



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Indian Foreign Policy towards Pakistan during Modi Era: Assessing the Role of Hindu Nationalism

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Abstract

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Foreign policy conduct of a State, executed by its leaders, broadly reflects various patterns of its experiences, beliefs and policies. Domestic factors coupled with systemic pressures play an important role in shaping states' behavior. In addition to various domestic and external factors, leadership and its ideological association play an important role in a country's foreign policy formulation and conduct. Nevertheless, the belief system, politico-religious identity of the statesman is reflected through his foreign policy conduct. With Modi in power, Hindu nationalism has been on the rise wherein Hindu nationalists feel permitted to undermine religious minorities (Muslims) in India, Kashmiris in Indian Illegally Occupied Kashmir (IIOK) and neighbors including Pakistan. Thus, the rise of Hindu nationalism has not just challenged the secular identity of India but has also affected India's interaction both at the domestic and international levels. BJP's policies and actions during Modi's tenure have undeniably eroded India's secular identity. Modi, having a politico-religious ideology of Hindutva, has adopted a policy of belligerence towards Muslims and Pakistan. Since India's politico-religious party – Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) – under the leadership of Modi has come to power, India's relationship with Pakistan has been at its lowest ebb. The objective of the study is to understand the role of Hindu nationalism on Indian foreign policy behavior towards Pakistan.

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