

A Discussion on Amartya Sen's 'The Argumentative Indian'

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Incomplete, Inconclusive,
Unresolved, but not
directionless. অসম্পূর্ণ,
সিদ্ধান্তহীন, অমীমাংসিত, কিন্তু
দিশাহীন নয়।

Reasoning – Pillar of
Modernity, Way of Exchange of
Differing Opinions.

The story of the Five Economists.
(Paul Anthony Samuelson, *Economics*)

Two types of Indian people –

- 1) People educated in western ways (secular and zealot);
- 2) People not educated so. These people see their affairs in an ethnic cultural way. (Ashis Nandy)

Amartya Sen – *The Argumentative Indian:
Writings on Indian Culture, History and
Identity* – ‘Secularism and Its Discontents’

The article was first published in Kaushik Basu and Sanjay Subrahmanyam (eds.), *Unravelling the Nation: Sectarian Conflict and India's Secular Identity*, (Delhi, Penguin, 1996)

BJP comes to power and Bajpai becomes prime minister in 1996, 1998 and 1999 to 2004.

The book containing the article as a chapter was first published in 2005. Allen Lane, Penguin Books in UK. Farrar, Strauss and Giroux in USA. The copy I have is the one published by Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2005.

BJP comes to power at the Centre, Modi becomes Prime Minister in 2014.

Collective Choice and Social Welfare (San Francisco, Holden-Day, 1970) – Delhi School of Economics.

Amartya Sen – Nobel Prize in 1998.

Lamont University Professor of Economics
and Philosophy, Harvard University.

Individual liberty – individual rationality –
individual choice \Leftrightarrow Social rationality –
social choice – social policy.

ধর্ম কি একার ব্যাপার? না কি,
অনেকের?

Problems of choice

Story 1: Public works – taxation: Works? – yes;
Taxation? – No.

Story 2: Individual psychology – mass psychology.
The case of lynching a pickpocket.

Story 3: People – environment: The case of
metalled roads.

Charvaka, Lokayata Philosophy:

“There is no other world other than this;

There is no heaven and no hell;

The realm of Shiva and like regions,
are fabricated by stupid imposters.”

(Sarvasiddhantasamgraha verse 8, quoted in
Ray Billintong, *Understanding Eastern
Philosophy*, London, Routledge, page 44).

Individual – Social – Reasoning –
Sympathy and respect (Economics,
Philosophy, Ethics)

Optimality (the best, the ideal) – hard to be found.

Maximality – none is inferior – impossible to rule out from set of alternatives – rational reasoning – go for any alternative. (The story of the donkey and two hay stacks).

collective Choice and Social Welfare – elaborates rational and tight reasoning though without helping to arrive at a reasoned conclusive choice. (It is not supposed to be a popular/easy reading). Economics and mathematics requires axioms which often are hard to satisfy in extant social/economic reality. (This does not offer a made-easy process of decision-making, but provide direction towards rational thinking).

Secularism and Its Discontents' is much less tightly reasoned (it is supposed to be and is a popular/easy reading). Nonetheless, it prioritizes rational reasoning based on sympathy and respect for the other's opinion. It is not mathematical. Hence, provides space for discussion and reconciliation while also poses problems of finding axiomatic basis of symmetry across different religious practices. (This does not offer a complete, full-proof choice making, much less a decision. But it offers a direction. Most importantly, it points out the dangers of marginalizing the other).

concept of god, good, bad and evil, and religion on the basis of these has come to exist because of people's fear. If this is accepted by all, the problem of religious conflicts ceases to exist. But this is hard to achieve. 1) People are still afraid of god, especially those who do not have much to lose except to hold on to their faith. 2) Religion has become one of the most important components of one's identity, resulting in juxtaposing one with another. Given this, secularism seems the best way of co-existence. (Or, is it?)

Pagan: অখৃস্টান, অমুসলিম, অ-ইহুদি,
পৌত্তলিক, নিকৃষ্ট ধর্মাবলম্বী, heathen, বিধর্মী,
ধর্মহীন, অসভ্য। People known as pagans did
not call themselves so. They were termed so
by others, in a derogatory sense. In this
sense, animism (সর্বপ্রাণবাদ) is also a pagan
practice. Animistic people did not see
animism as a religion. They saw it as a way
of life.

paganism and/or animism, the concept of afterlife was either not entertained or when entertained it did not make much difference between this life and afterlife. Whether there was no god, or if they were there, they were not very different from the humans except that they were more powerful than the humans. Perhaps they never died. Hence, people, instead of going to heaven, wished for immortality, not figuratively or metaphorically but literally. They valued this life and not the afterlife.

