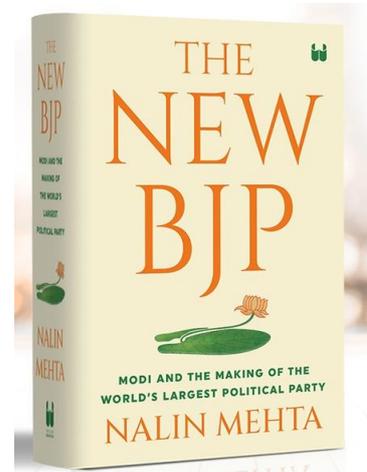


'The New BJP' helps understand India

Dr N Bhaskara Rao
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"The NEW BJP-Modi and the making of the world's largest political party" (Westland, Chennai) is a fascinating account and gripping narration with "startling insights" of veteran analyst professor Nalin Mehta. The 840 page book, as described by iconic professor Robin Jeffrey, is classic and offers "an understanding of contemporary India and the processes that have shaped it". The book compels discourse and debate as it opens a new vista for all those engaged in politics, policy making as well as public communication. Equally important, the book offers a fresh outlook to those who are otherwise averse to party politics.



With impeccable credentials as a dispassionate analyst, Professor Nalin Mehta offers a new perspective for news media's punditry. The in-depth analysis is possible as Mehta had the benefit of consultations with not only "four musketeers" he referred to but a host of professional peers and colleagues each with own eminence. The book avails new digital research tools, including never before availed ones, like the three unique indices- the Mehta-Singh social index, the Narad and Poll Niti indexes. These enabled him to go beyond straight line analyses that the public is otherwise familiar. This is more than a narration of emerge of a political party of "merchants of north" initially into a "party of heartland" to that of "clear majority of Bharat" with Modi becoming "**Hriday Samrat**".

The book is not only a "revisionist history" of BJP and social engineering, but a landmark in public discourse for ushering in of a "new India" with an altogether a different paradigm for new politics as well. It offers a new window to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to further widen his options and reposition himself as a messiah of not just the masses but of a generation, much beyond as a political leader. The book assures Modi that he can now look beyond party prism, far more confidently, offers him a new framework to look beyond claims, party crafting and fighting electoral battles.

This Nalin Mehta's book offers valuable insights for way far ward for everyone interested in the future of the country. First it reminds that BJP and Modi could now afford and have an unprecedented opportunity to initiate shifts all the way from that of "control and command" to cooperation and collaboration mode. This is what Modi had already enunciated as "***Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas***" but this requires going beyond "social representation" concern and "ease of living" view. This should mean less dependence of people on government and the government should be visibly inclusive. Also, it is time to realise that Polarisation is not a sustainable approach for good politics. All this requires polls become harmonious and collaborative, and welfare policies do not remain dole and lure driven. Now is high time to assure citizens that parties, politics and elections need not be dividing or segmenting or endless "fighting". That is how this book could help the country gear up for the second hundred years of the Republic (2050).

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(Dr N Bhaskara Rao is a longstanding public policy analyst and author of over a dozen books including "*Rejuvenating the Republic*" and "*Next Big Game Changer of Elections in India*", 2021).

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