbols of Hindu societies, culture and religious sentiments of people in independence movements against British Raj. Gandhi wanted Indian identity based on Indian culture and religious values however Gandhi's concept of nationalism did not get enough support and it was the Nehruvian concept of nationalism which led the Indian State.

1.1.4- Resurgence of Hindu Majoritarian Nationalism in India

The concept of Hindu nationalism based on Hindutva was present even before the independence of India during the period of British Raj. But the resurgence of Hindu nationalism in India after independence was begun in 1980s, which rejected the concept of Nehruvian nationalism i.e. Secularism. It led towards the concept of "Hindu Rashtra (making India as a true Hindu majoritarian State)".

After partition the RSS and Bharatiya Jan Sang (BJS) both Hindu Nationalists groups opposed the Secular status of Indian State as given by the founders of India i.e. Nehru and Gandhi. But at times these Hindu majoritarian Nationalist groups have not achieved much success in the electoral process as compared to Indian National Congress which was successful in uniting the Indian voters on "pan-nationalism based on Secularism". At the time of the 1960s the BJS and other Hindu Nationalists groups did not enjoy much political support. But during the time of Indira Gandhi in 1975 when there was an emergency in India for almost two years to counter the demonstrations against the Congress government. It provided the political space for the Hindu Nationalists to attract the public in order to gain success in the electoral process. Therefore 1977 elections were the first in the Indian history when the alliance of opposition parties (Janata alliance) came into power and BJS was the main group of that government.

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[12] Yogendra K. Malik, V.B.Sing, *Hindu Nationalists in India: The Rise of Bharatiya Janata Party,* (New Delhi:Vistaar Publications, 1994), 9-14.

During the 1980s there was a shift in the direction of Indian politics as Hindutva politics started to play its part in Indian society during this era. This shift was due to the fault policies of Congress as during the regime of Rajiv Gandhi, there was emptiness in Indian politics which gave opportunity to these Hindu nationalist to fill this vacuum. The Hindu nationalist under the umbrella of RSS and BJP as their main political party exploited this opportunity and expanded their influence across India.

1.1.5- Emergence of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

The Bharatiya Janata Party is the political wing of Hindu Nationalist organization RSS and it is the outgrowth of Bharatiya Jana Sang. It has the same ideology and organization as that of RSS and BJS (Bharatiya Jana Sang).[13] The main agenda of Bharatiya Jan Sang was to develop Indian national identity on the basis of Hindu culture and Hindu Rashtra and their aim was to "convert Secular Indian State into Hindu majoritarian nationalist State". They were anti-Secularism and Western values and influenced by the reformed culture of Hinduism like that of during reform movements i.e. Aryan and Samaj. The BJS was founded by Dr. Sayama Prasad Mookerjee in October 1951. He was against the concept of Nehvarian Nationalism "Secularism and liberalism" because he thought that it against Hindu majority and in favor of Muslim minority. Therefore he formed his separate political party BJS against the secular policies of Congress party and to promote Hindu Rashtra nationalism alternate to Secularism.[14] The ideology of BJS was like that of RSS because it was the offshoot of RSS and it has support from RSS because of the RSS's local political support. The RSS was founded by Dr. K.B Hedgewar in 1825 its hidden agenda was anti-minority and promotion of Hindu Rasta, so the BJS and RSS worked together to promote Hindu nationalism. The RSS was banned on February 4, 1948 because one of its leaders Nuthuram Godse (Hindu nationalist) murdered Mahatma Gandhi. Both the RSS and BJS have the same ideologies, organization and leadership. Both were ant- Secularism, anti-minorities, in favor of Hindu majority State and against the special status of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, which was given by the Indian Constitution.

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[13] Thomas Blom Hanson, Christophe Jafferlot, *The BJP and the Compulsions of Politics in India,* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 15-25.

[14] Angana P Chatteri, Thomas Blom Hansen and Christophe Jaffrelot, *Majoritarian State How is Hindu Nationalism is Changing India,* (India: Harper, 2019), 50-60.

1.1.6- Jana Sang in electoral politics of India

Because of its opposition to the Congress party and especially its anti-Nehruvian narrative it was not easy for Jana Sang (Hindu Nationalist political group) to get success in mainstream politics. Despite this the electoral performance of the Jana Sang of was not bad in its early years i.e. in the general elections of 1952 which was the first election of BJS; it got almost 3.06 votes of the Lok Sabha. In the legislative elections of 1952 the BJS secured 2.7 percent votes while the party received 8.77 percent votes in the elections of 1962.

The BJS because of its strong opposition has followed the strategy of joining anti-Congress parties in order to achieve its political objectives. Because of this purpose BJS invited the opposition alliances in different States i.e. Madhya Pradesh, UP, Punjab and Haryana to form anti-Congress stable governments. But all these governments could not continue long due to the differences among the policies of all political parties who were in the alliance. Then the party also tried to develop its relations with the leaders of top opposition parties. But the main concern of the leaders of these political parties about the BJS was its intolerance of religious and extreme Hindu nationalist policies. They were of the view that if the BJS came into mainstream Indian politics then it might convert the secular status of Indian State into Hindu nationalist majoritarian State. However, the socialist leaders who were anti-Congress i.e. Jaya prakash Narayan and Ram M. Lohia haVE given the space to the BJS to join the anti-Congress opposition camp despite its affiliation with RSS and its Hindu Nationalists policies. Due to the support of socialist leaders to the RSS and BJS, it has provided the opportunity to the Congress party to sweep in the elections therefore Congress enjoyed majority in 1971-72 State elections. There was no such challenge for the Indira Gandhi led Congress government, so the leaders of Congress started to pursue their political interests instead of giving attention on governance; it led to widespread corruption and bad governance. These situations created the gap between the government and middle class people and anti-Congress government forces exploited this situation in favor of their political interests. This situation led towards the protests against the policies, corruption and bad governance of the Indira Gandhi government. Therefore the BJS with the support of RSS entered in mainstream Indian politics by participating in the protests against and movements against the Congress government. May 1975 was the year when the members of all opposition parties agreed on one single point against Indira Gandhi's government by making some seat adjustments

and defeated it in the State elections of Gujarat. The BJS got boom in Indian electoral process during the emergency declared by Indira Gandhi in 1975-77, when she has put many opposition leaders in jail including the leaders of BJS. It provided an opportunity to the BJS and other opposition parties to join hands together and contest elections jointly against Congress as a result the opposition alliance "Janata Alliance" including (Bharatiya Lok Dal, Socialist party, Congress for democracy, Jana Sang and others), defeated Indian National Congress in 1977 elections.

1.1.7- Creation of Bharatiya Janata Party

The Janata Alliance government collapsed after two years due to the flaws in its policies and division on the issue of leadership. Moreover, BJS was under pressure due to its close ties with RSS. Therefore in 1980 the members of BJS formed their new political Bharatiya Janata Party in order to continue their struggle for Hindu nationalism under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee. There were divisions within the party in the early stage of its formation that either party should adopt moderate ideology or Hindu Nationalist ideology. But the new party tries to find a new ideology in order to build its better public image. Soon the party adopted the concept of Ghandism nationalism which was based on the concept of Hindu culture and the respect for other religions and cultures. The leaders of BJP criticized both Capitalism and Marxism by calling them exploiting the system and preferred the "trusteeship system" of Ghandism. Ghandi advocated the decentralization of power and economy which according to Atal B. Vajpayee was the best system to eradicate poverty. The new party came up with five new commitments including changes and modification in the concept of Hindu nationalism, positive liberal, respect for the minorities and secular values. Nevertheless despite all these assurances they could not completely separate itself from RSS because the ultimate goal off every political party is to win elections, so therefore for BJP the RSS provided strong support.

1.1.8- The strategy of cooperation and alliances and Electoral Adjustment

To achieve its political goals the BJP under the leadership of Atal B. Vajpayee started to find new alliances among the opposition group against the Congress government which was led by

Indira Gandhi. Finally, BJP formed a political alliance known as "Janata Alliance" against the Congress. But it was a weak political alliance based on divided interests and it was unable to create problems for the Congress. Nonetheless finally it was evident that the opposition was divided and it was contesting elections with each other instead of Congress (I). The division among opposition groups enabled the Congress (I) to win States elections against divided opposition, so Congress defeated the opposition group led by BJP in the State elections of Delhi and State of Jammu and Kashmir.

After the defeat in two State's elections the leadership of BJP decided to define their political ideology. The BJP had three different ideological groups within it first group who came from RSS were of the view that the BJP should not compromise on its ideology i.e. Hindu nationalism and they were hardliners. The second group included those people who came from BJS and RSS but they were politically more realistic and political realities compelled them to adopt a moderate approach. The third group included electable who enjoyed different government positions in different governments. They were politically more mature and aware of electoral realities.

However, the party president Atal B, Vajpayee did not agree with the stance of hardliners Hindu nationalist groups within the party to go alone to pursue their political interests. The party president initially adopted the moderate approach to capture the Muslim vote bank. The party was successful in capturing the Muslim vote but however due to its moderate it lost Hindu nationalist vote bank. Then the moderate group within the party led by Atal B. Vajpayee despite the reservations within the party was successful in making the alliance with the opposition called The Democratic Alliance. However despite the alliance the BJP was not successful in winning the elections of 1984 after this the party changed its ideology and returned back to its original Hindu nationalist ideology.

1.1.9- Defeat of 1984 elections and change of ideology: Hindu Revivalism

After the defeat of 1984 elections the BJP changed its strategy and return back to its original ideology i.e. Hindu Rashtra. The politics of Hindutva (Hindu Nationalism) became a prominent

factor in Indian politics in the 1990s, when in 1992 the incident of Ayodhya arose. The famous Mosque of Muslims Babri Masjid was demolished by the Hindu Nationalists mainly the supporters of BJP. This incident has increased the support of BJP among religiously motivated Hindu Nationalists (followers of RSS). 1994 was the year when BJP under the leadership of Atal Vajpayee finally came into power for just thirteen days and later in 1996 for full term. The BJP under the Prime Minister ship of Atal Vajpayee not seen much rise of Hindu Nationalism, although the Hindu Nationalists were not completely disappeared from Indian politics as the incident of Gujarat is clear example of this, the Chief Minister Narendra Modi was involved in the killings of more than2000 Muslims.[15] He was supporting Hindu nationalist forces but secretly.

1.1.10- BJP under the leadership of Narendra Modi

After the mass killings of Muslims in Gujarat Narendra Modi became the famous among the Hindu fundamentalists especially among the Sang Privar. Therefore extremists like Narendra Modi and Amith Shah started to get a more central role within the party and the people like Atal B. Vaypaeeye became less popular. Finally Narendra Modi became the new leader of BJP and Hindu nationalists due to his strong link with RSS, commitments with Hindutva agenda and hatred for minorities. Since the BJP coming into power in 2014 under the leadership of Narendra Modi the Hindu Nationalism increased significantly in India. These Hindu Nationalists backed by the BJP government are openly threatening Secularism in India by attacking the fundamentals of Secularism. The radicalization in India increased as a result the riots between Hindu Nationalists and other minorities are increased. The minorities of India are facing social, religious, economic and political discriminations. These Hindu Nationalists are converting the Secular State of India into Hindu Nationalist State.

The pro-Hindu policies of ruling party BJP i.e. annexation of special status of Jammu and Kashmir, CAA and RCA bills, ban on cow meat and controversial Muslim women divorce bill, are direct threat to the Secularism in India. Moreover, these Hindu Nationalists are openly operating in India against minorities i.e. "Ghar wapsi movement", under the shelter of the

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[15] Ramesh Thakur, "Ayodhya and the Politics of India's Secularism: A Double-Standards Discourse," *Asian Survey* 3, No. 7 (2016):10-15, file:///C:/Users/The%20Little%20Laptop%20Sp/Downloads/[Ramesh-Thakur]-Ayodhya-and-the-Politics-of-India'(z-lib.org).pdf

government. This shows how Secular India is being converted into Hindu Nationalist State by the Hindu Nationalist. The BJP which is influenced by the ideology of RSS, which is religiously, motivated ideology. This ideology is against Secularism in India, so now its political wing is in power. They are fulfilling the agenda of their mother organization which is to make India a Hindu Nationalist State. Moreover, this will damage the secular image of Indian State at International level. Rise of Hindu Nationalism in India under the umbrella of the BJP government the existence of Secularism is becoming in danger. The Hindu Nationalist BJP government created hatred among the Indian society through its pro-Hindu policies. Even the Modi government has made Muslims responsible for the spread of global epidemic Covid-19, which we all know that the Muslims have nothing to do with it. The BJP government discriminated against Muslims patients who are suffering from Covid-19, and treated them in different hospitals.

1.1- The Shift of Indian State to the right-wing Hindu Nationalism under Modi's government

The emergence of BJP as a single majority in the general elections of India i.e. 2014 and 2019 shows the Shift of India from Secularism to right-wing Hindu Majoritarianism. The BJP came into power with three important objectives, first the building of Ram temple over the place of "Babri mosque" which the Hindu fundamentalist of the view that it is the birth place of Ram (Hindu god). Now the Supreme Court of India has given a verdict in the favor of Hindu nationalist and now they are building the temple over there. It also shows the influence and institutional control of RSS and Hindu nationalist under the government of BJP.

Next, is formulation of a uniform "Civil Code" for all inhabitants of India because after the independence of India its first PM Jawaharlal Nehru classified Hindu personal Laws, but the Muslims of India were allowed to follow their personal laws. The BJP and other Hindu nationalist are of the view that Nehru has favored the Muslims and he was against the Hindu religion, so they wanted the same Civil Law for all Indians regardless of their religion.

The third is, the leaders of BJP wanted to terminate the special status of the State of Jammu and Kashmir by revoking Article 370 from Indian Constitution which the BJP government has done on 5 August, 2019. They have annexed the State of Jammu and Kashmir and further they have

also revoked the article 35A, which will allow the Hindus to settle permanently in the AJK. Then the BJP government announced the new domicile law for the AJK, which is going to favor the Hindus. The BJP has long been opposing the special status of AJK, and it had made a promise that after coming into power it will revoke this article, so it has done this.

This all shows the shift of the Secular Republic of India towards religious fundamentalist system of government. The senior leaders of BJP are of the view that this shift from leftist ideology of Secularism and liberalism to religiously motivated right wing ideology happened in India because of the failure of leftist parties to deliver. The leader of BJP Vinay Sahasrabuddhe said that, "the rejection of left is undoubtedly happening in India because the ideology of left has become obsolete". He further argued that the Secular ideology lost its significance and cannot resonate with prevalent hopes and so people of India have rejected it.

Chapter -2

Reasons of Rise of Hindu Nationalism in India

The current rise of Hindu nationalism in India is not a new concept; instead Hindu nationalism is the concept of before the independence of India. Subsequently at the time of independence when the founders of India decided that the country would be based upon the concept of Secularism and democracy, these Hindu majoritarian nationalists opposed this idea. There are articles in the Constitution of India through which it is declared as a secular State, until the death of its first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, India acted as a secular State but after the death of Nehru the Hindu nationalism began to influence. During this period the Hindu nationalist forces became more and stronger due to the increase of their influence over the masses especially "lower and middle class". The current developments under the government of BJP show that Communalism is still the unresolved issue in Indian politics and societies.[16] The events and the policies of the current ruling party for the last six years have divided the Indian society and weakened Secularism further.

The most important question is what led the World's biggest democratic Secular State to become Hindu majoritarian nationalist State? There are number of reasons of this rise of Hindu nationalism in India i.e. the failure of Congress in maintaining of Secular values and the protecting the rights of the minorities, poor economic conditions, radicalization of the society, role of media, problems in Indian Secularism and role of "Hindutva forces i.e. RSS, BJS, VPH and then finally BJP". Moreover, the role of British during the royal period also played its part in sponsoring of Hindu nationalism.

2.1- Secularism against the South Asian Culture

The concept of Secularism is a Western thought, it has its origin in the Western States i.e. US and European States, most of the South Asian States are not familiar with it. Most of its elements are not acquainted with Asian societies and their traditions i.e. the complete separation between the State and the religion is against South Asian culture.[17] The other important fundamental of

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[16] Vaishnav Milan, *Religious Nationalism and India's Future,* (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2019), 40-50.

