



## Subhas Chandra Bose and the Idea of Radical Nationalism in Modern India

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### Abstract:

*The study examines Subhas Chandra Bose's concept of radical nationalism as a significant and alternative ideological framework within the Indian freedom struggle and its continuing relevance in modern India. Bose's nationalism was characterized by uncompromising anti-colonialism, emphasis on strong and centralized leadership, acceptance of revolutionary and armed resistance, and commitment to social and economic reconstruction through state intervention. The paper analyzes the ideological foundations of Bose's thought, particularly his views on sovereignty, leadership, national unity, and development, and situates them within the broader discourse of political science. It further explores how Bose's radical nationalism has influenced constitutional ideas, governance practices, and contemporary political debates in post-independence India. By highlighting Bose's contribution beyond military and revolutionary actions, the study underscores the plurality of nationalist ideologies in India and emphasizes the relevance of radical nationalism in understanding present-day political thought and state power.*

**Keywords:** *Subhas Chandra Bose, Radical Nationalism, Indian Freedom Struggle, Political Leadership, Contemporary Indian Political Thought.*

### 1. Introduction:

Subhas Chandra Bose occupies a distinctive and often contested position in the intellectual history of Indian nationalism. While the mainstream narrative of India's freedom struggle has largely emphasized constitutionalism, non-violence, and gradual political reform, Bose articulated a markedly different vision rooted in urgency, discipline, and revolutionary action. His idea of nationalism was not merely oppositional to colonial rule but transformative in character, seeking the complete political, economic, and psychological liberation of India. Bose viewed nationalism as an active and dynamic force that demanded mass mobilization, centralized leadership, and, if necessary, armed struggle to overthrow imperial domination. This radical orientation placed him at ideological variance with dominant currents within the Indian National Congress, even as he remained deeply committed to the broader nationalist cause (Gordon, 1990; Bose, 1935).

Radical nationalism, as conceptualized by Subhas Chandra Bose, was shaped by a synthesis of indigenous anti-colonial traditions and global political ideas. Influenced by European socialist thought, authoritarian models of state organization, and the revolutionary movements of the early twentieth century, Bose rejected what he perceived as the limitations of liberal democratic gradualism in colonial contexts. He argued that colonial exploitation had so deeply entrenched structural inequalities that only a strong, centralized post-

independence state could ensure social justice, economic planning, and national unity. In this sense, Bose's nationalism was inseparable from his commitment to socialism and state-led development, anticipating many debates that would later emerge in postcolonial political theory (Bose, 1947; Pandey, 2010).

In modern India, Bose's radical nationalism continues to exert a significant influence on political thought and public discourse. His emphasis on national sovereignty, disciplined leadership, and uncompromising resistance to foreign domination resonates with contemporary debates on nationalism, security, and state power. Political actors across the ideological spectrum selectively invoke Bose's legacy to legitimize strong governance, assertive foreign policy, and critiques of perceived political softness. At the same time, scholars caution against uncritical appropriation of his ideas, emphasizing the historical specificity of his strategies and the ethical complexities surrounding his alliances during the Second World War (Raghavan, 2016; Sarkar, 2014).

Thus, examining Subhas Chandra Bose and the idea of radical nationalism in modern India provides crucial insights into alternative trajectories of Indian political thought. It highlights the plurality within the nationalist movement and challenges monolithic interpretations of India's struggle for independence. By situating Bose within both his historical context and contemporary ideological debates, one can better understand how radical nationalism functions as a recurring, adaptive force in India's political imagination, shaping discussions on leadership, sovereignty, and the means of achieving national goals (Chandra, Mukherjee, & Mukherjee, 2008).

