



‘Hindutva is not our political agenda, it is our inspiration’

Editorial Director **Prabhudev Chawla** speaks to BJP president **Nitin Gadkari** on ETV's Sachchi Baat. Excerpts from the interview:

Why was Uma Bharti taken back?

From the day I became BJP president, I made up my mind like Arjun, who only saw the eye of the bird. I can only see the 2014 elections, and my mission is to see NDA in power. I want to widen our votebank, bring back old people and those whose thoughts match ours and make efforts to clear wrong notions in the minds of SCs, STs, minorities, workers and intellectuals.

From being a party with a difference, the BJP is a party with differences.

In the past six months, the differences within the party have become negligible.

Sushma Swaraj has given a whole speech...

The party is united, people are working together. Many decisions taken recently were important. There might be differences of opinion but not in the minds of people. Do understand—we are a democratic party and India's principal opposition. *Hamari maa-beton ki party nahin hain.*

After being eight years out of power, BJP leaders are still arrogant.

There is no arrogance, everybody takes decisions together. There is no supremacy of the president. I have authority, but before taking a decision I speak to people for their opinion, bring them all on one table, before a unanimous decision is taken. Which political party has 15-18 people discussing, thinking, developing an idea and working together for a decision? Does it happen in

the Congress party?

In the recent Assembly polls, BJP fought 826 seats, but won only six.

Our vote-share went up by 0.5 per cent in Assam, 1.5 per cent in Tamil Nadu, 2.5 per cent in Kerala, and 1.75 per cent in West Bengal.

Had to happen. You fought 800 seats as opposed to 400 last time.

We have retained six seats.

Is BJP's acceptability, credibility, reliability lessening by the day?

Our party's growth graph is rising. In UP, we'll emerge as a strong party. Our home ground is UP, Uttarakhand, Punjab—let polls happen in these states, then decide.

Have you forgotten Hindutva and Swadeshi?

If we talk about Hindutva, we are called communal.

Does it affect you?

What is Hindutva? Swami Vivekananda had said great things about Hindutva. The Supreme Court has given a good definition of Hindutva—good governance.

You mean Ram Rajya...

What is Ram Rajya if not Hindutva, it is also ideal government. Hindutva is nationalism, it is good governance and tolerance.

Do you still believe in Hindutva?

Hindutva is not a political agenda. It's our belief and inspiration. Our win or loss should not be equated as Hindutva's win or loss. This issue is above politics.

Uma Bharati's return—she led in Ayodhya—sends a message.

A grand temple should be built at Ayodhya with cooperation of people of all religions. But constructing Ram Mandir is not our agenda. We don't want to make this a political subject.

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