[17] Donald Eugene Smith, *India as a Secular State,* (New Jersey Princeton University Press, 1963), 22-30.

the secular State that the government should not provide any financial support to the religion is also against the South Asian norms and traditions. Hinduism and Buddhism advocate that the government should provide financial and other assistance to the religion so; therefore the South Asian States find it difficult to adopt the model of Secularism. In the Sub Continent the king was supposed to provide financial aid to build the places for worship, so in these societies it is very difficult to separate the State and the religion.

The South Asian people are unable to accept Secularism because of their religious affiliations; here most of the people have poor life standards and education system. This situation makes them to be exploited by the religious fundamentalists for their electoral and political interests. Today India is facing this issue as most of the Hindus are unable to adopt the Western Secularism due to their long religious history. Secondly, most of the Indian people have poor living standards i.e. more than 50% Indian even don't have the toilets, under these circumstances they are exploited by the Hindu extremists. These Hindu extremists i.e. BJP, RSS, VHP and Shiv Sena promised them that most of their problems are because of Secularism and hence once Secularism will be replaced with Hindutva nationalism their problems will be resolved. This is one of the most important reasons for the rise of Hindu nationalism in India under the shadow of Hindu nationalists party BJP.

2.2- Difficulties in Indian Secularism

The idea of complete separation of State and religion is somehow difficult especially in a country like India where religion is the important component of the lives of the common people. The Indian Secularism does not completely separate religion from the lives of the people unlike that of Western concept of Secularism. Indian version of Secularism says that the lives of the masses may or may not be completely being separated from the religion and it must have left the space for the religious, cultural and traditional discussion for the people of different religions. The republic of India declared itself secular in such a way that "the State will not allied itself with a particular religion or instrument of any Church.[18]" But it is evident that in practice the Indian State does not distinguish itself from religion; instead it try to give the impression that it is a neutral State by declaring that it respects all religious beliefs of the Indian people.

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[18] Ibid

The father of Indian Secularism Jawaharlal Nehru was not able to explain to the Indian people the actual meaning of Secularism which is the only possible option for the multi-religious countries like India, where Secularism is the only option for the people to coexist. The People, especially religious fundamentalists, consider it a conspiracy to favor Muslims, Christians and other minority groups i.e. as Secularism will provide the minorities with equal socio-economic, political and other opportunities. In this way the majority of the Indian people remained unable to understand the true spirit of Secularism and their ignorance from secularism used by the Hindu fundamentalists in their interests.

On the other hand, Mahatma Gandhi's version of Secularism was different from the Western Secularism as the Grande was not in favor of complete separation of religion from State politics. He said that, "those who say that the religion has nothing to do with politics, don't know what the religion is". He was of the view that the lives of the people are socially constructed from the religious norms and values, so in this way religion and politics have strong links, so they cannot be separated. According to Mahatma Gandhi the State should not interfere in the religious matters of the public, rather it should give the kind of environment to the people where they could practice any religion of their choice. It is clear there is confusion among the Indians what kind of Secularism they should follow i.e. Nehveraian concept of Secularism or Gandhi concept of Secularism.

The other important problem with Indian Constitution is that at one hand the India has been declared as a sovereign socialist secular democratic republic, "that assurances the economic, communal, political and religious rights, freedom of expression, opinions judgments, religious faith and worship and equal chances to the all citizens as well as it gives the equal dignity to all people regardless of their religion, race and caste". But at the same time the Constitution is unable to define "what is meant by secular Indian State and how the politics and the State affairs will be out of religious influence?" There is no legal discussion about these two important questions which are quite relevant.

2.3- Role Hindu organizations in Promotion of Hindutva Ideology

Several Hindu organizations played an important role in the rise of Hindu nationalism in India i.e. RSS, BJS, VPH, Sheave Sena, Abhinav Baharat and finally the BJP which is currently ruling the country. During the period of "British Raj" these organizations played an important part in propagating the Hindu culture by gathering Hindus in the name of Dharam.[19] Secondly, these Hindus organizations also played their part in Independence of India from the colonial rule i.e. RSS in its early years gathered Hindus at one platform. After the independence when India declared as a secular State these organizations opposed openly the concept of Secularism and demanded that as India is dominated by the Hindu religion, so it should be stated as Hindu Nationalist State. Their second argument was that as Pakistan has been declared as an Islamic State and it is for Muslims of the Subcontinent, so it will be fair enough that India should be emerged as a State of Hindus like that of Pakistan which emerged as a country for Muslims.

Although their point of view was rejected by Nehru and his fellows and India emerged as a secular State, the Indian people have been exploited in the name of religion, culture and race. Even during the government of Nehru when local leaders of Indian Congress used religion and race for their "political interests". These "Hindu fundamentalists' organizations" were successful to grab the attention of the middle and lower middle class in the name of religion. It is essential to note that despite the influence of these forces on the people, they were unsuccessful in getting enough electoral support in order to form a government. These organizations continue to increase their influence over the masses by using different methods i.e. by organizing religious movements, religious events, religious schools and religious educations.

2.4- Role of RSS in "promoting of Hindu nationalism"

 The RSS played a vital role in shaping the Indian politics and society because of its influence on the large number of Hindu population. It was founded in 1925, for the purpose of promoting of Hindu culture and values but after increasing its influence, it was used for political purposes by the "right-wing Hindu majoritarian fundamentalists' '. This organization is based on the concept of "Hindu religious supremacy" and considers other religions as inferior, so basically the "RSS" is an anti-minorities organization. The member of this organization believe that the non-Hindu

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[19] Arun R. swamy, "The Hindu Nationalism: What's the Religion Got to Do With It," *Asia-Pacific Centre for Security Studies*, 6 No.10 (2013): 10-15.
https://apcss.org/Publications/Ocasional%20Papers/OPHinduNationalism.pdf

rule in Subcontinent i.e. Mughal and British rule destroyed Hindu culture and heritage, so RSS is helping them to supplement their heritage. The RSS is running thousands of religious schools, yoga centers, religious gatherings, summer camps and training centers across the Indian State. In the "summer camps' ' organized under the RSS the men and women are getting training with guns and rifles, it also includes the followers and the members of ruling party BJP. This shows the influence and the impact of RSS on the power centers of Indian State. The PM of India Narendra Modi himself is a lifetime volunteer of RSS and the influence of RSS on him is visible in his pro-Hindu nationalist policies.

2.4.1- RSS and the "Hindu nation"

Since the Indian independence the RSS has been the most vocal advocate of "Hindutva nationalism" and the making of India into a pure 'Hindu majoritarian State. India is a host of many minorities while dominated by the Hindu majority which is 80% of the country, the word "secular" was added in Indian Constitution in 1976 in order to give space and confidence to the minorities i.e. Muslims, Christians, Dalits, Jews, Sikhs and Buddhists. The RSS and its followers wanted to change this status of India to fulfill their agenda which is the "erosion of Secularism based ideology and the promotion of Hindutva nationalism". According to the leaders of RSS their main idea is to bring the nation to the peak of magnificence, through shaping the whole nation and confirming the guard of "Hindu Dharma" (Dharma a Sanskrit word used by Hindus to describe Hindu religion, culture to the whole World).[20] The RSS is a fascist Hindu organization and the fascism is confirmed when there was an involvement of a member of RSS in the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi in 1948. The killer was the member of RSS and also he has previously linked with "Hindu Mahasabha" because of this the RSS was banned by the government of Nehru at that time. The leader of RSS Golwalkar along with the other key leaders of RSS was arrested due to the allegation of provoking the religious sentiments of the people and increase of religious extremism. Nehru while speaking at the Constitutional assembly in 1948 said, "The alliance of religion and politics in the shape of communalism is the most dangerous alliance, and it yields the most abnormal kind of illegitimate brood."

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[20] Kiran Bala, "The Bharatiya Jana Sangh as a part of the Janata Party," *International Journal of Advanced Educational Research* 2, No: 5 (2017): 5-12.

Today the influence of RSS on Indian society is much more than as compared to the past because it has large men power and vote bank. It has thousands of schools and training centers where the youth, men and women are getting religious education in this way it is doing the brainwashing of its followers. The RSS got fame when it declared to build a temple in Ayodhya and secondly it used the word Hindu cultural nationalism, where many Hindus became its followers. It is influencing the educational policies in the States where BJP is in power and its influence can be visible in the State's policies of the Central government. Moreover, it has strong mobilizing power which helped this organization to increase its influence over the masses. Through its strong organizations, men power and followers the RSS is shaping the Indian politics, society and State's affairs because of its popularity and influence on public.

In this way the RSS played its part in sponsoring and increasing of Hindu nationalism in India by mobilizing the masses in the name of religion and heritage.

2.4.2- Role of Bal Thackery's organization

Bal Thackeray was an important character in Indian politics, he was running his organization named "Shiv Sena" (meaning the army of Shiva designated after Shivaji, 16th a Marathi warrior also applied to Shiva, a Hindu god). The role model of Thackery's was Shivaji, who fighted against Muslims as well as Christians missionaries, so the hate of Thackery against Christians and Muslims was in the ideology which he was following. He labeled Muslims as an agent of Pakistan and said that Muslims are creating instability in India on the request of Pakistan, in his weekly writing of Mamrik. He was a critic of the government whenever the government did some favors to the Muslims.

Bal Thackery formed his organization in 1966 with a limited manifesto that is to fight for the rights of South Indian who are mostly Tamils Marathi people. He admired Hitler of Germany and demanded the same kind of treatment with the minorities of Indian like Hitler did with the Jews in Germany. In the early days of his organization he supported Indira Gandhi in 1977 mainly for his political benefits then he moved in the camp of Janata Alliance and then came in the camp of Congress.

The important turn in the politics of Thackery came in 1984, when he joined the alliance with BJP and converted his politics towards "Hindutva", so for that reason he became highly anti-minorities.[21] After this he initiated different harassment, maliciousness and communal campaigns against minorities particularly against Christians and Muslims. He played his role in the riots during 1996 in Bombay and in 1995 in Maharashtra State where he was in alliance with BJP. The alliance of "Shive Sena with BJP" was full of ferocity, strains and disputes against minorities of India. In his interview he said, "I'm interested in Hinduism and if calling myself a Hindu in Hinduism hurts someone feelings, I do not care". In the demolition of Babri mosque, the role of his organization was evident along with RSS and BJP.

Paradoxically, Thackery himself was not the member of "Sang Priva and RSS" but he facilitated the RSS and other Hindu clusters to operate, in an organizational setup, to increase their influence and spread their ideology. Even the Bombay film industry was forced to take a pro-Hindu line in their stories, by Thackery and his supporters for this purpose in 1993 all leading filmmakers signed a deal with the BJP and Shiv Sena alliance. In this way Bal Thackery also played his part in increasing "Hindu nationalism" in India. In fact he was the helper of "RSS, BJP and other Hindu extremist groups in gathering of people on the platform of Hindutva.

2.4.3- Role of VHP in spread of Hindutva

Hindu organizations including Vishwa Hindu Parishas VHP and others are also the main reasons for the spread of Hindu nationalism through the use of their influence. The VHP was established in 1964, the basic aim of its creation was "the spread of Hindu values and create a link between Hindus living in India and abroad". The VHP always played an important role in participating in the Hindu religious movements i.e. in the 1980s it was at the front foot in the movement of Ram Janmbhumi. It constantly presents itself as a pure "cultural movement without any political motives or interfere" for this purpose the VHP started to hold Hindu religious festivals in different parts of the country especially in rural areas.[22] Through these religious festivals, movements and events they created mobilization in the public i.e. it included common

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[21] Prof Khalid Mehmood, "The Rise of Hindutva Fundamentalism," *Regional Studies* 17, No. 3 (1999): 95-110.

[22] Nitasha Kaaul, "Rise of the Poltical Right in India: Hindutva-Developmemnt Mix,Modi Myth,and the dualities: RISE OF THEPOLITICAL RIGHT IN INDIA," *Journal of Labour and Society* 20, No.7(2017): 5-10.

people, professors, and other professionals. The VHP (World Hindu Organization) is a RSS led Hindu global organization mostly US based. It is responsible for the funding of Hindu organizations domestically and it is the important wing of the BJP government. It played an important role in the spreading of Hindu nationalism across the Indian State. The VHP has its presence in Western part of the Indian State Gujarat from where Modi is from. The role of VHP was evident during the riots of Gujarat and as well as in the attack on Babri Masjid. The VHP has many wings outside India mainly in Western countries and the US and it is responsible for providing financial assistance to the RSS and Sang Parivar.

During the April 1984, the VHP led Hindu arm organization announced the drive to reclaim the birth place of Ram (a Hindu god), at Ayodhya where the famous Muslim's mosque is "Babri mosque". The timing of this movement was very interesting because it was the time of general elections in India, so actually the VHP was using the religion in order to attract the attention of people towards the BJP.

In this way by using religious cards the VHP appealed for "Hindutva nationalism" and it supported the Janata Alliance against Congress. The poor economic conditions and the contradictions of the Congress led the people to support this appeal.

2.5- Failure of Congress

The growing factor of Hindu nationalism in India is mainly due to the failure and bad governance of the secular Congress. After the death of Jawaharlal Nehru the Congress could not maintain its secular status, it started to favor Hindus to increase its vote bank among Hindus. Its leaders openly used the religious card for their electoral goods and the top leadership remained silent. The Congress party which declared itself the true representative of all India could not provide the better opportunities to the minorities for the improvement of their lives. Moreover, it remained unsuccessful in protecting the rights of the minorities i.e. political, religious and social and economic rights despite its long history of ruling in India. The incident of Babri mosque, attack on Golden Temple of the Sikh and numerous violence against Muslims, Christians, Dalits, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jews, Parses and other minorities in India. The Congress party adopted the policy of compromise on the issue of communal violence.

In order to increase the support among Hindus, Congress paid lip service to the Secularism and adopted pro-Hindu policies. After the post-colonial period Congress, which was famous for the true representation of all Indians regardless of their religions, became pro-Hindu party and started to protect the Hindu religion. Indira Gandhi even started to visit Temples to gain the support of Hindus, when she was isolated politically. Further people were fed up with the corruption, their poor "socio-economic" conditions and contradictions of Congress. This situation shrank the vote bank of Congress especially among the Muslims and other minorities. Muslims were conventionally supporting the Congress due to its secular status. Despite this support the Congress made them frustrated as despite its long ruling history the Congress remained unable to protect the political, religious and economic rights of Muslims. The anti-Muslim insurgences were increased by the Hindu militants and the "Congress government" was unable to act properly to stop the killings of Muslims, particularly during the desolation of Babri mosque and Gujarat uprisings against Muslims. Many people believe that the local leadership of "Congress" is also involved in the ethnic cleansing of Muslims along "Hindu militants' '. Besides, it also remained abortive to resolve the much needed Kashmir issue. The leadership of Congress remained confused to take a clear position due to the fear of its political loss in either case.[23] It shows that the Congress's contradictions and lip service with Secularism. Then the case of Golden Temple where the religious sentiments of Sikh (who are second most populist majority after Muslims in India) were hurt by the Congress government during the Indira Gandhi era. This episode weakened secularism in India and added hate sentiments about Congress among the Sikh community which made the Congress party more unpopular.[24] The "Secularism" of Congress compromised in order to pursue its electoral benefits, it was unable to minimize the influence of Hindu fundamentalists over the State's affairs.

All these events and the failure of Congress government to remain loyal with Secularism and uplift the living standards of the people forced the Indian people to try some other option except the Congress. In conclusion the BJP was successful in uniting people on the platform of religious nationalism and used this mess created by the Congress in her favor. It also promised to the people that it would bring the economic revolution if it had the chance to rule the country. The

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[23] Vaishnav Milan, *Religious Nationalism and India's Future* (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2019), 40-50.
[24] William Gould, *Hindu Nationalism and the Language of Politi*cs *in Late Colonial India,*(New York Cambridge University Press, 2004), 201-210.

