



Original Article

NEW NATIONALISM TO VIKSIT BHARAT 2047: INDIA'S PATHWAY
TO GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

Vikas Tawar¹ & Dr. Archana Sharma²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Political Science,
Maharaja Chhatrasal Bundelkhand University, Chhatarpur (M.P.), India.

²Professor & Supervisor, Department of Political Science,
Maharaja Chhatrasal Bundelkhand University, Chhatarpur (M.P.), India.

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Corresponding Author:
Vikas Tawar

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Abstract:

India stands at a decisive historical moment. As it approaches the centenary of Independence in 2047, the national vision of Viksit Bharat (Developed India) has converged with a renewed form of nationalism that is civilisational, developmental, and outward-looking. This paper examines how “New Nationalism” in India—especially in the post-2014 period—links national identity with economic growth, social transformation and an aspiration for responsible global leadership.

Conceptually, the paper traces the shift from anti-colonial and post-colonial nationalism to a value-based, development-oriented nationalism that emphasises self-reliance, cultural confidence and technological progress. It analyses flagship initiatives such as Make in India, Digital India, Atmanirbhar Bharat and Viksit Bharat 2047 as expressions of developmental nationalism, and explores how ideas like Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam and the civilisational ethos of Vishwaguru shape India's external engagement.

Empirically, the paper briefly draws on a broader doctoral study that employed a qualitative design supplemented by a perception survey ($N = 100$) and semi-structured interactions with around 10 respondents from political, social, cultural, spiritual and professional backgrounds.

The paper argues that if anchored in inclusivity, constitutional values and global responsibility, India's New Nationalism can serve as a powerful pathway from Viksit Bharat 2047 to meaningful global leadership in a multipolar world.

Keywords: New Nationalism, Viksit Bharat 2047, Developed India, Global Leadership, Civilisational State, Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, Atmanirbhar Bharat

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Introduction:

Nationalism has been one of the most powerful forces shaping modern states, yet its meanings and manifestations vary across time and space. In the Indian context, nationalism first emerged as a force of anti-colonial resistance, then as a project of national integration and state-building after Independence. In recent years, a new phase has become visible: a form of “New Nationalism” that links civilisational memory, cultural pride and developmental ambition with the explicit goal of making India a developed nation by 2047.

The vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 is now a central theme of public policy and national discourse. It is not merely an economic slogan but a comprehensive framework that seeks to integrate growth, social justice, technological innovation, internal security, and global responsibility. This paper situates the idea of Viksit Bharat within the broader evolution of Indian nationalism and analyses how New Nationalism shapes India’s aspiration to become both a developed nation and a responsible world leader.

Methodologically, the paper draws on the author’s doctoral research, which combines a qualitative, analytical and thematic design with a perception survey (N = 100) and semi-structured interactions with around 10 respondents from different walks of life. The emphasis here, however, is conceptual and interpretive rather than statistical.

Conceptualising New Nationalism and Viksit Bharat 2047:

Classical theories of nationalism, from Benedict Anderson’s “imagined communities” to Ernest Gellner’s linkage of nationalism with industrial modernity, typically focus on the Western experience. In India, nationalism has always carried a civilisational dimension: it draws on ideas of dharma, rashtra, janmabhoomi and Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam while engaging modern democratic institutions and development goals.

New Nationalism in India can be characterised by four interrelated features:

1. **Civilisational Continuity:** India is seen not only as a modern nation-state but as an ancient civilisation that has preserved its identity through centuries of change.
2. **Developmental Focus:** National pride is increasingly expressed through economic performance, infrastructure creation, technological capability and poverty reduction.
3. **Cultural Confidence:** There is renewed emphasis on language, traditions, festivals, spiritual heritage and indigenous knowledge systems like yoga and Ayurveda.
4. **Global Responsibility:** Nationalism is projected not as isolationism but as a basis for contributing to global welfare and multipolar stability.

Within this framework, Viksit Bharat 2047 is both a target and a test of New Nationalism. It defines “success” not only in terms of GDP but also in terms of human development, social cohesion,



environmental sustainability and ethical leadership in world affairs.

New Nationalism and India's Developmental Transformation:

The post-2014 period has seen an intensification of policy efforts that connect nationalism with development. Three broad dimensions are noteworthy.

1. Economic and Technological Self-Reliance:

Programmes such as Make in India, Digital India, Startup India and Atmanirbhar Bharat frame production, innovation and entrepreneurship as acts of nation-building. New Nationalism encourages citizens to see domestic manufacturing, indigenous research and digital inclusion as expressions of patriotism.

This developmental nationalism stresses:

- Infrastructure expansion (highways, railways, urban renewal, digital connectivity);
- Technological missions (space exploration, digital payments, 5G, renewable energy)
- Local value addition and reduced external dependence.

Such measures seek to lay the material foundation for a developed economy while reinforcing the idea that economic strength is integral to national dignity.

2. Social Transformation and Inclusive Aspirations:

New Nationalism also emphasises social schemes aimed at basic welfare, empowerment and dignity—housing, sanitation, health insurance, financial

inclusion, and targeted subsidies. While these programmes have many administrative and political dimensions, they are often framed in the language of sabka saath, sabka vikas, sabka vishwas.

