



ISSN Print: 2394-7500
ISSN Online: 2394-5869
Impact Factor: 8.4
IJAR 2022; 8(12): 262-267
www.allresearchjournal.com
Received: 09-10-2022
Accepted: 16-11-2022

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Ideology of Bharatiya Janata Party

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Abstract

The only factor that explains the mushroom growth of political parties in India is the difference in ideology. While some of them are pro-liberalization, some others are anti-capitalism. The ideological differences also exist in social sphere with some political factions swearing by Hindu nationalism and the rest seem quite content with progressive westernization. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), expressing full faith in Hindu nationalism, socialism, secularism, integral humanism and democracy, lays emphasis on nationalism based on cultural and civilizational ethos. From Ram Janambhoomi movement, Uniform Civil Code to good governance, the party has been prudently selecting and taking stand on issues of national importance to gain better visibility.

Keywords: Ideology, Bharatiya Janata Party, political parties

Introduction

The ideology of the BJP could be traced back to the roots of the Bhartiya Jana Sangh. After the foundation of the Jana Sangh, Deendayal Upadhyaya developed a set of concepts under the name of integral humanism. This concept was developed in 1965 and came to be accepted like the Jana Sangh's official doctrine. Upadhyaya's integral humanism emphasizes the significance of a complete man comprising body, mind, soul and intellect. He advocated democracy, yet opposed both capitalism and communism^[1]. The Jana Sangh laid emphasis on the establishment of value-based politics and swadeshi as a motto in relation to industrializing the country so as to produce indigenous articles according to people's needs. It also set out its philosophy in terms of one people, one nation and one culture. According to Craig Baxter, "the nationalism of one nation must be based on undivided allegiances to Bharat as a whole. Unity in diversity has been the characteristic feature of Bharatiya culture, which is a synthesis of different regional, local and tribal growth. While the very idea of a theocratic state is foreign to Bharat, secularism is only a euphemism for the policy of Muslim appeasement. To the Jana Sangh, secularism and theocracy are not the only alternatives; there is a middle ground wherein men and women of various faiths, speaking different languages and residing in different parts of the country will live in an atmosphere of unity, freedom and goodwill under the law^[2]."

After 1951, the Jana Sangh became the main representative of the right-wing policies in Indian politics, emphasizing on conservatism, militant nationalism and Hindu communalism. In fact, the ideological base and the growth of the party were shaped by its emotional attachment to the RSS. Consequently, the ideology of the Jana Sangh was molded by diverse sections of nationalists and reformers like Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Swami Vivekananda, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, etc. the main ideologues of neo-Hindu Nationalism. They used cultural symbols to promote Hinduism as well as to mobilize people for national movement^[3].

With the emergence of the BJP, the party sought to effect a makeover in its image through ideological rhetoric. In its inaugural session, as stated earlier, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the founder President of the BJP emphasized the fact that the BJP was not simply a new name of the former Jana Sangh but it also represented the inspirations and aspirations of Jai Prakash Narayan. On this occasion he said, "I believe that the country's crisis is essentially a moral crisis. The biggest curse of our life is that moral values have given the way to self-seeking and power-lust and politics has become a pure power game^[4]." He held that this moral degradation had permeated Indian society and politics.

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He also proposed Gandhian socialism and positive secularism as the party's creed and emphasized that the BJP's secularism was different from that of the Congress, which was biased in favour of the minorities to consolidate its „vote bank“. In fact, this attempt to appropriate the Gandhian message of the masses found expression in the BJP's Constitution, where the word "Hindu" did not make a single appearance. The only discernible reference to the old Jana Sangh creed was to Upadhyaya's integral humanism", which was used under the heading in which the party's „Five Commitments“ were set out. Thus, it was explained, was insofar as „decentralized economy, integral humanism and Gandhian socialism are all manifestation of one and the same continuing theme ^[5].

Hindu nationalism and national integration

The BJP emphasizes Hindu nationalism and national integration. It believes that Indians are living in an era of nation states and welfare of the people, largely depends on national efforts. India is one nation and Indians are one people, constituting and mutually accommodating plurality of religions, faiths, ideologies, languages and interests. People of different faiths and different ideologies should be able to co-exist in peace and harmony with one another. National consensus is possible when the development of one social group leads to the development of other social groups. Those who have external or extra territorial loyalties or are engaged in anti-social activities cannot be expected to contribute to national consensus and, therefore, will have to be kept out. The party is pledged to build up India a strong and prosperous nation, which is modern, progressive and enlightened in outlook proudly drawing inspiration from India's ancient culture and values and playing an important role in the comity of nations for the establishment of peace and a just international order ^[6].