*There was a time when in Greek
and Indian epics gods walked the
world side by side the humans.*

ear is the very basis of animism also, but that fear is related to day-to-day behavioural pattern of the individual and society, to the wellbeing in this life, and not to the aspiration of attaining heaven or fear of going to hell in the life after death. In animistic belief people do not go to heaven after death simply because it does not exist. They live near their spirits who are alive and they are to be feared and kept happy by worship and sacrifices. They are unhappy because they are not alive. It transpires then that this life is to be valued more than anything.

All the so-called refined religions and related religious beliefs and faith incorporated the concept of god and evil, and of heaven and hell in the life after death. The preference for this life took a backseat at least figuratively. Some say that it made the world slip into an era known as medieval darkness which lasted for almost a thousand years (5th to 14th century, between the fall of the Roman Empire and the Renaissance). They say that this was a period of stagnation for the society, science and knowledge in general, and for intellectual development in particular.

This allegation has been refuted later by many and usage of the term dark ages is fast going out of use. However, there is no denying that this period saw a rule of religion, acts of blind faith and wars between religions. In case of Asia and of Indian sub-continent this kind of religious malady continued to affect the society much longer. For example, sati-daha was legally banned and widow re-marriage laws were passed under the British rule.

secular – pertaining to this world, present life,
not ecclesiastical, not found by monastic views
secular, therefore, means worldly, related to
things connected with present life only. In the
negative sense, it implies dissociation from
religion or religious teachings. (Charvaka?)

The concept of secularization was first used in 1648 at the end of Thirty Years' War in Europe. This was a war among various Christian churches. In 1789, during the French Revolution, all ecclesiastical properties were demanded to be brought under the rule of nation. Finally, the term 'secularism' was coined by the English intellectual George Jacob Holyoake in 1851.

he term 'secular' at least came from the West while its spirit may have existed in the East beforehand. (Example, Charvaka philosophy).

However, Charvaka school and doctrine was developed and discussed by 7th-6th BCE. It has been criticized by all religions and even that disappeared by the end of the medieval period.)

As such, the ‘secularist’ is a person “who bases morality on the wellbeing of mankind without paying any attention to the religion, religious systems and the forms of worship even to the extent that the religion should not be introduced in the public education or in the management of public affairs”. (Encyclopedia of Social Sciences).

Today the antithesis of communalism
is secularism.

Principles of a secular state:

- 1) People are free to adopt any religious faith they prefer;
- 2) The state should have no religion of its own;
- 3) Non-interference by religion in the affairs of state and non-interference by state in the affairs of religion.

However, under the Indian Constitution, the state can interfere in religious practices for the purpose of social reform.

The word 'secular' was not there in the Indian Constitution when it was promulgated in 1950. The word was inserted by the 42nd Amendment, in the Preamble of the Constitution in 1977.

litigations followed.

Indian Judiciary observed that although the word was not there, the spirit of secularism was very much present in the Constitution, especially under the articles 15 and 16. (15 – state shall not discriminate on grounds of religion; 16 – no citizen shall be discriminated against on grounds of religion). Also, articles 25, 26, 27, 28.

‘Secularism and Its Discontents’

“When India became independent ... much emphasis was placed on its secularism, and there were few voices dissenting from that priority.” (Page 294)

“In contrast, there are now persistent pronouncements deeply critical of Indian secularism ...” (Page 294)

Criticism of Indian secularism
have come from different
quarters.

Hindutva movement, Hindu nationalism,
RSS, BJP. Politics of Hindu sectarianism,
polarisation of voters. But that is only
one of the various quarters against
secularism, though the staunchest and
strongest quarter.

Indian secularists do not discuss this much. “Reliance is placed instead ... on the well-established and unquestioning tradition of seeing secularism as a good and solid political virtue for a pluralist democracy.” (Page 295)

... but ... addressing these criticisms is important.’

(Page 295)

) Implications for political and intellectual life in contemporary India;

) Face these issues to scrutinize and re-examine habitually accepted priorities, and the reasoning behind them. “There is much need for self-examination of beliefs - nowhere more so than in practical reason and political philosophy.” (Page 295)

Secularism – “Incompleteness and
the Need for Supplementation”
(Page 295)

“Some of the choices considered under the heading of secularism lie ... beyond its immediate scope.” (Page 295)

Example: Requirements of minority vis-à-vis majority religious groups.

