**Indian Minorities Face Serious Risks**

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The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) is an Indian right-wing, Hindu nationalist organization. The organization was founded in 1925 to promote Hindu culture and protect the Hindu community. In recent years, the RSS has been accused of promoting a form of marketing fascism through its association with Hindutva, a term that refers to the ideology of making India a Hindu nation. Hindutva is a political ideology that seeks to establish a Hindu state in India. It is based on the belief that India is a Hindu nation, and that all Indians are Hindu by virtue of their culture, history, and traditions. The RSS, along with other organizations associated with the Hindutva movement, has been accused of using marketing tactics to promote its ideology and gain support among the Hindu community.

The communally charged political parties and organizations are prioritizing the Hindu religion over the others, and the secular fabric of the Indian society is showing glaring up. This is a disturbing trend, which gravely affects the fine balance, that India as a country maintained thus far. A secular democracy is bound to have the presence and practice of many religions and they can co-exist without any conflict unless the nation-state maintains plural character by equally respecting, protecting and accommodating all religions. The Indian State under BJP is pushing its project of majoritarianism as its point of governance and has been gaining some serious momentum since 2014 and counting to the detriment of the hapless minorities especially the Muslims of Hindutva Bharat.

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The present scenario has created insecurity amongst the minorities who feel threatened by state-sponsored religious fundamentalism and cultural fascist nationalism. What is happening now is the polarization of communities based on religious persuasions to which they adhere. The communal parties to secure Hindu votes are polarizing society and, in the process, creating a Hindu vote bank. It is in line with their vision and manifesto that in a civil society when majority community belonging to Hinduism ought to appropriate the existing political and institutional processes according to their whims and wishes.

The reason is the very words that are being used by the proponents of Hindutva such as “nation” and “religion” imply uniformity and division. It is not unity in uniformity but, unity in diversity that the RSS/BJP just cannot fathom or abide by. Can any country or race or caste or community exist as an isolated island in an era of a plural and multi-religious world? Therefore, those who believe in secular principles and pluralistic values across religious-cultural, class-caste and gender divides should resist and oppose the present project of Hindutva before it becomes a monster.

It is atrocious that an organization, which had been banned twice for anti-national activities by the Government of India after Independence should pose as the controlling authority of patriotism in the country. The large-scale organized killings of the Muslims and the destruction of their properties in Gujarat by the RSS cadres is the result of a well-thought-out philosophy of hatred towards the minorities preached for more than three-quarters of a century. However, it will not be possible to understand the rise of recent fascist Hindu nationalism without going into the history of its origin and development.

The ideology of Hindu Nationalism which developed in the second half of the 19th century under the leadership of high-caste Brahmin Hindus had two essential elements. The first was a deep hatred towards the Muslims with a strong urge to destroy them violently. The second was a deep love and liking for the imperialist rulers. The philosophy of the Hindu Rashtra (Nation) has never lost sight of these two essential elements of its structure. The RSS demands total loyalty to the Hindu Nation from the minorities. It is another thing that it does not feel it proper to be loyal to the constitutional-legal set-up of India.

The study of Prarthana (prayer) and Pratigya (oath) as practised in the branches of the RSS is an example of how Indian nationalism has been equated with Hinduism. Significantly, both the Prarthana and Pratigya are in direct contravention of the existence of an Indian Secular State where secularism is an important ‘Basic Feature’ of the Constitution of India. One of the key tactics used by the RSS and other organizations associated with Hindutva is the use of News channels and social media to spread their message. The RSS has a large presence on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp, where it shares news, articles, and videos that promote its ideology and peddle fake news to spread hate and mass hysteria. One way in which RSS promotes Hindutva is through the use of marketing techniques. These marketing strategies are designed to appeal to the emotions and biases of potential supporters and to persuade them to support the organization and its goals. The organization also uses these platforms to organize events and rallies, where it can reach a large audience and gain support for its cause.

One example of this is the use of slogans and catchphrases by RSS. These slogans are intended to evoke feelings of pride and nationalism among Hindus and to create a sense of belonging among those who support the organization. For example, the slogan “Jai Shri Ram” (meaning “Hail Lord Ram”) has become a rallying cry for RSS supporters. This slogan is meant to evoke feelings of devotion and respect for one of the most revered Hindu gods, and to create a sense of fear and servitude amongst the minorities. Another way in which RSS uses marketing techniques to promote Hindutva is through the use of symbols and imagery. The organization’s members often use the saffron flag, which is associated with Hinduism, as a symbol of their support for the cause. They also use images of Hindu gods and goddesses, such as Ram and Durga, to promote their beliefs and to appeal to the emotions of potential supporters.

In the light of facts discussed above, it should not be difficult to comprehend that RSS/BJP and its camp followers present the greatest danger to India and its secular polity ethos. The shocking reality is that except RSS/BJP & Hindutva clan all those who want to supposedly harm Indian democracy (like Naxalites, Kashmiris and regional separatist groups) have met with the brute force of the Indian State. But the Hindutva Fascists backed by the ruling BJP government have been given a free run despite open violent preaching for overthrowing the democratic-secular Indian polity. This is despite the fact that Neo-Nazis of Europe have openly disclosed their close affinity with RSS and its clan and offered to help in overthrowing democracy in India & elsewhere. Imagine if the same ideology was preached by ‘Dalit, Muslim, Sikh or any other minority, their fate would have been sealed by bullet or jail. We urgently need to counter the serious danger posed by RSS and its fascist ideology for the sake of the region and India itself.

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