

## Lecture Series on Governance and Politics in South Asia Department of Political Science

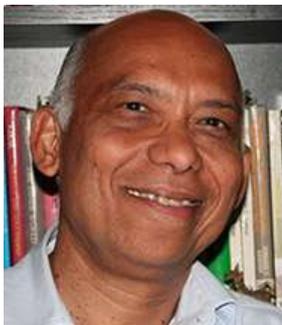
### Integration and Anxiety in Modi's India

by

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The surge in support for Hindu Nationalism, marked by the massive victory of the Bharatiya Janata Party in the parliamentary elections of 2014, was seen as a turning point in Indian politics. However, now in the second half of the mandate, despite its major achievements, the Modi government has come in for criticism for some alarming setbacks for secular democracy in India. Incidents of cow vigilantism, attack on Muslims, and elevation of leaders Hindu religious figures into high office are seen by many as a systematic attempt to dismantle or stymie institutions that safeguard rights of religious minorities. These arguments, however, have not deterred the voting public of India from endorsing both the BJP and the leadership of Prime Minister Modi in a string of key elections to regional State assemblies of India. The supporters of Mr Modi see this as a popular endorsement of his attempts to give salience to Indian culture and tradition in the institutions and political process of modern India. The paper attempts to understand this polarisation of opinion in contemporary India in terms of the key concepts of 'integration', 'anxiety' and 'moral panic' and seeks to establish a conceptual bridge across the chasm that separates the opposite camps. The solution is based on a model that connect three related concepts of critical traditionalism, re-use and hybridity. The paper draws on historical parallels to give the analysis a comparative stretch.



**Professor Mitra was former Director, Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), and Visiting Research Professor, NUS, Singapore, and, Emeritus Professor Heidelberg University, in Germany.** The dynamic interaction of culture and rationality has deeply influenced his research profile, which focuses on governance and administration, citizenship, hybridity and re-use, the evolution of the Indian state from classical to modern times, the transition to democracy and its consolidation, and security and foreign affairs of South Asia. His publications include *Culture and Rationality* (Sage 1999), *The Puzzle of India's Governance* (Routledge 2005), *Re-use: the Art and Politics of Integration and Anxiety* (Sage 2008), *Politics in India* (Routledge 2011), *Kautilya's Arthashastra: Classical*

*Roots of Modern Politics in India* (jointly authored with Michael Liebig, published by Nomos 2016, and Rupa, 2017) represent different facets of his oeuvre.

**Date: Monday, June 4, 2018**

**Time: 16:00-18:00**

**Venue: SAI 317**

**All are cordially invited!**