“There is thus a need, in dealing with religions and religious communities, to take up questions that lie ‘beyond’ secularism.” (page 297)

“Secularism in the political ... sense requires the separation of the state from any particular religious order.” (Page 295)

a) the state be equidistant from all religions;
 (“Broader View”)

b) the state must not have any relation at all with any religion. (Strict View / “More secular”) (Pp. 295-296)

the state be equidistant from all religions –
... there is no demand that the state must stay
clear of any association with any religious matter
whatsoever.”

... there must be a basic *symmetry* of treatment.”

... there would be no violation of secularism for a
state to protect everyone's right to worship as he or
she chooses, even though in doing this the state has
to work with - and for - religious communities.”

(page 296)

What form of *symmetry*?

Example:

... the state may decide that it must not offer financial or other support to any hospital with any religious connection.” (Strict View/More secular)

Alternatively, it can provide support to all hospitals, without in any way discriminating between their respective religious connections (or lack of them).” (Broader View) (page 296)

“It is the broader view that has been the dominant approach to secularism in India.” (page 296)

But this ... is an incomplete specification.” (page 96)

... “allows several distinct options related to the unspecified distance at which the state should keep all religions, without discrimination.” (page 97)

There is thus a need, in dealing with religions and religious communities, to take up questions that lie ‘beyond’ secularism.” (page 297)

“Incompleteness” of Indian Secularism

- a) Leads to problems;
- b) Offers opportunities.

Critical Arguments against Indian Secularism: Six distinct Lines

The ‘Non-existence’ Critique (mostly Western point of view):

- This is no secularism.
- “Sanctimonious Nonsense”.
- Not to be taken seriously.

Just as Pakistan is Muslim Pakistan, India is Hindu India.

The 'Favouritism' Critique (RSS/BJP point of view):

“... in the guise of secularism, the Indian constitution and political and legal traditions really favour the minority community of Muslims, giving them a privileged status not enjoyed by the majority community of Hindus.” (pseudo-secularism). (page 298)

The 'Prior Identity' Critique (one of the intellectual points of view):

- “... being a Hindu, or a Muslim, or a Sikh, to be politically 'prior' to being an Indian.”
- “The Indian identity is 'built up' from the constitutive elements of separate identities.”

“... any Indian national identity ... a function of ... largely Hindu identity.”

- “a salad bowl does not produce cohesion; a melting pot does” ~
“only a shared cultural outlook, ... in India ... largely Hindu view, can produce such a cohesion.”

“Even the unity of India derives, it is argued, from the 'cementing force' of Hinduism.” (page 298)

The 'Muslim Sectarianism' Critique (RSS/BJP point of view):

- If the mantle of Indianness has been thrust upon the Hindus, it is not because they are the majority, but because of “the 'failure' of the Muslims to see themselves as Indians first.”
- Muslim rulers in India failed to identify themselves with others.
- They saw Muslims as a separate and preferred group.
- Muslim Kings destroyed Hindu temples.
- Jinnah's 'two-nation' theory – a continuation of the evident Muslim refusal to identify with other Indians.
- Partition of India has provided a 'homeland' for the Muslims the Muslims left in India are not 'loyal' to India (page 299)

the 'Anti-modernist' Critique (one of the intellectual points of view, Ashis Nandy et al.): (pp. 299-300)

- > 'Secularism' is folly of 'Modernism'.
- > 'Secularism' is 'Modernism'.
- > 'Modernism' is Reasoning.
- > Reasoning leads to Secularism.
- > Reasoning fails ~ Secularism fails.
- > 'as India gets modernized, religious violence is increasing' (Ashis Nandy)
- > 'traditional ways of life – internal principles of tolerance'. (Ashis Nandy)
- > ideology of secularism – ideologies of progress and modernity.
- > use of violence to achieve and sustain ideologies.
- > Violence hits religion.
- > Religion hits back.
- > people take up to the language of violence.

the ' Cultural' Critique ('foundational' view, RSS/BJP point of view): (page 100)

- India is, in essence, a 'Hindu country'.
- It is wrong to treat Hinduism as simply one of the various religions of India.
- It is Hinduism that makes India what it is.
- Britain and many other countries acknowledge their own religion.
- British laws are specifically protective of Christianity and no other religion. (just as it happens for Islam in Pakistan)
- India denies similarly privileged status to its Hindu heritage.