The underlying message is that a truly “developed” India cannot exist without upliftment of the poorest, reduction of regional imbalances, and better opportunities for women, youth and marginalised communities. Patriotism is thus linked with social responsibility.

3. Leadership Narratives and National Identity:

The articulation of New Nationalism in political and social discourse also shapes popular imagination. Under the current leadership, economic and foreign-policy achievements, large-scale public programmes and cultural events are narrated as symbols of a “New India” that is confident, self-reliant and ready to lead.

At the same time, cultural and spiritual voices emphasise service (seva), social harmony, character building and civilisational values as essential pillars of national progress. Taken together, these political, social and spiritual streams contribute to a composite nationalist narrative oriented towards Viksit Bharat 2047.

Towards Global Leadership: Norms, Diplomacy and Soft Power:

India's aspiration for global leadership is not framed in terms of territorial expansion or military dominance, but through moral authority, development partnership and cultural influence.



1. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam and Civilisational Diplomacy:

The ancient maxim Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (“the world is one family”) has become a central motif in India’s external messaging, including its G20 presidency theme. It positions India as a country that seeks global welfare, climate justice and an equitable international order. India’s diplomatic agenda increasingly links national interest with:

- Sustainable development and climate responsibility;
- Voice for the Global South;
- Reform of multilateral institutions to reflect contemporary realities;
- Peaceful resolution of conflicts and respect for sovereignty.

In this sense, New Nationalism extends beyond borders by offering a civilisational perspective on global governance.

2. Strategic Partnerships and Multipolarity:

India’s foreign policy has evolved from strict non-alignment to what is often termed “multi-alignment” or “issue-based alignment.” Strategic cooperation with the United States, Russia, France, Japan and others coexists with active engagement in platforms such as BRICS, the Quad, SCO and the G20.

This flexible diplomacy reflects:

- A desire to protect strategic autonomy;
- Recognition of India’s growing economic and technological weight;
- Commitment to a multipolar world where no single power dominates.

New Nationalism thus underpins a foreign policy that is assertive yet responsible, calibrated yet value-driven.

3. Soft Power and Cultural Outreach:

India’s soft power—yoga, Ayurveda, cinema, cuisine, diaspora networks, literature and spiritual traditions—plays a significant role in shaping global perceptions. New Nationalism encourages structured promotion of these assets through international yoga day, cultural centres, diaspora engagement and digital platforms.

Soft power is not seen as a substitute for hard power, but as a complement that enhances India’s legitimacy as a potential Vishwaguru—a moral and cultural guide in an interconnected world.

Empirical Insights from the Doctoral Study:

Although this paper is largely conceptual, it is informed by empirical work conducted as part of a doctoral thesis on “The Rise of New Nationalism: India Emerging as a World Leader.”

1. Research Design:

The study adopted a qualitative, analytical and thematic design supported by:

- A perception survey using a structured questionnaire (N = 100) covering diverse respondents across regions, age groups, occupations and educational levels;
- Around 10 formal and informal interactions with political leaders, administrators, spiritual figures, academicians, social workers, professionals, youth and common citizens.



The survey used a five-point Likert scale to capture views on nationalism, development, leadership, and India's global role.

2. Key Patterns:

Broad patterns that emerged include:

- A strong majority of respondents perceived that a “new form of nationalism” is emerging in contemporary India, linked closely with development and self-reliance.
- Most respondents expressed confidence that India can become a developed nation by 2047, provided current efforts in governance, infrastructure and social welfare continue.
- There was significant support for the view that India can play an important role in world leadership, especially through its philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam and its record in peace-keeping, disaster relief and South–South cooperation.
- Qualitative interactions suggested that political, cultural and spiritual leadership together shape public imagination of New Nationalism and Viksit Bharat, although expectations and concerns differ across groups.

These findings do not “prove” nationalism in a statistical sense, but they do indicate that the idea of Viksit Bharat 2047 enjoys broad resonance and that many citizens see development, nationalism and global responsibility as mutually reinforcing.

Conclusion:

This paper has examined how India's New Nationalism provides an ideological and emotional framework for the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 and for India's aspirations to play a greater role in global affairs. Unlike purely territorial or exclusionary forms of nationalism, the Indian model discussed here combines civilisational memory, democratic values and developmental goals.

Three broad conclusions emerge:

1. New Nationalism as Developmental Force: By linking national pride with economic, technological and social progress, New Nationalism motivates large-scale state initiatives and citizen participation.
2. Viksit Bharat 2047 as National Project: The 2047 vision gives a temporal focus to long-term planning and invites people to see themselves as co-creators of a developed India.
3. Responsible Global Leadership: Through Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, multi-alignment and soft power, India seeks not domination but dignified partnership and moral leadership in a multipolar world.

At the same time, the future of this project depends on how effectively India can uphold constitutional values, protect diversity, ensure inclusive growth and manage internal and external challenges. New Nationalism will strengthen India's path to Viksit Bharat and global leadership only if it remains open, ethical and oriented towards the welfare of all.



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