

RSS and Bajrang Dal: A Threat to India's Integrity

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1. Muslims in the Freedom Struggle

Muslims played a critical role in India's fight against British rule. The 1857 Sepoy Mutiny featured Bahadur Shah Zafar as a unifying figure. Movements like the Khilafat (1919–1924), led by Maulana Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali, merged with Gandhi's Non-Cooperation Movement and mobilized Muslims on a massive scale. Figures like Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Ashfaqulla Khan (Kakori robbery, executed 1927), Maulana Hasrat Mohani (coined "Inquilab Zindabad"), and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's Khudai Khidmatgars in the 1942 Quit India Movement show a long-standing Muslim involvement. Institutions like Aligarh Muslim University also contributed. Despite the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan, many Muslims remained loyal to a united India.

2. RSS in the Freedom Struggle

Founded in 1925 by K. B. Hedgewar, the RSS focused on Hindu organization through *shakhas* and stayed away from anti-British movements. Hedgewar was jailed in 1921, but RSS avoided Gandhi's movements like Quit India in 1942. British reports often noted the RSS as non-threatening. While the RSS claims indirect contributions (e.g., Bengal famine relief, 1943), critics note their absence in key national movements.

3. Modern RSS Critique of Congress

The RSS today labels Congress as "anti-national" and accuses it of minority appeasement, citing events like the Shah Bano case (1985). They present moves like the abrogation of Article 370 and the CAA as nationalist victories. However, critics argue that RSS's marginal role in the freedom struggle and its earlier rejection of the national flag contrast with Congress's foundational secular vision.

4. Hindu-Centrism and Criminality in RSS and BJP

RSS promotes a Hindu-only ideology (Hindutva, as per Golwalkar), and its members have been linked to crimes that often go unpunished due to BJP influence. Examples include the 2007 Ajmer blast (RSS pracharaks convicted), the 2020 Delhi riots (16 RSS-linked arrests), and the Samjhauta Express bombing (Aseemanand acquitted). ADR (2023) reports that 36%

of BJP MPs face criminal cases. Judicial backlog (58 million pending cases) and political power dynamics often shield the accused.

5. Media and Legal Bias Against Muslims

Muslims are often labeled as terrorists (e.g., 2008 Mumbai, 2016 Pulwama), whereas crimes linked to Hindu right-wing groups rarely attract similar terminology. A 2018 study showed that headlines are 3.5 times more likely to associate Muslims with terrorism. UAPA data (2022) revealed 60% of arrests were Muslims. Meanwhile, individuals like Pragya Thakur get bail despite serious allegations, while activists like Umar Khalid remain detained.

6. The Kashmir Paradox

Right-wing Hindu groups pose a greater threat to Indian secularism than Kashmiri separatism, which is often mislabeled as Muslim terrorism. The 1992 Babri demolition, 2002 Gujarat riots, CAA, and anti-Love Jihad laws disproportionately target minorities. Scrapping Article 370 intensified fears of Hindu dominance in Muslim-majority Kashmir. Yet, the same groups demand a Hindu nation while denying Kashmiri self-determination, revealing a contradiction tied to the ideal of *Akhand Bharat*.

7. A Hypothetical Hindutva Nation Opt-In

A proposed peaceful solution is for the BJP to declare a Hindutva nation and let states choose whether to join. Some like UP and Gujarat may opt in, while others like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Kashmir may not. This could avoid communal tensions like the Muzaffarnagar riots (2013). Historical precedents like the 1993 Czechoslovakia split support this model. However, BJP's desire for national control makes such an arrangement unlikely.

8. Bajrang Dal's Contradictions

Bajrang Dal claims to protect Hindu values and women's honor, but members have been involved in rape cases (e.g., Shubham Singh, 2018; Meerut gang rape, 2021). They promote unscientific practices like cow urine/dung as cures (50 crore government investment, 2022), sometimes even force-feeding it (Agra, 2023). Uttar Pradesh reported 4,282 rapes in 2022, and 68% of communal violence cases go unresolved, highlighting the disconnect between the group's rhetoric and actions.

9. Conclusion

Muslims contributed significantly to India's independence but are often vilified today. In contrast, Hindu right-wing groups with limited roles in the freedom struggle now wield political power, sidestep accountability, and push for a Hindu nation. Their actions undermine

secularism, target minorities, and contradict democratic values. This duality—of narrative control and suppressed truth—defines modern India’s ongoing identity crisis.