



# THE **MODI** EFFECT

Reinventing Bharat



Edited By

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The journey of  
**MODI 3.0**  
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## Reinventing Bharathiya in the Last Decade

- Yashowardhan Tiwari

What does it mean to be a 'Bharatiya'? This is a timeless question which has been posed by the people of our land for millennia, the answers to which have profoundly shaped our worldview and civilizational framework. Thinkers, scholars, political and social leaders who have engaged themselves with this question, have provided us with pivotal moments of self-realization and a deep understanding of our lived experiences. Simply put, to be a Bharatiya is to be actively immersed in our culture and traditions.

It's an oft-repeated statement that our Bharatiya civilization has suffered the brunt of Islamic and European colonialism for centuries, which has not only left indelible marks on our civilizational structures and memories, but has also created a rupture, thus distorting the access to our own cultural experience. What is referred to as colonization of the mind in public discourse, is partly reflective of this inability to access and experience our traditions on our own terms. Through the churning of the freedom struggle and post-Independence, our nation had the opportunity to shed its colonial baggage, and lay out the contours of its national consciousness in tune with the civilizational values of this land. However, the modern state chose to construct an alternate discourse of 'civic' nationalism,

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which would give primacy to the secular ideal and be devoid, or at least conspicuous, about the presence of any sacred moorings.

With the rise of Shri Ram Janmbhoomi movement in the late 1980s, described by some scholars as a “truly subaltern, mass movement”, the cultural tropes of Bharat once again found some breathing space and positively struggled to situate their presence as an authentic, inseparable part of our national consciousness. It also ushered in a major shift in the political landscape, catapulting the politics of cultural nationalism to the mainstream, everyday discourse of national politics. Fast forward to 2014, the country witnessed a political party, the Bharatiya Janata Party, adhering to the ideology of Hindutva and riding on the personal appeal of its prime ministerial face Shri Narendra Modi, sweeping national elections and comfortably forming its government at the Centre with full majority. This marked a turning point in the trajectory of our collective national discourse, as the hegemony of conventional secularist ideologies faced an open challenge.

In the past decade since taking over the reins of central government, **the BJP has re-engineered Indian statehood as an entity which has shed its skepticism of indigenous culture and traditions**, and has been at the forefront of driving Bharat’s cultural resurgence. Under the leadership of Shri Narendra Modi, the central government has positioned itself as one which comprehends the repercussions of our colonial history, and actively anchors its developmental model in our Sanatan civilizational moorings. It has undertaken the task of rekindling Bharat’s “sacred geography”, bringing our traditions once again back to life in their full glory, with overwhelming celebration, pomp and devotion. This rejuvenation of Bharatiya civilizational markers is being accomplished through infrastructural development intertwined with a commitment towards the re-



establishment of the sanctity of our sacred spaces. The focus is both on ensuring the reconstruction of our religious spots in their full grandeur, complemented by a holistic development of the socio-economic ecosystems and public infrastructure supporting the spiritual tourism in such sacred spaces. Further, the public display of religious fervor by government leaders and political figures instills a renewed confidence among the masses to wear their religious and cultural identities on their sleeves.

Be it the re-construction of a **grand temple for Prabhu Shri Ram**, or the majestic beautification of **Mahakal and Kashi Vishwanath temple complexes**, the Indian state has ensured the availability of moments for gravitating our entire social fabric together as an eternal civilization weaving a culturally-rich, prosperous future for itself. These moments mark the unchaining of our civilizational consciousness from the painful shackles of colonialism and a deep dive into our cultural paraphernalia by the restoration of its lively manifestations. With the rejuvenation of Indic sacred spaces across the expanse of Bharat, we are also simultaneously witnessing the unravelling of a vigorous process of unlearning and re-learning, steadily bringing about a rise in our self-confidence as a civilization ready to face the challenges faced by Western modernity.

A very crucial contribution by the central government, BJP and the larger Sangh Parivar has been the **creation of space for sustenance of alternative political discourses beyond the constrictions of secularism**. Through a critical questioning of the left-liberal political discourse and challenging its hegemony in political and academic spaces, the flag bearers of cultural nationalism have laid fertile grounds for the organic growth of a kaleidoscopic political spectrum. Despite the Overton window being pushed towards left ideological radicalism over decades,

our culturally-rooted establishment has seriously attempted to balance the spectrum and bring about some breathing space for culturally-anchored political worldviews. While time may be the ultimate judge of the influence and acceptance of such worldviews, our present establishment has at least ensured that our indigenous lebenswelt is given a chance to blossom on the landscape which it considers as its home.

Perhaps the most significant transformation being witnessed amongst the general populace is a renewed adherence to their indigenous culture and traditions with a graciously poised inner confidence about their cultural practices. The masses are returning to the performance of their traditional practices without undergoing the pressure of any colonial psychological burden to provide some rational or logical explanations as to why they practice what they practice, and the scientific reasoning behind the structure of rituals and traditions. Every Bharatiya sees the possibility of experiencing indigenous culture and practicing traditions for what they are and as they are, without any distortions of the practices or their explanatory meanings. Prof. S.N. Balagangadhara's research project titled 'Comparative Science of Cultures', spanning over decades, has produced serious scientific hypotheses explaining the phenomenon of colonialism, 'colonial consciousness' and its impact of the distortion of our cultural experience. The very fact of initiation of a process of experiencing our traditional practices on our own terms may be a good start towards envisioning a remedial hermeneutics for the prosperous future of our Bharatiya civilization.





### 15. Yashowardhan Tiwari - Reinventing Bharatiya in the last decade'

Yashowardhan Tiwari is a LLB. (Hons.) He has completed his LL.M. in General Legal Studies from JGLS as a Silver Medalist in the LL.M. cohort of 2021-22. Yashowardhan has joined India Foundation as a Research Fellow.



### 16. Smriti Sharma - A decade on Shankaracharya's Path

Smriti Sharma, a media postgraduate currently serving at the Department of Culture Madhya Pradesh Govt as an Assistant Program Officer for the Ekatma Dham initiative, With a passion for social justice and cultural preservation



### 17. Naveen Huliur Durga - Narendra Modi's Leadership: Embracing the Timeless Wisdom of Basavanna

Naveen is an Entrepreneur, Columnist and Social activist.



### 18. Dr. Lekhan K.G. - Modi Government's decade of resurgence: Elevating Ayurveda, AYUSH and integrated Medicine on the Global stage

Dr. Lekhan K.G. is a young ayurvedic doctor, graduate of SDM Institute of Ayurveda, Udipi and social worker from Shikaripura, Karnataka known for his holistic and affordable approach to medicine in the locality.