Many Hindu nationalists argue that the partition of India on the basis of religion and the creation of the Muslim majority Pakistan was itself a testimony to the failure of Nehruvian ideology of Indian nationalism. They believe that if Muslim nationalism was the cause for the creation of Pakistan, logically Hindu nationalism should have been dominant in the Indian state. They also reject the ideology that India has a composite or synthetic culture. They hold that Buddhist, Jain, and Sikh cultures are the sub-cultures of Hinduism because they were born out of Hinduism and they are a part of Bhartiya Culture ^[7].

The BJP continues to adhere to a specific ideology of Hindu Nationalism, which has a long genealogy in the Indian context dating back to the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. Suhas Palshikar argues, "Religio-cultural homogenization and the search for Hindu cultural hegemony are key defining features of the politics of *Hindutva*. This political project claims that India's nationhood is based on Hindu cultural-religious traditions, that Indian culture is primarily Hindu culture, that Hindu religion and culture are superior. This „Hindu nationalist“ position is suspicious of the non-Hindu communities and manifests an express animosity towards Muslims. Given the nature of this ideological position, the prospect of the BJP becoming „centrist“ appears curious because it would involve toning down many of these claims and, above all, it would mean giving up on homogenization-hegemony project ^[8]."

As stated earlier, the BJP is committed to the concept of one nation, one people and one culture. The nationalist vision of the party is not merely bound by the geographical political identity of Bharat but it is referred to by India's timeless cultural heritage. This cultural heritage which is central to all regions, religions and languages, is a civilizational identity and constitutes the cultural nationalism of India which is the core of *Hindutva*. The BJP held the view that every effort to characterize *Hindutva* as a sectarian or exclusive idea had failed as the people of India had repeatedly rejected such a view and the Supreme Court too, finally endorsed the true meaning and content of *Hindutva* as being consistent with the true meaning and definition of secularism. In fact, *Hindutva* accepts as sacred all forms of belief and worship. The party is convinced that *Hindutva* has immense potentiality to re-energize this nation and strengthen and discipline it to undertake the arduous task of nation-building. This can and does trigger a higher level of patriotism that can transform the country to greater levels of efficiency and performance.

After 1984, the BJP revived the strategy of militant Hindu nationalism which enabled it to muster the support of the RSS. The party has rejected Savarkar's version of *Hindutva* which emphasized territorial and cultural nationalism, and was comparatively broad based. Now it has adopted Golwalkar's ideology of *Hindutva* which rejected the theories of territorial nationalism. The BJP also favoured the Golwalkar's concept of Hinduism in which he said that the minorities would have to become Hindus not by choice but against their will, or else they would have to face violence and threat from the Hindus. This concept, according to which *Hindutva* emphasizes the creation of Hindu empire by conquest and by engaging in the task of temple rescuing activities, was readily accepted and upheld more prominently by the RSS and VHP and to a lesser extent by the BJP. According to the BJP, nationalism is rooted in the acceptance of Hinduism as a religious identity, and India's national identity has its roots in Hindu culture and should incorporate the traditions, values, practices and beliefs of Hindu heritage, as the Hindus constitute majority.

Integral humanism: An alternative

The BJP believes in Deendayal Upadhyaya's ideology of integral humanism. In fact, Deendayal wanted to evolve such a political philosophy which must be in tune with the nature and tradition of Bharat, and can lead to all around progress of the nation. According to him, "...It is necessary that we consider integral humanism in all its aspects. So long as the country was under the yoke of the British rule, all the movements and policies in the country had one principal aim to drive out the foreign rulers and to achieve independence. But what would be the face of new Bharat after independence? In which direction were we to advance? These questions were precisely thought out. It would not be correct to say that no thought was devoted to these aspects. There were people who even at the time had considered these questions. Gandhiji himself had set out his idea of the independent Bharat in his book „Hind Swaraj“. Prior to this, Lokmanya Tilak discussed the philosophy basis of the rejuvenation of Bharat in his book "Gita Rahasya". He gave a comparative discussion of various schools of thought current all over the world at that time...from time to time; the Congressmen or others have declared welfare state,

