



# FREEDOM FROM BIGOTRY IS NECESSARY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND GDP IN THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTH ASIA

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## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

Bigotry or religious intolerance or religious fundamentalism, rather occurs when a group (e.g., a society, a religious group, a non-religious group) refuses to tolerate one's religious practices or persons or beliefs, especially on religious grounds does. Bigotry is a state of mind in which individuals dislike individuals of national origin, socioeconomic status, other races, genders, sexual orientations, especially religions, while tactfully, dogmatically, showing intolerance. Not a single region of the earth has been spared from a past full of religious intolerance. Constitutional provisions do not necessarily guarantee freedom from religious intolerance, all elements of the state always remain in place and practice can vary widely from country to country. The Asian Development Outlook 2022 predicts that Southeast Asia's GDP would expand by 4.9 and 5.2 percent, respectively, in 2022 and 2023. Southeast Asia was already experiencing an economic slump prior to the epidemic because of rising US-China trade tensions and a decline in global demand. Four industries dominate the region's attention: travel, tourism, medium-sized and small-scale companies (MSME), and agriculture. Health, transportation, tourism, the hospitality industry, and small and medium-sized businesses were among the susceptible industries that were affected by the countrywide lockdown to stop the pandemic's spread. Southeast Asia had several difficulties because of the pandemic, including environmental, financial, economic, and health issues. The impact of bigotry on international trade in South Asia is analyzed in this research paper. In this research paper, the religious composition of the countries of South Asia, population and import-export data with SAARC countries, etc. have been analyzed. The research also explains how other factors contribute to the reduction in international trade.

**Key Words:** Freedom from bigotry, international trade.

## Introduction

Defending the proposed changes, Attorney-General George Brandis argued, 'people do have a right to be bigots, you know' (Alcorn 2014, p.30) <sup>[1]</sup>. Bigotry, by its very nature, is a violation of human rights. When perpetrated, acts of bigotry rupture the peaceable bonds that might otherwise be developed between people, and which would enable them to live safe lives free from the unwanted and hateful intrusions of others. Acts of bigotry also impose an unfair burden of suffering onto those who have been vilified by virtue of the fear, psychological distress and emotional trauma that they cause. A bigot is intolerant and prejudiced against others (usually on the basis of their ethnicity, race, religion, sexuality, age, etc.) and who, because of their prejudices, treat 'othered' people with fear, hatred, and contempt. Disregarding the norms of social decency and fairness, bigots make statements, exhibit mannerisms and behave in ways that are not merely offensive or hurtful to the entities they target but which, ultimately, create a 'we-they' divide in the minds of onlookers. This divide is morally problematic on two accounts: first, it provides a foundation for those who are vilified to be dehumanised; and second, once dehumanised, the vilified are portrayed as being outside of the category of 'human' and all the protections that being human would normally entail. Muslim fundamentalist organizations have been gaining momentum in Bangladesh for a long time. In the last few years many major terrorist organizations have come

into existence in the name of religion. The biggest threat to the country of Pakistan is from religious fundamentalists. India is the most stable democracy in South Asia. Here for the first time a pro-Hindu right-wing party has come to power on its own strength. The resolve to combat religious bigotry in political parties is weakening. Laws on subjects such as blasphemy have fueled religious extremism and made minorities more helpless and vulnerable than ever before. Religious fundamentalism is now affecting the democratic institutions of the country as well. Dershowitz's <sup>[2]</sup> underlying theory is one that can be neutrally applied by people residing at all positions within the political spectrum....

South Asia is the origin of the four major world religions Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. The origins of South Asian peoples can be traced back to an early settlement around 3300 BC, at the height of the great Indus Valley Civilization in Afghanistan, Pakistan and the northern part of India. Most of the area of this civilization was under the Maurya Empire from 322 to 185 BC. The spread of Islam in South Asia was facilitated by Arab general Bin Qasim's conquest of Pakistani territory and other subsequent invasions. From the 18th century onwards, the British Empire took over nations like India and Afghanistan. In South Asia, missionaries mainly from Europe were responsible for the introduction and spread of Christianity, while Islam was introduced through the Arab conquest.

