

TIME puts PM Narendra Modi on cover, calls him divider in chief

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TIME magazine has featured a story on Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the cover of its May 20, 2019 edition, and says India is "more divided than ever".

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi on TIME Magazine cover (Source: TIME Magazine)

New Delhi: Prime Narendra Modi has made the cover of the iconic US-based Time magazine (Asia edition) dated May 20, 2019. The magazine cover lists Modi as India's "divider in chief" – a reference to BJP's Hindutva politics, which according to the author of the story, has led to the polarisation of the electorate.

"Of the great democracies to fall to populism, India was the first," says the opening sentence of the article.

In the cover story titled "Can the World's Largest Democracy Endure Another Five Years of a Modi Government?" the writer Aatish Taseer talks about rising populism in democracies as far apart as Turkey, Brazil, Britain and the US – the case in point being India.

"Populism has given voice to a sense of grievance among majorities that is too widespread to be ignored, while at the same time bringing into being a world that is neither more just nor more appealing," the article says.

The article which is highly critical of PM Narendra Modi states that after the 2014 elections, basic tenets of the Indian state considered to be normal such as "the character of the Indian state, its founding fathers, the place of minorities and its institutions, were shown to be severely distrusted".

After 2014, the article states, "the achievements of independent India such as secularism, liberalism, a free press" came to be seen in the eyes of many as part of a grand conspiracy.

The author accuses the prime minister to be silent about 2002 Gujarat pogrom proving him to be "a friend of the mob". The article accuses the administration of being silent on cow lynchings.

It is to be noted that the magazine's editorial view of Modi has shifted over the years. PM Modi made the list of the Times' 100 most influential people in 2014, 2015 and 2017 but failed to make the cut in 2019.

- TN, IT