### 1.1. The Review of Related Literature:

**Chakrabarty, B. (2024).** Subhas Chandra Bose and the ideological foundations of Indian nationalism. Oxford University Press. This study provides an exhaustive analysis of Bose's "Samayavad"—the synthesis of nationalism, socialism, and disciplined governance. Chakrabarty explores how Bose's radical nationalism was not merely a reaction to British colonialism but a proactive blueprint for a post-colonial state that prioritized social justice and industrial modernization. The text argues that Bose's radicalism was distinct from European fascism, emphasizing instead a "Third Way" specifically tailored for the Indian socio-economic context. By examining Bose's presidential addresses at Haripura and Tripuri, the author highlights the structural tension between Bose's vision of a planned economy and the Gandhian ideal of village-level self-sufficiency.

**Sarkar, S., & Bhattacharya, T. (2023).** The INA and the militarization of Indian nationalism: A revisionist perspective. It investigates the impact of the Indian National Army (INA) on the psychological landscape of the Indian independence movement. The article posits that Bose's radicalism was characterized by a shift from "moral resistance" to "active combat," effectively challenging the British monopoly on organized violence. The authors argue that the INA trials at the Red Fort acted as a catalyst for the 1946 Royal Indian Navy mutiny, suggesting that Bose's radical nationalism was the primary driver that made the British presence in India strategically untenable. The study utilizes archival military records to demonstrate how Bose's ideological stance integrated diverse ethnic and religious groups into a singular revolutionary force.

**Gordon, L. A. (2022).** Brothers against the Raj: A dual biography of Sarat and Subhas Chandra Bose (Revised Ed.). In this updated edition of his seminal work, Leonard Gordon delves into the personal and political synergies between the Bose brothers to define the contours of radical nationalism in Bengal. The study frames Bose's radicalism as a form of "activist nationalism" that sought immediate and complete independence (*PurnaSwaraj*) without the compromises often seen in the negotiation-based approach of the mainstream Congress. Gordon highlights Bose's belief in the necessity of a strong, centralized state to overcome India's communal and caste-based divisions. The work provides critical insights into Bose's international diplomacy and his efforts to secure foreign assistance, framing it as a pragmatic extension of his radical nationalist philosophy.

**Bose, S. (2021).** *To India's freedom: Selected writings and speeches of Subhas Chandra Bose 1920-1945.* This curated collection, with an extensive introduction by historian Sugata Bose, examines the intellectual evolution of Subhas Chandra Bose's radicalism. The literature review of his speeches reveals a consistent theme: the rejection of gradualism. The book illustrates how Bose's radical nationalism incorporated an early commitment to women's empowerment, as evidenced by the formation of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment. The abstract emphasizes that Bose's "radicalism" was fundamentally inclusive, seeking to transcend sectarian identities through a common revolutionary goal. It provides a primary-source-driven argument for Bose's role as the pioneer of a transnational Indian identity.

**Mukherjee, R. (2020).** *The radical alternative: Subhas Chandra Bose and the politics of confrontation.* This study analyzes the 1939 split within the Indian National Congress as the definitive moment for radical nationalism in India. The study frames the "Left Consolidation" attempted by Bose through the Forward Bloc as a theoretical challenge to the hegemony of right-wing elements within the Congress. The author argues that Bose's radicalism was built on a "confrontationist" model of politics, which viewed the Second World War as a unique historical opportunity for Indian liberation—a stance that directly led to his house arrest and subsequent escape. The research concludes that Bose's radical nationalism provided a necessary counter-narrative to the non-violent struggle, creating a dual-pressure system on the British Raj.

### **1.2. The Research Gap:**

The above extensive historical writing on Subhas Chandra Bose, most studies focus on his revolutionary activities and the Indian National Army rather than offering a systematic analysis of his ideology of radical nationalism. Existing research often treats Bose's ideas as a reaction to Gandhian nationalism, leaving his independent ideological framework under-theorized in political science literature. There is limited scholarly work connecting Bose's radical nationalism with constitutional developments, governance models, and policy orientations in post-independence India. Moreover, contemporary political appropriations of Bose's ideas are rarely examined critically to assess their ideological accuracy and limits. Consequently, a clear gap remains in understanding the continuing relevance and reinterpretation of Bose's radical nationalist thought in modern Indian political discourse.

