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Reclaiming India As Bharat: A Detailed Study On Breaking The Chains Of Mental Slavery

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Abstract

This paper explores the civilizational, cultural, and psychological imperative of reclaiming "Bharat" as the primary identity of the Indian nation. "India," as a colonial construct, imposed a Western framework upon a civilization that predates many modern nations. Through historical, constitutional, and philosophical lenses, this study aims to unearth how mental slavery persists post-independence and how renaming and re-identifying with "Bharat" can lead to a cultural renaissance, reawakening national pride and indigenous consciousness.

Introduction

The name "India" finds its origin in the Western interpretation of the River Sindhu (Indus). While the name was popularized during colonial rule, "Bharat" has been the indigenous name for the subcontinent since ancient times. The Indian Constitution, in Article 1, recognizes both names: "India, that is Bharat..." This duality is more than semantic—it represents a civilizational dichotomy between a colonized identity and a decolonized self.

Historical Context

Ancient texts like the Rigveda, Vishnu Purana, and Mahabharata use the term "Bharat" to define the land and its people. The British institutionalized "India" to create a governance-friendly, divided, and simplified representation. The renaming was not just administrative but psychological—breaking the link between people and their historical memory.

Mental Slavery and Cultural Erosion

Colonial education policies, legal systems, and language dominance created layers of mental enslavement. Macaulay's Minutes on Education proposed creating a class of Indians in blood but English in taste and intellect. This alienation from native traditions, languages, and philosophies continues in the modern education and governance systems.

Constitutional and Philosophical Perspective

Article 1 of the Constitution reads: "India, that is Bharat, shall be a Union of States." Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the chief architect of the Constitution, acknowledged the necessity of decolonizing institutions and identities, even though practical adoption of Bharat as a sole national identifier remained incomplete. Contemporary thinkers like Dr. Sudhanshu Trivedi argue that reclaiming "Bharat" is a step towards restoring the indigenous ethos of governance and thought.

Reclaiming Bharat in Contemporary Discourse

Movements like 'Vocal for Local', promotion of Indian languages, and revival of Bharatiya Knowledge Systems are part of the larger framework to reassert the name "Bharat". The G-20 invitation addressed by the 'President of Bharat' in 2023 marked a pivotal moment in this discourse.

Challenges in Reclaiming Bharat

Resistance stems from political polarization, administrative complexities, global recognition, and fear of religious or ideological domination. A gradual approach supported by educational reform, public discourse, and inclusive nationalism is essential.

Conclusion

Reclaiming "Bharat" is not merely about renaming a country but re-establishing a civilizational identity rooted in dignity, memory, and indigenous knowledge. Breaking the chains of mental slavery requires a cultural awakening that starts with language, education, and political will.

References

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