socialism, liberalism, etc. as their aims. Slogans have been raised. But this ideology attached little significance to the philosophies, apart from the slogans." The need for integral humanism was felt in independent India primarily because ideological differences were kept aside in order to achieve the collective goal of independence and self-rule. The need for establishing coherent socio-economic ideologies was also felt as there was an environment of ideological haziness in the country both in the Congress and their opponents. Nehru had his own inclination towards socialism, bordering on blind faith which was criticized by both the lefts and rights. In such conditions, Deendayal Upadhyaya felt that the rise in opportunism in the ruling party as well as opposition parties was detrimental to national interests. Many in the opposition parties were of the viewpoint that one could adopt anything from extreme Marxism to capitalism just to defeat the Congress. The presence of people from all extremes, from right to left in the Congress also created a sense of dissatisfaction and vagueness in the polity.

Upadhyaya rejected the economic policies of Nehru and industrialization on the ground that they were borrowed from the west in which cultural and spiritual heritage of the country was disregarded. He emphasized to work out a balance between the Bhartiya and western thinking in view of the dynamic nature of society and culture heritage of the country. He said that India should seek a reconciliation of spiritualism and materialism. In fact, the Nehruvian model of economic development was based on western ideas which have failed to alleviate poverty in the country. The philosophy of integral humanism, following the essentials of Indian culture, seeks to discover the unity underlying diversity which takes an integrated view of both the society and the individual and finds that basically there is no conflict between them. Without the individual there is no society, and without society the individual can hardly exist^[9]. Deendayal Upadhyaya said, "If we analyze the situation we shall discover that the modes of thinking of an individual and of a society are always different. These two do not bear arithmetic relation. If a thousand good men gather together it cannot be said for certain that they will think similarly of good things." In Hinduism an individual's moral and material development is possible when he is guided by the Dharma. According to Deendayal Upadhyaya, Dharma is not a religion and not confined to temple or mosques. Worship of God is only a part of Dharma. Dharma is much wider. Many misconceptions that originated from faulty English translations include this most harmful confusion of Dharma with religion. Religion means a creed or a sect; it does not mean Dharma. On the other hand, Dharma is concerned with all aspects of life. It sustains the society. Even further, it sustains the whole world. That which sustains is Dharma. In the context of society it (Dharma) is defined as „the enunciation of all those duties and obligations of everyone, both as an individual and as a member of the society, at different stages in life and different roles for attainment of the ultimate purpose of human existence“^[10].

In politics, Dharma encourages the individual, society, state and rulers. Rajya Dharma does not mean a theocratic state. In a theocratic state, one religion has all the rights and advantages, and there are direct or indirect restrictions on all other religions. Dharma Rajya accepts the importance of religion in the peace, happiness and progress of an

individual. Therefore, the state has the responsibility to maintain an atmosphere in which every individual can follow the religion of his choice and live in peace. The freedom has its inherent limits. In fact, Dharma Rajya ensures religious freedom and is not theocratic state. The BJP offered the philosophy of integral humanism as developed by Upadhyaya as an alternative to socialism of Jawaharlal Nehru. As stated earlier, Nehru's ideology was a justification of cultural domination of India by the west both in economic and political terms, while Upadhyaya's ideology is much closer to Gandhian philosophy of Socialism^[11].

The BJP's enchantment with integral humanism of Deendayal Upadhyaya is seen in its election manifesto of 1996. In this manifesto, the party emphasized social harmony. According to BJP manifesto, "The Bhartiya Janata Party's social philosophy, which is the bedrock of its social agenda, is rooted in integral humanism. It rules out contradictions between society and its various components, as also between society and individual, or, for that matter, between the family, the basic building brick of our social structure, and the individual. From this stem, the BJP's commitment to the eradication of social and economic disparities that have prevented India from emerging as a modern, dynamic nation; to a creation of socially integrated nation. The BJP will help all socially and economically weak and backward sections of society, through special welfare and other schemes, to reach their full potential, for us, it is a historic task which we are resolved to fulfill." However, about integral humanism model of India's economic and technological development, Hindu nationalists contradict themselves on both ideological and practical levels. "They advocate the acceptance of religious diversity and respect for others" teachings, yet, as seen earlier, display little tolerance for non-Hindu minorities, especially for the followers of Islam. They advocate extension of political democracy to economic and social spheres without specifying how such ideals could be achieved^[12]."