"social and economic" situations of the middle class were not improved by the Congress government, so this class diverted towards the Hindu nationalism which assured them to bring prosperity and wonders to their lives. These factors make the roots of "Hindutva nationalism" stronger in India as compared to the past and they used this situation to complete their agenda.

2.6- Monopoly of British Raj

The monopoly of colonial power is also one of the most important reasons which led towards the growth of Hindu nationalism in India. The British Raj divided the Sub-continent into religions and castes to rule in the people of this region.[25] The communal violence among Hindus and Muslims were expressively increased in high numbers during the period of British rule. The British were successful in using the policy of "rule and divide" for their interests. Hindu militants developed their power during the era of British rule in the British helped them in order to increase communal gap between Muslims and Hindus.

Further the centralized State system of British helped the Hindu nationalists to unite Hindus at religious platforms and increase their sphere of influence as before Britishers the Sub-Continent was divided in tribal and different States. The centralized State system provided an opportunity to the Hindus fundamentalists that they can revive their religion by reforms movements.[26] Then due to the British government in India the role of Christian missionaries to convert lower class and poor Hindus into Christianity also paved the way for the rise of "Hindutva" nationalism in India.

The racial arrogance of British government towards the people of the "Sub-continent" is also a reason of rise Hindu nationals as the Hindus judges were not allowed to perform in European courts. This thing is used by the Hindu nationalist in their interests and they were successful in uniting the lower and middle class Hindus at religious platforms.

2.7- Economic reasons

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[25] Gray J Jacobsohn, *Wheel of Law INDIA'S SECULARISM IN COMPARATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEX,* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2003), 150-160.
[26] Gyanendra Pandey, *Remembring Partition :Violence, Nationalism and History in India*, (New York Cambridge University Press, 2003), 45-55.

The economic reasons were also very important which provided the chance for the promoter and leadership of Hindutva forces to attract the attention of the public in the favor of "Hindu nationalism". First the colonial power exploited the Indian people by looting the resources of the continent. The British government extracted the resources from the Sub-continent and transferred it into their own country. The 80% revenue generated by the Indian people were used for the betterment of the British military and people despite the large resources and revenue generation the common Indian people remained poor during this time period. Secondly, some laws formed by the colonial power regarding agriculture revenue where the farmers were supposed to give the 80% of their profits to the British government. Then there were certain laws regarding the forests which were the main source of earning for the common people which were also exploited by the British government which further created poverty among the people. The construction of India railroads was also a kind of strategy which provided the tactic to the British companies and investors to further exploit the resources of the Sub-continent.

The economic conditions of common Indian people under British rule were very poor, which created the sense of realization among the people to unite against colonial power. The leadership of Hindu nationalism argued that the economic conditions can only be improved by adopting the true Hindu values and system. There was strong influence of these religious forces on the less educated class of the Hindus; therefore they were successful in promoting their ideology to the ordinary persons.

After the end of colonial period Congress won the debate and Indian emerged as the ideology of secularism along with the socialist ideology for industrialization through nationalization. The proponents of industrialization were of the view that through the industrial revolution the economic conditions of the masses will be uplifted and poverty will be eliminated. Even though socialism brought some fruitful results for Indian economy, the sad story is that despite this the economic the common man was deprived of this economic revolution due the bad governance of the Congress.[27] The people suffered from hunger, bad education and health conditions, jobs issues and even basic facilities of life. All this mess created by the Congress was exploited by the Hindu nationalists who were opposing socialism since independence.

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[27] Kalim Siddiqui, "A Critical Study of 'Hindu Nationalism' in India," *Journal of Business & Economic Policy* 3, No. 2 (2016): 11-17.

2.7.1- Economic policies of the Congress government

After independence the economic policies of the Congress government (which has led Indian State for most of the time) are the main driving force behind the increase of identity politics in India. In order to gain broad political support from all citizens of the State, the Congress party took some incentive including privatization and increase of global competitiveness has threatened the jobs of middle class people. Because of this the middle class has lost their jobs and this led towards the increase of communalism and the religious, ethnic and other political parties started to exploit this situation. This was in the favor of religious fundamentalist political parties to appeal for "Hindu Rashtra" identity politics. The increase of communalism due to economic reasons paved the way for the discriminations and marginalization of the minorities within the Indian State. This discrimination cannot be eradicated by the education even. This situation is visible in different States of India where the Hindus have given the preference over the people of other religions in higher posts of civil and other institutions.

In the northern part of the India i.e. Gujarat and Maharashtra due to economic competition, lands and jobs between Hindus and Muslims the religious identity politics is clearly visible in the form of mass violence. The Hindu nationalist forces exploited this kind of condition in their favor by using identity politics to increase their political support.

Now Narendra Modi's party BJP came into power in 2014, with the slogans of "Shining India" and to improve the economic conditions of the people. Regardless of all pro-Hindu policies of the Modi's government the economy of India has improved which increased the support of BJP and it emerged as a more powerful political party in the next elections which were held in 2019. As a result the vote band of Congress which is a secular political party has further decreased and this increased the power and support of "Hindutva forces" and secular forces further shrunken in India. This also provided a platform for the BJP to implement its Hindu nationalist agenda. The failure of the Congress government to manage economic challenges provided the space for "Hindu nationalists" to increase their strength, especially the failure of Congress to introduce the land reforms. This provided the opportunity to the landlords and religious fundamental forces to join hands together in order to challenge the secular forces. Because the economy and

Secularism have strong links, the weak economic conditions of the people gave rise to Hindu nationalism.

2.8- Lack of leadership among Muslims and Christians

Muslims and Christians of India do not have modern leadership and the political parties which the Muslims have i.e. Indian Union Muslim League, AIMIM and All-India United Democratic Front. These all political parties mostly limited themselves to be Muslim-centric political parties. In the 2019, Lok Sabha elections these Muslim political parties obtained only four seats which shows their minimum representation in the Indian parliament despite the fact that the Muslims are 14% of total Indian population. The Muslim leadership in Indian was unable to unite Muslims at one platform to increase their support for Secularism. At the end due to the emergence of BJP in Indian at national level which decrease the Muslim representation at national level.

Likewise, the Christians and other minorities of India were not able to shape national level leadership which helped the "Hindu nationalist powers" to grow and increase their support and vote bank.

2.9- Role of print and electronic Press

Press played a role of a powerful institution in spreading the ideology and message of Hindutva forces. The introduction of press in Indian continent was an vital progress of 1820s, when Raja Ram Mohan Roy started to publish two papers named i.e. "Sambad Kaumudi and Mirat Ul Akbar" in 1821 and 1822. These two papers opened the door for many other new nationalist base newspapers i.e. The Hindus, The Indian Mirror and The Pioneer which helped the Hindu nationalists to send their message at every corner of Indian continent. The emergence of many new "Hindu nationalist" newspapers frolicked Starring role in publicizing the Hindutva narratives i.e. Hindus are in danger due to Muslims and Christians.

The strong effect of Hindu militants on Hindu masses was possible due to the propaganda created by these news presses which turned the minds of the people against the colonial power as well as against secular forces and minorities. After the independence Hindu militants continue to use the press in their favor i.e. Shiv Sina has its own newspaper. The RSS, VHP, BJS and BJP

were effective in resolving the public opinion in their favor. The press played an important role in the election drives of Hindu nationalist forces, with the help of the media BJP and other Hindu nationalist political parties were able to increase their support. In the general elections of 2014 and 2019 the BJP were able to expose the incompetency and economic mess of the Congress government and present itself as an alternative to the Congress. The BJP used propaganda on electronic and print media as an important tool to win the elections in 2015 and 2019. BJP is using this strategy even after the elections against its opponents and to defend its pro-Hindutva policies and increase of Hindu nationalism.

2.10- Political reasons

Democracy carries the opportunity for the Secular State to contain identity politics with help of education, equal economic rights as well as equal participation for all the masses. But in societies like India here it is difficult to overcome identity politics due to the influence of religion on the lives of the masses. The influence of religion on the lives of the people has given rise to communal politics and communal violence, the most dominant religious community became the most powerful to influence the State's affairs.[28] The religious communal political parties try to politicize the issue and with the help of religious card they used it in their favor i.e. BJP i.e. Babri masjid. It is one of the most important reasons which led towards the rise of Hindu nationalism in India. The roots of communalism lie in the structure of the Indian society and political system. A society like this creates the hurdles for the secular values to practice.[29] Early it was believed that soon once the economic conditions of the masses would improve it would give rise to the new political structure based on secular and liberal values. But unfortunately due to religious communalism it could not happen and the nationalism based on "Hindu Rashtra" became the prevailing factor in Indian politics. According to Thomas Blom Hansen i.e.

"Indian society is probably one of the most politicized societies in the world. It happened because the democratic order that the leaders of India fought for released new, assertive and

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[28] Gino Battaglia, "Neo-Hindu Fundamentalism Challenging the Secular and Pluralistic Indian State," *Religions* 8, No. 216 (2017): 1-15.

[29] Farhat Parveen, "Communal Violence in India," *Spotlight on Regional Affairs* 13, No. 1(1994):40-50.

uncontrollable social identities that over time produced a form of modernity –pluralist, creative, chaotic and brutal at the same time.[30]"

The lack of Nehru legacy in Congress party damaged the overall Indian political system and it provided the space for the "religious Hindu fundamentalist" to exploit the religious sentiments of the public. Further the centralized control of Indira Gandhi over the Congress party has made the party more weakened, so this has given rise to the increase of the role of religious political parties. The emerging role of religious political parties shortened the secular values and as a result Indian society became more and more a communal society.

2.11- Controversy over Cow slaughter

The defense of cow slaughter has been the symbol of Hindu resurgence since the 19th century as according to the Hindu fundamentalists, "he who kills the holy cow lives as many years in hell as there are hairs on the cow's body." This shows the respect for cows among the Hindu fundamentalists and nationalists. After the independence when India declared itself a secular State many Hindu fundamentalist and nationalist led by Seth Ramakrishna Dalmia launched a prorated campaign for the purpose of including an article in the India Constitution which forbade the slaughter of cows. Because of pressure created by this movement, Nehru formed a committee to decide whether the act of forbidding cow slaughter should be added in the Constitution or not. The committee rejected the proposal of forbidding of cow slaughter while after this matter was challenged in the Supreme Court of India which gave the verdict in the favor of Hindu nationalist. The Supreme Court of India said that the slaughter of cows could start riots across India, so to respect the public sentiments there should be a ban on cow slaughter.

2.12- Failure of Nation State building

The Indian people have rejected the kind of process which the Indian forefathers used for the purpose of Nation State building as the Western concept of Socialism, Secularism and liberalism. The founder of Indian Secularism Jawaharlal Nehru has given the concept of Secularism because he thought that after the economic development the religious and identity politics will be taken

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[30] Thomas Blom Hansen. Safforon Wave*: DEMOCRACY AND HINDU NATIONALISM IN MODERN INDIA,* (Princeton University Press, 1999), 30.

over by the concept of economic class system. He wanted to build a nation State above religion, culture, ethnicity and race. According to him 'Secularism is the only suitable system for a multi-cultural and religious country like India which can unite the masses of different religions, cultures and races.

Most of the Indian people did not support his concept of nation building and after his death, religious identity politics began to dominate over secularism. They supported the concept of nation building based on "Hindu Rashtra and Hindu culture". Majority of the Indian people thought that the Western system is secrecy against the majority of the Indian people and it will provide the space to the minorities to become equal citizens like Hindus.[31] The followers of Hindu nationalism consider the people of minorities as second class citizens. Recently in April, 2020 the MP of ruling party BJP Subramanian Swamy, who is educated from the West in an interview said that "the Muslims are not equal to the Hindus, they are second class citizens, so they do not have the equal social and economic rights like that of Hindus". Similarly the people of other religions i.e. Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Jews and Buddhist, are unable to come out of the shell of their religions, so religion became their main identity rather than being called to be Indian.

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[31] Gray J Jacobsohn, *Wheel of Law INDIA'S SECULARISM IN COMPARATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEX,* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2003), 172-180.

Chapter-3

Policies of BJP government and future of Indian minorities

The BJP is the political wing of Hindu right-wing nationalist organization RSS, hence it follows the same policies and ideologies as that of RSS. It was formed in the 1980s by Atal B. Vajpayee and his allies after the collapse of the government of "Janata Alliance ", which was formed by the anti-Congress political parties. The BJS was the only prominent Hindu nationalist political party after the collapse of the government of the "Janata Alliance ". But at that time BJS faced the worst criticism and it was banned over its affiliation with RSS.[32] Consequently after this criticism some active members of BJS found better to detach themselves politically with BJS and hence they formed their new political party named as Bahartiya Janata Party (BJP), Atal B. Vajpayee as its president.

The basic purpose of forming the BJP is the same to promote the concept of Hindu majoritarian nationalism and the politics of "Hindu Rashtra or Hindutva". Apparently the new political party BJP detached itself from the extreme Hindu nationalist organization RSS but it was evident that the most of the leaders and the members are from RSS and BJS. Thus the BJP followed the same organization structure and beliefs, agendas and strategies like its mother organizations. In its early days the leaders of BJP found it better to follow a moderate approach to gain electoral success "Gandhism", which is close to Hindu beliefs, values and culture but it is somehow anti-Secularism. But after the failure of this strategy then BJP adopted its basic ideology that is "Hindutva", due to this ideology BJP became popular among Hindu nationalists. The RSS supported BJP and its vote bank increased, so after many years of struggle the BJP first came into power in 1996, Atal B. Vajpayee as a Prime minister.

The BJP was in power due to the support of its allies who were the sum of anti-Congress political parties, so there wasn't any proper ideological understanding. These political parties were supporting the BJP government for their political interests; hence the BJP government collapsed after 13 days. After this BJP again came into power in 1998 for full term and then it came into power in 2016 and 2019 Natrendra Modi (life time volunteer of RSS) as Prime

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[32] Yogendra K. Malik, V.B.Sing, *Hindu Nationalists in India: The Rise of Bharatiya Janata Party,* (New Delhi:Vistaar Publications, 1994), 154-160.

minister. The policies of BJP always remain pro-Hindu majority group and anti-minorities. There were severe communal violences during the government of BJP i.e. Hindu-Muslims violence, Hindu-Christians violence, violence on cow slaughter, violence on Kashmir issue, violence on Babri Masjid and other communal and ethnic violence. Due to this the minorities in India are always the victim of RSS and right-wing Hindu nationalist whenever BJP comes into power. There is a heated sentiment even in the election manifesto of BJP against minorities; this is because the ideology which BJP follows is based on hatred and Hindu supremacy.

The history of "intolerance and extremism" is the concept of the 1920s during which the people of the Sub Continent started the agitation against the British colonial rule under the platform of the secular Congress party. But along this the Hindu religious fundamentalist organizations were also active in provoking the religious sentiments of common Hindus and turning their minds against Secularism and people of other religions. The Snag Parivar was the main advocate of "Hindutva ideology" and it is responsible for the creation of religious hatred and divisions among the Hindus and the other religions in the Sub Continent. The main organization of Sang Parivar RSS is ruling the State in India i.e. BJP is a political wing of RSS, so they are implementing their ideology by disregarding minorities with their pro-Hindu policies.

3.1-The RSS and the BJP

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh i.e. RSS "a Hindu Majoritarian Nationalist Organization" and the mother of BJP was founded by Dr. K.B. Hedgewar along with B.S. Moonje in 1925. The creators of RSS were mainly from the upper caste of Hindu religion i.e. Brahmin and they believed in the Hindu majoritarian supremacy.

The RSS is mainly known for its anti-minorities ideology, RSS was established against the Muslims and Christians of the Subcontinent as they were called the outsiders by the Hindu nationalists. According to the one of the founder of RSS Savarkar, "the Christians and Muslims of Subcontinent represent others they were converted into Christianity and Islam some generations ago. Therefore they should be converted back into Hinduism or they should leave India or they remain in India to be subordinate to Hindus". The Muslims and the Christians are not the share of one nation according to the idea of Savarkar about nation. According to him "the holy land of Muslims and Christians are far off in Arabia and Palestine, while the Hindus belong

to Vedic civilization of the Subcontinent". Thus Muslims and Christians cannot be loyal to India because they do not share the common culture, history, language, blood and religion. He even linked Muslims in India with Jews in Germany and said their interests' lies outside India.

