

Pseudo-Hindus: Truth and Hindutva Sangh

1. Who we are talking about

1.1. Contours of the sangh

The Hindutva sangh and its frontal organisations have long proclaimed themselves ‘protectors’ of ‘Indian culture’. The ‘sangh’ would broadly be the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (World Hindu Forum, VHP), Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (meaning National Selfservice Group, RSS) and the Bajrang Dal (BD). These are by far the best known. They claim that Hindutva is a way of life, denying that it is political Hinduism, the equivalent of political Islam or political Christianity, most of which are right wing, reactionary and fascist.

There are many other front organisations, covering virtually every facet of life and public polity. Some have had a short life, mushrooming for a short while and gone when light is shone on them. Amongst these would be the Swadeshi Jagarn Manch, which tried to project them as economic nationalists before they continued the policies of the Congress in opening up India to international capital. The several schools, Sarasvathi Sishu Mandirs indoctrinate young children into the ideology of hate at a very young age. The women’s wing of the RSS claims to be the largest women’s organisation in the country. Of course, this is impossible to verify since virtually none of the sangh organisations maintain membership lists—enabling them to make exaggerated claims of influence and membership.

There is a students union (ABVP) and a farmers organisation (BKMS). The doctors front died a quick death, and the Hindu NGOs forum—floated with the new age guru Ravishankar—was still born, but is on life support. During the elections there is a host of media watch groups, to inundate the editors with letters alleging biased coverage or asking for more coverage. To attract ‘nationalists’ they have institutions in the name of Swami Vivekananda.

1.2. Different strokes for different folks

Each of these is for different sections of Hindu Society—the VHP for the Brahmins, the RSS for the middle castes (other backward castes, OBCs) and the BD for those lowest in the caste hierarchy or outside it—from the Shudras on.

They work in tandem with the VHP Brahmins deciding the agenda (for instance anti-cow slaughter, since the cow is the ‘soul of the universe’). The RSS whips up a frenzy towards it and campaigning for it (through the BJP and its frontal organisations) through mass mobilisations, demonstrations (route marches in 40,000 kilometres) signature campaigns (210 million) and then petitioning the president (on 29 January 2010). It is led by OBC-initiated religious sects of Ravishankar, Amritanandamayi and Ramdev. Those who do not agree, or those of different faiths off the media lens in villages and working class localities of cities, will be brought to heel by the BD.

1.3. A mask for every occasion: Independent, autonomous, interlinked or ...

They project themselves differently in different places, each claiming to be ‘different, distinct and independent’ entities. The VHP projects the cultural and spiritual side of the unchanging moral code ‘Sanathana Dharma’ with its exotic, erotic and esoteric mystique. This includes the range from vedic chants, tantric indulgence, ayurvedic ‘alternate healing’ to yogic holistic health.

The RSS takes this forward by a grotesque version of para-military training and indoctrination in a warped form of nationalism that excludes all non-vedic aspects of India, appropriates ones too dominant to ignore, yet shamelessly mimics the power of the day. Its trade-mark divided-skirt like pants for its cadre is directly lifted from the British-Indian police uniform, as also their exercise using a cane.

The BD are the storm troupers, brought in to enforce their unchanging, Sanathan, way of life with force. They have routinely assaulted and stripped women in western attire since it is ‘against Indian culture’ (presumably public stripping of women is, a la Draupadi in the Mahabharatha) and forcibly separated couples in inter-religious marriages.

This ability to talk with a forked tongue, and be different things to different people, is an intrinsic character of the sanghi’s for what they seek to do is bring about a fascist rule in India—complete with racial superiority theories—using Gobbelsian techniques. For instance the RSS claims to be a ‘cultural’

organisation with nothing to do with politics, yet routinely ‘deputes’ its cadre to become office bearers in the sanghi political front the Bharatiya Janata Party (Indian People’s Party, BJP), apart from deciding who the BJP president would be, and its cadre ‘loaned’ to the BJP during election campaigns. Virtually every party position is filled with sanghis, often those who have joined one of the sangh outfits in their teens. In addition, all non–sanghis are vetted by the sangh before being allowed to play any significant role in the BJP, let alone an official position.