Eventually, the integral humanism forms the basic philosophy of the BJP which enshrines the political, social, economic and religious developmental ideas of the party. The BJP considers this ideology as a doctrine in consonance with ancient Indian ethos. The integral humanism, being a part of Indian philosophy, builds up a new social order which is capable of resolving modern conflicts and abolishing all types of exploitation in the society. This integral approach establishes a symbiotic relationship between the whole society and the individuals. It also recognizes the urge for freedom, on the part of both individual and the nation, as natural. Democracy is a device to uphold the rights of the people, which are not only confined to political participation to safeguard the people's rights but are also extended to economic and social spheres.

Commitment to democracy

The BJP believes that for all its shortcomings, democracy is the best system of governance. It feels that the soul of the Indian democracy lies in the innate desire of the people for equality and freedom from exploitation. Most of the founding leaders of the BJP had done a lot to establish and strengthen democracy by participating in freedom movement and other movements too. The Party aims at establishing a democratic state which guarantees to all

citizens, irrespective of caste, colour, creed or sex, political, social and economic justice, equality of opportunities and liberty of faith and expression ^[13]. According to the philosophy of the BJP, emergency was the biggest conspiracy to undermine democracy in India. Mass resistance against this onslaught under the leadership of Shri Jayprakash Narayan led to restoration of democracy. In its first convention, the BJP declared *Pancha Nishthas* or five guiding principles in which commitment to democracy is most important.

The BJP holds the view that „the strength of a democracy is directly proportionate to the strength of three pillars on which it rests – the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary. More than five decades of misrule and misuse of these institutions has eroded their strength. Corruption at the highest levels of the Executive has corroded people’s faith in Government. The Congress and United Front Governments’ inability to take firm decisions and make tough choices, apart from their failure to confront disruptive forces, has weakened the authority of the Indian State. Over-centralization of power at the Centre and unbalanced models of development have led to Centre-State friction. Abuse of constitutional provisions like Article 356 and misuse of Raj Bhavan as extension counters of the ruling party at the Centre have defiled the sanctity of the country’s Constitution.” The BJP assures that it is committed to strengthening all constitutional institutions of the republic through an agenda of reform and rejuvenation. The primary task is to restore to the State – and thus Government – its honour and prestige. It is also deeply committed to strengthening India’s democracy and to making its institutions more effective in fulfilling the aspirations of our people.

Positive secularism

The BJP believes in the ideology of positive secularism based on moral values. As a matter of fact, secularism may mean different things to different people, but it is imperative to have a certain consensus on secularism in our multi-cultural and multi-faith country. It is equally imperative that citizens are not targeted and divided on the basis of religious backgrounds. Indian Constitution mandates that the State cannot have a religious preference or prejudice but citizens are free to follow their respective religions. It calls for equal treatment of all citizens irrespective of faith, gender and caste. It is also mandated that the practice of one’s religion cannot violate any other citizen’s fundamental rights and freedom. According to Gandhi, “I came to the conclusion long ago that all religions were true and also that all had some error in them, and whilst I hold by my own, I should hold others as dear as Hinduism our innermost prayer should be a Hindu should be a better Hindu, a Muslim a better Muslim, a Christian a better Christian.” In early days after independence, the Congress advocated an Indian brand of secularism designed to hold country’s disparate communities together under one umbrella. Nehru often pronounced that India’s composite culture was its greatest strength. The BJP envisions India as a majoritarian nation-state, not a multicultural one.

However, political parties have used secularism to polarize voters during the elections. The BJP blamed the Congress for adopting immoral and opportunistic tactics to communalize the Indian polity. Vote bank on communal lines is sought to be expanded by various political parties

and the virus of communalism has assumed cancerous shape in Indian politics, which has proved to be fatal to nationalism and national integration. The Congress has never acted upon the kind of secularism as spelt out by Gandhi. Besides, the BJP is pledged to defend the unity and integrity of India. It believes that India, from Kashmir to Kanya Kumari, is one country, and all Indians, irrespective of language, caste or creed, are one people. Unity in diversity has been the hallmark of Indian culture, which is a unique multi-hued synthesis of the cultural contributions made over the centuries by different peoples and religions. In conformity with Indian traditions, since times immemorial, the state has always been a civil institution, which makes no distinction between one citizen and another on the ground of his religion. According to the positive concept of secularism to which the BJP is committed, secularism should not be allowed to become a euphemism for appeasement, alternately of this community, or that, or a sordid political device to garner bloc-votes ^[14].