Dr. Hedgewar and Moonje founder of RSS once they both were the members of Hindu Mahasbha have keenly taken part in the protest in front of Mosques they played music in the time of Azan and prayers in Nagpur town in 1924-25.[33] There was clash among Hindus and Muslims on this issue. Dr. Hedgewar described this incident later in his biography, "Because of the in-built distress of Muslims among the Hindus, the band groups at times avoided to play before the mosque. On such occasions Hedgewar himself would take over the drums and rouse the sleeping manliness of Hindus".

After the death of Hegewar and Savarkar, Golwalkar became the head of RSS in 1940, he was another right-wing Hindu extremist who hated the minorities. Golwalker believed in Hindu racial supremacy and he wrote in his book that, "Hindu alone should rule in India because they have such privileges". He even opposed democracy in India; further the RSS organization favored the authoritarian regime led by Hindus in India. They were against Secularism in India as well as opposed the special status of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. They were of the view that soon the other countries of South Asia including Pakistan, State of Jammu and Kashmir, Bangladesh, Sri-Lanka and Nepal will be the part of India and then it will be the formation of "Akhand Baharat (greater India)".

It is evident that most of the leaders of ruling party BJP including the PM Modi and party president Amith Shah are the volunteers of RSS and they have the influence of RSS. Therefore after coming into power they are fulfilling the agenda of RSS and Hindu Rashtra. The power and the influence of RSS are increasing under the BJP government, as the work base of RSS and Hindu Rasahtra increased in many parts of the country. Similarly the followers of RSS and Hindu Rashtra are in power in the BJP government. It is a sign of worry for the minorities of India because these followers of RSS are taking certain steps which are anti-minorities. The main agenda of BJP and its leaders is to promote the concept of Hindu majoritarian State and to eradicate Secularism. This shows in the statements of many BJP's leaders.

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[33] Eviane Leidig, "Hindutva as a variant of right-wing extremism," Patterns of Prejudice 54, No.3 (2002):5-7.

3.2.1-Communal violence during British Raj

Communal violence exists in the Sub-continent between Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Sikhs and Dalits even before the colonial period. But they were increased during the British Raj in the Subcontinent. Communalism is the "product of religion" but actually it is the product of power or competitive politics among different communities. The main reasons behind the increase of tensions between the Muslims and the Hindus were religion, socio-economic and power sharing. The British Raj was well aware of ethnic and religious rifts in South Asia, so therefore they used the "divide and rule" technique in order to rule in the Sub-continent.

Muslims were 25% of the total population of the Subcontinent and they were facing problems in political power sharing in provincial assemblies and economic problems due to the monopoly of Hindu extremists. Hindu extremists formed a group in the Congress party and they compelled the leaders of Congress to formed pro-Hindu policies and anti-minorities policies especially the anti-Muslim policies. These Hindu extremists opposed the divide of Bengal provinces because it was in favor of Muslims politically and economically because of this the gap between Hindus and Muslims was further widened. Muslims were also humiliated by Hindu fundamentalists as they were playing in front of mosques and the leaders of Hindu nationalist organization RSS participated in these events. There were deadly clashes between Hindus and Muslims on the issue of cow slaughter, all these events show how the Hindu and Muslims were religiously, politically and economically divided. Hence due to this religious, political and economic gap it led towards power politics which ended in severe communal violence. Similarly, Sikhs were also used by the "Hindu fundamentalists" against minorities. The religious Hindu extremists further exploited the lower caste Hindus i.e. Dalits

3.2.3- Communal violence of RSS and BJP post-partition

After independence the right-wing Hindu majoritarian nationalists continued their violence against Muslims, Christians, Dalits and Buddhist. The main reason behind this communal violence was that Hindu nationalist considers India as the land of Hindus only, so the rest of the people are second class citizens. The people of other religions have no right to live in India and practice their religious activities, so there was ethnic cleansing of Muslims, Christians, Sikhs,

Buddhists and Dalits. There are some communal rattles of Hindu nationalists against minorities' i.e.

3.2.4- Involvement of BJP in Ayodhya Incident

The BJP provoked the Hindu-Muslim violence in 1990 and increased the polarization across the India and as a result Hindu-Muslims riots were increased all over the India. The Muslims were made the subject of hatred, anti-State, terrorists and pro-Pakistan by the BJP and RSS. The sole beneficiary of all these riots and violence was BJP because after this it has won the state election in 1991 in different States of India i.e. UP, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh.[34] The Ayodhya riots are most important among all of the riots between Hindus and Muslims.

Ayodhya is situated in Uttar Pradesh (one of the biggest State of India in terms of population), there were clashes between Muslims and Hindus in 1992 when the mobs of about 300000, right-wing Hindus mainly workers of RSS and BJP demolished the famous Babri Masjid. The forefather of Mughal Empire in the Subcontinent Babr built Babri Mosque in Ayodhya in 1528. The destruction of the mosque led India into bloodshed communal violence with the death of about 1,700 people. The case of Babri Masjid was mainly due to the "criminalization of politics'' by BJP and Hindu nationalist organization RSS. Hindu nationalist and the BJP are claiming that the Babri mosque was built on the birth place of "Hindu god Ram", so therefore Hindus have all right to build a Temple over there. Thus, in September 1990, the party leader Advani launched a movement in support of building of temple over Babri mosque and the slogans chanted by the was "mandir wahi banay ga (we will build the temple only there)". This event set the platform for Hindu nationalist to destroy the mosque in 1992 therefore they did it.

Nevertheless, it was BJP and Hindu nationalists who benefited due to this religious polarization and communal violence as after this BJP won seats in UP, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. BJP did it because it was the election manifesto of BJP to build the Ram temple over the place of Babri mosque. This shows the hatred and harsh policy of BJP towards Muslims living in India, therefore the Muslims feel insecure under the government of BJP due to its pro-Hindu policies.

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[34] Ramesh Thakur, "Ayodhya and the politics of India's Secularism: A Double Standards Discourse," *Asian Survey*

3.2.6- BJP and the Gujarat Riots

The most deadly riots against the Indian Muslims were the Gujarat riots of 2002, under the government of BJP and Narendra Modi's (currently the Prime Minister of India) Chief minister-ship. It was the worst communal violence against the Muslims where approximately 2,000 Muslims lost their lives in the hands of right-wing Hindus (workers of BJP and RSS) and with the support of the State government. In the slum areas of Gujarat where mainly Muslims were living over 100 Muslims were burnt alive including women and children even pregnant women were burnt and women were raped.[35] These riots occurred under the shelter of the BJP government and the close supporters of Narendra Modi and BJP planned these riots and they were involved in these riots. All the State's institutions and the police were helping them instead of protecting the affected people.

There was a central government of THE BJP at that time and Atal B. Vajpayee was the Prime Minister, so it was said that instead of taking any actions he accused the Muslims for these violence.

After the violence against Muslims in Gujarat State, the BJP has won with majority in State's elections of December 2002, which was one of the best electoral performances of BJP. It showed that the violence against Muslims is rewarded. There were no protests against these insurgencies in the State by the NGOs and other public groups because of the fear of the goons of RSS and other Hindu nationalist organizations. The police was also biased towards BJP and Hindu nationalists as one of the policeman in Gujarat defended the rape of Muslims women in Gujarat like this, "If rape did happen in Gujarat, so what, it is what they (the Muslims) did in the past, they did it to the Kashmiri (Hindu) women. Gujarat incident in fact reduced rape by warning Muslims that the Hindus will respond in kind.[36]" It shows how the administration was under the influence of Hindu nationalists. There was a commission on this issue which was formed to investigate these riots and the culprits were supposed to be punished. But it was the lack of will

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[35] No. 7(1993), 654-660. file:///C:/Users/The%20Little%20Laptop%20Sp/Downloads/[Ramesh-Thakur]-Ayodhya-and-the-Politics-of-India'(z-lib.org).pdf

[36] Ornit Shani, *Communalism, Caste and Hindu Nationalism:The Violence in Gujarat,* (New York Cambridge University Press, 2007), 133-145.

of the government because there was involvement of RSS and BJP, so its report was not public and offenders were not punished.

3.2.7- Communal Violence of Hindu Nationalists against Christians

Hindu nationalists (followers of RSS and BJP) have been doing communal violence against Christians this includes burning Churches, physical violence, forcefully conversion of religion, sexual violence and damages of Christian's colleges, universities and schools. Christians are also facing socio-economic and political discriminations due to their religion in India because of the influence of Hindu nationalists. The RSS, BJS and BJP follow the ideology based on Hindu supremacy which considers them as second class citizens, so they are facing severe social and economic problems in India under the BJP government.

The US Commission on "International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)" placed India at second number due to its violence against minorities along with Iraq.[37] India has a history of communal violence against minorities but with the coming of BJP into power under Narendra Modi, the minorities are living the worst of their lives. Because the main agenda of BJP is to make India a "Hindu majoritarian State" as the BJP State's leader Rajeshweer Sing said on December 2014,

"Our target is to make India a Hindu Rashtra by 2021. The Muslims and Christians don't have any right to stay here. So they would either be converted into Hinduism or forced to run away from here.[38]"

On March 11, 2018 more than 30 supporters of RSS and BJP attacked a Church and burned Bible and forced them to close the prayer hall otherwise they would burn the pastor's family. After this case there was not any legal action against these goons due to the influence of the BJP government.

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[37] Michelle, Boorstein and Joanna, Slater. "Religious Freedom in India deteriorated last year, U.S. government watchdog sayas." *The Washington Post*, April 28. 2020. https//www.washingtonpost.com/religion/2020/04/28/india-receives-low-rating-us-government-watchdog-religious-freedom/%3foutputType=amp

[38] Ravish Kumar, "RSS pracharak speaks on the recent controversy over conversation," *INDIA TODAY,* December 22, 2014. https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/conversion-rss-sangh-pracharak-rajeshwar-singh-paravartan-232416-2014-12-22

Likewise there was the worst violence of Christians in the State of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Delhi and Tamil Nadu where thousands of Christians were killed and humiliated by the leaders of RSS and BJP and there was no legal action against them because of the government of BJP.

3.4- Institutional Biases during BJP government

There was the "National Commission for the protection of minorities", in India which was formed in 1993, after 43 years of independence. It was useless due to the influence of Hindu nationalist organizations, "RSS, Hindu Rashtra, VHP, Shive Seena and BJP" on bureaucracy and other State's institutions. Moreover, the biases of Hindu religion fill in Indian Constitution, bureaucracy, judiciary, media, academic syllabus and State's affairs. Equally, there is communal biasness in the decisions of Supreme Court as the decision of court regarding M. Afzal Gurru and Manisha Sethi and many other Muslim, Christians and Dalits are the victims of institution biasness.

Likewise, the there is also a communal biasness and influence of Hindu Rashtra upon the investigation of police when it comes to Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhism and Dalits. According to Vrinda Grover, "there is numerous evidence that shows that there is a clear biasness of police during the anti-Sikhs riots in 1984", same is the case during the anti-Muslims riots of Gujarat.

Minorities of India are facing discrimination in socio-economic and political issues as Hindus are given more preference in jobs over Christians, Muslims, Dalits, Jews and Buddhists. The Muslims and Christian eat cow meat but as the cow is the holy animal for Hindus, the BJP government is protecting the slaughter of cows by passing laws. But in a secular system, the State is not influenced by religion but here in the case of India under the BJP Government State is clearly supporting and protecting one religion that is Hinduism. These are the institutional biases in India under the BJP government towards Hindus and as a result the minorities are facing discriminatory behavior in every field.

3.5- Election Manifesto of BJP

The election manifesto of BJP under Narendra Modi as a Prime Minister and Amith Shah as a party president shows the hatred and biases towards minorities. It is based upon the concept of

Hindu supremacy and anti-minorities, which is the ideology of RSS and Hindu Rashtra.[39] Before the election campaign of BJP during the general elections of 2014 and 2019 was full of the hatred sentiments towards Muslims, Christians and Dalits which are living in huge numbers in India.

During the election campaign the PM Modi categorically announced the steps in favor of Hindu extremists and anti-minorities i.e. ban on cow slaughter, giving more opportunities to the Hindus, promotion of Pan-Hinduism, aggressive approach against Muslims, revocation of article 370 which deal with the special status of State of Jammu and Kashmir and many more. Moreover, when BJP used the word development for the people in its manifesto actually they wanted to include the Hindu people only. Because according to the leaders of BJP Muslims and other religious people are not equal like Hindus.

3.6- BJP under Naredra Modi anti-minorities policies

The leadership of Narendra Modi over BJP proved worse for the rights and future of the minorities of India including the lower Hindu class Dalits. Under the command of PM Modi the BJP government completely attached itself with Hindu majoritarian nationalist groups. Suddenly, the secular Indian State becomes the hub for the activities of RSS and Hindu majoritarian nationalists' organizations. The major policies of the BJP government are formed by the followers of RSS ideology and as a result these policies are highly against the spirits of secularism and minorities.

3.6- BJP and the article 370

The BJP government revoked the special status of the State of Jammu and Kashmir by withdrawing the article 370 and 35A from Indian Constitution. These two articles were very important for the State of Jammu and Kashmir because through the former article the State of Jammu and Kashmir was given autonomy while the later article prohibited the non-Kashmiri people to buy any property in the State until the resolution of the issue.

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[39] Khushwant Sing, *THE END OF INDIA,* (India: Penguin Group, 2003), 13-20.

The Hindu nationalists' forces always opposed these two articles since the beginning and it was the election manifesto of BJP that after coming into power, it will revoke these two articles. Moreover, the RSS and BJP declared these two articles against the Hindus and favor for Kashmiri Muslims. The BJP is fueled by the ideology of Hindu supremacy, so by revoking these two articles they completed the agenda of RSS and Hindu Rashtra. The founder of BJP Shyama Prasad Mukherjee was famous for his slogan against the special status of State of Jammu and Kashmir i.e. "Ik desh mai dovidhan nahi challenge" (There cannot be two constitutions in one State). The revocation of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir is part of the anti-minorities agenda of BJP and Hindutva forces in India. To change the demography of the State of Jammu and Kashmir BJP government introduced new Domicile law for the State. This new law regarding the domicile allows the non-residential people of the State to claim residential benefits of the State which will enable them to stay permanently in the State including all migrants who are registered in "Relief and Rehabilitation Commission" in J&K. Moreover, they are Hindus and when they claim such things then ultimately the Muslims who are the majority of the State will be turned into a minority.

Further, through these changes the "Hindutva forces" will start the ethnic cleansing of Muslims like Israel did with Philistine Muslims.These unilateral moves of Modi's government and forced demographic change created the war like situation in the State.

3.7- "Ghar Wapsi" (back to home) campaigns in UP and the BJP government

After winning the State election in 2017 in the most populist Indian State UP with more than 20% Muslims living there, PM Modi has appointed Yoghi Adityanath as Chief Minister. He has extreme and discriminatory views about the Muslims and he openly shared his views about Muslims in public gatherings. Now, this has severe consequences for the Muslims of UP State because the Yoghi Adityanath has affiliation with the RSS and other Hindu extremist and fundamentalist organizations i.e. Sang Parivar and VHP. Muslims of UP State are facing sever human security threats under the government of Yoghi because his government considered them as a subordinate to the Hindus who are living in UP State. Muslims are being labeled as terrorists and the cause of every evil by the State government of UP. They are ignored by the State government in the civil service and other higher rank government jobs just because of their

religion. The Hindus are being given preference over the Muslims in different government departments despite their qualifications for the jobs. This is not only the case with Muslims of UP State but the people of other religions i.e. Christians, Buddhist and lower caste Hindus are also being targeted by the Hindu nationalists. This shows the conditions of Indian minorities under the current government which is controlled by the Hindu nationalist.