According to Frederick List, "Domestic trade is between us, while international trade is between us and them." Trade between two or more countries is called "international trade" or foreign trade. When there is buying and selling of goods and services between two different countries by land, water, and air routes, then it is called international trade. In international trade, goods are produced not only to meet domestic demand, but also to sell goods abroad. Due to this increase in national production, the income of the people increases. More workers are needed for more production as a result the level of employment also increases. At the international level, due to geographical division of labor, total world production can be maximized because each country produces only those goods in which it gets maximum ability and skill. As a result, optimum conditions of production are achieved, and production is maximum. Only those industries and businesses available in the country are established, for which the necessary resources are available in the country, the resources are fully utilized and the national income increases. In the worldwide competition, only those industries survive whose production quality is high and the price is low. This improves the production technology of the country. Due to international trade, there is a tendency to have equality in the prices of goods in all the countries. The tendency of monopolies gets hurt as a result of foreign trade. Due to foreign trade, monopolistic business cannot flourish in the country] because they are always in danger of foreign competition. The resources which are not available in the country for the development of industries can be imported from abroad. Any country can easily face economic crisis due to international trade. The area of competition in international trade expands from the obvious to the whole world.

As businesses look to move to a stakeholder capitalism model that considers people and the planet alongside profits, here's a breakdown of some of the ways that racism is bad for business. <sup>[3]</sup> Owing to protectionist policies, high logistics cost, lack of political will and a broader trust deficit, intra-regional trade in South Asia remains well below its potential at 5% of the region's global trade.<sup>[4]</sup> This makes South Asia one of the most disconnected regions in the world, especially when compared with other regions such as East Asia and the Pacific, where intra-regional trade accounts for approximately 50% of total trade, and Sub-Saharan Africa, where intra-regional trade has improved over the years to 22% due to the steps taken by governments to create transparent mechanisms for trade facilitation.<sup>[5]</sup> Intra-regional trade in the South Asian region (including Myanmar) amounts to only 5.6% (2017). <sup>[6]</sup> The slowdown in India's exports to South Asia in 2015 and 2016 coincided with the 13% decline in India's global trade from US\$19 trillion in 2014 to US\$16.5 trillion in 2015. <sup>[7]</sup> Additionally, NTBs such as import policy barriers, anti-dumping and countervailing measures, testing and certification requirements, export subsidies, and government participation have all curtailed the potential of intra-regional connectivity. <sup>[8]</sup>

Cooperation, partnership, trade relations with the whole world is necessary for the development of a country. If the best relations are maintained among themselves, by importing labor force (engineers and specialists) as per requirement from any country, one can fulfill the needs of his country. It is known by looking at the history that in the olden times; a lot of energy had to be spent to maintain the existence of our country. Although the defense expenditure is still substantial, the existence of any country is not in danger because the international community cannot allow any country to occupy another country. Therefore, the existence of the country may also be in danger if it is separated from the world community. If man was not a social animal, then it would have been possible to reach the stage of development which he has reached today. Indian leaders, experts opened the doors of generosity in India to world entrepreneurs and associated themselves with the world community for economic growth which gave birth to free competition. People got employment opportunities and got opportunity to use world class goods, as well as got world market for country's factories, plantations, farm barns so that they could get fair price and get more production opportunities. The whole world is developing simultaneously, and all the countries have become dependent on other countries. It has become necessary for all countries to maintain trade relations with other countries. With the development of transport and communication means, from village to city and city to metro city, and in the same way, the countries of the whole world have become intertwined in such a way that the whole world has become like a united village. Today our physical development has reached such a level that to develop above this the world community has to walk together. No producing country can take production advantage by restricting its production only to the

country. Religious fanaticism cannot bring harmony in relations with different countries. No country can produce everything. All kinds of minerals, plants and intellectual abilities are needed for development. In addition, each country needs each other to exchange the output of tomorrow's factories which remain the main source of development today. Forest wealth, mineral wealth, intellectual property of all countries is different due to different climate. Tomorrow, only by the development of the factory, facilities are available in our life and our standard of living is high.