The BJP defines secularism as “*Dharma Nirpeksha*” and “*Sarvadharm Samabhava*”. The party holds that a secular state should remain neutral to religious beliefs of the people, provide equal respect and protection to the followers of all religions. Atal Bihari Vajpayee advocated a more positive idea of secularism as it constitutes the bedrock of democracy. According to the BJP, the Congress has been destroying secularism for many years by formulating policies to appease narrow communal and sectional interests. Ahmed Rashid Shervani writes, “The solution of the communal problem in our subcontinent has to begin with the most valid Hindu idea of *Sarvadharm Samabhava*. Hindu philosophy, Hindu learning, Hindu wisdom, Hindu culture, Hindu art, etc. are the common heritage for all of us...so is every Indian, every child of Bharat Mata. But the trouble starts when some zealots try to impose those ideas on other Indians, other Hindus, which these bigots wrongly believe to be the be-all and end-all of Hinduism, ideas which most thinking Hindus no longer accept. The hallmark of real Hinduism is the intellectual and spiritual freedom of a Hindu, of each and every Hindu, to think and choose for himself what he wants to believe, what he wants to think and feel. Those who strive to curb this freedom of the Hindus are themselves doing something most un-Hindu ^[15].”

In fact, to be a secular state, the country’s political system must not reject or stand above religion, caste, colour and creed but must inculcate religious ideals in the people. Moreover, it must base itself on the foundation of Indian cultural heritage, which is seen as synonymous with *Hindutva* ^[16]. The *Hindutva* has been explained by the intellectuals in different terms. Broadly speaking, its premise is that India’s national identity is rooted in Hindu culture, as Hindus are in dominant position in the country and a nation is built on the basis of common cultural ideology. According to BJP’s ideology, Indian nationhood should incorporate the Hindu heritage along with the traditions, practices and beliefs that flow through the ancient history of the country. 38 Some historians and politicians believe that the BJP has constructed this ideology in a negative sense to create fear in the minds of the Muslims. But this strategy has paid rich political dividends to the BJP, attracting a large segment of Hindus in its fold.

The BJP claims that as against the „pseudo secularism” practiced by all political parties in India, the BJP is the only

party which believes in genuine secularism. Its leadership also claims that their insistence on *Hindutva* as the basis of Indian nationalism is not anti-secular at all, because they hold that the word 'Hindu' is merely a term for very inhabitant of the country. According to BJP, "It is not limited to the residents of the adherents of any particular faith or creed. That is why Bharat received with open arms all faiths and people fleeing persecution – whether it was the Jews, Parsis, Muslims or Christians – and preserved and protected them long before any other civilization could think short of exterminating those who differed from the ruling faiths and people. Israeli society has openly acknowledged that out of over a hundred nations in which Jews sought refuge, only in Bharat they were received and treated well. It is because religion in ancient India meant faith in general and not in any particular faith. It is this ancient Indian mind that formulated the Constitution of India, guaranteeing equal treatment to all faiths and their adherents and it is not the Constitution that shaped the Indian mind... The BJP not only respects but celebrates India's regional, caste, creedal, linguistic and ethnic diversity, which finds its true existence and expression only in our national unity. This rich tradition comprises not only Vedas and Upanishads, Jainagamas and Tripitaka, Puranas and Guru Granth Sahib, the Dohas of Kabir, the various reform movements, saints, warriors and writers, sculptors and artisans, but also the Indian traditions of the Muslims, Christians and Parsis."

Gandhian secularism

The BJP projected itself in a more moderate and humanistic guise by adopting Gandhian socialism as a dominant ideology of the party. Its leadership accepted Gandhi's idea of fulfillment of man's material and spiritual needs. Gandhi believed in the principles of freedom and employment. The BJP make these principles the central core of its development strategy and try to build a national consensus around them. The Gandhian socialism based upon the Indian spiritual ethos is one unique ideology which has become the cornerstone of India's political heritage. The BJP leadership rejected Marxist or scientific theory of socialism which was based on class struggle. The BJP reaffirms its commitment to the establishment of a progressive social order on the ideas of equality, equity, compassion, cooperation, social justice, social harmony, gender justice, *Antyodaya* (rise of last people), protection of the environment, preservation of family and social values, and the all-around development of the individual self as an essential pre-condition of human evolution. The party does not subscribe to the theories of class struggle or caste conflict. BJP believes in the goal of *Sarva Janah Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all be happy).