"Ghar wapsi" is a chain of religious change movements by the forces of Hindu majoritarian nationalists that aims non-Hindus (Muslims, Christians and Sikhs) to convert them into Hinduism. The two terrorists Hindu organizations i.e. Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) and RSS facilitated these movements across India with help of the Central government. This movement gained momentum under the government of Narendra Modi. One of senior leaders of VHP Praveen Togadla declared that the population of Hindus should be 100 %, he was actually talking about the forced conversion of minorities into Hindu religion.

Many hundreds of poor Christians and Sehajdhari Sikhs have been forcefully converted into Hinduism by "Hindu Fundamentalists". The Chief-Minister of India's most populist State Uttar Pradesh (UP) Youghi is currently leading this campaign in his State with the help of BJP government. This shows how secular India became the "hub of Hindu fundamentalists" under the BJP government and how the minorities of India are facing challenges in order to live in India.

3.8- Passing of controversial CAA and RCA bills

On December 11 2019, the BJP government passed the controversial Citizens Amendment Act (CAA) and National Registration Act (RCA) from Indian parliament. The Citizens Amendment Act allows minorities from other countries i.e. Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and other countries to settle in India who entered India till 31, December 2014, it only excludes the Muslims. This attempt shows that India is rapidly moving towards Hindu majoritarian State and it is eradicating Secularism under the BJP government. The controversial Citizens Amendment Act was the part of BJP's election manifesto, which shows the fascist approach of BJP towards its minorities.

Along with CAA the Modi government passed another controversial acts NRC (National Register for Citizens), in this act the government asked its citizens to show documents in order to

prove Indian Nationality. The NRC act was initially implemented in Assam State of India which resulted in the exclusion of 1.9 million people out of the State.[40] It included a large number of Muslims, Christians and Dalits. Amith Shah the home minister of India declared that this practice will be soon carried out across the Indian State.

Thousands of people started protests in big cities of India i.e. Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Calcutta, Assam and Chennai to show their anger and disagreement to these moves of government. The BJP government started to crack down and kill off the people who participated in these protests. There were the killings of hundreds of people across the country by the goons of RSS and BJP along with police. There was attacked on the universities i.e. Jamia Millia Islamia, Aligarh University and Jawaharlal Nehru University, while there was a shutdown of the internet and section 144 was imposed in various part of the country. The people of Assam State were worried about their future because the Hindu immigrants from Bangladesh will put a burden on the existing limited resources of their State. The media channel who gave coverage to these protests faced restrictions by the RSS and BJP government. Many intellectuals, opposition parties and public community condemn these acts and they were humiliated by the Hindu fundamentalists and BJP government. The people who were opposing these controversial bills were labeled as ant-State and the agents of Muslims.

The hidden agenda of BJP behind the passing of these acts is to change the demography of Muslim majority States i.e. Assam, Gujarat and others by converting them into minorities. Similarly the other minorities i.e. Dalits and Christians are also the victims of these acts. The States with Dalits majority and Tamil Nadu will also be expelled from the Indian Territory through the act of NRC. These two acts are showing that the space for minorities in Secular India is shrinking under the government of Narendra Modi. Narendra Modi's India is full of bloodshed and discriminations against minorities. Further if the BJP government continues its fascist policies against minorities then secular India will be further divided. This shows the practical manifestation of thought of Hindu supremacy and Hindu majoritarianism in the policies of the BJP government.

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[40] Soumya, Shankar. " India's Citizenship Law, In Tandem With National Registry, Could Make BJP's Discriminatroy Trageting of Muslims Easier," *The Intercept*, January 30.2020.https//theintercept.com/2020/01/30/india-citizenship-act-caa.nrc.assam/

3.9-Controversial Muslims Women divorce law

The Modi's regime passed the divorced law regarding Muslims women in 2019, which is against the Sharia law of Muslims. This is also a direct attack on the religious fundamentals of Muslims by the "Hindutva forces". Muslims across the India condemn this act of the government but despite this the bill has been passed from the Indian parliament.[41] This is a serious issue because first the Muslims are the victims of BJP's policies but after this the other minorities including i.e. Christians, Sikhs, Jews and Buddhists will have to face same kind of situation. Additionally, in a secular State system the government does not interfere in the religious matters of the people but here in India the Narendra Modi's government is completely violating the fundamentals of Secularism.

3.10- Violence against Lower Caste Hindus (Dalits)

The BJP is the party of the people of upper Hindu castes while it completely discriminates the people of low caste Hindus i.e. Dalits. The "Hindutva forces" consider them untouchable and hence the people of low caste are the victims of "BJP government". There is communal violence against them across India by the supporters of "BJP, RSS and VHP". These low caste Hindus are facing severe discriminations from the "Central government" i.e. religious, political, social and economic discriminations.

The BJP won election on the slogan of "Sab ka sath sab ka vikas'' in actuality like other religious minorities the lower caste Hindu Dalits are marginalized by the government of India. During the election campaign PM Modi used the identity card by saying that he belongs to the lower class, so after coming into power he will uplift the lower class but this was just to get the support of lower class. The Hindutva force like other minorities i.e. Muslims and Christians also attacked the Dalits as the incident of Sahanpur where in Sahanapur district in Uttar Pradesh, Dalits were attacked by the Hindu extremists. The victims of Sahanapur said, "We are Hindus for elections and after that we become untouchable." The Sahanapur attack is the indicator than each and

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[41] Joe, Wallen. "India outlaws controversial practice of instant Muslim divorce." *The Telegraph*, July 30. 2019. https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/07/30/india-outlaws-contraversial-practice-verbal-muslim-divorce/amp/

every time the Dalits pursue to defend their self-esteem they would be attacked by the Hindutva forces.

3.10-1- The BJP renunciation of budget provisions to the Dalits

The budget sharings during the government of BJP show that the Dalits are intentionally demoted and disadvantaged by the Hindutva government. The government provisions "Special Component Plan (SCP), in the budget has been banned by the BJP government which was for the purpose of development and for the welfare of Dalits. Further the provisions for the scholarship of Dalits students were also delayed by the BJP government. The Dalits are saying that, "these delaying are done deliberately by the BJP in order to make the Dalit students drop out from the colleges and Universities.[42]"

3.11- COVID-19 and discrimination against the Indian Muslims

During the time of Covid-19 the hatred of Indian government against its minorities especially the Indian Muslims continue. Firstly, the Indian government, especially the Hindu nationalists, blamed the Muslims for the spread of coronavirus in India. Then the Muslims were not treated equally like Hindus as the treatment of Muslims is prohibited in the same hospital where the Hindus are getting treatment. This shows the racist behavior of Indian government towards its minorities under the government of Bahartiya Janta Party (BJP). After this the Hindu nationalists with the support of central government are asking for the boycott of business run by the Muslims and also they are asking for the social rejection of Muslims. This is the latest ant-Muslim drive in India as the other countries are busy in providing the cure and treatment of their people during the time of this crisis. The Indian government is busy in blaming and marginalizing its own people because of the fact that they belong to other religion than Hinduism. The "Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)" has condemned this Indian attitude towards Muslims. The "World Health Organization" even intervened in this matter and said, "It is very important that we don't profile cases on the basis of racial, religious and ethnic lines."

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[42] Ragini Bhuyan, "The political battle for Dalit votes," *Mint,* November 02, 2017, https://www.livemint.com/Politics/olG5xKe8zJnKS3pyFmzdNP/The-political-battle-for-Dalit-votes.html.

Recently the Hindu extremists are chanting against the Muslims and they are calling the Muslims as "corona, corona" and making Muslims as responsible for the spread of coronavirus in India. The Hindu extremists burned the town of Muslims in Western Bengal, one of the States of India due to these allegations. It shows the worst communal violence and discriminatory treatment against the Muslims in India.

Chapter-4

Influence of the RSS Ideology on India's Regional Agenda

The Current rise of Hindutva ideology in the world's biggest democratic State India will have severe consequences for the regional peace, stability and security. The ruling party BJP came into power with the ideology of "Hindutva", so therefore the whole election campaign of BJP was full of pro-Hindutva sentiments. After coming into power the Indian PM Narendra Modi is continuously making efforts to empower the "Hindutva forces" by empowering the Hindu majority at the cost of other minorities. Since the time when the extremist forces came in to power in India, they not only adopted offensive diplomacy especially towards Pakistan on disrupted territory i.e. State of Jammu and Kashmir but also created a security dilemma in the region. This security dilemma is leading the South Asian region into the threats of nuclear war. The South Asian region is considered the poorest region of the world after Africa, despite the fact that it is 1/3 of the whole population of the world. The condition of human security in the South Asian region is also bad, even the people of South Asia do not have access to the basic necessities of life i.e. health, education, shelter and employment. The regional organization i.e. SARC, which is formed for the purpose to improve the social-economic conditions of the people of South Asia is not functional due to the monopoly of both India and Pakistan.

The hostile relations between India and Pakistan (two biggest States of South Asia) are leading the region into instability as both States have already battled three wars. The main flash point in South Asia is the disputed territory between India and Pakistan is the Kashmir issue. Further the

arms race between India and Pakistan, revocation of Kashmir's special status by the Indian government, RCA and CAA acts in India, proxy war between India and Pakistan on LOC and Eastern border are leading the region towards chaotic and regional instability. Moreover, the Hindutva agenda of BJP government i.e. Akhanad Bharat (greater India) and Hindu majoritarian State has further disturbed the regional peace and stability.[43] Currently the Indian government is involved in the border dispute with China, Nepal and Bhutan. It shows the security risk in the South Asian region due to Hindu nationalist government.

4.1- The influence of Sang Privar and its implications

There is a rise of Hindutva ideology after the second successive victory of BJP in general elections of 2019. There are approximately more than twenty members who belong to Hindu extremist organization RSS; the Akhil Bharatiya Vidya Parishad is the youth wing of RSS. The key ministry during the first era of BJP i.e. national security advisory was also given to a person with Hindutva background i.e. Ajit Dovel, which shows the influence of Sang Parivar on the Modi government. The influence of RSS and Sang Parivar on State's affairs shows that the nuclear button is in the hands of Hindu majoritarian nationalists forces which are highly extremists towards the non-Hindu people living in India. It is clearly the biggest security threat for regional peace. The use of religious card and identity politics by the BJP is going to create more internal instability and communal violence. This politics of racism and the communal violence will impact the regional security and stability as because of this there is an increase in the anti-Pakistan sentiments in Indian people. The aggressive Indian policy towards Pakistan is threatening Pakistan as well as regional security as both States are nuclear power. Indian has hegemonic ambitions as it wanted to increase its influence in the South Asian region as well as in Indian Ocean region, so the only hurdle in the way of India is Pakistan. In this way India wanted to make Pakistan more and weaker and diplomatically isolated which at the end will impact the security of the South Asian region. Pakistan and India already have engaged in three wars i.e. 1958, 1965 and 1971 apart from these wars they have been engaged on Line of Control (LOC) this is also a huge threat for regional peace. The hostile relations of these two big States of the South Asian region are leading towards the economic instability within the region as due to Indo-

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[43] Dr. Khurram Iqbal, "The Rise of Hindutva, Saffron Terrorism and South Asian Regional Security," *JSSA* 5, No. 1 (2019): 48-55.

Pakistan hostile relations there is no regional economic organization. The SAARC organization has become dysfunctional due to the leg pulling of both India and Pakistan as a result there is no economic cooperation in the region.

The use of violence against minorities by the Hindu nationalists could start the new cycle of reactive violence in the region as currently the Muslims are the second largest populations in India. The marginalization of such a large population will have reactions which could disturb the overall situation of the region.

4.2- Greater India agenda of RSS and Its impact on Regional Security

The RSS which is the parental organization of BJP and PM Modi is the life time member of this organization has an agenda of expansionism called "Maha Baharat" (greater India). The RSS take influence from the Hindu Holy book i.e. Bhagavad Gita which talks about the concept of "Maha Bharat", it included the territory of Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives and State of Jammu and Kashmir. The leaders of RSS and the BJP are openly claiming in the public gatherings that the BJP will complete this agenda at the end of year 2024 i.e. BJP MLA Surendra Sing said the India will become Hindu State in year 2024. This is the clear threat for the regional security and stability because it will lead towards the war within the region. The South Asian region which include two nuclear powers i.e. India and Pakistan and if any misadventure happen it will start the nuclear war, so as a result it will have severe consequences for the region. The influence of RSS over the Indian national security is the real danger for the regional peace and it is evident that there are regular meetings between leaders of RSS with the members of government over national security issues.

The RSS and other Hindu majoritarian nationalist organizations have dream of greater India. They wanted to reconstruct the country on the bases of glory of ancient size of "Akhand Baharat". The leaders of Hindu extremists' organizations i.e. RSS and BJP have shown their motives and spoken about the completion of this agenda by rejoining India with Pakistan. The Akhand Baharat included the territories of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal, Burma, Tibet, Bhutan and Bangladesh. In 1965, a Hindu nationalist political party Jana Sang passed a resolution about

the "Akhand Baharat by reunifying India with Pakistan". On December 2015, BJP national secretary Ram Madhav shown his motive that the "RSS and the BJP are still believe that through cultural diplomacy Pakistan and Bangladesh will rejoin India and this will be the completion of Akhand Baharat.[44]"

4.3- Indo-Israel alliance and threat for the region

The Indo-Israel nexus is not somewhat new when it comes to strategic cooperation between different States in International relations. Different States cooperate together for economic, political and for security purposes, same India and Israel are doing. Both India and Israel are cooperating and investing together in different fields i.e. developing of military capabilities, cyber technology, counter-terrorism and space technology.[45]All this cooperation has been done under the agenda of "Made in India projects". But due to the motive of India about leading the region and as Pakistan is its main hurdle; it shows that all these cooperation are against Pakistan. Moreover, Pakistan also does not have good relations with Israel due to the Philistine cause. Israel wanted to see Pakistan as a destabilized country and economically failed, so for this purpose it is supporting India. Israel also supports and backs any offensive move of India against Pakistan i.e. surgical strikes against the State of Pakistan. Secondly, India has followed the same strategy of Israel in annexation of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The main parental organization of the BJP government RSS in the past supported the aggressive "Zionist militarism" in the Palestine against the Arabs, at times covertly and at time overtly. This shows the closeness among the leadership of the BJP government and the Israeli government.

Moreover, India and Israel announced plans to develop MIRSAM for Indian military, and India is disturbing the balance of security in the South Asian region by increasing the arms race. It is disturbing the overall stability of the region because all these military cooperation and arm developments are dragging Pakistan into the arms race.

4.4- Politics of Article 370 and its impact on regional security

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[44] Shyamlal Yadav, "RSS and the idea of Akhand Bharat," *The Indian EXPRESS*, January 04, 2016, https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/rss-akhand-bharat/.

[45] N. A. K. Browne, "A Perspective on India–Israel Defence and Security Ties," Institute for Defense strategic Studies 41, No. 4(2017):3-11.

The article 370 of the Indian Constitution was very important for the State of Jammu and Kashmir because the State of AJK was given semi-autonomy through this article. Newly, the Indian State has revoked this article along with article 35A. There is a criticism against this move of Indian government among the legal and civil society that the government has revoked these two important articles without proper discussion in the Parliament. The International community has already shown their concerns about the current move of Indian government regarding the State of Jammu and Kashmir.[46] The UN secretary general Antonio Guterres has also expressed his displeasure about the revocation of the special status of State of Jammu and Kashmir. It is not only the desecration of Indian Constitution but it is also the break of United Nations Security Council Resolutions, which declared Kashmir as an undecided area.

The revocation of these two articles will have the worst implications for regional security. Firstly, the Indian government will make demographic changes in the State of Jammu and Kashmir (to change the Muslim majority into Hindu majority), this will lead towards bloodshed violence. Secondly, the Indian government is doing massive mass killings of Muslims for this purpose. The government has deployed 800000 military troops, which is not just making the situation tense for AJK but also for the whole region. The forceful demographic change will further escalate the tensions and communal violence between Muslims and Hindus starting from the AJK and will spread across the country.

Secondly, the revocation of these two important articles will further make the Indian and Pakistan relations more unfriendly because this flashpoint between two States can lead towards the nuclear war as both the States were involved in war three times previously. This situation will harmfully impact the regional security of the South Asian region.

