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- Editor

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The Agenda for AMU for a Fresh Start

The discredited Vice-Chancellor of the AMU has finally made his exit through the backdoor, 'unwept, unhonoured and the unsung' and the new Vice-Chancellor has assumed charge, with the usual rites of welcome. But during the next two years, all his diplomatic skills, all his administrative experience, all his past association with Aligarh, all his qualities of head and heart, that he undeniably possesses, shall be put to severe test. The AMU is not easy to manage. Successive Vice-Chancellors have swung from one extreme to the other from adoration to condemnation!

It is not enough that the new Vice-Chancellor deals with the routine of administration and management justly and fairly and puts the AMU back on the rail. What is important is to restore its *elan vital* and the meaning of the AMU for the Muslim Indians, as the country enters the new millennium, and give it a sense of purpose and direction to lead the community educationally into the new era, which demands excellence and competitiveness, in areas of learning which were not even contemplated when its seeds were sown.

In a sense, the new Agenda is essentially no different from what was conceived by the founder Sir Syed Ahmed Khan – not to be left behind in educational progress. But today the opportunities and challenges are much wider, the competition is much more intense and the prize is much more rewarding. Moreover, yesterday, the AMU constituted the entire corps; today it is only the vanguard. As the educational base expands with universalisation, talent becomes available on a national scale.

The new Vice-Chancellor has begun well by declaring that his agenda is the agenda of Sir Syed. But since the times are different, we have to interpret what Sir Syed would have done today. We know that even in his old age, Sir Syed had not allowed himself to be fossilised. He was always open to new realities and dynamic enough to work for realisation of new ideas. Education today is a universal demand; it is indeed a fundamental right. The educational circle has to be widened to bring the entire Community within its purview. The AMU cannot cater to the rising demand but it can serve as a model, as a continuing inspiration as a centre of excellence, as the vanguard for the community as it moves into the 21st Century.

The Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor is the head of the University. He can make a world of difference by making a habit of easy accessibility, maintaining equidistance from all the factions, whether among the teachers or the students, giving everyone his due, applying the law without fear or favour and, above all, encouraging performance and

excellence.

The statutory bodies of the University beginning from the Court, the Executive and the Academic Council, the Board of Studies, the Disciplinary Committee and the Selection Committees should be reconstituted, if necessary and they should meet regularly.

The Court has become non-functional. It meets rarely. It almost never discusses the Annual Reports and the Annual Accounts, which are its statutory responsibility. It has never discussed academic status of the University. It plays no role in the AMU's governance and development and more often than not, it has been ignored and by-passed by the Vice-Chancellor. Its token membership itself has become a matter of prestige for individuals who make little contribution to the advancement of the University.

Admission Policy

If the AMU has to achieve this objective, it should not be a refuge for the second-raters either as students or as teachers. While retaining its *de facto* minority character, it must admit the best available material from the community and other sections of the people from all over the country on the basis of merit. Reservation for 'internals' – the products of the third-rate secondary and higher secondary schools, managed by the University, in Aligarh – should cease. The AMU should indeed shed the burden of running schools and transfer the responsibility to an autonomous Board or a Society affiliated to the CBSE.

Selection of Teachers

The students come and go; the teachers, once recruited, stay on for decades. Indeed the teachers make the University. As a central University, the AMU must cast its net wider to select its teachers without any consideration of religion or caste or place of origin. The practice of arbitrarily transferring vacancies from one department to another, even from one faculty to another, should cease. Selection should anticipate the vacancy to avoid academic gap. Appointment should be made only on the advice of the Selection Committee and not by the Vice-Chancellor, or his *ad hoc* nominees, on an *ad hoc* basis, 'until further orders'. Appointment should be confirmed in the normal course as soon as the appointee becomes eligible and found to be worthy. Interse seniority should be protected; good work should be rewarded; research and foreign assignment should be encouraged. No employee should be suspended, teacher or otherwise, without due process of law.

Senior teachers should be permitted to play their due role in managing the University. Openings available for

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

These ambiguities, flaws and lacunae have come to light in the course of the last 2 decades. Particularly the role of the AMU in promoting education among the Muslims of the country, which is directly related to its redefinition as a minority institution. This alone will ensure its benefits at all levels are largely, though not exclusively available to the community.

Restoration of the Minority character of the University which was not, repeat NOT, restored in 1981, though it was loudly trumpeted by the then ruling party is thus essential.

Several well-intentioned persons including Mr. Saiyid Hamid, former Vice-Chancellor and today the foremost living Muslim educationist in India, have been emphasizing the impropriety inherent in the procedure for the selection of the Vice-Chancellor.

Experience has shown the need to provide clear guidelines for the exercise of emergency powers by the VC because, under the former VC, the AMU, at all levels, was in a permanent State of Emergency and he had usurped the function and power of all other authorities of the University, what also needs to be reconsidered is the size of composition of the University Court which links the University to the Community.

There are many other aspects of the Act and the Statutes which need to be gone into with a comb so that the norms in administration, admission of students and recruitment of teachers are well-established and acted upon.

Muslim India heartily welcomes the new Vice-Chancellor, conveys its best wishes to him for his success and expresses the hope that while he has less than 2 years to go, he shall move simultaneously on all fronts – administrative and academic, teaching and extra-curricular activities, student and campus life, and, above all, pave the way for necessary amendments to the Act and the Statutes, and thus to lay the foundation for a glorious, peaceful and creative future.

Muslim India knows that Hamid Ansari will succeed because he has no personal axe to grind, because he is not involved in the group politics of the campus, because he enjoys the unstinted support of the community and universal goodwill of the country, because he is an Aligarian and an honest and committed person.

Muslim India wishes him Godspeed.

New Delhi,
1st July, 2000

(SYED SHAHABUDDIN)

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Asghar Ali Engineer on Nation-State, Religion & Identity

... The concept of nation-state becomes ... controversial in a country which lacks religious, cultural and linguistic homogeneity. The classical nation-state came into existence in Europe on the basis of a shared linguistic and cultural heritage and future economic vision. That was not the case in colonised countries in Asia and Africa... Administratively-unified areas became nation-states when the colonial masters left.

In India ... when the colonial power was about to leave. The Muslim League ... rejected the concept of composite nationalism and advanced the theory of religious nationalism ... for the first time on the Indian subcontinent. Till then, nationalism was associated with shared history, culture, language and ethnicity. And, the theory of religious nationalism was advanced by the secular elite of the Muslim community and not by its religious leadership.

The two-nation theory was born more out of political considerations than religion. It was result of competition for power between the secular elites of the two communities rather than justified by the theology of Islam or Hinduism. The Muslim religious leaders opposed the theory and justified composite nationalism on religious ground. Territory and not religion forms the basis of nationalism, they argued. The most articulate theorist among those who rejected religious nationalism was Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani of the Deoband school.

Among Hindus too it was not the religious leadership which justified the two-nation theory but the 'secular' leadership led by Savarkar and others. Neither the Muslim League nor the Hindu Mahasabha was a religious party. The leaders of Hindu Mahasabha agreed with Jinnah and his Muslim League that Hindus and Muslims were two different 'nations'... The Hindu Mahasabha, unlike the Muslim League, did not demand partition. It stood for "Akhand Bharat" under Hindu hegemony.

The theory of religious nationalism has been thoroughly discredited. Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani was well aware of the problems and he raised them in his seminal book "Muttahida Qaumiyyat aur Islam" (Composite Nationalism and Islam). There are several Muslim nations today in the post-colonial world. If Islam was to be the basis of nationalism, there should have been only one nation. It is territorially impossible ... there being no contiguity. Even if this argument is theoretically accepted, the question arises: why don't countries which have territorial contiguity - Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran and several of the central Asian nations, and several Arab countries - merge into one nation?

No Muslim country will ever take such an idea seriously. An attempt was made during Nasser's time to merge Egypt, Syria and Libya and create a United Arab Republic in the early Seventies. Though all three were

overwhelmingly Muslim and Arab the union did not last more than a couple of years, though even the language was the same...

The question of identity is of primary importance in the formation of a nation. What then is the basis of identity? Identity, most commonly, is based on a shared sense of history, culture and language. Religion may or may not be common. Religion alone cannot provide a viable and cohesive base for common nationalism. In the classical European model too, though Christianity was a common factor Europe was divided into different nations on linguistic and cultural basis. Thus in the formation of a nation a common language, culture and a sense of a shared history play quite an important role.

In the case of Malaysia, Malay nationalism, apart from Islam, plays an important role. Malay identity to them is as important as their religious identity. In fact, it is difficult to make a distinction between their Malay and Islamic identities. This identity is unique to them which they cannot share with other Muslims in Malaysia or elsewhere...

... Political unity and the sense of a common nationhood need not depend on religious unity but on political, historical and cultural factors. Religious nationalism is not a viable category as the same religion can be, and often is, embraced by different racial, ethnic and cultural groups. Religion, it should be remembered, is a spiritual and moral category whereas nationalism is a political-cum-territorial category. The two should not be confused. A composite culture can be a more viable base for nationalism than religion alone. Religion provides for a common spiritual experience and shared moral and ethical vision whereas nationalism provides for shared political concerns, cultural practices and historical heritage. South Asia had such a common heritage. Its division was brought about by extraneous factors such as British imperial policies rather than by differences of religion. **A South Asian confederation is a must for this region to usher in peace and prosperity.**

(Source: The Hindu, 13 May, 2000)

The manner in which Buddhism was driven out of the country in the eighth century shows the potential of resurgent Hinduism. It is this spectre that haunts the nation when under the guise of the national agenda for governance, the BJP pursues its own hidden agenda. The pity is that parties like the DMK, which at one time successfully opposed the Brahmin hegemony in Tamil Nadu, are unaware of the dangers of collaborating with a party that says one thing in the morning and does quite another in the evening.

**- Bharatputra in The Indian Currents,
20 Sept., 1999**

Government Statements On Development of Religious Places

The Development of Tourism infrastructure including the religious places is primarily the responsibility of the State/UTs concerned. However, the Ministry of Tourism provides Central financial assistance for specific projects prioritised in consultation with them every year.

The Committee on Pilgrim Tourism has identified three religious places namely Shirdi, Nanded & Jyotiba in Maharashtra for the development of pilgrim tourism... (The construction of Yatri Niwas there) have been sanctioned during 1999-2000 (at a cost of 21.5, 48.8 and 48.4 lakhs respectively).

(Source: the LSUQ No. 4266 dated 20.4.2000 by N.H. Diwathe)

On Right to Vote of Doubtful Voters in Assam

... According to the information made available by the Election Commission of India, during the intensive revision of electoral rolls in Assam with reference to 1st January, 1997 as the qualifying date, about three lakh citizens had been detected as "D" Voters: meaning "Doubtful/Disputed" under the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act, 1983 and Foreigners Act, 1946. These voters were not allowed to vote during General Elections to Lok Sabha in 1998 and 1999.

The Government have not received any representation for restoration of Right to Vote to such persons.

The Government have not organised any meeting with leaders of all political parties ... on this issue.

The Government do not propose to amend the Representation of People Act, 1951...

No action is called for on the part of the Government.

(Source: LSUQ No. 4374 dated 24.4.2000 by A.G. Geete and A. Hamid)

On Composition of National Commissions

1. **National Commission for Minorities,**
Lok Nayak Bhavan, Khan Market,
New Delhi - 110 003

Composition (as on 21.1.2000)

Justice Mohammed Shamim	Chairperson
Tarlochan Singh	Vice-Chairman
A.M. Sethna	Member
T.K. Lochen Tulku	Member
Vijay Kumar Dar	Member
John Joseph	Member
Shamim Kazim	Member

2. **National Commission for Women**
4, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg,
New Delhi - 110 002.