Unlike Marxian socialism, which subjects human values to social relations, conditions of production and material conditions, Gandhian socialism attempts to reconstruct the socio-economic system which is based on human values. The BJP thinks that to prevent the exploitation of man by man in society, a roadmap for economic decentralization should be prepared based upon ethical and moral principles. In fact, Gandhian socialism favours decentralization of economic and political powers, revitalization of representative institutions, especially to the local level, participatory democracy and reduction in the size of bureaucracy, etc.^[17].

As stated earlier, Gandhi's ideas on many aspects of free India's economy are very exhaustive. He underscored the

importance of decentralized economy and polity. He propounded the philosophy of *Antyodaya* and *Gramodaya* (uplift of the lowest strata of society). Jayprakash Narayan also believed in evolving a system in which *Lok Satta* (people's power) plays a dominant role in establishing a political and economic order with a high degree of decentralization. Deendayal Upadhyaya's integral humanism also emphasizes the necessity of a socially regulated and decentralized economy, prohibiting all kinds of exploitation. Thus, decentralized economy, integral humanism and Gandhian socialism are all manifestations of the thinking which can ensure the basic requirements of bread, freedom and equality and it is to this system that the BJP commits itself. Apart from this, in the opinion of the BJP, the main thrust of India's economic programme should be to provide full employment and to remove poverty by strengthening the agro-rural base, and by inculcating a spirit of *swadeshi*. The party strongly advocates the removal of all forms of exploitation of the peasantry, particularly of the marginal farmers, landless labourers and bonded labour. The BJP believes that decentralization of all economic and developmental activities is imperative for the rapid and balanced advancement of the country.

Value-based politics

The BJP is committed to pursue value-based politics. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the founder President of the BJP criticized the political manipulations of the contemporary politicians. He said, "I believe that the country's crisis is essentially a moral crisis. The biggest curse of our politics of life is that moral values have given way to self-seeking and power lust, and politics has become a pure power game." He never hesitated in being an ardent critic of the government on policy matters nor did he shy away ever from extending unstinted support as well if the nation demanded. He also never indulged in criticism for the sake of criticism either as an opposition leader or as the Prime Minister of the country. He once said, "*Satta ka khel chalta rahega; sarkare aayengi, jayengi, Parties banegi bigdengi, parantu ye desh chalna chahiye.*" The party adopted Vajpayee's principles of value-based politics. It also committed itself to strengthen the values of tolerance, contentment, simple living, hard work and brotherhood on the basis of which a new India would be built. These principles were advocated by Mahatma Gandhi, Deendayal Upadhyaya, Jaiprakash Narayan. Atal Bihari Vajpayee asked his party colleague to launch a struggle by consciously organizing the small farmers, workers, Dalits, tribal people and other depressed sections of the country. This would establish a new society which will be free from exploitation, discrimination and inequality. To mobilize the masses, Vajpayee kept before the party the task of establishing credibility in the minds of the people. He opined that the people must feel convinced that there is a party different from the crowd of self-seekers who swamp the political stage, that its aim is not somehow to sneak into office, that its policy is based on certain values and principles. He also set the standards of debate in the Parliament, and made strenuous efforts to ensure that the BJP participation in the mainstream politics be in terms of issues, ideas, perceptions and even in terms of political vocabulary, idioms and language.

Thus it can be concluded with these remarks that the ideology of the BJP is deeply committed to the idea of *Hindutva*. Its philosophy of Integral Humanism" is based on

the four lectures of Deen Dayal Upadhyay in the mid-1960s. These lectures offer a critique of national politics by evoking intrinsic relationship between individual and society. The BJP believes in cultural nationalism and integration, national integration, positive secularism and value-based politics. It is committed to implementing its ideology of one nation, one people and one language. It projected itself in more moderate and humanistic guise by adopting „Gandhian secularism“ as a prominent ideology of the party. The party leadership accepted Gandhi’s idea of fulfillment of man’s material and spiritual needs. Bread, freedom and employment are the important principles of Gandhian socialism. The BJP makes these principles the core of its development strategy and tries to build a national consensus around them. Before the General Elections of 2019, Uniform Civil Code, Article 370 and Article 35A, national security, construction of Ram Mandir, etc. were the main agendas of the electoral politics of the BJP. To fulfill one of its electoral commitments, the BJP government abrogated the Article 370 and Article 35A on 5 August 2019.

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