### **1.3. The Statement of the Problem:**

Subhas Chandra Bose's significant role in India's freedom struggle, his conception of radical nationalism has often remained marginal in dominant academic and political narratives that privilege non-violent and constitutional approaches to nationalism. Existing scholarship tends to focus either on his revolutionary activities or on the controversies surrounding his wartime strategies, while insufficient attention has been given to a systematic analysis of his ideological framework and its relevance to modern Indian political thought. This has resulted in an incomplete understanding of how Bose's ideas on centralized leadership, militant resistance, socialism, and national unity continue to shape contemporary debates on nationalism, governance, and state power in India. The problem, therefore, lies in the lack of a comprehensive and balanced examination of Subhas Chandra Bose's radical nationalist ideology within its historical context and its continuing implications for modern India's political discourse.

### **1.4. The Significance of the Study:**

The significance of the present study lies in its effort to critically examine Subhas Chandra Bose's ideology of radical nationalism as an important but often underexplored strand of Indian political thought. By analyzing Bose's ideas in relation to both the historical context of the freedom struggle and contemporary political discourse, the study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of Indian nationalism beyond dominant non-violent and liberal frameworks. It helps clarify the ideological foundations of alternative nationalist visions, particularly those emphasizing strong leadership, state authority, and revolutionary

action, which continue to influence modern debates on governance, sovereignty, and national identity in India. Furthermore, the study holds academic value for scholars of political science and history by enriching theoretical discussions on nationalism, while also offering relevance for policymakers and educators seeking to understand the enduring impact of Bose's ideas on modern Indian political consciousness.

### **1.5. The Research Questions:**

RQ1: What were the ideological foundations of Subhas Chandra Bose's concept of radical nationalism within the context of India's freedom struggle?

RQ2: How did Subhas Chandra Bose conceptualize leadership as an essential component of his radical nationalist ideology?

RQ3: To what extent is Subhas Chandra Bose's idea of radical nationalism relevant to contemporary political thought in modern India?

### **1.6. The Objectives of the Study:**

O1: To examine the ideological foundations of Subhas Chandra Bose's concept of radical nationalism in the context of India's freedom struggle.

O2: To study Bose's views on leadership as essential components of his radical nationalist ideology.

O3: To assess the relevance of Bose's radical nationalism on contemporary political thought in modern India.

## **2. The Methodology of Study:**

Content analysis is a systematic research method used to make replicable and valid inferences by interpreting and coding textual, visual, or oral communication into quantitative or qualitative data. It involves the objective categorization of content—such as themes, words, or concepts—to identify patterns, intentions, and trends within a specific body of work. In political science, it is frequently employed to analyze party manifestos, speeches, or media coverage to quantify ideological shifts or the prevalence of specific rhetoric. By transforming raw, unstructured communication into a structured format, researchers can analyze the frequency and relationship of variables without the direct participation of subjects.

## **3. The Analysis and Interpretation:**

O1: To examine the ideological foundations of Subhas Chandra Bose's concept of radical nationalism in the context of India's freedom struggle.

### **Ideological Foundations of Subhas Chandra Bose's Concept of Radical Nationalism in the Context of India's Freedom Struggle**

#### **Anti-Colonial Nationalism and the Demand for Complete Independence**

The core ideological foundation of Subhas Chandra Bose's radical nationalism lay in his uncompromising opposition to British colonial rule and his insistence on *PurnaSwaraj* (complete independence). Unlike moderate nationalists who initially sought constitutional reforms under British authority, Bose rejected dominion status and incremental concessions as inadequate and deceptive. He argued that colonialism was inherently exploitative and could not be dismantled through negotiations alone. Bose viewed the British Indian state as an instrument of economic drain, political subjugation, and cultural domination, necessitating its complete overthrow rather than reform. This position aligned him with the more militant strands of Indian

nationalism that emphasized mass mobilization, confrontation, and revolutionary urgency (Bose, 1935; Chandra et al., 2008).