3. **National Commission for Backward Classes**
Trikoot-I, Bhikaji Cama Place, New Delhi.

Chairman	Vacant
C.T. Benjamin	Secretary

(Source: LSUQ No. 3959 dated 19.4.2000 by M. Shahabuddin)

Views of P.M. Atal Behari Vajpayee On Relationship with Pakistan

We want peace with Pakistan. That is why I visited Lahore in 1999. We took the initiative of starting a dialogue. Subsequently ... happened Kargil. Peaceful relations ... depends on Pakistan. Their inherent hostility towards India must end. The ... Pakistani establishment (feels) that it will benefit from being anti-India. This must end. The people of India want peace. So do the people of Pakistan... Disguising terrorism as Jihad is unacceptable... For resumption of dialogue, Pakistan must create the appropriate climate for meaningful talks, put an end to cross-border terrorism, honour bilateral agreements like the Shimla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration, and maintain the sanctity of the Line of Control.

(Source: The India Today, 5 June, 2000)

Murli Manohar Joshi Awarded Doctorate for Demolition

Amit Sharma's in The Indian Express, 4 May, 2000

Name: Dr Murli Manohar Joshi.

Qualification: Ph.D. from Allahabad University in 1958, joined the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) in 1944, arrested in 1948, joined ABVP in 1949...

"Dr Joshi is consistently active for the construction of a grand temple at the birth place of Sri Ram, a place of paramount significance in the context of our religious tradition and social icons of dignity, representing lofty humane and superhuman values. He also participated in the famous Cow protection movement and launched a satyagraha against Al-Kabeer, the slaughter house....

These are some "reasons" highlighted in a citation letter from the Faculty of Science to the Academic Council of the Benaras Hindu University for nominating the Human Resources Development Minister for the honorary Doctor of Science degree...

"This is for the first time that degree is being conferred on an active politician. This university has given honoris causa degrees to personalities like Rabindra Nath Tagore and Nelson Mandela. Where does Joshi fit in? He is a teacher who was paid a salary for 26 years without taking any classes?" asked B. Mazumdar, former president of the BHU students' union.

Why not for VHP, Bajrang Dal and Shiv Sena Activists?

Arun Kumar in The Indian Observer, 15 May, 2000

... If these campaigns deserve such commendations then there are other more deserving ones. Like the VHP, Bajrang Dal, the Shiv Sena-the silent rank and file deserve such honours more than Dr. Joshi. More than the leaders, it is the activist who takes more risks and hence deserves

(Contd. on Page 318)

Fraud on Dalits or the Constitution?

Editorial, The Indian Currents, 21 May, 2000

... (The Bill) intended to achieve two birds with one shot: to prove BJP one up above other political parties patronizing the causes of the weaker sections ... and at the same time to further the Sangh Parivar's declared objective of murdering the Constitutional principle of reservation in favour of these groups. The first one was understood by other political parties and each tried to outshine others in supporting the bill without even considering the real implication so the same. The second bird is hidden well underneath but at the center itself... For the first time the Constitution has incorporated the ceiling of 50 per cent as a constitutional concept. In the very words of Law Minister till now 50 per cent ceiling was only an obiter dictum pronounced by the Supreme Court. Now creating an exemption to the said rule, the rule has been brought into Constitution, and given the status of a constitutional concept recognized by the Constitution. Thus even a future Constitution bench of the Supreme Court ... would be unable to undo the dictum of 50 per cent ceiling...

... Clause (4B) added to Article 16 says "Nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from considering any unfilled vacancies of a year which are reserved for being filled up in that year in accordance with any provision for reservation made under clause (4) or clause (4A) as a separate class of vacancies to be filled up in any succeeding year or years and such class of vacancies shall not be considered together with the vacancies of the year in which they are being filled up for determination the ceiling of 50 per cent reservation on total number of vacancies of that year"...

The Supreme Court had recently murdered the positive content available in the Constitutional provisions for reservation through a proactive 'legisputational' judicial activism by three consecutive constitution bench decisions. The Dalit MP's belonging to different political parties were planning to counter and neutralize those decisions by presenting private member's bills. Without touching any of these major issues, the BJP through the ingenuity of the Law Minister brought in a very sinister amendment which the MPs of other political parties did not have the time or expertise to understand and counter. The rule of 50 per cent ceiling has really played havoc in relation to the very policy of reservation. Its logic killed the applicability of reservation in single post cadres as propounded by the Savarna-dominated Supreme Court. Another Constitution bench ruled that reserved candidates will not enjoy the benefit of seniority if they get it as a result of reservation. Another declared that reservation ought to be excluded from admissions to specialties. Without remedying the harm done by these decisions and without moving amendments to the Constitution to cure the mischief created by the said decisions, the BJP-led coalition decided to bring in such an absurd amendment, only to ridicule the Dalits and the Constitution at the same time. In addition to this they have achieved the impossible of constitutionalising the concept of 50 per cent ceiling.

Case for Dalit-Dwija Alliance

Chandrabhan Prasad

... The decision to review the Constitution began reinforcing the belief that the RSS remote-controlled government is planning to scrap the Dalits' right of representation in state-run institutions. In this environment of fear and suspicion, the government's resolve to take care of the backlog by bringing in the Constitutional Amendment Bill, which is an act now, deserves kudos.

The NDA is at best a government headed by Dwijas, a social minority. But the community, faced by challenges from its own lower brethren, the Shudras, seem to be looking for newer social allies. Dalits, for instance, too cannot reconcile with the Shudras' growing onslaught. Thus, in other words, the BJP is trying to become the Congress in its attitude towards Dalits... Half-heartedly, the community is looking for non-Congress platforms. The Congress on the other hand ... is now attempting to forge an alliance with...the Shudras... The BJP as a leading partner of the NDA, is attempting to cleanse its anti-Dalit image... Why is the BJP showing benevolence towards Dalits? Party sources suggest it is aware of the fact that to usher in a new social alliance of the two important social minorities - Dalits and Dwijas - it has to go beyond the Congress Dalit policy. The recent steps of the NDA government are indicative of that long-term strategy...

But then the Dwijas are caught in a self-created social web, running the risk of being thrown out under Shudras' political might... Dwijas lack inner strength to stand suffering ... (and) Dwija intelligentsia has perpetuated the Chaturvarna order...

(Source: The Pioneer)

Needed Dalit-Muslim Alliance against Dwijas

Shahabuddin's Letter to The Pioneer, 12 June, 2000

Shri Chandrabhan Prasad's surmise that the Dwija attitude towards Dalits is changing because the former need the latter even more now, is some what superficial and the expectation of Dwija-Dalit alliance is a bit premature.

For one thing, the recent Constitutional amendment of exceeding the 50% limit in public recruitment applies only to the filling of the backlog. But for the first time it gives **Constitutional recognition to an obiter dictum of the Supreme Court.**

Secondly, to deal with either the Congress or the BJP on terms of equality, the Dalits need their own party or parties. So do the Shudras and the religious minorities. But perhaps one should not write off the possibility of the Shudras, the Dalits and the Minorities forming a united front which would prevent permanent dominance by any one and assure equitable participation to all. This is what the Dwijas fear most - the coming together of all the deprived sections. Perhaps the forward Shudras may join the other camp but surely 60% of the Shudras who are better off than the Dalits and the Minorities will not. These can yet come together and rebuff both the Dwija-dominated parties.

Harish Khare on Wages of Pseudo-Deshbhakti

... The (Khurana) eruption may have been capped, but it would not do to overlook ... the dissonance in the nationalist constituency. Every BJP activist must be disconcerted over the unapologetic manner in which the Vajpayee regime is busy signing away on the dotted lines when it comes to dealing with the outside world, especially the Americans. The distinct deshbhakti to which the BJP ideologues laid exclusive and proprietary claims all these years is suddenly being shown to be counterfeit, though entirely homegrown. The BJP activists cannot be faulted for feeling a bit disoriented because the Vajpayee Government is zealously pursuing the very unhidden agenda for which it calumniated its rivals as lacking in deshbhakti.

There are three promises in the BJP's pre-1998 pseudo-deshbhakti agenda - sprucing up the cult of militarisation, bashing up the minorities, and facing down the meddlesome foreigner. A combination of these three psychological promises was used to crank up the nationalist fervour and to position the BJP as the only party capable of protecting disinterestedly our national interest...

First, the promise of the militarisation project. The nuclear bomb, the threat of a pro-active approach in Jammu and Kashmir, the suggestion to roll back the soft state syndrome, and later the Kargil 'victory' were all part of the half-hearted attempts at promoting a new machoistic culture; invocation of the cult of 'shakti' and glorification of the armed forces did warm the cockles of the middle classes. The deshbhakti index shot up (with) Kargil ... state funerals in the villages; and, the electoral dividends were quickly encashed in the Lok Sabha election.

But then the BJP constituency has not been given that much cause for satisfaction... The joy of Pokhran II was marred by the Pakistani bomb; all the serenading of the armed forces was rudely interrupted by the sacking of Admiral Vishnu Bhagwat; the triumph in Kargil was followed by the surrender at Kandahar. The deshbhakti noted with dismay that even the anointment of Sardar Patel II as the super-czar of internal security has not deterred the militants in Kashmir; if anything, the situation is getting worse... And there is bound to be dissonance in the heart of every deshbhakt every time a Bharatpur happens; what ... reflexively hides their monumental incompetence and negligence...

The second element in the unhidden pseudo-deshbhakti agenda was a promise to show the minorities their place. The call for a national debate on 'conversion', the burning of the Staines, the elevation of Dara Singh into a cult figure, the incessant chanting of the ISI menace, etc. were all intended to brow-beat the minorities, even while

proclaiming to have put the 'contentious' issues on the back-burner. Unfortunately this project too got botched up because of a vigilant opposition and a vigilant media, who refused to be taken in by the wonderful jugalbandhi between the hard-liner, fundamentalist RSS and the soft-liner and moderate Vajpayee. What must have come as a great disappointment to the BJP deshbhakt was that a presumably nationalist dispensation in New Delhi was unwilling to stand up to the foreign investors and foreign Governments who found distasteful all these verbal and physical assaults on the minorities and their autonomous space.

And, the third element was that in a regime of blue-blooded deshbhakti, India would stand up to the outsiders be it in matters economic or strategic... And what is the two-year-old record? The Prime Minister and his Foreign Minister are never tired of patting themselves on the back for bringing the country into the Americans' good books; but the BJP cadres cannot be faulted for hearing a minatory tone when Washington talks down to New Delhi. For the first time the Federal Bureau of Investigation has set up shop in India...

Consequences of these corrosive compromises on the strategic front are not immediately visible, but the result of the 'selling' of the nation's interests in the economic field are all too apparent; in fact, in black and white, as pointed out by Khurana. More than the BJP's nationalist cadres, it must be corporate interests who must be feeling most let down by the Vajpayee regime... It was the promise of a deshbhakti regime providing protection to the Indian brands that prompted the Rahul Bajajs and the Ratan Tatas to bankroll the 'Vajpayee: Man India Awaits' project. And now when Khurana accuses the Government of giving in to the American pressure in this matter of removing quantitative restrictions (QRs), the pseudo-deshbhakti reply ... that they are merely carrying out ... the agreements entered into by the previous Governments.

