**Exceptionally Incendiary Rhetoric**

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Narendra Modi is seeking the premiership of the country for the record third time. The election process is already underway. During his election campaign being true to RSS ideology of ‘Hindutva’ he kept his focus on anti-Muslim rhetoric and working for the betterment of Hindus. During a rally in Rajasthan made very controversial remarks calling the Muslims ‘infiltrators’ adding that if the opposition congress party won the elections it would give the country’s wealth to them. A journalist of Indian origin Salil Tripathi, writing in the Guardian on Saturday, termed Modi’s speech as exceptionally incendiary rhetoric ostensibly meant to capture and maintain his Hindu voter base.

Such populous slogans steeped in communal overtones have a devastating impact on social harmony. It gives rise to religious polarization and sectarian conflicts the glimpses of which have been continuously seen in India since Modi has taken over the reins of the country. The most regrettable phenomenon is that the bulk of the Indian media has been supporting his communal politics. Though the Congress party has taken exception to Modi’s remarks and also asked the election commission to take notice of these highly provocative remarks, there has been no response.

The fact is that Modi, since his advent to power, has taken multiple anti-Muslimism steps, vitiating the secular face of India and turning it into a majoritarian state. To begin with, the Modi government promulgated a national citizens register in Assam; depriving 1.9 Muslims of Indian citizenship and then came up with the Citizenship Amendment Act. Both these legislations are classic examples of communal bias against Modi’s policies. These legislations did spark widespread protest in India particularly the enactment of the Citizenship Amendment Act. More than 50 Muslims were killed during the riots. It is pertinent to mention that in the wake of these killings, UN Human Rights Chief Michelle Bachelet moved the Indian Supreme Court against the controversial legislation passed by the Indian parliament.

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The situation created by the BJP government in India was not restricted to condemnation by the international community but there was also great resentment within India. Former Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, in an article published in the Hindu on 6th March 2020, maintained, “The truth is that the current situation is very grim and morose.

The India that we know and cherish is slipping away fast. Willfully stoked communal tensions, gross economic mismanagement and an external health shock are threatening to derail India’s progress and standing. It is time to confront the harsh reality of the grave risks we face as a nation and address them squarely and sufficiently. India faces imminent danger from social disharmony. I deeply worry that his potent combination of risks may not only rupture the sould of India but also diminish oru global standing as an economic and democratic power in the world. Delhi has been subjected to extreme violence over the past few weeks. We have lost nearly 50 of our fellow Indians for no reason. Several hundred people have suffered injuries.

Communal tensions have been stoked and flames of religious intolerance fanned by the unruly sections of our society including the political class. Institutions of law and order have abandoned their dharma to protect citizens. Institution of justice and fourth pillar of state, the media, have also failed us.

Every act of sectarian violence is blemish on mahatma Gandhi’s India. Just in a matter of few years, India has slid rapidly from being a global showcase of model economic development through liberal democratic methods to a strife-ridden majoritarian state in economic despair. I believe that the government must quickly embark on a corrective course. It should withdraw or amend the Citizenship Act, end the toxic social climate and foster national unity.”

The Modi government did not pay any heed to the advice rendered by Manmohan sigh and continued pursuing the path dictated by the RSS ideology of ‘Hindutva’. Violence against Muslims, desecration of their worship places and the building of temples in their centuries-old mosques are frequent spectacles. Salil Tripathi sums up Modi’s intentions and acts in these words, “The vehemence of Modi’s speech suggests that after 10 years of his government is running out of tricks and wants to ensure that the BJP’s core voters – angry, fundamentalist Hindus – won’t desert him. Modi has delivered many of the contentious issues that were on Hindu nationalists wish list: the supreme court has upheld the government’s decision to revoke Kashmir’s special status, his government has outlawed the Muslim practice of ‘instant divorce’ and the ram temple has been built in Ayodhya after the supreme court rule in Hindus favour.”

Modi has not only resorted to communal policies within India to appease his Hindu voter base but has also whipped up the anti-Pakistan narrative to win elections. He staged the Pulwama incident before the elections to win the elections. He also sent planes to attack an alleged terrorist camp at Balakot to assuage anti-Pakistan sentiment not realising the consequences of that belligerence. Pakistan gave a befitting reply to the Indian misadventure by downing two of its planes and capturing one pilot. Things might have taken an ugly turn but with the intervention of the friendly countries, the situation was defused.

The RSS ideology of ‘Hindutva’ is like nazism and poses a great threat to regional peace, more so to the security of Pakistan which has time and again warned the international community and the un about the dangers that are lurking in the region because of Modi’s policies. But regrettably, neither the UN nor the powers like us and its allies who can exert their pressure in stopping Modi in its tracks have shown criminal indifference to the emerging situation, India is being rewarded for its support to stop China policy. These countries also look at the regional situation through the prism of their strategic and commercial interests.

Modi’s likely success in these elections will give licence to him to keep pursuing his communal policies within India and posing a threat to the security of the region. His policies constituted an affront to the conscience of the global community and all those who take pride in their humanitarian credentials. It was time that the world took notice of the unfolding situation in this region and saved it from likely disaster. They must realize that their strategic and commercial interests would also be jeopardized if the confrontation between Pakistan and India attained a higher trajectory.

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