4.5- Impact of NRC and CAA on regional stability

Recently on December 11, 2019 Indian government approved the Citizenship Amendment Act and National Register for Citizens, this step is also taken for the implementation of Hindutva agenda. The recent two acts faced criticism and anger across the State as well the United Nations and other International circles show their concern. The United Nations commission for Human rights condemned these acts and declared them "fundamentally discriminatory". These two acts

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[46] Moonis Ahmar. "Indian Secularism and the Erosion of Article 370," *Pakistan Vision* 18, No. 1(2020): 1-10.

at one point favor Hindus but the important thing is that these acts will disturb the stability of the whole region. The stability and peace of the South Asian region is always affected by the offensive policies of the Indian State. The important Indian allies within the region i.e. Bangladesh and Afghanistan have shown their concerns regarding these acts because the acts will cause the influx of refugees towards Bangladesh and Afghanistan as a result their internal security will be disturbed. Apart from the Indian allies, these acts will disturb the internal stability of Pakistan as well because the refugees will also come to Pakistan. Pakistan is already hosting 200 million Afghan refugees, so any further arrival will disturb its own security and economy.

Secondly, Citizens Amendment Act will provide the Hindu minorities from neighboring country Bangladesh to permanently settle in Assam (a Muslim majority area), where there will be a lot of instability, first as with the settlement of Hindu migrants from Bangladesh, Muslim majority will be convert into minority. This will further marginalized the Muslims socio-economically as well as politically because with the Hindu majority population in the State Muslim vote bank will become less dominant factor in electoral politics. Then the migration of Hindus from Bangladesh to Assam State of India will disturb the economic condition of the Muslims. Most Muslims living in Assam have very stable economic conditions but the influx of migrants will lead towards the shortage of economic resources, this will disturb the Muslims. It will lead the Muslim population towards economic crisis and poverty.

The Indian government has already forced 1.3 million people from Assam to leave the State by implementing the National Register for Citizens act i.e. as the government asked the people to prove their nationality by providing the documents. Now, these people have migrated towards Bangladesh and having the less resources Bangladesh will be unable to bear the pressure of these migrants. These millions of people will have no place for shelter. It will disturb the stability and the security of the whole South Asian region and once these people will find no place and resources then out of frustration these people can join the terror networks. These people can act against Indian government and once any misshape will happen in India. The Indian government will blame Pakistan and as a result there will be the possibility of another war in the region. This situation will disturb the security and peace of the region.

The Indian home minister Amith Shah said that the government will soon apply the NRC to the whole Indian State. If this act will be implemented then there will be biggest human crisis in the history of the world i.e. Dalits, Muslims, Christians and other minorities will be expelled from India.

4.6- Water crisis between India and Pakistan and its implications for the regional security of South Asian region

The universal call for freshwater resources has increased vividly over the last few years, especially due to the increase in the number of population and urbanization across the world. Further because of the rapid climate changes and their impacts as well as due to the pressure of water resources compelled all the States of the world to find some maintainable resolutions to their water anguishes. In South Asia the "water security" has become an extremely serious and nonstop issue as South Asia is one of the world's most crowded regions and home to nearly 1/3 of the world's population.

India and Pakistan have been deeply involved in water issues since the independence of both countries from the "British Raj". At the time of patrician in 1947, the 'Indus river basin' which was providing the water to the entire Subcontinent was divided between these two States i.e. India and Pakistan. The important point is that the rivers which are providing the water to Pakistan's irrigations originated from Indian side. After the independence in 1948 India tried to divert the flow of water which is flowing from India to Pakistan, by claiming the sovereign rights on waters. Pakistan tried to resolve this matter through table talks but it failed and finally this issue was resolved by the cooperation of the World Bank in 1960. According to the World Bank's treaty the three eastern rivers i.e. Ravi, Beas and Sutlej were given to India while the Pakistan was given three Western rivers i.e. Indus, Jhelum and Chenab. This treaty was called Indus Water treaty and it was accepted by both sides i.e. India and Pakistan.

In the case of India, use of water as a tool against Pakistan is an important part of Narendra Modi's offensive diplomacy against Pakistan. In order to disturb the internal situation of Pakistan, India is able to release water on the Pakistan side without informing thus it causes the floods in Pakistan as well as the loss of crops and human lives. India is going to build dams i.e. Kishanganga and Ratle hydropower project despite the serious reservations of Pakistan. After

coming into power due to the influence of RSS, the Modi's government at several times threatened Pakistan that it will stop the flow of waters given to Pakistan under the Indus Water treaty. Because of this situation there can be a war on waters between India and Pakistan. In September 2016, the Indian PM Modi referring to the Indus Water treaty said, "Blood and water cannot flow together" and showed his intention to review the treaty.

The involvement of two nuclear States over the issue of water is increasing the tensions and as a result it poses very disturbing implications for the South Asian region. The region with 1/3 of the population, if the two populous nuclear States of the region fail to resolve their water scarcity could lead towards disastrous.

4.8- Politicization of Terrorism by the Modi's government and its impacts of South Asian stability

The politicization of terrorism by the Modi government against Pakistan has become the integral part of Indian foreign policy especially since the BJP came into power. The Indian government has repeatedly practiced this kind of strategy against Pakistan as any terror activity happens in India, the Indian government starts to blame Pakistan for this. The Pathankot attack in 2016 and recently on February 14, 2019 when in Pulwama district of AJ&K 46 Indian soldiers were attacked and killed by a Kashmiri suicide bomber, the Modi government blamed Pakistan for this attack. The Modi government despite the offer made by the Pakistani government did a false operation against Pakistan because of this activity of Indian State the region was at the verge of nuclear war. India has adopted this strategy due to its false strategy in the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

This is mainly happening due to the mistrust and lack of cooperation among the two nuclear States of South Asia and as a result the whole region has to suffer the instability and severe security implications. The Indian hostile relations towards Pakistan especially since the Modi's era, Modi's effective nuclear posture towards Pakistan and increased violations of LOC has made the regional situation further tense. The nuclear doctrine of India has also changed from no first use to first use during the government of BJP; this is going to disturb the overall stability and security risks of the South Asian region.

Importantly, the Modi government is not only involved with Pakistan but also it is involved in the issues of other regional States i.e. Sri Lanka and Nepal. In 2015, the Modi government was involved with Nepal over the Madhesi crisis and border issues. Similarly, India is not comfortable with Sri Lanka as in 2014 Sri Lanka has signed a treaty with China for infrastructure development hence India is not happy with the Sri Lankan government. All these moves of India after the coming of power right-wing religious fundamentalist political parties are making the security condition of the region more and more worried.

4.9- BJP aggressive approach towards Pakistan and implications for the region

After coming into power Prime Minister Narendra Modi has adopted the aggressive approach towards Pakistan. The first BJP government tried hard to isolate Pakistan diplomatically.[47] Secondly the Modi government sandwiched Pakistan as at one hand it is creating instability with the violations of Line of Control. India is using the soil of Afghanistan to create instability in Pakistan as India is busy in terror activities in western border. It is also creating troubles for Pakistan by terror activities in tribal areas of Pakistan with the help of Afghan soil. Indian has spent millions of dollars to improve the infrastructure of Afghanistan in order to increase its influence over Afghan government. The PM of India Modi is using Afghan soil to train Bloch liberation groups against the State of Pakistan. The Indian government with help of the media is trying hard to turn the Afghan public against Pakistan for this purpose they have spent billions of money.

The secret agency of India RAW is busy against anti-Pakistan activities, it is funding and supporting anti-Pakistan groups to disturb Pakistan i.e. Bloch liberation forces, PTM and TTP. Newly the activists of RAW Kulbhushan Jadhav has been arrested by the armed forces of Pakistan, who has confessed that he is involved in many terror related activities in Baluchistan and Karachi. India is also creating mistrust between Pakistan and Iran because India wanted to make CPEC fail with the help of Chabahar Port.[48] This will create mistrust between Pakistan

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[47] Surendra Kumar, "The Narendra Modi Government's Policy Towards Pakistan: Cooperative And Tough Bilateral Diplomacy," *The Journal of International Issues* 21, No. 4 (2017): 5-10. hhttps://www.jstor.org/stable/48531310
[48] Muhammad Nawaz, "Indian Policy to Isolate Pakistan at International Forum and the Way Forward," *Review of Economic and Development Studies*, 5, No. 4 (2019): 706-710.

and Iran and in the end it will increase the tensions amongst Iran and Pakistan and it will disturb the stability of the region.

India is using its media in order to turn its masses against Muslims and Pakistan, this strategy has divided Indian State and it has increased the communal violence within the State. Further the anti-Pakistan sentiments of the Indian people are increasing gap among the people of two nations. This growing gap between the people of two States is making the regional stability at stake.

4.10- The growing Arm Race between India and Pakistan and implications for regional security

The increasing arms race between two nuclear rivals i.e. India and Pakistan has increased under the BJP government, which is directly affecting the regional peace and constancy. The Hindu nationalist government has always had a very aggressive and harsh approach towards Pakistan, so after coming into power, it developed arms and military capabilities more effectively. The increase of arm and military capabilities of India are creating the security imbalance in the region, so to balance the security within the region Pakistan has also increased its military capabilities. This increase of arm and military capabilities has implications for the region, first of all as both the rivals are nuclear power, so any misadventure can lead towards nuclear war.[49] This nuclear war will impact the people of the whole region as both the States have the history of involvement in a number of conflicts i.e. territory and water conflicts.

India under the government of "Hindu nationalist party BJP" is progressively increasing its defense budget because it has hegemonic ambitions. Its total defense budget has doubled under the Modi government. According to Ernst and Young's, India plans to spend over $ 100 billion by 2020. The Indian PM Narendra Modi is keen to increase more and more military power. Apparently India is claiming that all these arm developments are to counter China but due to the security dilemma Pakistan has to increase its arms in order to counter the India hegemonic ambitions. The PM of India has also bought Rafale fighter jets which are worth $8 billion. Likewise India has purchased sophisticated military equipment on 12 February 2020. All this

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[49] Arfin Sudirman, "The India-Pakistani Military and Nuclear Arms Race in Post-Cold War Period: The Regional Security Complex in South Asia*," Global and Strategies* 12, No. 1 (2018): 171-185.

Indian military apparatus will have severe implications for Pakistan and in this way it will impact the region. The approach of the current Indian government towards Pakistan is very offensive which a real concern for regional security is.

The arms race between two hostile States is creating the economic disability within the region as due to the nuclear flash region, the foreign investors are afraid to invest in the region. Secondly, this military and arms race has a direct impact on the tourism of the region which is an important source of economy for the regional States.

Human security is badly disturbed by the arms race as the amount of money which should be spent on human development by two States has been spent on arms. Both the States have low literacy rate, poor health and education facilities, instead of uplifting the lives of their masses both the States are developing arms. The only regional organization SARC has also become the victim of the Indian aggressive and hostile approach especially since the last six years.

4.11- Indo-Sino relations and implications for the region

The tensions between China and India are not new but in the past both the States have fought full scale war in 1962 in that war the China detained the Himalayan zone of India. Since then both the States are involved in different issues. However the relationship of both China and India could not fully improve and became worse in 1988 during the era of Rajiv Gandhi. After this, the Indian Prime minister Rajiv Gandhi met with the Chinese President Deng Xiaoping and resolved the issues related to border management. This meeting led the series of agreements related to the border management that took place between India and China in 1993, 1996 and 2003. There was no such issue between China and India till the year of 2017, but the hegemonic ambitions of Indian State under the Hindu nationalist government led to the recent clash between two nuclear armed States.

Recently both China and India are involved in a dispute over "Ladah valley" and hence it can lead towards the escalations as both the countries have deployed extra troops on the disputed border. The issues between the two States were resolved after the successful meeting between the military sides of the two States but since then both the Chinese and Indian troops are face to face. After this the Chinese President Xi has ordered his military officials to get ready for the

severe circumstances and for the war. Similarly the Indian State has also deployed the extra military troops at Ladakh. This situation can lead towards a nuclear war between two States as any escalation can make the situation worse and this war if it starts can harm the whole region45. On June 16, 2020 the Chinese army officially killed two soldiers and one Colonel of Indian army at Line of Actual Control (Galwan area of Ladakh). The situation between both the countries has been tense over Ladakh since the start of May 2020 both the States share a 3488 km border. Moreover, the meeting between the military officials of two countries to deescalate the situation on 6th June remained unsuccessful which is evident that it could lead towards the war. The bullets were shot for the first time after the Indo-Sino war of 1962. The influence of Hindu fundamentalists over State affairs has made the relations of China, Pakistan, Nepal and Gulf countries worse for India. The Indian State is facing diplomatic isolation because of it's the pro-Hindu policies.

Actually the mantra of Modi and Sang Parivar which is based on the sense of "Hindu superiority" with the nuclear in the hands is a threat not for regional security but also for the peace and stability of the whole world. In the past the same kind of nationalism or ideology of Nazis caused worlds and they have harmed the peace and stability of the world. The same is happening in India.

4.12- Tensions between India and Nepal and its implications for the region

India and Nepal both share more social, political and traditional cohesions than any other State of the South Asian region as both countries share about 1,800 km of open border. Due to their good and brotherly relations they allowed the free movement of people of both States without any visa. But recently because of growing Hindu nationalism in India and its hegemonic character within the region under BJP government disturbed the brotherly relations of both States.

The tensions started between Nepal and India in 2019 when India by unilateral movement by issuing a new political map. This include the territory Kalapani which is the part of Nepal in response the Ministry of foreign Affairs of Nepal rejected the new political map of India by issuing a statement, "The Nepal government believe that the Kalapani is a part of Nepal." The growing tensions between India and Nepal are going to have an impact on regional security. India at one hand is involved in border issues with China and Pakistan while at the other hand it

has opened another Pandora box with Nepal.[50] The South Asian region which is already in the state of war is going to become further unstable because of hegemonic Indian ambitions under the government of BJP. The Indian State also involved hostile relations with Bhutan which is its alley in the region over the territorial issue. It is clear that the Indian State under the BJP government is losing its allies rapidly due to its aggressive approach and it's going to disturb the whole South Asian region. The region is suffering from the policies of the Hindutva government.

Chapter-5

India's International Image under Modi's Regime

The election victory of BJP in 2014 general elections, it was the first time in Indian history since its independence when a Hindu ultra-nationalist party has won complete majority. The experts, academicians and other observers were of the view that the historical step has been taken in the "world's largest democratic State.[51]" This election victory of Hindu nationalist Modi, was a joyful change for his supporters and they were calling it the "New Modi era" has begun in India, "Modi's moment and new change in India. But his victory instantly raised concerns among Indian liberal class and as well as among the minorities because of the political

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[50] Zakir Ullah, "Sino-Indo Ladkha Standoff: Esclating Tensions and its Implications for Regional Stability," *Centre for Global and Strategic Studies Islamabad*, 7 No. 5 (2020):8-16.

[51] Deepitma Shukla, "India- Nepal Relations: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS," *The Indian Journal of Political Science* 67, No. 2 (2020): 5-9.

experience of Modi and the ideological influence of RSS and Sang Parivar on him and his political party BJP.

The politics of Hindu majoritarian nationalism which is based on the ideology of hatred and sense of superiority is not only dividing India internally but it is also defaming World's biggest democratic secular State at International level. The policies of Hindu majoritarian nationalists who are actually religious fundamentalists led India (World's largest secular democratic State) into the populism and ethno-religious partition. Today, all international organizations are openly critiquing the immoderate policies of the existing government. Besides, the bond between the BJP government and RSS is denigrating and creating a mess for the secular and liberal image of Indian State in the eyes of the global community.