Khurana had to be demonstratively muzzled because he was about to cry that the emperor was indeed without his nationalist clothes. Serious students of Government have known all along that **slogans of deshbhakti are no substitute for administrative competence, ethical leadership and political imagination.** The BJP establishment is naturally uncomfortable at any outbreak of dissonance... It is taking a leaf out of the Congress book: a soft personality cult, discouragement of any open debate, prime ministerial superiority over the organisational wing, etc. ... The BJP's nationalist constituency cannot be blamed for feeling cheated at the hands of the pseudo-deshbhakti.

(Source: The Hindu, 3 May, 2000)

All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat: Markazi Majlis Resolution On the Election of New Office-bearers, 18 June, 2000

The MMM endorses the results of the election as conveyed by the Returning Office and offers its felicitation and good wishes to the new office-bearers.

The Markazi Majlis-e-Mushawarat (MMM) of the All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat deplores the formation of a parallel body by a small group of dissidents on 17 June, 2000.

The MMM notes that the unconstitutional meeting of the old Majlis-e-Amla on 17 June, 2000 was attended by only 3 out of 11 Constituent Members, 2 out of 10 old office-bearers and 6 out of 21 other members including 2 who are not even members of the new Markazi Majlis-e-Mushawarat.

The MMM sees no deviation or impropriety in the procedure adopted for the election of the new office-bearers and in the electoral process.

The MMM is of the view that the dissidence has been engineered by some disruptive elements who have, their own axe to grind and who have through manoeuvres and manipulations, misled three respected members into breaking away from the main body. The MMM expresses the hope that the dissident group shall soon realise its error and return to the fold so that we can work together for the common cause.

The MMM expresses its confidence that the AIMMM will not only survive this crisis but emerge stronger with new determination.

The MMM endorses the President's plans for strengthening the machinery of the Mushawarat including the formation of the Standing Committee of the Markazi Mushawarat and the State Majalis-e-Mushawarat and the setting up an effective and efficient central office.

Markazi Majlis: Policy Statement on National Situation, 18 June, 2000

The Markazi Majlis-e-Mushawarat (MMM) of the All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat reiterates the objects and purposes of the Mushawarat – defence of the religious identity, the human right and the constitutional rights of the Muslim community, protection of their life, property and dignity and the sanctity of their religious places, institutions and Wakf properties, the development of their educational and economic status, their adequate representation in the political structure, public services, development outlay and welfare benefits – in short, their Empowerment. The MMM also reiterates its pledge to promote inter-religious harmony, tolerance, goodwill and fraternal relations among all communities of our multi-religious society.

The MMM expresses its distress at the national situation today – the upsurge of chauvinism and fascism, the threat of assimilation of all diversities into uniformity, the widening economic gap between the rich and the poor, the steep rise in the price levels of the essential items of mass consumption, the persistent violation of human rights, the phenomenal rise in corruption, the brutal atrocities against the weaker sections, the rampant discrimination against the minorities and the steady saffronisation of education and culture.

The MMM advises the Muslim community individually and collectively, to join hands with like-minded forces to save the country from disaster and take it in the right direction.

The MMM reiterates its commitment to the

democratic and secular order under the Constitution and to our glorious traditions of cultural synthesis, religious tolerance and social fraternisation and takes note of the hidden agenda of the Sangh Parivar to convert the secular State progressively into a Hindu State and to destroy the basic ethos of our mother land. The MMM expresses its determination to resist their anti-national move in cooperation with other secular forces.

In this context, the MMM calls upon all secular forces to come together with a view to form a truly secular government at the Centre and the states and assures them of the full support of the Muslim community in this task.

The MMM records its deep apprehension that the minority rights shall be targetted in the current review of the Constitution and authorises the President to monitor the progress of the review and to intervene to protect the Muslim interest, when considered necessary.

The MMM requests the President of the Republic to return the UP (Regulation of

Public Religious Buildings and Places) Bill, 2000, and call upon the Governments of Rajasthan, MP and West Bengal to repeal their corresponding Acts.

The MMM reiterates the commitment of the Muslim community to accept the final judicial verdict on the Babari Masjid dispute but cautions the authorities against the plan of the Sangh Parivar to build the proposed Mandir on the Babari Masjid site, in defiance of the judicial orders. The MMM also records its firm rejection of an

(Contd. on Page 32)

AIMMM: Office-bearers, 2000-2003

President	: Syed Shahabuddin
Vice-Presidents	: Maqbool Ahmad
	: Saifuddin Soz
	: Shafi Moonis
	: Masood Khan
General Secretary	: Mohd. Abdul Qayyoom
Treasurer	: Syed Farooq
Secretaries	: S.M. Hasnain Abidi
	: Navaid Hamid
	: Abdul Wahab

Terms of Reference: Pandian Commission J&K Notification, 17 April, 2000

Whereas, the Government is of the opinion that it is necessary to appoint a Commission of Inquiry to enquire into a definite matter of public importance, namely one event of firing on a procession of inhabitants from Achhabal area of District. Anantnag at Brakpora/Bulbul Nowgam (Anantnag), on 3rd of April, 2000;

Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 3 of the Jammu and Kashmir Commission of Inquiry Act, 1962, the Government hereby appoint a Commission of Inquiry consisting of Mr. Justice S.R. Pandian, retired Judge of the Supreme Court.

The Commission so appointed shall: -

- enquire into the causes and circumstances leading to the event of firing at Brakpora/Bulbul Nowgam (Anantnag) on 3rd of April, 2000, resulting in the death of five persons on the spot and causing injuries to others of whom three succumbed to their injuries subsequently;
- enquire whether the force used in firing on the crowd was justified or not;
- fix responsibility for using excessive force if any; and
- make suggestions for preventing recurrence of such events in future.

The Commission shall perform all the functions necessary for holding the enquiry or incidental thereto and submit its report within a period of three months...

Harish Khare On Parameters of Peace Process

... Whatever be the dynamics of internal equations within the Vajpayee Government in New Delhi, the "peace process" in Kashmir remains predicated on four parameters. First, the vexatious question: who represents the people of J&K? The Hurriyat Conference claims - and has been steadfast in this - that it alone can speak for the "people" of Kashmir. This claim has remained untested...

Second, the unavoidable question of Pakistani involvement and interest in a Kashmir settlement...

... It requires foolhardiness of a different kind to discount Pakistan's capacity to keep making things difficult in the Valley (and) to crank up violence ... notwithstanding the grand Kargil "victory"...

Third, there is the American parameter. It is no secret that a section of the Hurriyat leadership has been assiduously nurtured and promoted by the U.S. State Department... The Americans have done everything possible to undermine the legitimacy of the Indian state in the eyes of the average Kashmiri; inversely, the American willingness to give the benefit of the doubt to the "freedom struggle" has generated an aura of respectability around the ... militant outfits...

Government's New Move on Kashmir Editorial, The New Age, 26 May, 2000

... There is no objection to the Government's effort to open dialogue with the Hurriyat leaders or any other group active in the state... But one cannot ignore the ground realities. The All Party Hurriyat Conference is a grouping of certain political outfits with contradictory approach to the problem...

In such a situation merely opening of dialogue with these leaders of APHC will not meet the requirements of the situation. More importantly, to arrive at a lasting solution to the problem, concrete and concerted efforts are required to redress the grievances of the people at large, overcome their sense of alienation and win them over thus isolating the extremists operating in the Valley...

Most intriguing part of the whole exercise is that most of the people and leaders in Kashmir believe that the current initiative of the government of India is not merely backed by the USA, actually it is the moving spirit behind the entire game... The US ... desires to not only assume the mediator's role but also pave way for a foothold for Pentagon in ... Kashmir, the ideal place being very close to China, Russia, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran, a gateway to the Central Asian republics as well. Linkage of Kashmir problem with the nuclear capability after the Pokhran-II had further complicated the matter. It actually internationalized the issue... It is high time that the government convenes an All Party meeting to discuss all the aspects of the vexed problem and build a consensus on a comprehensive Kashmir policy.

We are Sensitive to Territory, not People - Rajmohan Gandhi

In some ways our attitude to Sri Lanka is not very different from our attitude to Kashmir or the Northeast. If we are honest, many of us have mentally said "Leave us alone" to Kashmir and the Northeast as well. While many Indians would react strongly to any threat of losing territories in Kashmir or the Northeast, the pain of these areas — including the daily death toll cutting across every divide and the destruction of normal life — is largely ignored...
(Source: The Hindustan Times, 1 June, 2000)

And, the fourth and last parameter can be identified as the "Farooq problem". The Vajpayee Government has not yet found a way to deny Dr. Abdullah a veto over the Kashmir issue...

At the same time, the good doctor cannot be expected to be a mere bystander to any arrangement, however tentative, that may bypass the National Conference...

These four parameters would more or less determine the pace and content of the "peace process" as and when, if at all, it takes off...
(Source: The Hindu, 21 May, 2000)

On RSS's Proposal for Trifurcation of J&K

Editorial, The India Today, 5 June, 2000

... The RSS, self-proclaimed bastion of Indian nationhood, has reportedly proposed the trifurcation of J&K. Three territories are envisaged — Buddhist-majority Ladakh, Hindu-majority Jammu and Muslim-majority Kashmir. The idea is that this will make the battle against militancy easier and facilitate protection of Hindus and Buddhists from Islamic terrorists. Such an action will also represent a clear, final and absolute surrender to the two-nation theory, something India as a civilisational collective has never subscribed to. To reject the philosophy behind Partition is not to reject Pakistan's right to exist nor to advocate some starry-eyed grand unification theory. It is only to cherish and accept the historical reality that different cultures, different religions and, well, different ways of life make up that composite whole called India.

In a sense, trifurcation of the state — a local body has gone to the extent of recommending four sub-regions — will amount to abandonment of the Valley by the rest of the country. It will create a permanent war zone and only strengthen those who hold Muslim Kashmir is a logical extension of Pakistan. In any war against insurgents bent upon ethnic cleansing, relocation of targeted people and creation of safe havens is to be expected. There is, however, a world of difference between tactical retreats and permanent vivisection. Healing J&K's scars is not a task that can be achieved in a hurry.

Rajindar Sachar

The views of Indresh Kumar, RSS Pracharak for J&K and Himachal Pradesh of Himgiri Prant Pracharak reported in the press on 24 May, 2000 show that the RSS is on a programme of colossal mischief to communalise the body politics. Its open support for trifurcation of J&K on religious lines shows that it is acting as a lackey to the US Government sponsored Kashmir Study Group suggestion to the same effect so as to suit US geo-political line... The BJP must immediately repudiate this suggestion. (Otherwise), the conclusion that BJP has a hidden agenda for the next election and ... will be inescapable...

Nehru's Pledge to the People of Kashmir

"If, after a proper plebiscite, the people of Kashmir said, 'We do not want to be with India', we are committed to accept that. We will accept it though it might pain us. We will not send any army against them. We will accept that, however, hurt we might feel about it, we will change the Constitution, if necessary.

(Statement in the Indian Parliament, 26 June, 1952)

Kuldip Nayar

... The RSS ... favours the division of the state into three regions: the Hindu-majority Jammu, the Buddhist-majority Ladakh and the Muslim-majority Valley. True, its Hindutva philosophy leads it to drive a wedge between the Hindus and the Muslims.