In the 19th century, due to foreign competition, the Indian Laghu and Cottage industries suffered a heavy blow. Many such resources of the country are exhausted by foreign trade] whose replacement is not possible. Due to foreign trade, the economy of one country becomes dependent on another country for certain goods. In times of war, such dependence can prove to be very harmful. Due to foreign trade, industrial units must compete with foreign industries-A foreign trade initially increased international goodwill and cooperation] but at present it remains the basis of international hatred and war. The development of only a few industries is possible without the development of all industries in the country. Due to this kind of one-sided development, many resources of the country remain idle. In international trade, each country produces only those goods in which it enjoys a comparative advantage. Developed countries start selling their goods in backward countries at very low prices. Sometimes they start selling their goods at prices less than the cost of production. Once the domestic industries are over, the foreign industrialists again increase the value of their goods. Due to foreign trade, such goods can be imported into a country which are harmful. Due to international trade, agricultural countries have to suffer in comparison to industrialized countries.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- Understand the bigotry of concept.
- Understand the international trade in South Asia.
- The analysis of impact of bigotry on peoples and South Asian countries

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY -

Exploratory research gives valuable insights, generates ideas and valuable aspect in a more exploratory manner. Primary aggregate (data) conveys first-hand information for the specific purposes at hand, while secondary aggregate (data) contains important information to describe and uncover valuable insights in research. Secondary data are obtained from books, published reports, the Internet, libraries, periodicals and reports from some government agencies. Data was collected by preparing schedules and questionnaires. 200 people were made subjects. Respondents are selected at random and requested to appear for interview. The questions are asked in a pre-determined order. These data are analyzed/sorted with the help of computer.

The term South Asia is used for the 8 countries located to the south of the Himalayas. India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Maldives, Bhutan and Afghanistan are included in these countries. SAARC is also an organization of countries of South Asia. The population of this region (2020) is about 185 Crores. Hindi, Urdu, Nepali, Punjabi, Bengali, Sinhalese, Pashto, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, English etc. languages are mainly spoken in the region. This area is mainly inhabited by the citizens of Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Jainism, etc. In this region with a large population, international trade is not strong among the members, due to which there may be many reasons, but the main reason is bigotry. Due to lack of good relations between different countries, the citizens here have been unable to cooperate with each other in achieving a high standard of living.

### Religious Structure of the Countries of South Asia

Table – 1

Country	Religious Demographics
Afghanistan	Islam (99 percent), Hinduism, Sikhism and Christianity (1 percent)
Bangladesh	Islam (90 percent), Hinduism (9 percent), Buddhism (0.6 percent), Christianity (0.3%),
Bhutan	Buddhism (75%), Hinduism (25%)
India	Hinduism (79.5 percent), Islam (14.5 percent), Christianity (2.3 percent), Sikhism (1.7 percent), Buddhism (0.7 percent), Jainism (0.4 percent), Others (0.9 percent)
Maldives	Sunni Islam (100%) (One must be a Sunni Muslim to be a citizen of Maldives)
Nepal	Hinduism (82 percent), Buddhism (9.0 percent), Islam (4.4 percent), Kirat (3.1 percent), Christianity (1.4 percent), other (0.8 percent)
Pakistan	Islam (96.28 percent), Hinduism (2 percent), Christianity (1.59 percent), Ahmadiyya (0.22 percent)
Sri Lanka	Buddhism (70.19 percent), Hinduism (12.61 percent), Islam (9.71 percent), Christianity (7.45 percent)

Source: World Bank<sup>[12]</sup> and other

Citizens who follow Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Jainism, etc. help in the expansion of the international market. The culture and tradition of each religion is different, due to which the product varies, and the market expands internationally. Due to bigotry in these countries, the benefit of market expansion is

not available to the citizens residing in this area. Political party leaders and religious leaders mislead citizens based on bigotry and deprive citizens of their rights.