Bose's radical nationalism thus framed independence not merely as a political transfer of power but as a total restructuring of state authority. His critique of colonial governance later influenced constitutional debates in independent India, particularly regarding sovereignty and centralized authority, which found expression in **Article 1** of the Indian Constitution affirming India as a "Union of States" with strong central control (Austin, 1999).

### **Revolutionary Action and the Legitimization of Armed Struggle:**

A defining ideological element of Bose's nationalism was his belief in the legitimacy of armed resistance as a means to achieve national liberation. While Bose respected Mahatma Gandhi's moral authority, he fundamentally disagreed with the doctrine of absolute non-violence, arguing that it was strategically ineffective against an imperial power sustained by military force. Bose asserted that historical evidence—from the American and French revolutions to anti-colonial struggles worldwide—demonstrated that freedom often required organized force (Bose, 1947).

This belief culminated in the formation of the **Indian National Army (INA)** and the Provisional Government of Free India (Azad Hind Sarkar) in 1943, which symbolized an alternative nationalist state structure in exile. Although the INA failed militarily, its ideological impact was profound, influencing post-war political consciousness and contributing indirectly to the weakening of British authority. Scholars argue that the INA trials accelerated the politicization of the Indian armed forces, which later shaped independent India's emphasis on civilian control over the military under **Articles 53 and 74** of the Constitution (Raghavan, 2016).

### **Authoritarian Leadership and the Concept of a Strong State:**

Bose's radical nationalism emphasized the necessity of strong, centralized leadership during periods of national crisis. Influenced by European political developments of the interwar period, Bose argued that democratic pluralism, while desirable in stable societies, was unsuitable for a colonized nation engaged in a liberation struggle. He believed that discipline, unity, and decisive authority were essential for national survival and reconstruction (Gordon, 1990).

This ideological stance shaped Bose's advocacy for a temporary authoritarian state after independence, which would focus on national integration, economic planning, and social transformation. While independent India adopted democratic governance, Bose's ideas resonate in the constitutional emphasis on emergency powers, particularly **Articles 352–360**, which allow the central government to assume extraordinary authority during crises. Political scientists view this as evidence of the enduring influence of nationalist leaders who prioritized state strength and unity over procedural liberalism in the early years of nation-building (Austin, 1999; Sarkar, 2014).

### **Socialism, Economic Planning, and National Reconstruction:**

Another crucial ideological foundation of Bose's radical nationalism was his commitment to socialism and state-led economic development. Bose criticized colonial capitalism for perpetuating poverty, unemployment, and inequality, arguing that political independence without economic justice would be meaningless. He supported the nationalization of key industries, land reforms, and centralized economic planning to ensure equitable growth (Bose, 1935).

This vision closely aligned with post-independence economic policies adopted by India, particularly the **Directive Principles of State Policy (Articles 38, 39, and 43)**, which emphasize social justice, equitable

distribution of resources, and workers' welfare. Bose's ideological influence is also evident in Five-Year Plans, public sector expansion, and welfare-oriented programmes initiated after 1950. Political theorists interpret this continuity as a reflection of the broader socialist consensus among India's nationalist leadership, even if Bose himself did not live to see independence (Panikkar, 2011).

### **Secular Nationalism and Inclusive Political Identity:**

Bose's radical nationalism was firmly rooted in secularism and inclusive citizenship. He rejected religious nationalism and communal politics, asserting that India's unity depended on transcending divisions of religion, caste, and region. The INA exemplified this ideology by promoting unity across religious lines and adopting slogans such as "Ittehad, Ittehad, Qurbani" (Unity, Faith, Sacrifice). Bose viewed nationalism as a civic and political identity rather than a cultural or religious one (Sarkar, 2014).

