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If Modi wins in Gujarat..



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No person seems to have dominated Gujarat politics as much as Chief Minister Narendra Modi over the last one decade. In case he wins this 2007 election, where fifty-fifty chances appear after the voting on 11 and 16 December, what will be the 'Modis' effect on national politics viz-a-viz BJP and if he fails, how the Congress and BJP will turnaround their politicking in India; a debate every political analyst and media portal is genuinely trying to explore.

We argue that after the 2002 Gujarat it is not LK Advani but Narendra Bhai Modi who is the formidable icon for Hindutva politics in India. His defeat or win in the recent Gujarat election will mean beyond Gujarat. Modi's win will mean — he will be a strong contender for the post of PM in next ten years or at least a very strong key-maker within BJP, without whose green signal it will be virtually difficult for BJP to move ahead. And this is what made a visible break within BJP in Gujarat as well as in New Delhi before the Gujarat election. BJP's uncalled for announcement for Mr. Advani, from anti Modi camp, as Prime Ministerial candidate few hours before Gujarat election means some within the BJP are sure that if Modi wins it will be impossible for them to bring Advani on top who already lost Hindutva charm after Jinnah saga. .

As is his strategy, Modi talks about economic development— 'vibrant Gujarat' but when the right time clicks he shifts his beans of development to the favorite agenda Hindutva— communalism. To justify the killing of Sohrabuddin in his election campaign speech is one example of the nature that has generated a national controversy.

Current Gujarat elections, irrespective of its result, will remain etched in the memory of the nation for wrong reasons. Gujarat witnessed the burning of Sabarmati express at Godhra in Feb 2002. The carnage which followed this train accident claimed the lives of thousands of innocents and simultaneously polarized Gujarat along religious lines. The process of ghettotisation of Muslims and the fear of minorities constructed in the minds of majority community are staring in some Gujarati faces. At the same time the threads of democratic nationalism, national integration are breaking rapidly. The consequent of polarization led to the victory of the leader of the carnage back to power in the elections which took place within a year. In the 2002 elections, the main opposition party, Congress did not

gather strength to take on Modi with full vigor.

During last two and a half decades the rise of right wing politics has taken place on the pretext of Hinduism, while it has nothing to do with the humane streams of Hinduism. It claims to be for Hindus, while majority of Hindus have also become victim of this intimidating politics. It reflects the state of erosion of our democratic norms and gradual strengthening of the forces which do talk about democracy but are deeply wedded to the RSS, the organization which is opposed to interfaith harmony and true democracy. The concept of Hindu nation is for Hindus is just a pretext. It essentially aims to abolish the values of liberty, equality and fraternity of Indian pluralistic society. In Gujarat, one can clearly make out that there is a slow but dangerous march towards a fascist state.

The Tehelka sting showed some of the perpetrators boasting about their crimes in front of the camera, and this made most of the people realize once again the gravity of the crime. It was in this background, we guess, that Sonia Gandhi in her election campaign called Modi as ‘the merchant of death’. Mr. Modi realized that the truth is being said after all, and tried to raise the communal sentiments high by justifying the extra judicial killing of Sohrabuddin, who was killed in a fake encounter by his police. He was keeping the communal card, under wraps till the word ‘merchant of death’ was hurled upon him.

All this sounds so unusual but we are becoming used to the prevalence of these things. Who knows, spats like ‘merchant of death’ and ‘Hindu terrorism’ from the Congress may backfire them. It might have already spoiled the political chemistry for the Congress and the BJP ultimately made up the loss caused by its own internal revolt.

If Narendra Modi fails— Congress comes into ruling in Gujarat, the party may go for early poll in the center cashing on the Nandigram incidence against the Left. The Left’s threat to withdraw support from the UPA on N-deal will have no effect and it, later or sooner, will be practical. And above all the Hindutva politics in India will have thumbs-down for a while until a new ‘Babri Masjid’ is rediscovered somewhere in UP, MP or Delhi.

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