### Countries of South Asia Country Population (2020)

Table – 2

Country	Population	Country	Population
India	1,380,004,385	Nepal	29,136,808
Pakistan	220,892,340	Sri Lanka	21,413,249
Bangladesh	164,689,383	Bhutan	771,608
Afghanistan	38,928,346	Maldives	540,544

Source: World Bank<sup>[12]</sup>

It is clear from Table-2 that India is the most populous country in South Asia. The population of India is 6.3 times that of Pakistan, 8.4 times that of Bangladesh, 35.47 times that of Afghanistan, 47.58 times that of Nepal, 64.48 times of Sri Lanka, 1788.47 times of Bhutan, 2553 times of Maldives.

### India's Exports - Imports with SAARC Countries during the last three years

Table - 3 (Millions in US Dollars)

Country	2017-2018			2018-2019			2019-2020		
	Export Trade	Import Trade	Balance of Trade	Export Trade	Import Trade	Balance of Trade	Export Trade	Import Trade	Balance of Trade
Afghanistan	709.75	433.78	275.97	715.44	435.44	280.00	997.58	529.84	467.74
Bangladesh	8614.52	685.65	7928.87	9210.32	1044.80	8165.52	8200.85	1264.74	6936.11
Bhutan	546.12	377.99	168.13	657.33	370.96	286.37	738.60	405.73	332.87
Maldives	217.00	5.68	211.33	223.02	20.41	202.61	226.57	6.00	220.58
Nepal	6612.96	438.38	6174.57	7766.20	508.14	7258.06	7160.35	711.61	6448.74
Pakistan	1924.31	488.56	1435.75	2066.63	494.87	1571.76	816.64	13.97	802.67
Sri Lanka	4476.46	772.63	3703.83	4710.21	1488.67	3221.54	3800.91	903.69	2897.22
TOTAL SOUTH ASIA	23101.11	3202.66	19898.45	25349.15	4363.29	20985.86	21941.51	3835.58	18105.93

Source: Department of Commerce <sup>[10]</sup>

Table-3 shows the international trade between the countries of South Asia. Through international trade, they meet each other's needs by importing and exporting. International trade is important for establishing a balance between the demand and supply of goods and services. The trade structure between South Asia can be understood from the following description: India is the largest market for Afghan producers in South Asia. Afghanistan exports raisins, walnuts, almonds, figs, pine nuts, pistachios, dried apricots, apricots and cherry fruits to India. On the other hand, India exports fresh fruits like pomegranate, apple, cherry, cantaloupe, watermelon, medicinal herbs and spices like asafetida, cumin, tea and coffee, cotton, pepper and saffron to Afghanistan. Apart from this, investments worth thousands of crores have been made by India in Afghanistan. Work on many of these projects is still in progress. The Taliban have once again captured Afghanistan. India will have to be cautious on many fronts. Looking at the current time, it is feared that there may be a lot of impact on the import-export between the two countries. Due to the current situation there, apart from the strategic relationship between the two countries, the trade relationship may also be affected.

Pakistan exports finished leather, processed food, inorganic chemicals, fresh fruits, cement, minerals and ores, raw cotton, spices, wool, rubber products, alcoholic beverages, medical equipment, marine goods, plastics, dyes and sporting goods to India. Whereas the commodities exported from India include organic chemicals, cotton, plastic products, cereals, sugar, coffee, tea, iron and steel goods, medicine and copper etc. Frustrated by the abrogation of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370, Pakistan stopped trade with India.