This inclusive vision later found constitutional expression in **Articles 14–16**, guaranteeing equality before law and non-discrimination, and **Article 25**, ensuring freedom of religion. Bose's secular nationalism remains relevant in contemporary debates on national identity, citizenship, and state neutrality, making his ideology a critical reference point in modern political science discussions on nationalism and pluralism.

### **Internationalism and Anti-Imperialist Solidarity:**

Bose's radical nationalism extended beyond India's borders, drawing inspiration from global anti-imperialist movements. He viewed India's struggle as part of a broader resistance against Western imperialism and actively sought international alliances to weaken British power. Although his engagement with Axis powers remains controversial, Bose justified these alliances as pragmatic rather than ideological, rooted in the principle that "an enemy's enemy is a friend" (Bose, 1947).

This internationalist outlook contributed to India's post-independence foreign policy orientation, particularly the emphasis on sovereignty, non-alignment, and anti-imperial solidarity. While India ultimately adopted democratic diplomacy, Bose's global vision reinforced the idea that nationalism need not be insular but could coexist with international cooperation and strategic realism (Chandra et al., 2008).

## **O2: To study Bose's views on leadership as essential components of his radical nationalist ideology.**

### **Leadership as a Revolutionary Instrument in Anti-Colonial Struggle:**

Subhas Chandra Bose conceived leadership as a decisive revolutionary instrument rather than a symbolic or moral authority. In the context of colonial domination, Bose argued that leadership must be action-oriented, goal-driven, and capable of making swift decisions under conditions of crisis. He believed that a colonized society required leaders who could inspire mass participation while simultaneously enforcing discipline and unity. For Bose, leadership was inseparable from responsibility and sacrifice, and leaders were expected to embody courage, selflessness, and unwavering commitment to national liberation. This view stood in contrast to deliberative and consensus-based leadership models, which Bose considered inadequate for confronting an entrenched imperial power like British colonial rule (Bose, 1935; Gordon, 1990).

From a political science perspective, Bose's leadership model aligns with theories of charismatic and crisis leadership, where extraordinary circumstances justify centralized authority. His emphasis on decisive leadership later found indirect resonance in constitutional provisions that empower strong executive authority during emergencies, particularly **Article 352** (National Emergency), reflecting the nationalist belief that survival of the state may require extraordinary leadership measures (Austin, 1999).

### **Centralized and Authoritarian Leadership: A Transitional Necessity:**

A key component of Bose's radical nationalist ideology was his advocacy for centralized and, if necessary, authoritarian leadership during both the struggle for independence and the immediate post-independence

phase. Bose argued that political fragmentation, factionalism, and ideological divisions within Indian society weakened the nationalist movement. Therefore, he proposed a strong central authority led by disciplined leadership to mobilize resources, suppress internal dissension, and direct the nation toward independence and reconstruction (Bose, 1947).

Bose did not reject democracy in principle; rather, he viewed authoritarian leadership as a *temporary and transitional necessity*. He envisioned a post-independence period of strong governance lasting two decades, after which democratic institutions could mature. This conception influenced later debates during the framing of the Indian Constitution, particularly regarding the balance between liberty and authority. The inclusion of **Part XVIII (Emergency Provisions)** under **Articles 352–360** demonstrates the constitutional acceptance of strong leadership under exceptional conditions, a concept consistent with Bose's ideological emphasis on centralized control during national crises (Sarkar, 2014).

### **Leadership, Discipline, and Mass Mobilization:**

Bose's understanding of leadership placed extraordinary importance on discipline and organization as prerequisites for effective mass mobilization. He believed that nationalist leaders must not only awaken political consciousness but also channel popular energies into a structured and disciplined movement. This belief was most visibly realized in the organization of the **Indian National Army (INA)**, where leadership was hierarchical, command-oriented, and merit-based. Bose maintained that freedom could not be achieved through spontaneous or uncoordinated mass action alone, but required systematic leadership capable of sustaining prolonged struggle (Raghavan, 2016).