The secular image of India around the world has suffered throughout the tenure of Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) government under the leadership of Narendra Modi. According to the intellectuals, academicians, scholars and educated Indian society the BJP government has destroyed the image of secular India. The policies of the BJP government during the 2014 to 2019 shows that the ruling party is making the efforts to affiliate the State with a particular Hindu majority group. Although the BJP is not alone in destroying the fundamentals of Secularism and using religion in its favor as the Congress and other political parties are also equally responsible for this. But the BJP is ahead of them using religion for its political gains and eradicating Secularism in the country. The BJP has shrunk the space for the civil society to express their criticism and disapproval of the policies of the government.[52] Today in India people are afraid to condemn the policies of the ruling party and express their point of view because of Hindu extremists. Even the people from Bollywood and from sports fields have to face the severe consequences once they criticize the BJP government i.e. Sanjay Manjraker, a cricket star has to lose his job from cricket commentary. According to the editor of Daily Times, "The BJP government was in the center before. Never ever was religion used in the way it has been used in the last five years, including the election campaign and during their tenure.[53]"

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[52] Andrea Malji, "The Rise of Hindu Nationalism and Its Regional and Global Ramifications," *Association for Asian Studies* 23.1, no.5 (2018):3-5, https://www.asianstudies.org/publications/eaa/archives/the-rise-of-hindu-nationalism-and-its-regional-and-global-ramifications/

[53] Jeffrey Gettleman, "Kai Schultz, and co, "Under Modi, a Hindu Nationalist Surge Has Further Divided India,"
The New York Times, April 11, 2019, https://research.wou.edu/chicago/chicago-news.

According to another prominent journalist of Bangla daily argued, "Secularism has never been perfected in India. But you have to acknowledge that, even though being a developing country with a major number of people without appropriate education and lower poverty line, we have been kind of a model at least in South Asia. But, during the tenure of Narendra Modi, India's secular image was simply destroyed".

The secular image of India has been affected during the government of BJP because the ruling party has promoted the concept of Hindu supremacy, this shows Secularism has been compromised in India. If India aspires to become a regional power then it has to maintain its Secularism to attract the respect from other regional as well as international community and the people will have to stand against the extremist regime of Modi.

5.1 The Hindu Majoritarian Nationalism and the image of Secular India

The Indian Secularism, which was once considered extraordinary, has been declined by the intensification of Hindutva majoritarian nationalism. The Hindutva majoritarian nationalism has increased in India since the last seven years under Hindu nationalist political party BJP. The BJP after coming into power in 2014 has promoted the attacks on minorities Muslims, Christians and on women and Dalits. The Modi government due to its centralized system of government has restricted the civil rights and freedom of the media. India with the world's second largest population i.e. 1.34 billion, and one of the largest democratic States in the world as well as the oldest democratic State in Asia, Africa and Latin America. India despite declaring itself a secular State since 1947 yet ruled by Hindu majoritarian nationalist and witnessed an increase in religiously and culturally motivated Hindu majoritarian nationalism with zero tolerance against minorities. Recently the United States Commission for International Religious Freedom raised its concern for minorities living in India and for religious freedom as well as shrinking the place for Secularism and democratic values. The report further said that the religiously growing "Hindutva nationalism" in India is bullying the "Indian Secularism as well as its multi-religious" uniqueness.[54] All these alarms are also elevated by several other international organizations i.e. UN, Amnesty International, World Bank and Human Rights Watch.

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[54] Jeffrey Gettleman, "Kai Schultz, and co, "Under Modi, a Hindu Nationalist Surge Has Further Divided India,"
The New York Times, April 11, 2019, https://research.wou.edu/chicago/chicago-news.

The Hindu nationalists suppressed the voice and writings of authors, intellectuals, academicians and artists who condemned and challenged the influence of Hindu nationalists over government affairs and policies. They have defended the use of force, surveillance and physical punishments against them in the name of provoking the public sentiments in order to prevent criticism. The ruling party has given punishment to the many authors and intellectuals under the "anti-national" law due to their disagreement with the current government. In February 2016, the Hindu extremists used the anti-sedition law against the gathering of students, poets, writers and activists who opposed the State repression in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The participants of this gathering were charged with anti-State charges and were arrested. The Hindu extremists have threatened the media to not cover this case although due to the lack of evidence they were released later. But the central government has not condemned this event which shows the support of the BJP government to these Hindu extremists. The leaders of BJP are beating and attacking the Churches by claiming that they are forcefully converting the religion of poor Hindu families. Recently in June, the BJM MP along with the supporters of BJP attacked the church in Jharkhand over religious conversion.

The Modi government has associated the Indian nationalism with Hindutva majoritarian nationalism because the BJP has firm assurance to the Hindu nationalism. This is the basic difference between BJP and Congress because the latter has an ideological basis based on secular values. The Modi has good relations with RSS than the previous leader of BJP Atal Vajpayee due to this the RSS provided the strong support for the Modi to come into power. The strong ideological influence of RSS over the current government's policies give rise to the emergence of a new society with extreme views that has created a mess for Indian Secularism and its image worldwide.

Noticeably, it is a matter of shame for the Secular image of India around the world as the policies of the "current ruling party" are completely opposite to the fundamentals of Secularism. The growing influence of Hindu fundamentalists on the government policies and the endorsement of many controversial laws have not only raised the questions about the future of Secularism in India but also it has offended the status of India in the eyes of the international community. Today the international tourists are afraid of visiting India because of the shrinking of Secularism and growing extremism, moreover many countries are advising their citizens to

not visit India. This is not a good sign for the country which was famous for being the world's largest democratic and Secular State but unfortunately the current government has defamed the country.

5.2 The inclusion of India among Flawed Democratic States

Currently, the policies of Indian State are shaped by the followers of RSS, which are based on the hatred sentiments towards the minorities. The influence of these extremists over Indian State declined the image of "Secular India" across the globe. The Indian State fell ten places to 51st position in the 2019 "Democratic Index's global ranking" because of its extremist policies.[55] This shows how the "Secular image" of Indian State is rapidly declining in the eyes of the global community and international organizations. The primary cause of this downcast grade is the "erosion of civil liberties" in the hands of Hindu extremists. Initially in 2014 before the BJP government "The Economist Intelligence Unit" classified India on 25th number as for as democratic States are concerned. But at the moment it has included Indian State in the list of "flawed democratic" States along with China because of the sharp falling of the secular principles under the present BJP government.

According to "The Economist Intelligence Unit" the Indian State is rapidly moving towards the authoritarian Hindu regime. The BJP government is trying to dominate a diverse Indian State which is multi-religious and cultures and shades them with a comprehensive Hindu label. The BJP government is rapidly controlling the State's institutions for the purpose of exchange of Indian State into a "Hindu majoritarian nationalist State." The followers of BJP and RSS are influencing these institutions culturally and religiously in order. By doing this, they are creating sunshine in order to make their ideology more popular and finally to transform the State into Hindu majoritarian State.

5.3 Impact of Hindu fundamentalists on Indian foreign policy and its implications for Secular image of India

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[55] Sai Manish, "India moves up a rank on The Economist's Democracy Index 2018," *Business Standard*, January 9, 2019, https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-moves-up-a-rank-on-the-economist-s-democracy-index-2018-119010900782_1.htmls

The policies of the current Indian government are based on the concept of Hindu Majoritarian ethnic nationalism and it is causing defame of the secular image of India in front of the international community. The Indian State which was famous for its diverse multicultural and religious Secular Republic State has been defamed by its right-wing religious fundamentalists. After the election victory of BJP in the general elections of 2014, the Indian PM despite his bad political track record tries to build Indian image through the use of soft diplomacy. But the influence of Hindu majoritarian nationalists on the domestic as well as international policies of Indian State compelled him to form the anti-secular policies.[56] All these policies are creating a mess for India at a global level. The "BJP government" has followed the election manifesto after forming the government, which is based on the "ideology of RSS and then concept of Hindu majoritarian State". Before winning the second consecutive term in 2019, the PM Modi has not clearly implemented the Hindutva agenda. During his first term his focus was to improve the economy of India as he used the slogan of "shining and rising India" and secondly he built Indian image at the global level by using soft diplomacy. There was increase in the communal violence between Hindus and minorities i.e. Muslims, Christians, Dalits and Buddhists. The gorillas of RSS were free and they have increased their training centers. Despite all this the central government has not taken some active steps to implement Hindutva agenda.

But after winning the second time in 2019, the BJP more confidently implemented the "Hindutva agenda" by eliminating the principles of Secularism. Therefore Narendra Modi has taken some extraordinary steps in the favor of "Hindu Rashtra" according to the ideology and concept of RSS. The decision of building temple in Ayodhya, implementation of Citizen Amendment Act (CAA), National Registration Act (RCA), annexation of State of Jammu and Kashmir and lynching of Muslims, Christians, Dalits and other minorities. Propagating of Hindu religion and drive of movements to convert people into Hinduism are some of the important steps which he has taken. By taking these steps Prime Minister Modi not only created religious divisions but also because of these policies India's image among the international community is becoming less popular. All these internal disputes are a hindrance for the Indian soft projection of power universally. These policies of Hindu nationalist government are spoiling the secular image of India among the global democratic community. The Indian State declared itself a

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[56] Happymon Jacob, "India's big foreighn policy shake-up," *The Hindu*, October 26, 2019, https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/indias-big-foreign-policy-shake-up/article29801640.ece

secular State through Constitution, so secularism demands equal handling for all citizens irrespective of their religious attachments, culture and ethnicity.

5.4 Damage to the Secular Image of India at regional and International level under Modi's regime

The Modi regime and its policies have damaged the Secular and liberal image of Indian State in front of regional and International community and it is a disaster for the world's largest democratic State. Today the Indian State has tensions nearly with its all bordering States i.e. Pakistan, Bangladesh, China, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka due to the influence of RSS over current government.[57] These tensions and clashes include territorial, water, and interventions in the internal matters of other States. The India State has territorial issues with China of Tibet State and other border issues.[58] The Indian State is playing the role of rival State for China in South Asian region i.e. The US wanted to minimize the influence of China with the help of India in the South Asian region as well as in the South China Sea.

In Sri Lanka India has the history of supporting and funding the terrorist organizations and Sri Lankan rebels against the Sri Lankan State, so it has spoiled the relations with Lankan State.[59] Nepal, another Hindu State which is famous for the Indian influence is moving and developing good friendly relations with China as the Modi regime has not supplied the food, electricity and other essential items when Nepal was facing a crisis. At this critical time China has helped Nepal, so it is moving towards China and is not happy with the policies of the Modi regime.

Similarly another Indian important ally in South Asian region Bangladesh, it is also known that the government of Indira Gandhi at that time has played a role in the creation of Bangladesh and is also not happy with current policies of the Modi government. The recent move of Indian State i.e. The Citizen Amendment Act (CAA) is going to create economic as well as security problems for Bangladesh. The Muslim population in the Indian State i.e. West Bagel is going to lose their jobs and nationality due to CAA and RCA, so they will move towards Bangladesh. The

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[57] Lt Gen Muhammad Zahir ul Islam, "Internal and Policy Conflicts of India Implications on Regional Peace and Stability," Centre for Global and Strategic Studies 5, No.4 (2017):7-11.
[58] Shivam Vij, "Modi's foreign policy puts Modi first, India second," The Print, June 19, 2002, https://theprint.in/opinion/modis-foreign-policy-puts-modi-first-india-second/444910/
[59] By Jeffrey Gettleman and Steven Lee Myers, "China and India Brawl at 14,000 Feet Along the Border," The New York Times, May 30, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/30/world/asia/india-china-border.html

Bangladeshi people have anti-Indian sentiments due to which the Indian Prime Minister Modi has to cancel his recent visit to Bangladesh. There was a protest against Indian PM Modi in Bangladesh; it shows how the policies of the Modi government are creating isolation for India.

The relations of India with Pakistan under the Modi regime are worst as compared to the past or Congress regime. Likewise, Myanmar is also not pleased with Modi over the issue of Rohingya and other border disputes. The relations of India with Iran is also getting hostile due to the close affiliation of Modi towards the US and Israel. Iran is not happy with the Modi government over the issue of annexation of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, Citizens Amendment Act (CAA), RCA and other humanitarian issues of Muslims in Indian State. The Iranian Supreme leader Ayatollah Khumani has categorically condemned the Indian annexation of AJK, ethnic killing of Muslims in Indian State as well as the passing of CAA and RCA acts.

The rising Islam phobia in India is making the relations of India with Middle Eastern States unfriendly. The Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) has recently condemned the discrimination of Indian State towards Muslims in current COVID-19 pandemic and other issues. Today the people and the well-known journalists of Middle Eastern States are openly condemning the Indian PM. They are putting pressure on their States for the diplomatic boycott of Indian government. The Hindu nationalists who are currently working in these States and spreading hatred against Muslims are putting them into the jails. This shows how the discriminatory policies of the Modi regime are creating regional isolation for Indian State. The countries who were India allies are moving away from India due to the control of Hindu fundamentalist over Indian State.

The ultra-nationalist politics of Narendra Modi and BJP government has directed India towards the corrosion of relations with its allies within the region i.e. Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Iran and Afghanistan. It is not only that Pakistan and China are facing the bitter relations of Indian government due to the influence of religious ultra-nationalism but Nepal and Bangladesh, who were the important allies of India in the South Asian region are also facing the brunt of Modi's ultra-nationalist politics. Nepal is going through territorial issues with Indian government over the Kalapani while Bangladesh will have to face the economic and security problems due to the NRC and CAA acts.

The CAA and NRC acts are highly discriminatory towards the Muslims and because of this the PM will have to cancel his visit to Bangladesh which was scheduled last March. There was a protest against the Indian government and PM Modi due to these controversial acts.

The right-wing religious nationalism is creating problems for India internationally as the global community is criticizing the Indian government over its anti-secular policies. The primary root cause of all these bitter relations of Indian with its neighboring States is the influence of RSS on the foreign policy of India.

5.5 The US commission for International Religious Freedom

The freedom of religious beliefs has gone down in India since the Hindu nationalist government came into power in 2014. The communal violence against the religious minorities i.e. Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Dalits have increased. The State of India which is famous for its secular values now is being humiliated by Hindu nationalists due to their anti-secular policies. Recently The US commission for International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), has put India on the list of countries which are violating religious freedom in their States along with Iraq, Cuba, Afghanistan and Azerbaijan.

According to the USCIRF, the conditions of minorities in India have worsened mainly due to the multilayered drive by the Hindu nationalist group RSS, VHP and Sang Parivar. These Hindu nationalists' organizations are actively involved in alienating the non-Hindu and the people of lower castes from Hindu people with the support of BJP government. This alienating between Hindus and non-Hindus helps them to polarize the society and the polarization helps them to increase their support. The Hindu nationalists are doing "saffronise" Indian State through forcefulness, bullying and harassment to the non-Hindu people and lower caste Hindus. Further this report said that in secular India around 1/3 of the State government imposed anti-conversion or anti-cow slaughter laws against non-Hindus and Hindu hordes involved in the killings of Muslims, Christians and Dalits whose families have been involved in "dairy, leather and other beef business". The killings of minorities in the name of cow protection by the Hindu nationalists were almost 10 in 2017 and this number has been continuously increasing. The movement of forced conversions of minorities to Hinduism is active with the support of the central government.

The commission investigated that there is a strong link between current Prime Minister of India Modi with the religiously motivated Hindu extremist groups. These groups are responsible for the ethnic killing of minorities. The report requested the US government to discuss the issue of religious freedom with Indian government because it is the matter of great concern. The commission urged the US government to include this issue in mutual discussion and make some agenda and policy for the future with Indian government. The "most startling and disturbing was the passage of a citizenship amendment act that fast-tracked citizenship for newcomers who belong to six religions but excluded Muslims", said Nadine Maaenza the USCIRF's vice chairman.[60] Further the accusation against Indian State comprised torment, painful and inhuman action against minorities without proper proofs and charges.

This report is a matter of shame for Indian State at global level because the secular country is now being labeled as the country that is violating religious freedom. The result of this report will impact the Indian foreign relations and its secular posture.

Under the government of BJP and Narendra Modi the Secular Indian State has become further narrow-minded and dangerous for the non-Hindus as compared to the past. The growing influence of Hindu majoritarian nationalists is visible in the policies of the existing government. Nearly all policies of the BJP government are in the favor of a particular majority group within the State i.e. Hindu majority group. Therefore this approach of the government led towards the decay of the Secular and liberal values and as a result it has opened the door for the criticism over the status of Secularism in India. This criticism by the local as well as international intellectuals, thinkers and media is exposing how the BJP government is transforming the "liberal and Secular" Indian State into Hindu Majoritarian Nationalist State.