According to the export website, of the 92.6 percent of the products exported from Nepal in the year 2017, 56.7 percent of the goods were shipped to India, America 11.2 percent, Turkey 06.4 percent, Germany 3.9 percent, Britain 3.4 percent, and China 03 percent. Oil trade from India to Nepal accounts for about 28% of it. Motors, cars, other vehicles and spare parts (7.8 per cent), steel (07 per cent), medicines (3.7 per cent), machinery and other connected goods (3.4 per cent), power tools (2.7 per cent) other than Nepal petroleum products from India Are included. The main goods that come from Nepal to India include jute products (9.2 percent), zinc steel (8.9 percent), textiles (8.6 percent), yarn (7.7 percent), polyester yarn (6 percent), and juice (5.4 percent). Cardamom, wire, toothpaste, pipe etc. India's role in Nepal's economy has always been special. In the last two decades, many Indian companies have set up large projects there.

Major products exported by India to Bhutan include minerals, machinery, mechanical equipment, power tools and plastics. Bhutan exports electricity, Ferrosilicon, Portland cement and dolomite to India.

The top products exported to Sri Lanka are mineral fuels, oils, distillation products, etc., ships, boats and other floating structures, pharmaceutical products, iron and steel, knitted or crocheted fabrics.

The religious structure of the population in South Asia is such that by neglecting any religion, the nation cannot increase its fame at the international level. If any nation is to progress on the path of development, then it has to promote international trade in the era of globalization. The means of transport and communication have

turned the whole world into a global village. Factories have become instruments of modern prosperity. The concept of nation development cannot be fulfilled without the movement of skilled labor force and capital investment. Other countries make up for the shortfall in the natural resources of one country. Fanaticism has to be abandoned for the sake of modernity, innovation, entrepreneurship, skill development and development of technology.

In the midst of the world's competition to grow economically, countries in South Asia are embroiled in a bidding race of bigotry, hatred of their own citizens and warmongering. US-backed Afghan democracy in South Asia is dead and power rests with advocates of medieval barbarism. When the statistics of the world started showing glimpses of Bangladesh's economic progress, at the same time, what happened during Durga Puja in Bangladesh shows that bigotry is getting stronger there too. Pakistan's minority and civil liberties groups are paying the price for bigotry. Instead of fighting for a true democracy and civil liberties, Pakistan is engrossed in nurturing its fundamentalists. Despite the revolution against the monarchy, Nepal does not want to become that modern. The condition of India is no better than this. A player from a minority community is being blamed for losing a match in the Cricket T20 World Cup and is being called such a traitor on social media. Is Mohammed Shami only responsible for the loss to Pakistan in the team of 11?

Today in the era of globalization, the image of any country is very important. Former Reserve Bank Governor Raghuram Rajan's request to maintain tolerance and Moody's expressed concern over the growing intolerance in India. Intolerance does not only tear apart the fabric of the society, but it also has a negative impact on the international finance and trade system of the nation, development of the economy, capital security of investors and international image. It is this image that assures international investors that their capital is safe. The growing intolerance also creates disorientation in the ongoing political discourse within the nation. In the long run, the development journey of the nation gets adversely affected.

Due to bigotry and other reasons, the international trade of South Asia is not growing rapidly. **ANALYSIS OF THE 10 MAIN FACTORS OF THE IMPACT OF BIGOTRY ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

**Table – 4 (% of Respondents)**

S.N.	Factors	Completely Agree	Partially Agree	Partially Disagree	Perfectly Disagree
01	Linking bigotry to nationalism.	38	43	16	03
02	National and regional divisions due to extreme bigotry.	12	17	39	32
03	Communal riots on grounds of blasphemy and other reasons.	56	31	02	11
04	Advocating customers not to buy goods/services from traders of another religion.	23	19	39	19
05	Restriction/reduction of labor mobility based on religion.	33	58	02	07
06	Politics based on bigotry.	71	18	10	01
07	Propaganda about the company and its products based on bigotry.	19	46	03	32
08	Promoting negative thoughts about religious culture, customs and dress due to bigotry.	29	43	01	27
09	Fostering religious frenzy through social media.	63	01	03	33
10	Creating a negative image of the citizens of the country in the citizens of other countries psychologically or emotionally.	69	03	02	26