Amartya Sen's response to the critiques

1. Response to the 'Non-existence' Critique (pages 301-303)

- Many Indian intellectuals do not take this critique seriously as if it does not matter.
- Others are contemptuous of the Western opinion and hence do not respond to it.
- But it should be taken seriously and refuted with reason. Outside perception of Indian identity matters.

continued

➤ For foreign relations.

➤ Not only for trade and commerce, but also for cultural exchanges.

There are various sects within Hinduism, but all proclaim to be Hindu. Outsiders also perceive them so. This is hard to say while the proclamation makes one Hindu to the outsider, the outsider perception does not make one a Hindu. Similarly, proclaiming oneself as Indian is not enough. The rest of the world has to perceive and acknowledge one as an Indian. Secularism helps people to be identified as Indians irrespective of their religion. So, it is important to convince the West about the seriousness of Indian secularism.

1 continued

- At the time of partition, Pakistan chose to be an Islamic state. India chose to be secular. Westerners and some Indians consider this 'secularism' to be superfluous and insignificant simply because the partition was done along the religious lines.
- But there are differences and there is a lot being India secular.
- Pakistan's constitution requires the head of the state be a Muslim whereas in India it is not so.

Pakistan gives Islam a legal status. Whatever the Hindutvabadis may say, in India Hinduism does not have that status, and it is important.

1 continued

- However, Hindus still have a substantive advantage over Muslims in many spheres.
- This calls for practice of secularism even more.
- Religions in India each has anti-blasphemy laws. These may be untenable vis-à-vis state laws. The issue of treating all religions symmetrically gets too complicated.

Indian secularism leaves many dimensions unclear and unidentified. But that does not make it immaterial.

Response to the 'Favouritism' Critique (pages 303-306)

- Muslim personal laws have been in focus.
- Four wives. In practice, few Muslims take advantage of that.
- Divorce – Triple talaq.
- Alimony – Shah Bano Case – Only during the three months of 'iddat'.

This not an issue of favouritism towards Muslims and unfairness towards Hindus. This is Muslim personal law. If there is any unfairness in it, that is towards Muslim women. For that matter, no religion in the world is fair to the women.

Response to the 'Favouritism' Critique continued

- Hindus too have personal laws, many of which have been reformed through legal procedures.
- Indian Constitution provides for some 'uniform civil code' only under the 'Directive Principles' 'not enforceable by any court'.
- Undeniably, religious personal laws, bring in a lack of symmetry in treatment of people, between men and women, rich and poor, upper-caste and dalits.

Response to the 'Favouritism' Critique continued

- Uniform civil code is not a bad idea. But it has to be dealt with carefully in line with secularism and symmetry in it.
- Sen leaves this problem to be solved by the rigour and wisdom of India's judiciary.
- The idea of Indian secularism and dimensions of symmetry remain as unclear as ever.

Response to the 'Prior Identity' Critique (pages 306-310)

- Religious identity of an Indian does not take the first place in most dealings in personal, social and cultural spheres. But it may matter in political matters.

Response to the 'Prior Identity' Critique continued

➤ Jinnah was not a devout Muslim, but he demanded Pakistan on the basis of religion. Gandhi was a devout Hindu, he did not want a partitioned India. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was deeply religious. He did not want Pakistan and did not go there. Compared to Gandhi, Shyamaprasad Mukhopadhyay was hardly religious, he was a leader of Hindu Mahasabha. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar was not religious in private life, he was champion of Hindutva.

Godse killed Gandhi not because he was not religiously Hindu (which he was), but because he was soft on Muslims.

Response to the 'Prior Identity' Critique continued

- Assertion of religious identity prior to Indian identity has been made by Hindutvabadi politicians.
- This assertion has also been made as a reaction to state-sponsored violences.
- National identity is often misleadingly identified with 'nation state'. Existence of a state is not 'foundational' for the existence of a nation. Indian nation existed prior to 1947.

Response to the 'Prior Identity' Critique continued

- The concept of a Hindu India is hardly acceptable to not only the Muslims, but also to the Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, Christians who are not marginal in cultural, social, economic and numerical terms.
- Large also is the number of Indians who are atheist or agnostic.
- Indian constitution wanted to recognise the religious pluralism of the Indian people – “if the Muslims in India are a separate nation, then, of course, India is not a nation” (Ambedkar)

Response to the 'Prior Identity' Critique continued

- India needs secularism based on some symmetry and separation of state from religion.
- Personal and social religious involvements are different. One may not be religious in personal life, but may participate in social religious celebrations.

