

This is why Modi will win the war protesters have waged against him on CAA

What troubles protesters so much about Modi's idea of India? It is just one thing. A strong, organised, politically aware Hindu consolidation.

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The 'civil war' in India intensifies. As skirmishes and conflagrations break out there is so much unnecessary human suffering. Damage to public property. Normal life brought to a standstill. Even, worst of all, loss of lives of [protesters](#) and 263 injured law-enforcement [officers](#) in UP alone. Sadly, in the current atmosphere, all around the country there is more smoke than light.

Confusion seems worse confounded even among the best-informed. But if anyone is in doubt what these disturbances are about, I would ask them to just look at a social media hashtag that was trending – #IndiaHatesModi. It is full of such bile and loathing against Prime Minister Narendra Modi that anger over the recently passed Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) is left far behind.

Here's an example from a well-known [journalist](#): "It seems @narendramodi has opened a war on India. Let us see whether he survives or India!" This message was appended to the hashtag #CAA_NRC_Protest.

Uninformed on CAA

As is obvious, it is not that Modi has declared a war on India. Rather a small section of well-organised Modi-haters has declared war on Narendrabhai.

Of course, some well-meaning protesters who have joined in are somewhat exempt from this charge. Perhaps, they don't hate Modi as

much. After all, they voted for him. I'm referring to sections of the youth. But the videos proudly flaunting young protesters against the CAA only show how ill-informed this important section of our society is.

Having taught young adults all my life, I know that they are in favour of all things good and apparently idealistic. Truth, justice, equality, minority claims, LGBT rights, and so on. Now even animal rights. And why not? What's the point of being young but already cynical or hopeless about the future of India let alone human condition?

But these same young people don't know the first simple thing about the CAA. It is not about disenfranchising any citizen of India. It is about granting citizenship. To whom? To those who have fled to India to escape religious persecution. The Act is about giving, not taking away citizenship.

What about those excluded from its purview, namely Muslims? There are at least three Islamic countries in our neighbourhood—Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh. The CAA is for those who have nowhere but India to turn to. Are there no persecuted minorities within Islam? Yes, there are. The Ahmadiyyas of Pakistan are one example. They have been beaten, abused, raped, hounded, repeatedly targeted, and often charged with blasphemy, a capital offence in Pakistan. Their properties destroyed, shops burned, even their graves vandalised.

Shouldn't the Ahmadiyyas, for instance, also get refuge in India? Yes, they can. Even under existing citizenship laws. But they would not get the five years' relief granted to other communities—Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, Sikhs, Jains, and Parsis. The CAA does not debar Muslims from becoming Indian citizens if they are religious refugees. They would be still be covered by existing provisions of our citizenship laws. Those who consider this unfair should move an amendment to the CAA in Parliament rather than burning buses on the streets.

Unfortunately, the celebrities and Bollywood stars against CAA, though equally ill-informed, are not as innocent as some of our youth. Some have even posted fake pictures and videos. Besides showing [unauthorised maps](#) of India without Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Chinese-occupied Aksai Chin. None of them, moreover, seem to have read the Citizenship Amendment Act properly.

The hatred against Modi

The CAA is only partly what the protests are really about.

This agitation is against Modi. And his *sarkar*. If there is one thing that unites protesters across party, caste, religious, linguistic, or ethnic lines it is Modi-hatred. An implacable, unrelenting, unremitting hatred. That borders on the irrational and pathological. But as our spiritual masters have warned us, too much hatred is self-corrosive.

Modi-haters are also united by the privileges they have lost. Earned and unearned. The new India that he seeks to usher in is utterly threatening and alarming to Modi-haters. What troubles them so much about Modi's idea of India? It is just one thing. A strong, organised, politically aware Hindu consolidation. Such a consolidation, as we have seen in the last decade or more, has the capacity to so alter the dynamics of Indian politics that its erstwhile post-Independence rulers are now fighting for their very survival. These include caste satraps, brokers of backwardness, Muslim bullies and rabble-rousers, regional feudalists, dynasts of all stripes.

As I was writing this, #IndiaHatesModi was overtaken by #RamlilaMaidan. The latter pushed beyond 50k tweets within hours of Prime Minister Modi's speech. So much for making too much of social media trends.

Prime Minister Modi has hit back strongly against his detractors. An unholy and unruly mix of "urban Naxals", jihadists, negative

Ambedkarites, and so on—all backed by disgruntled opposition parties and leaders. Modi has accused this cabal of rumour-mongering, misleading and inciting the mobs.

Of course, he also reminded people that it is this same Modi *sarkar* that is going to regularise unauthorised colonies in Delhi. If so, how can it be accused of being anti-people? “Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians—all benefitted. Everyone who lives here was benefitted. Why did we do this? Because we live for the love of the country. We are dedicated to the mantra of ‘Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas’,” Modi thundered.

Listening to him, I am almost tempted to say that the war against Modi more resembles a game. And he is winning this round too. Even if BJP has lost Jharkhand, the pro-CAA rallies have gathered force.