**Sources: Self Survey**

An analysis of Table No. 4 reveals that 38% of the respondents fully agree with the factor of linking bigotry with nationalism while 43% partially agree. 16% partially disagree while 3% strongly disagree. After this, about the partition of the country from the second factor militant nationalism, 12% of the respondents fully agree while 17% partially agree. In the current context, 39% of respondents partially disagree while 32% strongly disagree. South Asia ranks among the worst regions of the world based on poverty, illiteracy, disease and backwardness, which religious fundamentalism is pushing it into more trouble. The example of Gulf countries is in front of everyone, the country which showed religious liberality stood in the developed category countries like Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait, UAE, Qatar etc. All Muslim countries but due to their generosity they became prosperous but Afghanistan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq are still not developed due to not giving up their fanaticism, whereas Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia have immense oil wealth. Afghanistan has no shortage of natural resources, but due to radicalization, it is a disturbed area and is underdeveloped. No country can freely treat another country on its own terms.

All religious fanatics have mutual friendship because when Muslim bigotry comes to the fore, the Hindu vote comes together. When Hindu bigotry is visible, Muslims come together. This is where the vote bank of political parties is formed. They enjoy power, not development, but from the fanaticism of caste and religion. In return

we get nothing but religious frustrated satisfaction. The anarchy arising out of bigotry has had a negative impact on our industry, business, business as well as public interest. Employment opportunities are decreasing, and the country's economy is collapsing. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad described the demand for Pakistan, on grounds of religion, as a great fraud. <sup>[11]</sup>

### Conclusion:

Is bigotry in our DNA, If we are completely honest, there is perhaps a little bit of xenophobia, racism, sexism and bigotry deep within all of us. This is also true for our fear of others who are different to us – xenophobia – and intolerance of their viewpoints – bigotry. Movements such as Nazism have openly promoted bigotry. It is possible to steer our cultures and rewire our brains so that bigotry all but disappear.<sup>[9]</sup> The long-standing political dispute becomes the cause of conflict between domestic and international political battles. Religious Bigotry is a weapon of political parties to gain power, which is used by national regional parties for the fulfillment of their political interests. Barriers to trade arise at the international level, in which the political interests of political parties' act as impediments. Industrialists and businessmen cannot create conflict with the political power of the country because their economic interests are linked to political parties. If political parties leave their political interests and think about global welfare, it is possible to increase international trade. Affordable and quality goods and services will be available to customers of each other country. Today, there are many examples of developed countries in the world, which have developed as an example of 'Sarva Dharma Sambhav'. Canada, USA, UK and other European countries all believe in fair justice and treatment. Despite being Christians themselves, all other religious followers reside there who have contributed significantly to the development there. Many high-ranking scientists, doctors, engineers, politicians in America are Hindus or Muslims of Indian origin. Let us develop the spirit of "Vasudhaiv-Kutumbakam".

### Suggestion:

Research work All countries work for the benefit of mankind with cooperation. If any society or country wants to move forward on the path of development, then religious liberality must be embraced. Respect for all religions can connect other religion lovers of the world. Casteism, fundamentalism cannot be used to make business relations with anyone. It becomes necessary that every section of the people, every religion should be respected. It is becoming necessary for every country to be secular. Religious generosity is the main way to bring the wave of peace and development in every nook and corner of the country. If international trade is to increase, then the countries of South Asia will have to promote religious tourism. International sports competitions will have to be organized regularly. To get education from one country to another, scholarship and other facilities will have to be expanded. Political parties of different countries should continue diplomatic and other negotiations so that trade can be expanded. Political parties should keep international business away from politics for the sake of politics. Business activities should not be included in politics based on religion. An international association of industrialists and traders was formed in South Asia, which could contribute to the expansion and spread of trade and services in the region. The countries of South Asia should remove the traffic related barriers on their borders and build international roads etc. at a fast pace so that the citizens of the country can get good and quality goods. The tendency to defame one country to another for internal problems needs to be curbed. There should be strict restrictions on the tendencies of extremism terrorism in which cooperation by one country for another country should be done.

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