



# National Integration : A Contemporary Debate

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**Abstract** - The proposed article is an attempt to analyse the question of National Integration under different threats, real or imaginary. Since independence the Indian society has observed a lot of changes in social, political economical and cultural spheres of life. Obviously, these changes have affected the binding factors of integration; it would be relevant and even interesting to look into these effects. In this paper we would try to discuss the much discussed term of the day, "tolerance". We sincerely feel that the tolerance is the foundation of integration. We will try to evaluate whether the term tolerance has become a word of convenience. Especially for so-called intellectuals of the day.

**Keywords**- Contemporary, Civilization, National Integration, Independence, Tolerance, Regulate, Assimilate, Holistic, Plural Society, Mainstream.

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India is not merely a country, state or nation but it is much more than these nouns. India is a complete civilization evolved through ages. A lot of civilization come and vanished. India stands high headedly since the times immemorial. This is the spirit of India and we should feel proud to be an Indian. This paper is an attempt to peep into the binding factors of integration where intolerance seems to be a great danger for our great integration.

If we look into the history and contemporary world without any prejudice it can be said that we are most tolerant people in the world. It will lead nowhere if we cite or count the examples of tolerance in India because we can hardly count the events of intolerance on our finger tips where thesis can be produced on tolerant nature of Indian people. It should be meaningful to understand that why the debate of tolerance/intolerance in connection with integration is seeking so much attention. Before discussing the nation integration as such it would be relevant here to discuss the term of the day tolerance/intolerance.

There are two forces countering each other, one is in the deep sorrow and stating that India has become highly intolerant country during last few years. The second one is highly optimistic and state that India is as tolerant as it was. Let us identify these two forces, if we analyze, we can certainly conclude at the 'AWARD WAPASI BRIGADE' with those people who are in favour of intolerant India have come from the beneficiary class of their times enjoying hand in glove relationship with the than political elites. Now a days they are paying their debt. Secondly, the opposition of this day is trying to follow historian George Grote negatively, who was of the view that powerful minority view can create unbearable hindrances in the way of majority view. Need not to say that some groups of opposition have also been pampered in past. Therefore, all the people of this group have forgotten that in the name of opposition of Government or a certain political party, they are vehemently opposing our nation. Nothing has changed except the ruling elites. Criminals committed

crimes in the past and are still committing. They should be treated as criminals and should face the law of land without any favour.

Those who are in favour of tolerant India often ignore the fact that certain types of crime portray India's intolerant image. They have to admit the fact that the radicals of either sides use the emotions and feelings of their follow citizens and make the situation looking intolerant enough. Therefore, as a novel citizen of this great country the onus lies on each of us to teach radicals the right lesson ignoring only a handful of so called intellectuals who are living in self made imaginary world, where they feel that only they are right in place of 'Left'.

Besides hot debates on T.V. channels, fiery articles in dailies and some criminal activities hither and thither, India was well tolerant country, is well tolerant country and will certainly remain a well tolerant country. Because the binding factors of our integration are much more strong than the intellectuals of the day. Finally it may be said that the term tolerance has become a word of convenience, especially for so called intellectuals. India is a land of diversities in every aspect of its life-socio-cultural patterns, economic formation, language, dialect groups, religious communities, caste-subcaste-sects & tribal groups, local variations, commonly revered deities, ethnic identities, dressing and craft of life. There are geographical, ecological and metrological variations also. In India people with all their varied customs, traditions and manners did develop a great cultural thesis in ancient times that integrated the individualism within himself and within society and also in the world at large.

National integration is a process of assimilation of socio-cultural diversities into a national pattern of oneness a national pattern which is to be adhered by re-adjusting sometimes even sacrificing, customary social pattern. Once attained national integration is a state of being in which 'thing', material as well as socio-political people are also interwoven as they express cohesion with national things.

"Problematically it is a challenging problem as how to motivate the nation-citizens to regulate their personalized interests, sentiments and loyalty in terms of national integration, as a social aspect national integration in an integrative pattern evolved purposefully by national consideration in which pluralities and their socio-cultural diversities are to be subsumed. People are the 'members' of their socio-cultural system. They interact with each other under socio-cultural habituation inherited from their respective bio-social heritage. There may be inconsistencies between them. At the same time people become 'National-Citizens' of a 'National system'. It requires a re-adjustment of mental disposition, in the thinking, feeling and acting, in a manner so that nation citizen may not feel alienated and resort to the deviant practice to harm the national cohesiveness, oneness and national unity.

In a nation-society social interactions and interpersonal relationships of the pluralities are to be reviewed in three perspectives:

1. People of a plurality interact with their fellow members of same socio-cultural system and maintain interpersonal relationship within the group in allegiance to customs of their own.

2. They interact with other fellow beings of different socio-cultural system. In doing so they negotiate contractual relationship with them while strictly adhering to their own customary practices sustaining their separate existence.
3. They interact with their own fellow members as well as with other members of different socio-cultural system but as 'National citizen' sharing national pattern of living. A pattern which 'demands' and forces them to adjust their day to day interaction in accordance with national system, to adhere obligatory rights and duties granted by national system, frequently referred as national culture, national consciousness and national character."<sup>1</sup>

If the third type of interactional pattern is emerging, if such adjustment is taking place to assimilate in national stream, and if its resultant cohesiveness is maintained, only then we can visualize national integration pattern.

**The Problems of National Integration:-** "The problem of national integration is not peculiar to India. It concern with developed and developing countries both, though it is more acute in the latter owing to the phenomenon of the politics of scarcity. National integration as a concept is at once holistic and multidimensional. It is holistic because it takes into account society, culture, economy, policy, administration and even education by way of tributaries. It is multi-dimensional because it is a question of cultural, politico-administrative, economic and emotional integration and its multi-dimensionality makes it once a goal and a process. These more important facts of national integration a process. These more important facts of national integration are-

1. Culture-group integration,
2. Elite-mass integration.
3. Integration or sub-nationalistic and national identities."<sup>2</sup>

"Secularism is also a function of economical development, particularly industrialization. Thus the various religious communities are also learning to live and work together for their economic rights within the trade union movement, where communal political parties have not had much success. The banning of some of the communal organizations under the emergency should further weaken this ingress. It cannot be denied, however, that by its very nature secularism has be to a slow process in the Indian context."<sup>3</sup>

"Political analysis must recognize that in a country which is characterized by glaring inequalities, appalling poverty, a highly vitiated social and political climate, wherein traditional loyalties are critical and where the political system has encouraged the jockeying for power caste by caste and community by community, the political secularization of minority communities cannot take place at a rate faster than that of the whole society. The whole society must grow and change at an even pace, and that is the only course for the successful socio-political integration of an otherwise diverse and plural society."<sup>4</sup>

And the hope of the change lies in the urge of the religious minorities to find a place in the system through participation in democratic politics, thereby sharing developmental benefit and in the politics ultimately becoming part and parcel of the national mainstream.

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