

# Hindutva and exclusion connected, says Amartya Sen

Expresses grave concern over inherent social inequality

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Expressing grave concern at the exclusionary thought guiding the ruling establishment, Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen said that “there is a connection between Hindutva psychology and exclusion.”

He was speaking at the launch of a book – whose title is borrowed from his own phrase ‘*A Quantum Leap in the Wrong Direction?*’ – which aims to evaluate the promises and policies of the current BJP-led government.

Professor Sen argued that the social inequality inherent in Hindutva translates into an acceptance of economic inequality also. “This idea of progress being progress for some, but not for others – there’s an element of religiosity in it. This basic belief that some people’s



Amartya Sen

progress is like everyone’s progress is something that can be rooted way back in our thinking,” he said.

### ‘Tolerance of inequality’

“There is a kind of tolerance of inequality and tolerance of judging progress by what is happening to the most successful,” he added, pointing out that the richest 10% of the country are faring better than ever.

The book argues that the

government has failed to fulfil its poll slogan of “*sabka saath, sabka vikas*”, and has also suppressed the data which shows this failure.

Professor Sen posited that the government’s dependence on a few success stories as opposed to wider statistics was also linked to Hindutva philosophy. “The numbers game is really important. That’s why Hindutva is important in this context ... There’s a connection between [Hindutva, and the idea that] ‘numbers don’t matter’, and worse than that, [the idea that] ‘some people don’t matter’,” he said. “The most problematic aspect of Hindutva is the issue of the treatment of lower castes and tribes. It’s not only that you can ignore some people, but that you identify who it is that you can ignore.”