A Muslim may participate in Durga Puja. A Hindu in Eid.

Response to the 'Prior Identity' Critique continued

- Even the Hindus are a diversified religious people. Some are Saivites, some Shakta, some are Vaishnavas. It's not that Saivites do not indulge in Holi or Rasa.
- That marks the plurality and cohesion in plural society. This cohesion gets destroyed by calling the nation a Hindu one.

Response to the 'Prior Identity' Critique continued

- Hinduism as a unified religion is a comparatively recent development. Hindus were a people who lived in the land by the river Indus.
- 'Hindavi' Muslims, in Persian as well as Arabic. 'Hindoo Muslims' and 'Hindoo Christians' in early British documents distinguished them from Muslims and Christians from outside India.

Response to the 'Prior Identity' Critique continued

- Rama is divine in North and Western India. Elsewhere he is a heroic king of an epic.
- Hindu traditions of India do not constitute a melting pot.
- India is salad bowl. Secularism can make the bowl full of harmonious salad.

Response to the 'Muslim Sectarianism' Critique (pages 311-312)

- Spying for Pakistan, cheering Pakistan cricket team, etc.
- Large number of Muslims stayed in India out of choice.
- Muslims are in administration, police force, diplomatic services and, the armed forces. Their record speaks for their loyalty.
- Muslim kings stayed separated from Hindu subjects.
- They treated Muslim subjects preferentially.
- They destroyed Hindu temples.

Response to the 'Muslim Sectarianism' Critique continued

- Sen in other essays in the book has refuted these allegations. In fact, in the essay 'The Reach of Reason' just preceding the present essay.
- He mentioned Emperor Akbar.
- Mughals regularly appointed Hindus in royal services.
- Some temples may have been destroyed, but that was not because of their religion. That was the order of the day. Before Mughals, some of the Hindu kings also had done the same.

Response to the 'Muslim Sectarianism' Critique continued

- All Muslims did not support or like the demolition and ransacking of temples. For example, Alberuni did not like Mahmud of Ghazni vandalizing Somnath temple.
- Even if some Muslim kings did commit some atrocities in the past the Muslim population in general of the present cannot be held guilty on that account.
- Kashmir received some preferential treatment till the other day (at the time this book was published) which is there no more. However, that treatment was linked to the history of the area being annexed to India and Pakistan's action on a part of it.

Response to the 'Anti-modernist' Critique (pages 312-315)

- Is it really the case that 'as India gets modernized, religious violence is increasing'? (Ashis Nandy)
- After the communal riots of 1947, such violence of similar spread and intensity did not take place in India.
- 'traditional ways of life' had, 'over the centuries, developed internal principles of tolerance'. (Ashis Nandy)

Response to the 'Anti-modernist' Critique continued

- There are instances of religious violence in pre-colonial India and in ancient times. (During Mughal period and at the time of the fall of Buddhist religion in Bengal).
- It's true that communal violence increased during the colonial period. (mostly because of British policy).
- It is also true that long cultural association has helped developing 'internal principles of tolerance'.

Response to the 'Anti-modernist' Critique continued

- Secularity is not modern. Else Ashoka or Akbar would not be secular.
- Modernity does not help increase in violence. Misrule and biased administration do.
- Indian secularism demands symmetric treatment of different religious communities in politics and in the affairs of the state.

Response to the 'Anti-modernist' Critique continued

- Perhaps, a nation state tries to 'homogenize to hegemonize'. But that is not only in the sphere of religion.
 - If the state stops favouring one religion over the others, religious violence would not take place.
 - Concept of modernity is not easy.
 - We do not need to bring in modernity either to support or denounce secularism.
- We need to recognize wisdom.

Response to the 'Cultural' Critique (pages 315-316)

- Should India be really seen as a Hindu country?
- Even if it were right to see Indian culture as quintessentially Hindu culture, it would be very odd to alienate, on that ground, the right to equal political and legal treatment of minorities.

Response to the 'Cultural' Critique continued

- Whoever presents this critique, their reading of Indian history and culture is extremely shallow. Indian culture is a mix of several cultures. Sufi saints influenced Hindu, Muslims alike. Saints such as Kabir, Dadu Dayal had profound influence on many religious groups.
- James Mill thought that India was intellectually bankrupt but full of religious ideas. He never came to India, did not know the country.
- Anti-secular demands are rising not from within the cultural tenets, but with political motive. Under the circumstances, political abandonment of secularism would make India far worse.