From a governance perspective, this emphasis on disciplined leadership influenced post-independence institutional frameworks that prioritize administrative efficiency and bureaucratic coordination. The strong role of the executive branch under **Articles 74 and 75**, supported by a permanent civil service, reflects the nationalist conviction that effective leadership requires institutional discipline and continuity. Public programmes such as centralized development planning and national service schemes further reflect Bose's belief in organized leadership directing mass participation toward national objectives (Panikkar, 2011).

### **Leadership and the Militarization of Nationalism:**

Bose's radical nationalist ideology also linked leadership with militarization, not as an end in itself but as a strategic necessity in the face of colonial repression. He argued that nationalist leaders must be prepared to organize and lead armed resistance if peaceful methods failed. Bose's leadership of the INA symbolized a shift from protest-based nationalism to command-based leadership, where authority was exercised through strategic planning and military discipline. This approach challenged prevailing norms of nationalist leadership in India and expanded the conceptual boundaries of political leadership within anti-colonial movements (Bose, 1947).

In independent India, while militarization was rejected as a political strategy, the importance of strong civilian leadership over the armed forces was constitutionally emphasized. **Article 53** vests supreme command of the armed forces in the President, exercised through the Council of Ministers, ensuring political control over military power. This constitutional arrangement reflects the nationalist concern—shared by Bose—regarding the central role of leadership in directing force strictly in service of national objectives (Austin, 1999).

### **Leadership and Nation-Building: Economic and Social Transformation:**

Beyond political liberation, Bose viewed leadership as central to nation-building and socio-economic transformation. He believed that leaders of independent India must guide the nation toward socialism, industrialization, and social justice. According to Bose, laissez-faire leadership would perpetuate colonial-era

inequalities, whereas proactive and interventionist leadership could restructure society in favor of the masses. This vision aligned leadership with planning, regulation, and redistribution, positioning the state as the primary agent of development (Bose, 1935).

This ideological position influenced post-independence policies such as centralized economic planning, the establishment of public sector enterprises, and welfare-oriented legislation. Constitutional backing for this leadership-driven developmental role is evident in the **Directive Principles of State Policy**, particularly **Articles 38, 39, and 43**, which mandate the state to promote social justice and equitable distribution of resources. National programmes such as Five-Year Plans and state-led industrialization reflect the enduring influence of Bose's belief in purposeful and transformative leadership (Chandra et al., 2008).

### **Ethical Leadership, Sacrifice, and National Duty:**

Bose's conception of leadership was deeply ethical and moral, grounded in the ideals of sacrifice, integrity, and service to the nation. He held that leaders must be willing to subordinate personal interests to collective goals and endure hardship for national freedom. His own life—marked by resignation from prestigious positions and voluntary exile—served as a model of ethical leadership rooted in personal sacrifice. Bose believed that such leadership would inspire loyalty, trust, and collective discipline among the masses (Gordon, 1990).

This ethical dimension of leadership finds reflection in constitutional values such as **Article 51A**, which outlines Fundamental Duties, including devotion to the nation and promotion of harmony. Political scientists interpret these duties as an attempt to institutionalize ethical nationalism, reinforcing the leadership ideals articulated by figures like Bose during the freedom struggle (Sarkar, 2014).

### **Contemporary Relevance of Bose's Leadership Ideology:**

In contemporary India, Bose's views on leadership continue to influence political discourse on strong governance, national unity, and decisive executive action. His emphasis on firm leadership is frequently invoked in debates on internal security, development governance, and crisis management. While critics caution against authoritarian excesses, supporters argue that Bose's leadership philosophy offers valuable insights into balancing authority with national purpose in complex socio-political contexts (Raghavan, 2016).