But it does not see beyond its nose. The division on religious lines weakens the case of Kashmiri pandits who want to return to their homes. The secular character of the state becomes a question mark. It suits the fundamentalist Muslims. How does it benefit the state or the country? And what does the RSS get out of it?

New Delhi has always opposed the division on the basis of religion because it defeats the very secular ethos of India. Is there a change in the Centre's policy? Prime Minister Vajpayee owes an explanation to the country because the RSS his soul, as he has declared many a time advocates the separation of Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists in the state.

The state's division will only provide grist to the propaganda mills that the Muslims, even after living for 52 years in secular India, want to live separate from non-Muslim regions of Jammu and Ladakh...

The proposal of division was mooted by the editor of an Urdu daily in Lahore many years ago. He wanted the Valley to merge with Pakistan. His emphasis was on the separation of Muslims from the non-Muslims...

Pakistan has always held that the Hindus and the Muslims are two separate nations. Since the subcontinent was divided on that basis, the Muslim-majority Kashmir was theirs. By supporting the division of J&K, the RSS is unwittingly endorsing the Pakistan line...

That Hurriyat chief Ali Shah Geelani should talk in terms of the state's division on religious lines is not surprising. He has always been advocating Kashmir's merger with Pakistan. Why should the RSS give credibility to his scheme?

... India takes pride in the fact that it is secular... India seems to be drifting... Either in the name of 'forced conversion' or the threat of being swamped by minorities, the liberal ethos is sought to be diluted. The intelligentsia is getting contaminated...

... There is no doubting the danger of revivalism India faces. In this atmosphere, it is no surprise that many in India should think of dividing the state into three regions. This proposal has been talked about by some think tanks of India and the US. The purpose is to facilitate the merger of Jammu and Ladakh with India and the Valley with Pakistan. That the RSS has also been roped in is a surprise.

(Source: The Indian Express, 6 June, 2000)

Selig S. Harrison on More Autonomy for Valley

The world is accustomed to sabre-rattling Indo-Pak rhetoric but nuclear sabre-rattling is another matter...

... No US mediation in the region is possible unless America removes the distrust that trouble its relations with India. These tensions, rooted in the Cold War US tilt toward Pakistan, have been exacerbated by the sanctions imposed...

No effective US mediation is possible unless an elected civilian government replaces the military regime in Pakistan. So long as the armed forces are in control, Islamic extremists will have far greater power than they've ever had...

Even with a return to civilian rule, the road back to Lahore would be a rocky one. But the outlines of a possible Kashmir settlement are visible. The cornerstone of such a resolution would be mutual Indian and Pakistani recognition of the LoC as the permanent boundary. This would be accompanied by the termination of Pakistani support for the insurgency in Kashmir and the gradual reduction of the forces that both sides now deploy in Kashmir. But such a settlement would not be possible until both India and Pakistan negotiate autonomy agreements with the Kashmiris under their control.

India, in particular, would have to show a new sensitivity to Kashmiri aspirations to soften the bitterness left by its brutal repression of the insurgency. As the war drags on, sentiment seems to be growing for autonomous status within India's Constitution as the only realistic way to end the bloodshed-but if, and only if, New Delhi is ready to grant enough autonomy.

The most important step that India could take to begin defusing tensions with Pakistan would be to ... spell out meaningful proposals for increased autonomy. Many of the autonomy demands made by chief minister Farooq Abdullah would have to be part of such proposals in order to cut through the bitterness left from a decade of fighting.

The argument made against Kashmir autonomy proposals has always been that India cannot give its only Muslim-majority state a degree of autonomy not enjoyed by other Indian states. My answer has been that autonomy for Kashmir could be folded into an overall restructuring of the Indian federal system in which all states would get

greater power. This has sounded fanciful in earlier decades when a single majority party governed at the Centre. But the dispersion of power to regionally-based parties reflected in the present BJP-led coalition has changed the situation and the BJP itself has long opposed the existing degree of centralisation. The advocacy of a looser federal system by Andhra Pradesh chief minister Chandrababu Naidu, a key figure in the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance, coupled with the pending increase in the proportion of central tax revenues to be allocated to the states, shows which way the wind is blowing.

In addition to projecting a new flexibility with respect to autonomy, India could offer to break up the existing J&K state as part of a settlement. Jammu and Ladakh could be incorporated into India and the Kashmir Valley split off as a separate entity. It is this new, truncated Kashmir state that would then receive increased autonomy.

... Clinton could help to pave the way for an eventual settlement by publicly declaring US support for the LoC as the permanent boundary. This would make it clear to Pakistan that it will gain nothing by keeping the pot boiling in Kashmir... A new US South Asia policy that gives India its deserved priority as a power eight times larger than Pakistan would help stabilise the area by showing Pakistan the futility of its present spoiler's role, especially if the US declared its support for the LoC as the basis for a settlement in Kashmir...

... The restraint demonstrated by India during Kargil consolidated world opinion on India's side and New Delhi's task is to keep the onus on Pakistan as the disturber of the peace. Sooner or later, the military dictatorship in Pakistan will end and new opportunities for talking peace with Pakistan will then open up once again-if, in that time, India couples its military resolve in Kashmir with a new readiness to negotiate a workable political accommodation with representative Kashmiri leaders.

(Source: The Outlook, 13 March, 2000)

[Selig S. Harrison is a Senior Fellow of the Century Foundation and a Senior Scholar of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars]

MUSLIM INDIA EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL TRUST IMANA SCHOLARSHIP FOR MUSLIM MEDICAL STUDENTS

The Islamic Medical Association of North America (IMANA) had been offering means-cum-merit Scholarships of Rs. 600 p.m. for Muslim students of recognised medical colleges in India for many years. In 1998-99, the number of scholarship was 30. For 2000-2001, the number has been increased to 60. Subject to satisfactory academic performance, the past recipients may also apply, if they have not yet taken the final MBBS II Examination.

Last date for application is 30 September, 2000. Those interested may obtain prescribed application forms from:

The Managing Trustee

**Muslim India Educational and Cultural Trust
27, Feroze Shah Road, New Delhi-110 001**

APHC:

Chairman S. Ali Shah Geelani's Views

... Without the inclusion of Pakistan no lasting solution of Kashmir problem is possible... Without tripartite dialogue, ... no lasting solution is possible.

All important organizations which have any hold in the Valley are with the All-Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC). Other parties are sponsored by Indian government, be it National Conference, Congress-I, Communist Parties or newly launched Mufti Muhammad Saeed's party. Otherwise all important organizations support our stand. If the three parties come together and tripartite dialogue is held and we reach a conclusion ... then it will be acceptable to all.

... We cannot take anybody along-with us forcibly. Our Bodh brothers want the status of union territory whereas Dogras want to go with India.

We want (freedom) for the whole of Jammu and Kashmir ... for all parts. If anyone wants to go with India we will allow it to them... If after freedom majority wants to remain in India we will agree. But first we should be given the right to choose our destiny...

(Source: The Milli Gazette, 16-31 May, 2000)

Ex-Chairman

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq's Views

... India is not serious for the resolution of Kashmir issue. Post nuclear scenario demands that the issue be solved amicably in order to ensure peace in the Sub-continent...

Kashmir is not a Hindu-Muslim case. It is a political and human problem. We have been made to loose our identity. Indian Muslims were given the chance to determine their fate in 1947. Kashmiris have never felt that they are a part of India. So we cannot be kept as hostages.

We want the implementation of the UN resolutions which state that the people of Kashmir should be asked to opt for either India or Pakistan. We also support tripartite talks between India, Pakistan and Kashmiris. The princely state which existed before 1947, all the representatives from all regions of this state, should be allowed to discuss in order to reach some amicable solution.

... Let the people of Jammu and Ladakh be given the option: if they want to join India we cannot stop them.

The division of State and the solution on communal lines ... is the only way what can we do? ...

... The Kashmir Study Group suggests a state within state seeking guarantees from both India and Pakistan and urging both the governments to enter into certain international agreements. The report/suggestions would be thoroughly debated and discussed. Yet no official stance has been taken by us. (Source: The Milli Gazette, 1-16 May, 2000)

J&K Liberation Front: Yaseen Malik's Views

I have moved from a small jail to a big jail. Kashmir is one huge jail – there is no one to be seen out in the evenings, there are check-posts and guards outside every house, there is restriction on movement.

I believe absolutely in Gandhi and his ideology. We want the people to have their right of determination. We will accept the decision of the people. If they decide in favour of India or Pakistan, we will accept it. And if they decide they want independence, India and Pakistan must accept that too...

Hurriyat Conference is a forum. Different political organisations have different ideologies and some are aligned with Pakistan. But we have reached a consensus that we will accept the decision of the people. If there is a negotiation, it must be a tripartite one and we will accept its outcome whatever it is.

The stalemate is only when India and Pakistan discuss Kashmir... Their attitude ... smacks of imperialism because they ignore the Kashmiri people.

A dialogue has its own constitution, the first principle of which is that all parties concerned must be present at the negotiations table with no precondition attached. When you impose a precondition, like Advani's statement that talks should be within the framework of Constitution, what can we talk?

Autonomy is not a solution. It will not work. This is an international issue, and the global interest will continue even if autonomy is granted.

... Vajpayee ... is a senior leader and the only statesman alive in India... In the middle east, before Yitzhak Rabin started a peace process, he announced it could take his life and government, but history would vindicate him... The Indian Prime Minister has to play that role...

The role of the Delhi-appointed chief minister died with Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah... The Government of India should realise that the present violent phase in Kashmir is a result of buying leaders and letting down people.

... The Government of India needs only a *mulazim* (servant) in Kashmir... Assam is an integral part of India... But Kashmir is an internationally recognised dispute. The Kashmiri people did not make all these sacrifices to make Yaseen Malik, or any one else in the Hurriyat, the chief minister of J&K. These sacrifices have been for their right of self-determination. (Source: The Week, 21 May, 2000)

Tangible steps must be taken to respect the Line of Control. So long as this simple principle is violated, the people of Kashmir have no real hope for peace.

- Madeleine Albright, US Secretary of State

Conference

On "Peace and Justice in Kashmir"
Srinagar Declaration, 11 June, 2000

We, members of civil society from various parts of India and Jammu and Kashmir,

Convinced of the indivisibility of democracy, peace, justice and human rights in Jammu and Kashmir (hereafter, J&K);

Deeply concerned at the trauma and turmoil experienced by the people of J&K, particularly over the last eleven years;

Conscious of the suffering of the civilians, particularly women, children and the aged;

Recognising the virtual collapse of health and educational services in the State;

Distressed at the widespread unemployment;

Anguished at the attempts to create a divide between various communities in J&K;

Outraged at the misgovernance and rampant corruption in the State;

Saddened by the insensitivity demonstrated by major sections of India's media towards the plight of the people of J&K,

Demand immediate steps for the cessation of all forms of violence and repression, including the withdrawal of security forces to the barracks and reciprocal measures by militants;

Seek an immediate release of all Kashmiris detained under TADA, NSA, PSA, Armed Forces Special Powers Act and all other draconian legislations, and a repeal of all such laws and guarantee civil and political rights;

Appeal to the civil society of India and Kashmir for providing immediate relief to all victims of violence in J&K, especially women and children;

Urge the government to take immediate steps for the restoration of health and educational facilities and the economic resuscitation of the State;

Reiterate the need for the revival and strengthening of the age-old traditions of tolerance, pluralism and communal amity that have flourished in J&K;

Condemn the apathy of the Central and State Governments to corruption and misgovernance in the State;

Appeal to the media to report truthfully to the Indian people the situation prevailing in J&K;

Oppose division of J&K along religious, sectarian or regional lines;

Demand an immediate and unconditional tripartite dialogue for a resolution of the Kashmir issue, in consonance with the wishes of the people, to ensure sustainable peace, democracy and justice in J&K.