Critiques of Amartya Sen's stand

Gordon Jhonson (President, Wolfson College, Cambridge; General Editor, *The New Cambridge History of India*)

(<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/books/effort-to-right-wrongs-leaves-past-shackled/198776.article>)

- History has been oversimplified.
- It is a flawed book. Sen does not go beyond stating self-evident truths.
- There is a thinness and superficiality that displeases.
- Repetitive.
- Same materials have been recycled again and again.

Arnold Zeitlin (Managing director, Editorial Research & Reporting Associates (ERRA); Member, Advisory Board, South Asia Journal)
(<http://southasiajournal.net/book-review-the-argumentative-indian-writing-on-indian-history-culture-and-identity-by-amartya-sen/>)

- “Sen’s evidence of argumentative nature in India is slim.”
- “Indians do not seem as argumentative as Jews or Italians.”
(here, there is case, Sen mentioned only the elites of ancient and medieval India as argumentative. Where are the ordinary people?)
- They seem very tolerant. (here too is a case)
- Sen contradicts himself. He praises Kerala over China in birth control. Then goes on to praise China for its economic growth.

Ashis Nandy (“An Anti-secularist Manifesto”, India International Centre Quarterly, SPRING 1995, vol. 22, No. 1, SECULARISM IN CRISIS (SPRING 1995), pp. 35-64)

(Nandy in this article does not criticize Sen. The question does not arise. This article was published before the publication of Sen’s article. Sen mentions Nandy in lengthy discussion, footage you may say, i.e, Sen recognizes the force of Nandy’s argument)

Ashis Nandy continued

“The modern secularist and the crypto-modern zealot know of the battles for survival against the zealots of other faiths, not of the other battle against the zealots of one’s own. Neither the secularist nor the zealot has the sensitivity to stand witness to this other battle for survival. Neither has the time to remember the experience of neighbourliness and co-survival which characterises the relationship among the peripheral believers of different faiths.”
(Peripheral in the sense that their points of view are not taken seriously by either the secularist or the zealot.)

Ashis Nandy continued

- But “The non-modern, peripheral ethnic ... has a longer and deeper memory.”
- “Hindu zealotry has never found the modernist [secularist] a serious enemy; it has found in him only an effete, self-hating Hindu.” (affected, over-refined, ineffectual).

Ashis Nandy continued

Bade Ghulam Ali refused to sing paeans to Pakistan or its founder. Secularists see it as his secularism. Zealots see it as treachery. Traditional ethnic points of view of Islam sees him as a true Islamist who refuses to praise a place or a person, for he praises only the Allah. Yet, some others think that he was pained by the division of his country.

Ashis Nandy continued

Taj Mahal-Tejo Mahalaya controversy (Pushottam Nagesh Oak) – Hindu zealot says:Taj Mahal was a Hindu Temple. Muslim king destroyed it and built a Muslim monument. Muslim zealot says: It is not true. There was nothing. Shah Jehan built his Mamtajmahal on a piece of land that contained nothing. – for the common (peripheral Hindu and Muslim, it is inconsequential. Foreigners and affluent Indians visit this place. It means nothing in the periphery (which happens to be otherwise the main-stream India).

ashis Nandy continued

It is the zealots who are making life difficult for the ordinary. Hizab
Jay Shri Ram – Allahu Akbar: “such defensiveness follows not so
much from his [her] faith as from his [her] frustration and insecurity
in his [her] immediate political environs”.

Ashis Nandy continued

Here we may add accounts of our experience. The Outsider Theory! We see these days that the political miscreants, particularly during electioneering, are mostly outsiders. Why? কেন বহিরাগত? কেন স্থানীয়কে ভাঙচুর, লুটপাট, খুনের কাজে লাগানো গেল না? বহিরাগতকে শনাক্ত করা মুশকিল, এটা একটা যুক্তি। এর চেয়ে বড় বাস্তব হল, এলাকার মধ্যে চেনা মানুষ চেনা মানুষের শত্রুতাসাধন সহসা করবে না। বিবেকে বাধবে। এই বিবেক একদিনে তৈরি হয় না। ভিতর থেকে ভেঙেও পড়ে না। বরং আরও জোরালো হয়। তখন তাগুব বাধাতে লাগে বাইরের শক্তি. বিভিন্ন অর্থে. সর্বার্থে।

Reasoning, sympathy, respect.

Thank you!

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