The RSS has openly enforced its diktat on an ‘independent’ BJP by booting out BJP president LK Advani from office when they wanted to. The RSS has stepped in visibly during the transition crisis of 2009, and it is to them that all the BJP leaders kowtow to when they want power and office. Yet they claim to be independent organisations, the former ‘cultural’ and the latter ‘political’..

2. The articles of faith: promise and performance

They swear by three articles of faith, and behave as super–nationalists—abolition of article 370 of the Constitution of India bestowing a ‘special status’ for Kashmir, bringing in an uniform civil code and protecting ‘Hinduism’ in the form of ‘cultural nationalism’ which they term ‘Hindutva’ and their opponents call fascism.

At different times, they have used the following as core articles of faith to project their super–nationalism.

1. Common civil code.
2. National security.
3. Honour.
4. Culture and tradition.
5. Partition and the ‘core of nationhood’.
6. One India.
7. Protection of Hinduism.
8. Icons and iconoclasm.
9. Nationalism.
10. Symbols and symbolism.

This note looks at how they fare in each of the ‘core’ areas where they paint themselves to be a ‘party with a difference’. It is to look behind the media image they project about themselves, and expose their actual practice.

2.1. Common civil code: a common deception

Bringing in, and enforcing, a common civil code has been an article of faith for the sanghis in their various avatars. They have effectively used this to demonise the Muslims, and play on the fear of the insecure that the Muslims will swamp the country because Muslims are allowed to have four wives, and Hindus only one. This, the sanghis allege, leads to the Muslims having many more children, resulting in an explosive population growth.

Apart from the sheer disingenuousness of the argument, it is simply incorrect. Study after study has found that it is Hindus who have more bigamous marriages both in absolute and percentage terms than Muslims do. It is still fresh in memory that when an Indian engineer was murdered in Afghanistan, his second wife came on TV and demanded her share. She freely admitted that she knew that he was earlier married, and the family of the slain engineer, both the parents and the first wife, did agree to a just settlement to the second wife and his family with her from the compensation given by the government.

The Supreme Court has held that it is illegal for Hindus to convert to Islam, only for the purpose of marriage. Most Indians, including those who support the right of Muslims to a separate personal law, concur. It is certainly immoral and unethical. It is even worse to punish Muslims when it is the Hindus who misuse these laws.

But what is the sanghi response? The only two MPs who have ‘converted’ to Islam, and got married—he for the second time, and she knowingly the second wife—are the dream girl, Jat—Tamil Brahmin couple from the BJP. Perhaps Aisha Bi R. Chakravarty and Dilawar Khan Kewal Krishn who got [married](#) in accordance with Islamic rites On August 21, 1979 would like to clarify? Incidentally, the

lady in question is a Rajya Sabha MP—meaning the party, and not the general electorate—chose her because she embodies their values.

This common deception is commonplace within the sanghi world. They certainly know how to talk the talk, and then talk the walk!

2.2. National security: Flight to Kandahar

The sanghi political front, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power on the promise of hot pursuit of terrorists, and strong action on national security. Apart from attacking civilians as ‘soft targets’, the sanghis proved to be even more weak kneed than their predecessors. They not only released dreaded terrorists but also sent the union Minister for Foreign Affairs to personally escort them to Kandahar in Afghanistan.

This sanghi–released terrorist recommenced terror attacks on India, causing many more fatalities. This decision showed that these sanghis were not fit to lead, and could not take tough decisions. If you thought this was bad, then read on to find out what the sanghi–chief–in–residence at the party did.

2.3. ‘Honour’: Advani in denial

Apart from being in the cabinet meeting and being party to the decision to trade terrorists for hostages, the pseudo–iron man of India wilted when it came to the test of character. He not only disowned the decision but also lied about being in the meeting itself. It is one thing to be unable to take a tough decision. It is totally immoral to deny his presence at the meeting and concurrence with the decision.