(Source: The Mainstream)

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Compliments*

from

**KALEEM
KAWAJA**

**THE ASSOCIATION
OF INDIAN
MUSLIMS OF
AMERICA**

**THE ORGANIZATION
FOR UNIVERSAL
COMMUNAL
HARMONY**

**WASHINGTON D.C.
U.S.A.**

The Pakistan-India People's Forum for Peace and Democracy

Resolution on Kashmir Adopted by the Plenary of the 5th Joint Convention, Bangalore, 8 April, 2000

Gravely concerned at the state of hostile relations between India and Pakistan and its impact on their on their domestic politics as also on the two civil societies.

Alarmed by the "limited war" in Kargil area of the J&K last summer by forces that possess nuclear weapons...

Realising that the hostility between the two countries has encouraged forces of reaction to whip up war hysteria and jingoism with the concomitant attack on people's freedom in the name of "national security".

Recognising that peace as a condition of democracy requires a degree of normalcy in relations between the two countries.

Considering the urgency for creating conditions conducive for beginning peace talks among all concerned and mindful of the central role that all the people of Jammu and Kashmir must play in its resolution.

Recognising that it is the peoples of Jammu and Kashmir who have the democratic right to decide their political future, and that they must get an opportunity to meet and confabulate.

Call upon Governments of India and Pakistan to order cessation of all hostilities among the Line of Control by forces directly or indirectly under their control.

Call simultaneously upon Government of India to halt its military campaign, which is imperilling the life and liberties of the people of J&K (and) upon the Government to Pakistan to exercise all control and restraint over the mindless violence of the mujahideen and jihadist groups.

Appeal to the various militant organisations of Jammu and Kashmir (and their over-ground supporters) and the state security forces to eschew violence ... (and) to agree to resolve all political and other differences exclusively through peaceful and democratic means and urge them to declare cease-fire voluntarily with immediately effect and to create conditions conducive for ... peaceful negotiations.

Call upon the political parties, the militants and the groups who support them ... to dedicate themselves to achievement of reconciliation, and mutual trust, and to the protection and vindication of the human rights...

Call upon the Governments of Pakistan and India to confer and cooperate with all the representatives of the people in all areas of Jammu and Kashmir, ... facilitate a process by which the people in all the areas of Jammu and Kashmir can choose their representatives who can then engage with the Governments to determine their future (and) the Government of India ... immediately to release all political detenus. The talks between the representatives of the peoples of Jammu and Kashmir may be held both at

bilateral level as well as at a tripartite level.

Propose that the talks between Government of India and the representatives of India held J&K as well as between the Government of Pakistan and the representatives of Pakistan-held Kashmir, should be held in the presence of a group of eminent persons of the respective countries...

Call upon the political parties and other groups in different parts of the former state of Jammu and Kashmir as a step towards beginning purposeful negotiations to acknowledge the fact that Government of India, Pakistan as well as different groups of peoples of Jammu and Kashmir hold divergent views on questions of continuance of status quo and of legitimate political aspirations of the participants, especially of the right of exercising sovereignty, wholly or partly, over the whole or part of the territories of the former state of Jammu and Kashmir.

... Also urge the Governments of India and Pakistan to recognise the inalienable right of the peoples of Jammu and Kashmir to decide their political future, ... together to strive to find a solution that may be generally acceptable to the peoples of Jammu and Kashmir and the sub-continent in their larger interest of peace and democracy, to recognise that durable peace and tranquillity in the sub-continent takes precedence, over all other considerations (and) strive in every practical way towards reconciliation and rapprochement keeping in view that in all agreements contraction of sovereign power in one political domain can be a gain in another.

The Forum believes that it is from such an effort that the contours of a likely solution will emerge.

The 'Patriotic Option'

... The jingoist would say that regardless of what happens to the people of Kashmir and what they think of the Indian Union, the land of Kashmir belongs to India. If some people do not like that they should leave the country and go to Pakistan. The patriot would not cede territory ... but would do the utmost to win over the hearts of the people ... to forge a stronger Union...

It is quite immaterial what resolutions the United Nation passes, or what world opinion thinks... Letting go of Kashmir will have serious repercussions on the ... Union. The compact will be unsettled and there will be secessionist wars and divisive slaughter across the country. The tragedy of Kashmir will be multiplied several times over. If Kashmir goes it will probably take India down with it. This is why the best option on Kashmir today is the patriot's option...

(Source: Dipankar Gupta in The Times of India, September, 1999)

**Mobilise Indian People
Against Violence, for Dialogue
Shahabuddin's Statement on Visit to Valley,
1-6 June, 2000**

I have just spent 5 days in the Valley to obtain a first hand impression of the current situation and to offer sincere condolences to the next-of-kin of the victims of Chattisinghpura Massacre and the subsequent violence as well of recent custodial killings in Srinagar.

After meeting a cross-section of the people, I have come to the following conclusions:

1. Kashmir continues to bleed and today the people are groaning under the unending cycle of violence. There is an air of fear and terror. In the constant clash of arms, there is a persistent pattern of massive violation of human rights, above all, of senseless killing of innocent persons in surprise attacks and of custodial killings.
2. The people long for Peace with Honour and for Development. Indeed, their well-being and happiness must be the supreme and ultimate concern of all of us.
3. The people see a welcome ray of hope in the possibility of the initiation of an unconditional dialogue to find the way for an enduring settlement of the underlying problem.
4. For this dialogue to succeed, there must be a moratorium on violence. All killings must stop. Political prisoners must be released. All violations of human rights must be looked into. All victims must be equitably compensated. The modalities and methods of security operation must be reviewed. Progressively, the machinery of repression should be dismantled and other convergent steps should be taken to regain the trust and confidence of the long suffering people; for example, due care of the widows and the orphans and the disabled should be taken.
5. No purposeful and meaningful dialogue can be arbitrarily limited in scope and participation, just as no preconceived solution can be imposed. An equitable and enduring solution shall hopefully emerge only out of comprehensive exchanges, multi-level and multi-lateral, in and out of state, involving all concerned, all shades of public opinion and, above all, of the intelligentsia, not only on both sides of the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir, but also in India and Pakistan.
6. In particular I urge the State Government to extend the term of reference of the Pandian Commission of inquiry to cover the entire chain of tragic events from Chattisinghpura Massacre to the police firing, to investigate all cases of violation of human rights and to order prosecution in all authenticated cases of custodial killings. I also request the state government to disband the Special Operations Group which the people regard as a symbol of repression and extortion.
7. I take this opportunity to request the human rights organisations to monitor the situation closely and call upon the secular and democratic forces in the country

**Kashmir Problem is Political,
Not Economic
Shahabuddin's Letter to The Nation and the World,
8 June, 2000**

Mr. K.F. Rustamji's article "The Truth about Kashmir" relates peace in Kashmir not only to the restoration of democracy in Pakistan but also to the depoliticisation of the Pakistan Armed Forces. However, the explosive situation in Kashmir demands immediate attention and cannot wait till Pakistan changes course.

I have just paid a visit to the Valley. No one there seems to be bothered about the nature, form and substance of the political system in Pakistan, though everyone asserts that no enduring solution can be found without Pakistan's agreement and its participation in the process of finding the solution.

Although Mr. Rustamji sees the alienation as "our warped way of imposing peace" by which, I presume, he means the policy of repression, he has himself made a number of untenable assumptions.

Kashmir problem is not an economic problem. It is a political problem. It is no longer an internal problem, after Pokhran II, it has become an international problem. 50 years ago, the Kashmiris wanted to be with India but not today.

But they do not necessarily want to be with Pakistan. They are longing for 'Azadi'. This Azadi idea is not a Pakistani plant. Indeed Pakistan is not prepared to give 'Azadi' to Kashmiris. Kashmir is realising that they cannot become 'Azad', against the common will of India and Pakistan.

So there is still a chance. Grant of real autonomy to the Kashmir Valley (if not to the entire State), respect for human rights and constitutional rights by the armed forces and the para-military forces, progressive dismantling of the apparatus of repression, withdrawal from high profile presence in the towns and villages and concentration of arms and vigil, not in the Valley but on the LoC, in order to deter outsiders including Pakistanis, from fishing in our troubled waters and force out those who have already come in, responsive and democratic governance from the Panchayat up, release of political prisoners, care of the widows, the orphans and the disabled of the 'proxy war', the 'cross-fire' and the custodial killings may yet give the Kashmiris the substance of freedom, if not its form and may yet give us a chance. By its very existential logic, Pakistan cannot match the degree of autonomy that India can give.

The core of the problem is the aspiration and the will of the Kashmiri people. Their disaffection and alienation in their hearts will not disappear but as in the period 1977-1982, the Kashmiris will be able to accept the feasible and the practicable against the ideal and the impossible.

to mobilise public opinion AGAINST VIOLENCE and
FOR DIALOGUE.

On Government of India - Hurriyat Dialogue

Kuldip Nayar

... The idea of peace is yet to seep in the minds of militants and those who are sustaining them. If the press reports are correct, the Hurriyat too has discussed peace as one of the pre-requisites for holding talks... Some intellectuals from Pakistan have also supported the move that all guns, direct or indirect, open or secret, should stop firing for creating an atmosphere of peace.

... New Delhi ... is still stuck at a solution within the Constitution... When (Advani) said in Parliament that his government was prepared for a solution within the parameters of the Constitution, he more or less accepted Article 370 and the special status of Jammu and Kashmir.

To break the ice, Advani could have gone further and said that any settlement within the Indian territory will be acceptable even if it is outside the Constitution... How to clear the decks for talks is the problem. Just as the government of India has to get out of the South Block - made status quo syndrome, the Hurriyat too has to face the reality. The reality is that the situation in the state has got communalised as well as regionalised. The success of the talks will depend on the extent to which the Hurriyat is willing to repair the situation.

"If you want to save J&K as an entity, you should revive Kashmiriyat, the state's secular ethos". This was my advice to Yasin Malik. He seemed to agree with me. However, Hurriyat chief Gilani has (spoken of) dividing the state into three parts: Jammu, the Ladakh and the Valley... His thinking is not shared by many Hurriyat leaders. But ... it is being taken that the present stand of the Hurriyat is in line with what Gilani has said.

... (Pakistan's) foreign office spokesman said the other day that Pakistan would accept whatever the solution was reached between the solution was reached between the government of India and the Hurriyat. The statement has in any way obviated the insistence by the Hurriyat to have the presence of Islamabad during the talks on the settlement... The Hurriyat ... has very few supporters in the country. In fact, it still has more contacts with foreign missions than with the Indian parliamentarians...

... The Hurriyat ... must ask itself: "Does it want to represent the state or a part of it, the Valley?" So far the Hurriyat is linked with the Valley. But if it wants to expand its horizon, it has to fight against communal or regional elements. It should unequivocally stand on the side of secularism... It is neither practical nor politic to touch the three points at the same time. New Delhi, Islamabad and Srinagar. A beginning between New Delhi and Srinagar is easier and more tractable. And Srinagar does not mean the Hurriyat alone. Farooq Abdullah's National Conference. Shabir Ahmad Shah's People's

Prem Shankar Jha

... Advani is trapped by the precondition he stipulated and does not know how to get out of the fix he is in...