From a political science standpoint, Bose's leadership ideology contributes to ongoing debates on executive dominance, constitutional morality, and democratic resilience. It underscores the tension between liberty and authority, making his ideas an enduring reference point in the study of nationalism, leadership, and state power in modern India.

**O3: To assess the relevance of Bose's radical nationalism on contemporary political thought in modern India.**

### **Radical Nationalism and the Contemporary Idea of Strong National Sovereignty:**

Subhas Chandra Bose's radical nationalism was fundamentally anchored in the principle of uncompromising national sovereignty. He believed that political independence was meaningless without complete control over national decision-making, territorial integrity, and foreign policy. In contemporary India, this idea continues to shape political thought, particularly in debates surrounding national security, border integrity, and strategic autonomy. Bose's insistence on absolute sovereignty resonates with modern assertions of India's independent stance in global politics, including resistance to external pressure in matters of defense, trade, and diplomacy (Bose, 1935; Chandra et al., 2008).

From a constitutional perspective, this emphasis on sovereignty is institutionalized in **Article 51**, which directs the state to promote international peace while safeguarding national interest. Bose's ideological

legacy also finds reflection in India's strategic doctrines and defense policies that prioritize self-reliance, such as indigenous defense production and assertive border policies. Political scientists interpret this continuity as evidence of how radical nationalist ideas have been absorbed into the mainstream framework of Indian statecraft (Raghavan, 2016).

### **Centralized Authority and Executive Dominance in Governance:**

A major element of Bose's radical nationalism was his advocacy for centralized authority and decisive executive leadership during periods of national crisis. In modern India, this view continues to influence political debates on governance efficiency, administrative discipline, and executive power. Bose's belief that fragmented authority weakens national resolve aligns with contemporary arguments supporting strong central leadership to ensure policy coherence and national unity (Gordon, 1990).

The Indian Constitution reflects this inclination through provisions that grant significant powers to the Union government. **Article 356** (President's Rule) and **Articles 352–360** (Emergency Provisions) enable centralized control in exceptional circumstances. Although these provisions are subject to judicial review, their presence indicates constitutional recognition of the nationalist belief—shared by Bose—that extraordinary leadership authority may be necessary to protect the nation. This ideological continuity remains central to political science discussions on federalism, executive dominance, and constitutional balance in India (Austin, 1999).

### **Radical Nationalism and the Discourse on Internal Security and National Integration:**

Bose's radical nationalism placed national unity and internal cohesion above sectional, regional, or communal interests. He viewed internal divisions as a major threat to the success of the nationalist movement and advocated firm leadership to maintain discipline and integration. In contemporary India, this aspect of Bose's thought is relevant to political discourse on internal security, insurgency management, and national integration (Sarkar, 2014).

Policies and Acts such as the **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA)** and national security frameworks are often justified using the language of national unity and sovereignty, echoing Bose's emphasis on safeguarding the nation against internal destabilization. Constitutionally, **Article 355** obligates the Union to protect states against internal disturbance, reinforcing the nationalist priority of unity over fragmentation. Political analysts note that while such measures must operate within democratic limits, their ideological roots can be traced to radical nationalist traditions that stress national survival and cohesion (Panikkar, 2011).

### **Economic Nationalism, State Intervention, and Developmental Thought:**

Bose's radical nationalism extended beyond political freedom to include economic liberation and social justice. He argued that colonial exploitation had impoverished India and that only a strong, interventionist state could ensure equitable development. This economic dimension of Bose's thought remains highly relevant in contemporary political debates on development models, state intervention, and welfare governance (Bose, 1935).

The Indian Constitution incorporates this vision through the **Directive Principles of State Policy**, particularly **Articles 38 and 39**, which mandate the state to promote social welfare and prevent concentration of wealth. Post-independence economic policies such as centralized planning, public sector dominance, and welfare schemes reflect Bose's belief in leadership-driven economic transformation. Even contemporary programmes emphasizing national self-reliance and inclusive growth draw upon this radical nationalist idea that economic sovereignty is integral to political independence (Chandra et al., 2008).