L K Advani has not only been a multi–term president of the BJP, its founding member, its star campaigner, but also been a lifelong member of the RSS. Just as the RSS distances itself from the BJP, claiming to be a cultural organisation with nothing to do with either politics nor the BJP, its faithful child does the same with his decisions. True values have a way of becoming manifest.

2.4. Culture and tradition: Parivar or Sanghi?

The sanghis call themselves the sangh parivar, parivar—meaning family. But how do they treat families? Their lead second generation leader was murdered in cold blood by his own brother. His son was found in a compromising position in drug induced stupor, got into a marriage of convenience, and divorced by the wife due to domestic violence within a year. The BJP split the mother son duo of an erstwhile royal family. It split a family in the hope of coming to power for the first time in south India too. They did not. However, until the alliance lasted, they managed to keep the family apart.

While coming to power on a platform of ‘swadeshi’, they presided over the largest sell off of national wealth to non–indians. So which ‘family’ do they have in mind, the global family? In which case why burn a man and his children just because of ‘religious conversion’?

2.5. Partition and the ‘core of nationhood’: from secular Jinnah with love to communal Nehru

In a strange twist reminiscent of the Stockholm Syndrome, the top leadership of the sanghi party fall in love with Mohammed Ali Jinnah serially with amazing regularity. It is comical since they often demonise Jinnah as the architect of the partition of India, never mind historical evidence that it was their guru who propounded the two nation theory (‘we, or our nationhood defined’) decades before Jinnah.

After cursory research, they suddenly find that Jinnah was actually a secular person, who wanted a secular Pakistan. They dig out his speech to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. They discover that he was once the poster boy of Hindu–Muslim unity. They conveniently gloss over the very many inconvenient facts. True to form, they cannot have a comprehensive analysis of the man and the phenomenon in its totality.

These pseudo–intellectuals who suddenly find Jinnah to be secular have maintained for long that Jawaharlal Nehru was communal! Secular Jinnah and communal Nehru... a revealing insight into the clarity of non–thought and penetrating insights of the Hindutva brigade

2.6. One India: Many lies

The sanghis claim that everyone living in India is a Hindu, and claim to be working for a return to ‘greater India’, greater India, that existed in British times. This territory would include Afghanistan in the

west to Burma in the east. How they would deal with an India with about 30% muslims when they cant deal with half that number is not satisfactorily explained. They bitterly oppose the migration of people from the southern state of Keralam to human resource deficit areas since they claim that these teachers and social workers are all Christian Priests and nuns out to convert the underprivileged. This concern is not seen in any other sphere of their involvement. It stops with preventing the religious conversion. It does not promote inter–dining, inter–marriage among different communities.

More intriguing is their treatment of fellow Hindu Indians. Their close ally, Shiv Sena in Maharashtra, was explicitly formed to attack non–Maharastrians, specifically Tamils, living in Mumbai (then Bombay). Virtually every year since they have attacked ‘outsiders’, the latest being migrant labour from Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand—the Hindi, Hindu ‘heart land’ and core of the ‘cow belt’.

Any debate on the Narmada dam is sought to be cut off by BJP ministers from Gujarat saying bluntly ‘we don’t want “outsiders” to tell us what to do’ the ‘outsiders’ being fellow Indians. So much for one India.

2.7. Hindutva and pseudo–Hinduism

Can it get worse? Oh yes it can. The pseudo–Hindu sanghis routinely burn down and vandalise people, works of art and property of those whom they don’t like. They burn people. They burn property... and they call the entire Upanishads and the Vedas as ‘verbal vomit’. Surprised? Read on...

The Indian parliament consists of two ‘houses’. Those in the Lok Sabha are directly elected. In the Rajya Sabha, they are elected by the state legislatures. So the party members in a state legislature elect one of their party members to the Rajya Sabha. The member to be elected is chosen by the party. This means that the person chosen best represents the party position. The BJP chose as their Rajya Sabha MP a person who wrote an entire section in a book condemning virtually every tenet of Hinduism in the Vedas and Upanishads as worshipping false gods. And the section title? ‘Verbal vomit’ and a subsection ‘empty boxes within empty boxes’. The party brings out this person to state its position any time it wants someone with a double digit IQ to talk intelligibly on issues. The book? Hinduism, essence and consequence. And the author, Arun Shourie.