The impasse in which the Government finds itself underlines the alarming extent to which ten years of isolation has eroded the Home Ministry's feel for the evolving political situation in Kashmir. This is hardly surprising...

... The analyst or decision-maker's first hand knowledge, which is the key ingredient for assembling varied inputs into a coherent narrative of the state of insurgency in Kashmir, is therefore totally absent.

Advani's precondition reflects New Delhi's insensitivity admirably... Any agreement that Hurriyat brokers will only acquire legitimacy if the people believe that its leaders went into the talks with all options open and concluded on their own that accepting something less than full independence was in the best interest of Kashmir...

Advani's precondition is therefore self defeating, but what is worse, it is also superfluous... The plain, unpalatable fact is that based on their experience over five decades, Kashmiris have come to regard anyone who is willing to give such an ex-ante assurance as someone willing to become New Delhi's puppet. Had New Delhi not lost its feel for Kashmir, its decision-makers would have realised long ago that the softening of the pro-independence militants' stand was only partly the result of the military success of the security forces. The main cause was growing pressure on them from a population that was weary of unending violence and a steady descent into poverty, and their growing demoralisation... that they could expect no help from Pakistan.

These feelings were most pronounced in the period between 1996 and 1999, but indecisive and bumbling governments in Delhi, unduly influenced by Farooq Abdullah, allowed the opportunity to slip away. New Delhi has another opportunity now. The sharp rise in ... attacks on the security forces after Kargil, and the resulting rise in atrocities on civilians by security forces desperate to show results, has plunged Kashmiris back into the nightmare from which they had emerged only in 1996.

... Advani's precondition, which has made the desired end result of the negotiations its starting point, has become a stumbling block that grows bigger every day.

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 2 June, 2000)

Democratic Freedom Party and Mehbooba Mufti's People's Democratic Party have to be associated with the talks at some stage. The purpose is to break the imbroglio and this requires everyone's cooperation.

(Source: The Radiance Viewswweekly, 28 May - 3 June, 2000)

On Possibility of Dialogue between Government and Hurriyat

The Economist, London Report, 3 June, 2000

Sopore ... 40 km ... north of Srinagar, has seen more than its share of turmoil during Kashmir's decade-long insurgency, but on May 25th it was perversely quiet... The bodies of six young men from the area had just been brought back from graves near the "line of control" that divides Kashmir into areas administered by India and Pakistan. They were killed while sneaking into Pakistan for training in terrorism, say the authorities. They were murdered, say the locals. Their protest the day before prompted the undeclared curfew.

... The Indian Government caused a flurry of excitement recently by offering to talk to the All Party Hurriyat Conference, an umbrella organisation for separatist groups, of which Geelani is chairman... The government's offer of talks is aimed at "deceiving the world community". Where Geelani sees deceit, normally despairing Kashmir watchers see a smidgen of hope...

... Though the offer has yet to be made formally, the separatists are thinking about it. Dialogue, if it happened, would be merely the first knot in a giant carpet. Peace would have to take account of Kashmir's minorities – including the Hindus of Jammu and the Buddhists of Ladakh – as well as the Muslims of the Kashmir Valley, which the Hurriyat mainly represents. It requires the assent of Pakistan, which provides the bases and, probably, the money on which the separatist militants depend. It would have to settle not only who governs Kashmir but also how. Corruption and injustices by the current state and central governments fuel separatist sentiment; it will not go away if a new dispensation delivers the same bad sort of government.

And there is something of a deadline for progress: if the Hurriyat boycotts the state assembly elections due in 2002, the current initiative will have been a failure. Two formal obstacles stand in the way of talks. One is India's insistence that they should take place within "the framework of the constitution", which no group in the Hurriyat accepts. The second is the Hurriyat's demand that the talks must include Pakistan, which controls about a third of the state and regards the rest of it as its rightful territory. India considers Kashmir an integral part of the union and is not about to negotiate with Pakistan over its sovereignty.

The hurdles are surmountable. India can treat its constitution as sacrosanct without insisting that the Hurriyat does likewise; perhaps India can avoid talking to Pakistan and the Hurriyat at the same time or in the same place. The bigger snares are thickets of politics and

ideology in which all the principals are enmeshed. The Indian government, led by the Bharatiya Janata Party, which has little tolerance for special claims by minorities, is ambivalent about talks and likely to be more so about the sort of autonomy that some separatists might accept in lieu of secession. The Hurriyat has two dozen constituent groups, which disagree about ... basic ideas...

Outsiders read the failure so far to find a successor to Geelani, whose term as chairman expired in April, as evidence of rifts. The most dangerous and implacable foes of Indian rule fall outside the Hurriyat's large tent. They include Pakistan-based militant groups ... largely foreign fundamentalists... They could turn hostile to leaders thought insufficiently committed to Islam or to Pakistan.

Pakistan itself has little reason to cheer better relations between India and the separatists... If talks between India and the Hurriyat make headway, it is likely to be at the expense of Pakistan's aspiration to rule the state.

Pakistan's military-led government may not have enough influence over militant groups to deliver peace, but it has enough clout to veto it. Yet the prospective participants also have something to gain from dialogue. Pakistan, potentially the biggest loser, faces international pressure not to stand in the way. India may spy an opportunity to detach the Hurriyat from Pakistan, and parts of the grouping from each other. The Hurriyat's leaders must balance the risks of being co-opted against the chance to be recognised as the representatives of the Valley's Muslims and to do them some good.

"Peace with honour" is a formula often heard on the lips of moderate Kashmiris. At the moment there is neither. The insurgency is running at full tilt, with bomb attacks on the security forces and other official targets... Hardly a day seems to go by in Srinagar, the summer capital, without an explosion. India's efforts to contain the menace are winning it no friends. Kashmiri leaders say the number of custodial killings – essentially, murders of suspected militants held in custody – has risen, a claim backed by human rights groups in Delhi.

The authorities insist that such charges are cooked up by separatists for political purposes. Perhaps, but without independent investigations and punishment of the guilty, few Kashmiris will believe that...

Talks with the Hurriyat would not clean up the justice system, satisfy Pakistan's ambitions, reassure Kashmir's minorities or turn separatists into loyal Indians. They might lower the level of violence and of hostility between the security forces and the people.

(Source: The Economist, 3 June, 2000)

Bharat Wariwala on Winning Kargil and Losing Kashmir?

We won the Kargil heights but are we losing the Kashmir Valley? If incidents like what happened at Anantnag happen again, the little hope there is for peace in the Valley would disappear.

After the killing of 35 Sikhs in Chattisinghpura in March, the security forces killed five innocent villagers. As if the shame of Anantnag was not enough, our sentinels of "law and order" killed seven more people.

If further acts of such indiscriminate use of force continue to happen, the liberal West, which has acquiesced in accepting the LoC as the line dividing the two Kashmirs, would turn against us. In Delhi, Bill Clinton called upon Pakistan to respect the LoC but he also asked us to show restraint and engage in a dialogue with the Kashmiri people. British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook has also reiterated Clinton's prescription for Kashmir.

The West, Russia, and perhaps even China, accept the division of Kashmir along the LoC because they fear that it can only be changed at the risk of a nuclear conflict. The Americans fear that a conflict between India and Pakistan could escalate to a nuclear level. Thus they accept for now the military status quo but hope that India, through a political dialogue with the Kashmiri people, would arrive at a durable settlement of the Kashmir problem.

However, ... a top strategic expert is of the opinion that nuclear weapons can freeze a conflict and that just as the line dividing Germany did not move by even a millimetre during the Cold War, the line dividing us and Pakistan in Kashmir too would not change once both have nukes. This is absurd, for nuclear weapons did not freeze the German status quo; it was changed peacefully in November 1989 by the German people when they dismantled brick by brick the hideous Berlin Wall. Indeed, no political problem can be frozen forever militarily.

By releasing some Hurriyat leaders, the Centre has begun to tackle the Kashmir problem politically. But for the talks to take off, we must ensure that another Anantnag does not happen. This means that security forces act strictly within limits of law. Since the outbreak of the winter of discontent in Kashmir in 1989, the security forces have committed terrible acts against civilians in the name of combating Pakistan espoused terrorism and the wounds have never really healed.

... The Hurriyat ... comprise pro-Pakistan, pro-azadi, pro-autonomy (within the Indian Union) factions. The negotiations are bound to be exasperating and prolonged and there will be many breakdowns. The negotiators cannot forget the preceding ten years of bloodshed. The most important thing is to talk freely and without a definite agenda.

The demand of some Hurriyat leaders for involving

Pakistan in talks is simply a posturing on their part which they will give up as talks with other leaders get going. But the (talks) must aim at handing over power to the representatives of the Kashmiri people. This means a fair election, which the Valley never had, except the fateful one in 1977 which ended Indira Gandhi's make-shift authoritarianism.

Democratic processes help in moderating ethnic-religious conflicts; they even solve them... But we have never accepted Kashmiri regionalism as we have accepted Tamil, Andhra, Bengali or Malayali regionalism. We instinctively fear that Kashmir regionalism, if allowed to grow, would ultimately end in separation. We regard the crisis in Kashmir not as a political issue but as a security problem, to be managed militarily and through the agency of the Abdullah family.

It has not worked... The Hurriyat, however internally divided, represents (Kashmiri) regionalism and we should agree to hand over power to it after a fair election. The pro-Pakistani faction of the Hurriyat may not have the strength to scuttle the democratic process because Pakistan-aided insurgency has failed. The Mujahideen sent across the LoC has not brought azadi but grief to the Kashmiris...

Autonomy of the kind promised to Sheikh Abdullah in 1953, a promise which was never honoured, is a contentious issue between Srinagar and the Centre. Autonomy is the policy plank of the National Conference. And the Hurriyat would demand much more than the 1953 kind of autonomy. Could we give it to J&K without giving it to other states? ...

It is strange that a party that said in its manifesto of 1998 that India was one culture and one people has forged a coalition government with 25 regional parties at the Centre. The political system of India today ... mirrors the social, cultural and linguistic diversity. (Can it not accommodate Kashmiriyat?)

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 31 May, 2000)

The attempt at cloaking acts of terrorism in the guise of jihad carries no conviction. We and the international community reject the notion that jihad can be a part of any civilised country's foreign policy.

- Atal Behari Vajpayee, Prime Minister

Amitabh Mattoo on Basic Postulates for Meaningful Dialogue

... After more than ten years of militancy, during which thousands of Kashmiris have been killed or displaced, there is now growing evidence that the Centre has finally realised the need for articulating a serious and well-thought-out Kashmir policy. The new initiatives will, however, flounder — like so many others in the past — if New Delhi demonstrates the same lack of sensitivity, subtlety, imagination and foresight...

Indeed, there are several axioms ... that must guide any enlightened move to bring back peace and normalcy...

First, Kashmir is unique, and must be dealt with specially. Jammu and Kashmir's uniqueness is obvious for a variety of historical reasons recognised even by the Supreme Court, but its singular importance to the very idea of India is often forgotten. A Muslim majority state that ... acceded to India in 1947 lent tremendous strength to the construction of India as a vibrant, secular and pluralistic state. The battle, therefore, to win back the hearts and minds of the Kashmiri people is critical not just for the recovery of the ideals that inspired Indian nationhood, but central to the war against obscurantism and fundamentalism...