More recently Amnesty International closed its office from India due to the hurdle created by the BJP government. Amnesty International has criticized the present government due to its policies which were against the spirit of secularism and liberal values. According to the spokesperson of Amnesty the government was harassing them for the last two years in order to avoid fair

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[60] United States, Commission on International Religious Freedom, *USCIRF–RECOMMENDED FOR COUNTRIES OF PARTICULAR CONCERN (CPC), https://www.uscirf.gov/sites/default/files/2021-05/India%20Chapter%20AR2021.*

criticism of its policies. The government has detained the accounts of Amnesty so, therefore, out of the financial crisis the institute has to shut out its office. This act of Indian government shows the dwindling space in today's Indian under the BJP government for the human rights institutions. It has attracted criticism from the Indian State and the international community began to question the status of secularism in India.

Recently the EU countries have raised serious concerns over the Indian annexation of Jammu and Kashmir and its cold-hearted behavior towards its minorities.

All these extremist policies of the BJP government are criticized by the international intellectuals, writers, authors and international institutions i.e. United Nations and Human rights commission. Moreover, these policies of the BJP government which are based on "Hindutva ideology" are creating a mess for the unique character of Indian State which is the world's biggest democratic and secular State.

Conclusion

This research concludes that the power and effect of Hindu nationalists has increased in the world's biggest democratic secular State. The second repeated sweeping victory of Hindu nationalist political party Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) shows the decline of secular and political parties and rise of religiously inspired political parties especially Hindu nationalist political parties. The emergence of BJP indicates the rise of politics of right-wing Hindutava in India and decay of leftist ideology which is based on liberal values. Now the "RSS and other Hindu nationalist organizations" will further make the Hindutva forces strong and they will do the marginalization of minorities i.e. Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and lower caste Hindus Dalits. The Muslims and Christians are the primary victim of Hindu nationalist next the Sikhs, Buddhists, Jews and other minorities are facing the same kind of issues and discriminations. Although the BJP was formed in 1980 but it has strong link with RSS, BJS and Sang Parivar, so therefore to understand why BJP is promoting the politics of Hindutva and exterminating the Secularism, one

have to understand the ideology and policies of RSS, BJS and Hindu reforms movements i.e. Arya and Samaj.

The Hindu nationalism is religiously motivated political construct ideology with an extensive historic past. Its primary goal is to revive declining Hindu nation, which according to the leaders and the followers of Hindu nationalism has decayed due to the Muslim and British rule in Sub-continent. Likewise the Muslims were blamed for the partition of Sub-continent in 1947 as they blamed the Muhammad Ali Jinnah (the founder of Pakistan) and other Muslim leaders at that time. According to Hindu nationalists Muslims have broken the unity of "Akhand Baharat" by creating separate country.

The "RSS" and BJP are excluding the minorities and lower caste Hindus from power corridor, economic development, education and other State related activities. Especially Muslims are being marginalized politically and socio-economically since the BJP came into power. The economic meters show the worst economic condition of minorities particularly Muslims and lower Hindu Dalits but the influence of RSS and its affiliation with the current government resisted inclusive development.

The impact of Hindutva ideology is visible from the policies of New Delhi about Pakistan, Kashmir issue and when it comes to Nepal and other neighboring States. Due to the strategy of "Saffronism" by the RSS and other Hindu nationalists under the support of the BJP government can bounce back in the form of reaction from the Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and Dalits. Then the BJP government and the PM Modi will link it with Pakistan and by keeping the hatred and offensive approach of Modi against Pakistan as he previously did during the incident of Palwama, it can lead towards "nuclear war" between two unfriendly countries. This situation will impact the stability and the security of the whole region overall and mainly for Pakistan.

The most unique character of Indian State for which it is famous is its secular constitution despite being multi-religion and multicultural. But today the Hindu nationalism is depriving India from its uniqueness by dividing people on religious bases and increasing communal violence and hatred among them. The ideology upon which the BJP is formed is based on the concept of religious superiority and Hindu majoritarian State. This ideology considers the minorities living in India as inferior and subordinate to Hindus and is against the secular status of

Indian State. The Hindu nationalism which the RSS and the BJP are followers and admire is a dangerous concept which allows the political mobilization of masses in the name of protection of Hindu values and culture. The challenge Secularism and democracy by promoting the idea of Hindu majoritarian State and defend the use of violence against the minorities. The future of Indian secularism under the BJP is dark and it is rapidly shrinking.

The results of general elections 2019 prove that India continues to move towards right-wing politics. After coming into power the government BJP is implementing its agenda "to convert India into Hindu majoritarian State" and the marginalization of minorities. The BJP is governing in 21 States of India with its allies. In 2020 the party will get a majority in the upper house of Indian Parliament, so it will provide the opportunity to pass many bills easily. Although the presence of the right-wing in Indian politics was always there, this trend increased in the last six years mainly due to the leadership crisis in Congress and its failure to deliver. During the second term after winning the elections in 2019, the Modi government took some extraordinary steps in favor of RSS, to implement its agenda like Muslim women divorce bill, revocation of article 370 and 35A, CAA and RCA bills, new domicile law for State of Jammu and Kashmir. The study suggests that all these pro-Hindu policies of the current governing party are going to have severe implications for Indian society specifically and for regional peace and security collectively.

This situation will increase the gap among Indian society which is a pluralistic and multi-religious society as a result it will increase the hatred and ethnic division internally in Indian society. It will lead to further chaos and instability within the State as the country has witnessed the demonstration against the CAA and RCA bills across the Indian State. Moreover the injustice and the sidelining of minorities will lead towards the war like situation within the State and it will impact the security of the State. This chaotic situation can lead towards any misadventure and terror activity which will not disturb the peace of the State but it will also disturb the regional peace.

The study further concludes that Hinutva agenda of Indian government is going to impact the South Asian region which is already a nuclear flash point due hostile relations of India and Pakistan. The current unilateral move of Indian government about the demographic change of State of Jammu and Kashmir is a security threat for the region. The marginalization of the

Kashmiri people is going to impact the region and if the Indian government continues with its Hindutva agenda there will be soon a nuclear war within the region. Due to the "Hindutva agenda" the relations of Indian with its neighbors are hostile i.e. Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan which is not a good sign for the region. Further the controversial bills of Indian government CAA and RCA are also going to disrupt the regional stability.

Moreover all these policies of the BJP government are defaming the secular image of India at global level. Today all leading newspapers and magazines of the world i.e. New York Time, BBC, CNN, Foreign Affairs, Wall Street Journals are condemning the policies of the Modi government. The European countries are issuing advisories for their public to not visit India due to the rise of communal violence and its Hindutva policies i.e. US, Canada, Australia and other European countries. Recently the US commission for religious freedom declared India the worst country for minorities by putting it in the list of most dangerous countries for minorities. This is not a good thing for the country which was formed on the concept of Secularism by its founders. If the trend continues, India will face internal isolation due to the extreme policies of its government.

The increasing influence of "Hindu majoritarian nationalists" over the State's affairs will shake the basics of Secularism in India which is the unique character of pluralistic Indian society. The policies of the current government are dangerous, self-defeating for Indian State as well as its masses. These are not just a threat for Indian Secularism but also threats and will have severe implications for the security of the Indian State as well as South Asian region. This research suggests that in order to save the secular and democratic character of Indian Constitution and its internal unity, the left and liberal and other reformist forces need to unite against these religious fundamentalists. The ideology of RSS which the BJP government and its Prime-minister are following, its aims are nothing less than the formation of Hindu State. After the death of Nehru the Indian State witnessed the weakening of secular forces but under the BJP government the secular forces became weaker than the past while the RSS has been on the rise of Indian political horizon. Finally, the BJP government is trying to create cultural and social influence of Hindutva over the masses in order to turn Indian State into a complete Hindu Majoritarian Nationalist State.

Findings

- The Hindu nationalism and its influence in Indian politics and electoral process have increased since the last seven years. The BJP government which is the political extension of the right wing Hindu nationalist organization favored the Hindu Majoritarianism after coming into power. The RSS organization and other Hindu nationalist forces increased their organizational network and institutions recently in different parts of the Indian State. The current government has given access to the RSS and its different wings over the primary educational system in order to change the syllabus according to the teachings of Hindu Rashtra. These Hindu nationalist organizations and their followers are changing the syllabus according to the Hindu nationalist ideology and beliefs. They are creating hatred in the minds of youth by amending the primary syllabus against the Muslims and other minorities of India. Apart from this all main decisions of the State related to the foreign affairs and security are being made after the discussion with the RSS and VHP.

- The minorities of India are going through the worst situation under the PM Narendra Modi regime. They are being marginalized socially, economically and politically by the government mainly due to their religion. There are campaigns to convert the minorities into Hindu religion by the Chief Minister of the BJP government in one of the biggest states of India Uttar Pardesh. The central government is silent on this issue; they are not taking any practical steps to stop this kind of movement. This shows that the future of minorities and the Secularism in India is not bright at all under this Hindu nationalist government. The senior leaders and the ministers of the government are openly threatening the Muslims even though they are not considering them equal citizens at all. Hindu are given priorities in the government jobs over the people of other religions, this is against the spirit of the secular State.

The Citizens Amendment Act and National Registration Act are the latest example of the marginalization of the minorities under the Hindu nationalist government. The basic purpose of the CAA and NRC is to increase make the demographic changes of the areas with Muslim and Dalit majority into minority. This shows that the current government is following the footsteps of "Hindutva nationalism" and the RSS. Moreover, the recent developments by the BJP government in the State of Jammu and Kashmir are the attack

on the fundamentals of Secularism. Further, all these events and developments In Indian State by the BJP government are raising severe questions about the future of Secularism in India. These developments are showing the decay of Secularism in India and the emergence of Hindutva Majoritarian nationalism in Indian politics.

➢ The emergence of Hindutva nationalism in India is mainly because of the decay of secular forces and poor economic conditions of the people. Moreover, the South Asian factor, colonial monopoly and the history of communal violence are the main reasons for the decline in Secularism in India. The secular parties especially the Congress government remained unable to deliver and protect the rights of the minorities which gave the space to the Hindu nationalists to get success in electoral politics. There were attacks on the places of the worships of the Muslims, Sikhs and Christians during the government of the Congress i.e. Golden temple, demolition of the Babri mosque and burning of Churches. These factors weakened the secular system in India and the people out of frustration supported the religious parties which faded the secular forces.

Moreover, the religious history of South Asia and the religious influence on the lives of the South Asian people is the main hurdle in the way of Secularism in India. The religion cannot be separate from the people of India, so due limited knowledge about the Secularism people of India consider Secularism as conspiracy against the Hindus. Apart from this the monopoly of the British Raj, communal divisions as well as internal divisions are also the main reasons for the decay of Secularism. The poor economic situation of the Indian people is also the reason for the emergence of the Hindu nationalism. The Congress government, despite its long ruling career, remained unable to improve the economic conditions of the people. The masses out of the frustration from the Congress government supported the BJP which is Hindu nationalist political party.

➢ There are severe security threats for the regional stability and peace due to the increasing influence of Hindu nationalism in India. Today the Modi government has issues with nearly all neighboring States i.e. China, Pakistan, Nepal and Bhutan. This shows how the South Asian region is disturbed mainly because of the fascist Hindu nationalist regime and the influence of Hindutva over the decisions related to the security matters.

Moreover, the CAA and RCA acts are going to create internal problems for Bangladesh. The Muslims of the Assam State will migrate towards Bangladesh and the Bangladeshi government with migrated people will face severe economic and security issues. The security and economic crisis in Bangladesh will disturb the stability of the whole South Asian region.

The current Indian government is sponsoring the terrorism in Pakistan by using the soil of Afghanistan; as a result the stability of the Pakistan is at stake. Moreover the Indian terror activities in the State of Jammu and Kashmir are also creating problems for regional security and stability. Apart from this the aggressive approach of Indian government towards Nepal and Bhutan is also disturbing the whole region. All these developments and activities are the result of the influence of Hindutva and RSS over the BJP government.

➢ The increasing phenomenon of Hindu nationalism and the policies of the BJP government are defaming the image of the world's largest democratic Secular State of India. The Indian government is facing severe criticism from across the world because of its approach towards its minorities. Recently the US institute for the freedom of religions declared India the worst country for the freedom of religion and the rights of the minorities. The president of the security council of the UN General Assembly condemned the Indian government for its activities in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The CAA and RCA acts are also defaming the secular image of Indian State. Additionally, the EU continuously raised questions about the Human rights issues in India.

Moreover, the policies of the current Indian government damaged the secular image of the Indian State and it also exposed the influence of Hindutva and RSS over the foreign policy of India which led towards regional issues. Due to its issues with neighboring States. The intellectuals of Arab States i.e. UAE, KSA, Qatar and Kuwait are now openly criticizing the policies of Indian State against the Muslims. The alley of India within the region i.e. Bangladesh and Afghanistan also criticized the CAA and RCA acts and declared them against the Muslims. The Indian government is facing challenges to

maintain its secular image in front of its allies as well as these activities is defaming the secular image of Indian State at international level.

Recommendations

In order to secure the Secular values in Indian State there is need to take certain steps to avoid any further "Gujarat " like incident. Moreover, there is a need of the hour to expose the "Hindutva" forces, their ideology and motives in order to save the future of the Indian Secularism, democracy and the future of the minorities living in India. The Hindutva politics in India is making the South Asian region unstable and shifting it towards the nuclear war i.e. due to Kashmir issue and aggressive Indian attitude towards its neighbors i.e. Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

➢ Firstly there is a need to expand the local awareness across India about the rise of Hindu nationalism and its impacts on Secularism. The different think tanks, NGOs and experts should educate the people about the close ties of the current government and Hindu nationalists' forces. They should expose the true face of Hindu nationalists and their motives. The Indian people should be given awareness about their uniqueness of having the world's largest democratic State and about the benefits of Secularism and democracy. Media should expose the militant ideology of the RSS and other Hindu nationalists' organizations.

➢ Secondly, the liberal and secular forces should come on the front line to secure the future of Secularism and liberal values. They should expose the terror activities and discriminations of minorities in the hands of Hindu nationalist forces. The liberal and secular forces can play an important role in securing the secular values in India; they should organize the events and seminars where all these issues and their solutions should be discussed. Moreover, they should minimize the public misperception about Secularism, the true picture of Secularism and its benefits should be explained to the common people. The Muslims, Christians and other minorities of India should make the secular forces stronger than the nationalist forces by supporting them in the electoral process. The minorities should support secular political parties instead of supporting their religious parties. Further, the Muslims, Christians and other minorities should build their political parties on secular and modern values instead of religious orthodox.

➢ Thirdly, the political parties having leftist ideology and secular ideology especially the Congress should play its role in order to secure the country from internal division and

communal violence. These political parties should put their personal conflicts aside and should join hands together to counter the Hindutva ideology. These political parties should give confidence to the minorities by protecting their socio-economic, religious and political rights. This will increase their trust in Secularism and they will play their part against the religious orthodox.

➢ Fourthly, the sensible media groups especially the electronic media should play its part as they can educate the people on the issue of Hindu nationalism and their harmful policies for the country. These media groups should pressurize the government that it should not eradicate the secular character of Indian State as well as for the sake of regional peace and stability.

➢ Fifthly, the International community, especially the US, UN and European countries should play their role. They should pressurize the Indian government that it should not take anti-minorities steps which are raising the questions about the future of India minorities. Further they should have compelled Indian government to resolve the Kashmir issue according to the UN resolution for the sake of protection of regional peace and stability. The global community should also compel India that it should treat the minorities equally like Hindus.

➢ India must clean its political system from "sadhus and saints", in order to avoid the influence of religions on the electoral process. The episode of destruction of Babri mosque shows the influence of sadhus and other Hindu fundamentalists on the public for the sake of electoral politics. Similarly the element of extremism from Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and other religions must be decreased by cleaning of the political system and electoral process. The political leadership of all major parties should not use the religious card for the sake of their political gains.

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