Twitter Thread by Indian Muslim

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Due to @asadowaisi's political expansion, question asked nowadays is whether or not Muslims voting for AIMIM is a communal phenomenon

But nobody has answers for
Majoritarian politics, which already divides voters along religious identity

Ajay

Notwithstanding @asadowaisi stated intention to expand the political representation of #IndianMuslims, the outcome of his approach seems to be electoral benefits for BJP, for it divides voters along religious identity

https://t.co/2UzelIpQa7

Owaisi's strategy is based on the legitimate anger of Muslims towards the so-called secular parties, which have done less than expected for the community. BJP's propaganda machine has instilled among its majority-community voters that such parties engage in "minority appeasement"

It is therefore legitimate for @asadowaisi to ask why he should not expand political representation of Muslims. And it is also legitimate for Muslims, for instance in West Bengal, to ask why, if regional parties are not doing enough for them, they still cannot vote for the AIMIM.

According to #IndianMuslim's, if @asadowaisi's party, the @aimim_national performs well in elections, it gives them a political presence, which is especially favourable if they do not vote for his candidates out of communal prejudice against Hindus.

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Further, @asadowaisi & Muslim voters can argue that BJP has been expanding its footprint in many regions, including the 18 seats it won in last general election in West Bengal, even though @aimim_national had not fielded a single candidate in the state.

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@aimim_national had not fielded a single candidate in last general election in West Bengal. If BJP is winning anyway, due to consolidation of Hindu voters around its candidates, how valid is it to then accuse Owaisi of helping BJP chalk its growth?

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If Muslims vote for AIMIM, it justifies to Hindus their decision to vote for BJP. At the same time, if Muslims continue to vote for regional outfits or @INCIndia, then they will not get benefits they deserve as these parties are wary of being accused of minority appeasement!!!

Further, Muslims of West Bengal harbour the grouse that secular parties such as the Trinamool Congress (@AITCofficial) never encouraged independent Muslim voices within the party, but gave space only to yes-men!!!

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In West Bengal, it is clear that Muslims are angry with the Trinamool (@AITCofficial) for short-changing them and taking their votes for granted, while Hindus are angry with @MamataOfficial too, for her “minority appeasement”!!!

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In this context, Muslims are caught in a bind: either be taken for granted by parties that cite the threat of an expanding BJP or vote for @asadowaisi, which only consolidates the Hindu vote further.

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Hindus would argue that if Muslims can vote for AIMIM, why should their voting for BJP be characterised as communal.

The point that Muslims have and do vote for non-Muslim parties gets waylaid. Besides, Hindus could legitimately counter that they, too, vote for non-BJP parties.

While voting for AIMIM expresses legitimate indignation of Muslims against secular parties, and is not necessarily communal voting, yet in the same breath, Owaisi’s overtures do help BJP. Therefore, it is untenable for him to claim he is unconcerned with what party finally wins!!

It is untenable for @asadowaisi to claim he is concerned only with his vote-shares and seat-counts.

It could also be argued that the @aimim_national looks sectarian because Hindus would not vote for a party that is committed to uniting Muslim.

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The question could also be asked why only @asadowaisi is seen as a “vote-cutter” and not the other parties.

Muslims could well wonder why secular parties have not come together to defeat the BJP and why doing so is seen as a concern of only the Muslims and @aimim_national

For instance, if @INCIndia and @cpimspeak do not invest in the bigger picture, can a small-time party with a limited footprint be blamed for BJP's rise in West Bengal? Or, even if it wills, can AIMIM make a difference to the current majoritarian impasse?

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At another level, all these questions, if pointed at AIMIM, can raise doubts about its desirability as a political alternative.

What is the track-record of the AIMIM in bringing about positive changes in the lives of Muslims in Hyderabad, leave alone Telangana?

What if one argues that Muslims would not benefit in terms of social policy even with rise of AIMIM. This is both because of the nature of politics that AIMIM pursues & because it is too small an outfit to pursue an independent policy that can substantively impact Muslim welfare

Would it be a beneficial strategy to mount more pressure on secular parties from within the community rather than voting for @aimim_national, given that its few MLAs or MPs can make no perceptible difference, while the cost of its success could be further consolidation of BJP?

The conundrum seems to be that majoritarianism is consolidating irrespective of the @aimim_national and @asadowaisi's strategy to contest "against"—or independent of—secular parties, even while it is fortifying the process of consolidation.

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One might ask what else Muslims & Owaisi can do, while also finding fault with the argument on who wins or not.

What will it take to overcome this majoritarian impasse is a question not many have the answer for, and its impact can well be felt in West Bengal & other elections!!!