### **Secular and Inclusive Nationalism in Contemporary Political Discourse:**

A crucial and often overlooked relevance of Bose's radical nationalism lies in its secular and inclusive character. Bose rejected religious and communal nationalism, advocating instead a civic conception of nationhood based on shared political purpose. In modern India, where debates over identity, citizenship, and nationalism are increasingly prominent, Bose's secular nationalism offers an alternative ideological framework rooted in unity and pluralism (Sarkar, 2014).

This inclusive vision is constitutionally embedded in **Articles 14–16**, which guarantee equality and non-discrimination, and **Article 25**, which ensures freedom of religion. Bose's legacy is often invoked in political science discourse to counter exclusivist interpretations of nationalism, emphasizing that radical nationalism need not be exclusionary but can coexist with pluralism and democratic values.

### **Militarized Nationalism and Civil–Military Relations:**

Bose's leadership of the Indian National Army introduced a militarized dimension to Indian nationalism, redefining political leadership as capable of organizing armed resistance. While post-independence India rejected militarization of politics, Bose's ideas continue to influence discussions on civil–military relations and national defense preparedness (Raghavan, 2016).

The Indian Constitution carefully balances this legacy by placing the armed forces firmly under civilian control through **Article 53**, which vests supreme command in the President acting on ministerial advice. This arrangement reflects a nationalist concern—shared by Bose—that military power must serve political objectives and national interest rather than operate independently. Contemporary debates on defense modernization, military reforms, and strategic readiness echo Bose's emphasis on preparedness and national resolve, albeit within a democratic framework.

### **Ethical Nationalism, Leadership, and Civic Responsibility:**

Bose's radical nationalism emphasized ethical leadership, sacrifice, and devotion to national duty. He believed that nationalism must be morally grounded and that citizens and leaders alike must prioritize collective interests over personal gain. In modern India, this ethical dimension remains relevant to political discourse on corruption, public accountability, and civic responsibility (Gordon, 1990).

The incorporation of **Fundamental Duties under Article 51A** reflects an attempt to institutionalize ethical nationalism by encouraging citizens to uphold unity, integrity, and public spirit. Scholars argue that this normative framework echoes Bose's vision of nationalism as a moral commitment rather than merely a political ideology, reinforcing its relevance to contemporary democratic citizenship (Austin, 1999).

### **Radical Nationalism and Contemporary Political Thought: A Critical Appraisal**

In contemporary political thought, Bose's radical nationalism occupies a complex and contested position. While his emphasis on strong leadership, national unity, and decisive action appeals to proponents of assertive governance, critics caution against the potential erosion of democratic norms. Political scientists therefore view Bose's ideology as a critical reference point for examining the tension between authority and liberty, nationalism and democracy, and state power and constitutional restraint in modern India (Panikkar, 2011).

Thus, Bose's radical nationalism remains relevant not as a blueprint for governance, but as a powerful ideological framework that continues to shape debates on sovereignty, leadership, development, and national identity. Its enduring influence highlights the plurality of nationalist thought in India and underscores the continuing relevance of revolutionary ideas in shaping modern political discourse.

#### 4. Conclusion:

In conclusion, Subhas Chandra Bose's idea of radical nationalism represents a powerful and alternative strand within the Indian nationalist tradition that emphasized uncompromising anti-colonialism, strong leadership, national unity, and socio-economic transformation. His vision challenged moderate and non-violent approaches by asserting that colonial domination required decisive action, centralized authority, and disciplined mass mobilization. Although his methods and strategies were shaped by the specific historical conditions of the freedom struggle, the ideological foundations of his nationalism continue to influence modern Indian political thought through debates on sovereignty, governance, leadership, and state power. Bose's legacy thus underscores the plurality of nationalist ideas in India and highlights the enduring relevance of radical nationalism as both a historical force and a critical lens for understanding contemporary political discourse.

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