Second, autonomy must not be viewed as a dirty word, and an "autonomous" Kashmir could become a model of cooperative federalism... Autonomy is synonymous with devolution or decentralisation of power... Even if Article 370 is restored to its pre-1952 shape, it is still possible to strike a harmonious balance between the need to integrate Jammu and Kashmir within the national mainstream, and the state's demand for autonomous self-governance...

Third, the admission of mistakes is the first step towards restoring trust between New Delhi and Kashmir. Over the years, the Centre has made a number of appalling mistakes in Kashmir. Several elections have been rigged, genuinely elected governments have been dismissed, puppet-leaders have been installed, and — in the last decade — the ordinary Kashmiri has faced tremendous harassment from security forces. Some of these mistakes were avoidable, others inevitable given the complex situation on the ground. Admission of these mistakes will not be construed as an expression of guilt, but will signal a recognition that fresh initiatives towards Kashmir will be based on an awareness of past mistakes and a genuine desire not to see them repeated.

Fourth, the recovery of Kashmiriyat is vital to sustained peace. While there does seem to be a genuine, all-pervasive, desire within the state to recover the social capital lost in the last decade, and to restore Kashmir's traditional society based on ideas of peaceful coexistence and the common syncretic identity of Kashmiriyat, the

Centre must make the recovery of this ethos central to its efforts to build peace in the state. It is essential, therefore, to ensure that there is no division of the state, and especially not along communal lines. Ensuring the return of the Kashmiri pandits is ... also vital for the resuscitation of Kashmiriyat.

Fifth, ordinary Kashmiris must be viewed as neither militants nor separatists nor even as being enamoured by Pakistan. In Kashmir today, there is an overwhelming sentiment against violence, irrespective of its origin. Militancy may not be down and out, but it has lost a great deal of popular legitimacy. Indeed, there is virtually no enthusiasm or sympathy for the foreign militants...

Similarly, there is an equally strong disillusionment with Pakistan. The political and social conditions prevailing within Pakistan have not gone unnoticed in the valley. The near total absence of a civil society, the deep ethnic conflict in Sindh and other areas, and the almost Orwellian control that is exercised in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, has gradually left a deep impression on the Kashmiris. The coup by General Pervez Musharraf has strengthened the growing feeling in Kashmir that a country whose commitment to democracy is so weak and imperfect can hardly be a real supporter of the democratic aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Sixth, a dialogue between the Centre and the Kashmiris should be as inclusive as possible, and no group or individual must be considered untouchable... Even militants, who are willing to give up arms and eschew violence, should be given a place at the negotiating table, as must representatives from minorities and different regions of the state.

Finally, a dialogue must not be for merely buying time or for transferring power to a new leadership, but for arriving at a *modus vivendi* that can ensure long-term peace in the state. It is essential, therefore, that this dialogue is carried (out) by a specially constituted negotiating team that has the backing of the top political leadership of the country...

(Source: The Times of India, 13 June, 2000)
[Amitabh Mattoo is a Professor in JNU]

I would certainly like to talk to the (Indian) Prime Minister. And we will be very open, very frank and very flexible, very practical, very realistic, but it is the Kashmir dispute which we have to address.

- Gen. Pervez Musharraf

Ban VHP's Mandir Yatra

BMMCC Statement, 17 June, 2000

"The VHP has announced plan for launching a Yatra between Jaipur and Ayodhya to mobilise support for the construction of the proposed Ram Janambhoomi Mandir. The ostensible purpose is the ceremonial transfer of architectural elements for the proposed Mandir model and to set up the Mandir initially on its own land in Karsevakpuram in Ayodhya. This Yatra is reminiscent of the Shila Yatra of 1989.

It is obvious that whatever the ostensible purpose, the real purpose is to generate public pressure on the Government to permit, or at least not to interfere with, the construction of the Mandir on the Babari Masjid site. Otherwise no one prevents the Parishad from transporting the pillars etc. to Ayodhya, as they have been doing.

The Yatra and the rehearsal of the temple construction are bound to vitiate the social environment and prepare the ground for yet another violation of the law of the land which is the off-repeated public objective of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad construction of the proposed Mandir on the Babari Masjid site in defiance of the Supreme Court Order".

The Central and State Governments concerned are duty bound to take due note of the real purpose and its legal implications and social impact.

The BMMCC, therefore, demands that the proposed Yatra should be banned immediately by the Rajasthan and UP Governments."

Views of P.M. Atal Behari Vajpayee On Babari Masjid

Ques: What is your current stand on the Babari Masjid issue. Are you going to allow VHP, Bajrang Dal and other associates to go ahead with the temple construction?

Ans: The case is in the courts. The law will decide the issue.

(Source: The India Today, 5 June, 2000)

On Ex-PM N. Rao's Role in Demolition Prafull Goradia's Letter in The Indian Express

Please refer to the report "Babari: Cabinet Secretary Contradicted" (IE, 15 June) and the mention therein of the demolition of the Babari Masjid. At 5.45 pm on December 6, 1992, it was dark and the kar sevaks had begun to disperse from Ayodhya. The Kalyan Singh ministry had been dismissed and President's rule had been imposed. All of the next day the government provided free bus service for the sevaks to reach the railway station.

The 10 tall, thick walls of the Masjid were standing. On the 6th only the three domes or gumbads had collapsed. A self-proclaimed secular government could have replaced the domes. Prime Minister Narasimha Rao promised to rebuild the mosque in his speech on Doordarshan at 10 pm the same evening. Instead, someone demolished all the walls and cleared the rubble over the following 60 hours. By the morning of the 9th, a flat-roofed temple had been built and the idol of Ram Lalla installed. Its photographs,

Ayodhya's Islamic Past

Shahabuddin's Letter to The Organiser, 23 May, 2000

Apropos Shri Rohit Chowdary's letter "Babari Structure" (28 May, 2000) may I clarify that Babar did not take Delhi or Ayodhya from the hands of any Hindu ruler but from the Turco-Afghans who had been invading India since the 11th Century and had established their rule since 1200 AD. After the defeat of the Kingdom of Kanauj in 1192, Ayodhya passed into Muslim hands. So the Muslim presence in Ayodhya dated at least since 1192 i.e. for 324 years before Babar appeared on the scene.

During this period and even earlier Ayodhya had developed as a Centre of Islamic learning and mysticism and many Sufi saints are reported have lived in Ayodhya. There was thus a large Muslim population to justify the construction of a Masjid in the central part of the town.

Most of the temples and shrines that exist in Ayodhya today, on the other hand, are of much later vintage. Most of them came into existence in the 17th and 18th Century, when the Ram Cult gained many worshippers after the great saint and poet Tulsidas popularised the Ramayana in Awadhi.

The controversy over the Babari Masjid, as having been built on the site of a pre-existing Ram Temple after demolishing the latter, also dates only from the 18th Century. There is no record of any such claim before that.

The Organiser on Demolition of Temples

So long, cold and deliberate has been the humiliation that it needs a positive gesture, a healing touch from the Muslim community. Unless we are frank and are prepared to face the hard facts, we are going to solve nothing. We would then be condemned to co-exist indefinitely in the uncertain tension between the Hindu and Muslim communities.

(Source: The Organiser, 4 June, 2000)

also showing a flag on the roof, were widely published in the dailies on the 10th. No earlier pictures of the walls without the domes appear to have been seen.

Whoever undertook the demolition and the replacement had to be resourceful and backed by authority. The only government was that of the governor under the direct rule of the Centre. Would not the episode seem different to the Justice M.S. Liberhan Commission after reading this.

(Source: The Indian Express, 17 June, 2000)

Shahabuddin's Response, 17 June, 2000

I appreciate your letter on the Babari Masjid demolition in the Indian Express of 17 June, 2000.

In fact, I have always, verbally and in writing, held Prime Minister Narasimha Rao as much, if not more responsible, for the demolition of the Masjid and any basic evidence has always been that the demolition was completed, the debris were levelled and the Ram idols were reinstalled (though some people question their originality) and the make-shift temple was created after UP had been placed under President's rule. All the time Mr. Rao was promising to rebuild the MASJID!

Panigrahi Judgement Exceeds Judicial Limits

Shahabuddin's Letter to The Hindu, 19 June, 2000

Apropos your editorial "From Shah Bano to Shakila" (19 June, 2000), the higher judiciary has the constitutional prerogative to interpret a law but not to ignore the very object and purpose of the law when it was enacted. The judiciary should not legislate. The Panigrahi judgement has exceeded all limits of judicial activism and taken us back to the position that existed at the time of Chandrachud's judgement in the Shah Bano case. The fact is that the very purpose, rightly or wrongly, of the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986, was to nullify the Chandrachud judgement which was not only based on a fallacious interpretation of the Holy Quran but was legally flawed, because it ignored the 1971 amendments to the Cr.P.C. which had introduced Section 127(3)(c) and had, in effect, exempted the Muslim community from the operation of Section 125.

It is one thing to provide that apart from the maintenance for the period of Iddat, a Muslim divorcee should be made a suitable provision which would enable her to re-establish herself. It is a tally matter to redefine the Iddat period, against the express provision of the Shariat and the tradition of the last 14 Centuries.

You are correct to state that the ruling 'has gone beyond a literal interpretation of the statute'. But it has even gone against the spirit of the statute and the intent of the legislature, exceeded the bounds of judicial interpretation and created a situation, which is bound to cause commotion in the country.

Does the judiciary propose to enact a new Personal Law for the Muslim society – progressive and liberal as it may seem to you – by the backdoor and imposing it on the Muslim community. If so, the Judiciary is treading on the ground when the State fears to tread! The Indian State has, time and time again, wisely declared that any social reform or legal change in this regard shall not be imposed on the Muslim community. Indeed any such endeavour would be ineffective and counterproductive. The urge for reform must come from within and, for any change to be acceptable to the Muslims, it must be within the framework of the Shariat.

Kerala H.C. on Divorce for Fraud

Jommon M.J. alias M.C. John, Petitioner v. Mercy John, Respondent.

Mrs. D. SREEDEVI, J.

Divorce Act (4 of 1869), Sections 18, 19 – Decree of divorce – Ground – Pregnancy of wife on date of marriage and its non-disclosure to husband – Amounts to fraud – Husband entitled to decree for declaring their marriage null and void.

(Source: AIR 2000 Kerala 239)

Swati R. Sharma On Telegraphic Talaq

... Muslim males are increasingly opting for talaq-through-telegrams, which provides them a document showing they have divorced their wives...

Mr. Suresh Chauhan. Court lawyer says the telegrams are needed as evidence. At times women refuse to accept before court that her husband has divorced her as per the Shariat (Islamic Law)... The telegrams are, however, followed by court notices.

Sometimes, the fear of being trapped by the wife and her family in Section 498 A (non-bailable dowry Act) also makes the husband go for a "telegraphic divorce" to strengthen his defence... Advocates say more than 90 per cent of such cases come from the poorer class.

...Divorce is already considered a curse for women. Now the "via telegram" device enables the husband to divorce his wife without being physically present before her...

(Source: The Statesman, 11 June, 2000)

Bharat Putra On BJP's Quest of Uniform Civil Code

... In India, we have a Prime Minister, whose "family" is an enigma wrapped up in a mystery, a Chief Minister who has more than one wife, a polygamous Congress minister in Bihar and a Communication Minister who has a "modern" wife to live with him in Delhi and another one in his constituency, whose condition is worse than that of a destitute. Let us be clear on one thing. The BJP wants a uniform civil code. Since it does not have the necessary mandate to pursue this programme, it wants to tinker with the personal laws of the minorities and bring a uniform civil code through the backdoor. That is the hidden agenda of the party as it seeks to lay its hands on the Christian marriage law.