True to form, in harmony with the party president’s courage on Kandahar, this worthy claimed that to define Hinduism and Hindutva as a ‘way of life’ is erroneous. This after the party went to the Supreme Court to get precisely this verdict. Now that the party has lost two successive national elections, apart from several state elections, he suddenly sees light. Now he says that it is wrong to define Hindutva as a ‘way of life’ since even drug addiction can be similarly defined.

2.8. Icons and iconoclasm: The sardar and the shudra swami

Guided by the non–productive sections of society, it is but natural that the sanghis appropriate the fruits of the labour and creativity of others.

The sanghis tried to appropriate the moniker ‘iron man of India’ which was used to refer to Sardar Patel. Sardar Patel, as home minister, was responsible for the unification of princely states with British India after Indian independence. Therefore, L K Advani, the pretender prime minister was also called the ‘iron man of India’. The sanghis try to appropriate Sardar Patel, conveniently forgetting (and hoping that the Indians also forget) that it was Sardar Patel, the real iron man, who banned the RSS in the first place. Despite the best efforts of the pseudo–iron man, he could not make it legal for government servants to be sanghis.

Swami Vivekananda was ridiculed during his life time by the Brahmins of the day. He was told that he had lost his caste since he had travelled overseas, and they questioned his morality since he was living with two while women. He replied that those were rules of Brahmins, and Brahmin rules did not apply to him since he was not a Brahmin. Disgusted with the Brahmin way of life, living off the sweat of the toiling masses, he firmly declared that the future belongs to Shudras alone.

2.9. Nationalism: ‘Cultural nationalism’ as pseudo–nationalism

It is not a coincidence that they use the term ‘cultural nationalism’. Their guru V D Savarkar, apart from the rather self–explanatory initials, worshipped Nazis. Their government in Gujarat—the Hindutva

Laboratory’—speaks of Hitler in laudatory terms in textbooks for children in impressionable ages. Their rath-going hate-monger-in-chief, L K Advani, multi-term party president and pretender prime minister, read Hitler’s Mien Kampf when imprisoned in Bangalore central jail during the Emergency.

Their idol V D Savarkar openly lamented that the Indian constitution did not mention, nor draw inspiration from, the Manu Smriti. Another ‘guru’ defined ‘our’ nationhood as that of Hindus alone. All others should become Hindus—subservient to the Brahmins, give up all languages but Sanskrit—or live without any rights, solely at the mercy of the Hindus, as the Manu Smriti prescribed for the outcasts. The sanghis, including the BJP, has not disowned these writings of their mentors published post independence, less than 60 years ago.

With such a divisive ideology, they claim to be nationalists. They cant even deal with the diversity of India, yet want to have a unified India from Afghanistan to Burma. Claiming to have a different vision of India, all they can come up with is the administrative map of British India.

2.10. Symbols and symbolism: Ram, Ram bhakt, and demons

The mobilisation of the sanghis has been on ‘raths’—modified LMVs to resemble chariots—on the ‘national movement’ to demolish a mosque to build a temple for Ram. Apart from the misuse of religion for political polarisation and vote harvesting, their appropriation and distortion of symbols and symbolism offers an instructive study in Gobbelsian manipulation of the vulnerable, uncritical psyche. In the Ramayana, it is the villain who came on a rath, not Lord Ram.

The greatest of Ram Bhakts is Hanuman, or Bajrang Bali—from which the Bajrang Dal gets its name. yet this greatest of Ram Bhakts did not build a single temple to Ram on earth. Ram (and Sita too!) were literally present in his heart. How many of these pseudo-Ram Bhakts can tear open their hearts and show Ram and Sita present inside?

Well versed in Nazi ways, they know that a big lie mentioned a hundred times becomes the truth—they themselves have quoted it many times—and have used Gobbelsian techniques not only to demonise entire sections to consolidate their ‘vote bank’, but also to promote a totally different image of themselves than they really are.

Hinduism or Hindutva? Hindus or pseudo-Hindus? We have presented the evidence. You decide.

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