(Source: The Indian Currents, 4 June, 2000)

Andhra Pradesh Court On Custody of Minors

Akash and another, Appellants v. State of Andhra Pradesh, Respondent.

V.V.S. RAO, J.

Guardians and Wards Act (8 of 1890), Section 4(2), 9(1) – Constitution of India, Article 261(3) – Custody of minor – Jurisdiction of Family Court – Family Court granted custody of minor to his mother – She alone being guardian is entitled to represent him – Petition by maternal grandfather to minor – Not maintainable.

(Source: AIR 2000 Andhra Pradesh 261)

Government Statements

I - On Death of Haj Pilgrims

The following number of deaths of Haj pilgrims was reported to Consulate General of India, Jeddah: -

Year	Actual Pilgrims transported	Pilgrims Died in Saudi Arabia
1996	50,347	N.A.
1997	53,766	N.A.
1998	63,648	221 (189 natural, 32 in stampede in Mina)
1999	62,103	184 (178 natural, 6 in road accidents)
2000 (till 13 April)	71,924	256 (252 natural, 4 in road accidents)

(Source: LSUQ No. 3901 dated 19.4.2000 by T.Govindan)

II - On Haj 2000 Operation

Aircrafts leased for the Haj 2000 operations and its capacity are as under:-

- 1 B747-100 with a capacity of 470.
- 2 B747-200 with a capacity of 470.
- 2 L1011-100 with a capacity of 320.
- 1 L1011-50 with a capacity of 280

The Government increased the quota of Haj pilgrims, going under the aegis of Haj Committee, Mumbai, three times during the last five years as per details below:-

1996	50,000
1997	56,000
1998	66,000
1999	66,000
2000	72,000

(Source: LSUQ Nos. 4858 and 5041/26 and 27.4.2000 by T.C. Gehlot)

Central Haj Committee:

Composition as on 13 June, 2000

Tanveer Ahmed	: Chairman
Gul Mohammed Mansury	: Vice-Chairman
Nasir Jamal	: Vice-Chairman
Obaidullah Khan Azmi	: Member
M.O.H. Farook	: Member
Rizwan Zaheer	: Member
Syed Ahmed	: Member
Bashir Moosa Patel	: Member
Mirza Taqi Raza	: Member
Mohd. Suhail Lokhandwala	: Member
Yusuf Abrahani	: Member
Shahzada Qaidjohar Bhai	: Member
Shakeel Ahmed Ansari	: Member
Syed Anwara Taimur	: Member
Syed Zahoor Qasim	: Member
S, Ministry of External Affairs:	Member
S, Ministry of Civil Aviation	: Member
S, Ministry of Finance	: Member
S, Ministry of Home Affairs	: Member

(Last six added as advised by the Supreme Court)

Supreme Court Judgement

On Reconstruction of Haj Committee

... In Writ Petition (C) No. 542 of 1997, which was filed in this Court under Article 32 of the Constitution, it was stated in the counter affidavit filed on behalf of Union of India as under:

"That with respect of contents of para number 16 it is submitted that the Government is actively considering to replace the present Haj Committee Act in view of changed circumstances."

This Writ Petition was disposed of by a 3-Judge Bench [comprising S.C. Agrawal, S. Saghir Ahmad and M. Srinivasan, JJ] by the following order dated July 15, 1998:

"In view of Statement contained in the counter affidavit filed on behalf of Union of India that the Government is actively considering to replace the present Haj Committee Act, we do not consider it necessary to deal with the questions raised in this writ petition at this stage. The writ petition is, therefore, dismissed.

In spite of the above order, a new Legislation has not been enacted and the "Haj Committee" constituted under Section 4 of the Act continues to function in which ...the officers mentioned in Section 4(1)(a) to (f) have no role to play. They are reported to be not taking any interest nor do they attend the important meetings of the "Haj Committee"

Learned Addl. Solicitor General appearing on behalf of Union of India has stated that the "Haj Committee Bill" has been prepared and cleared by the Government and that it will be placed soon on the floor of the House.

... In any case, it is not disputed by the learned Addl. Solicitor General that with the passage of time and change in the mod of transport of the "Haj" pilgrims, the Haj Committee Act, 1959 has become obsolete and participation of the Members, at least those set out in Section 4(1)(a) to (f), has ceased to be of any relevance...

We, therefore, provide that till the new Act or Ordinance is brought out and new and appropriate arrangements are made under that Act/ordinance for the "Haj" pilgrimage, the Foreign Secretary (at present, Mr. Lalit Mansingh) in the Ministry of External Affairs will control, supervise and oversee the performance of the present "Haj Committee" and it will be in his discretion to nominate, in place of Members indicated in Section 4(1)(a) to (f), such persons of merit and high integrity as would be useful in the proper management of "Haj" affairs, on the Committee... We may make it clear that in selecting persons for nomination, it would be open to the Foreign Secretary to pick up any experienced Member(s) from the past "Haj Committees" constituted during the last 15 to 20 years... The "Haj Committee" so constituted, we may repeat, shall function under the direct supervision and control of the Foreign Secretary and none of its decision would be given effect to unless approved by the Foreign Secretary himself....

Punjab Wakf Board: Annual Report, 1997-98 & 1998-99 (Extracts)

The Punjab Wakf Board ... is composite Board of four states namely Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Union Territory, Chandigarh controlling approximately 40,000 Wakfs in the region.

... After reorganisation of the State of Punjab, the Punjab Wakf Board had jurisdiction over three States and one Union Territory and (functions) under the control of Government of India... (Presently) the Board is functioning under the direct control of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment...

In 1997-98, the Punjab Wakf Board has made a record revenue collection of 8.75 crore. This is higher by Rs.1.58 crore over the year 1996-97... In 1998-99, the revenue collection of the Board steadily rose to Rs.9.68 crore representing an increase of 10.62%. Also, during the year 1997-98, the Board spent ...2.79 crore on social welfare programmes ...for the benefit of members of minority community in Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Union Territory of Chandigarh. In 1998-99 the total expenditure ... was Rs.2.74 crore...

A sum of Rs. 67.8 and Rs.58.9 lakhs were spent during 1997-98 and 1998-99 towards the payment of salaries to Imams, Muezzins, caretakers etc. engaged in about 400 mosques and shrines under the direct management of the Board... 1529 and 1503 widows and destitutes received monthly pension and the Board had spent Rs.18.73 and 31.83 lakhs on this account in 1997-98 and 1998-99 respectively...

under a new scheme called "Stipend to Orphans and Old-age Pension" ... 94 persons ... received monthly pension... On this account, the Board has spent Rs. 1.19 and Rs.1.83 lakhs in 1997-98 and 1998-99 respectively.

The Board gave financial assistance to victims of natural calamities ... in Mewat ... (and) to poor Muslim families for arranging marriages of their sons and daughters. On this head the Board spent Rs.2.11 lakhs in 1997-98 and Rs.1.68 lakhs in 1998-99... The Board is running a mobile dispensary in Nuh (Haryana).

... During ... 1997-98 ... 529 students and in 1998-99 ... 386 Muslim students were granted monthly scholarships of Rs. 5.12 lakhs and Rs.3.36 lakhs respectively...

Urs and Festivals: The Board organised functions on the occasion of Annual Urs ... of Sufi-saints. Prominent among them are Hzt. Booali Shah Qalandar, Hzt. Shamsuddin Truk, Hzt. Sheikh Jalaluddin Kabirul Aulia (Panipat), Sheikh Jalaluddin Thanessari (Kurukshetra), Hzt. Sain Tawakkal Shah, Hzt. Tajuddin Lakhhi Shah (Ambala City), Hzt. Mirarji Bhik, Thaska (Kurukshetra), Hzt. Imam Nasiruddin, Jalandhar and Haji Rattan, Bathinda. Functions are also held at different places on the occasions of Id Milad-un-Nabi, Board's Foundation Day etc. During ...1997-98 a sum of Rs.3.41 lakhs and in 1998-99 Rs.3.09 lakhs have been spent...

... Islamia Girls High School, Malerkotla ... received

grant-in-aid of Rs.33.67 lakhs from the Maulana Azad Education Foundation for the construction of new building. The Board ... established a charitable dispensary in the memory of famous Sufi-saint Hzt. Ghaus Ali Shah at Panipat. An MBBS doctor is regularly providing free medical constancy to poor families living in the tenements in and around the Dargah Ghaus Ali Shah.

Workshop on Legal Issues Relating to Wakf

The Board organized a legal workshop to discuss the legal issues and problems relating to Wakf matters ...on 15 November, 1998 at Ambala....

The Board organized a one-day workshop on "Modernization of Madarsa Education" on 19 June, 1999 at Ambala... During 1997-98 and 1998-99 Rs.18.11 lakhs was spent ... (as) non-recurring grant to various mosques, which are being run by the local Muslims.

On construction of shops/branch offices, the Board had spent an amount of Rs.15.56 lakhs.

During ...1997-98, 20.74 lakhs was spent (for) special repairs to mosques and shrines and ... an amount of Rs.8.05 lakhs was spent on the maintenance of mosques...

Restoration of Mosques: A large number of mosques in Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh (have) remained under illegal occupation since 1947... The Board had been forced by circumstances, to allow these mosques to remain under license with the occupants... Now licenses issued in the past are being cancelled. Efforts are also being made to (have) these mosques vacated with the help of the "Places of Worship (Special Provision) Act, 1991".

Madras High Court

On Proof of Dedication of Wakf

A.M.K. Mariam Bibi and others, Appellants vs. M.A. Abdul Rahim and others, Respondents.

S.S. SUBRAMANI, J.

Wakf Act (29 of 1954), Section 3 – Dedication of property as Wakf – Proof – No specific declaration regarding dedication of property – No actual delivery of possession – Dedication not proved – Property would not be Wakf property...

(Source: AIR 2000 NOC 21 (Madras) 2000 AIHC 661)

Karnataka High Court

On Declaration of Mutawalli as Tenant

Karnataka Board of Wakf, Petitioner v. Land Tribunal, Sira and others, Respondents

N.S. VEERABHADRAIAH, J.

Wakf Act (43 of 1995), Sections 3(k), 50 and 83 – Karnataka Land Reforms Act (10 of 1962), Section 3(f) – Occupancy right – Claim for – Muthawalli cannot be construed as tenant – As such he cannot claim tenancy right...

(Source: AIR 2000 Karnataka 141)

Government Statement On Promotion of Urdu Language

The Government implements several schemes for the promotion and development of Urdu language.

The National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (NCPUL) has been established as an autonomous body exclusively for this purpose. The Council implements several schemes, such as Computerised Urdu Calligraphy and Multilingual Desk Top Publishing (DTP), Financial assistance to voluntary organisations for engaging part-time Urdu teachers and financial assistance for publications, bulk purchase and distribution of Urdu books.

Besides, the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysore undertakes Urdu research and training programme.

A Centrally sponsored Scheme for the Appointment of Urdu Teachers in Schools is also being implemented through the State Governments.

(Source: LSUQ No.4678 dated 25 April, 2000 by S. Roy)

Place of Urdu in CBSE Syllabus Shahabuddin's Letter to Anjuman Taraqqi Urdu, Bihar, 23 May, 2000

I fully endorse your demand that at the Secondary level, the Mother Tongue should be a compulsory subject. I go further and feel that the Mother Tongue should be the First Language under the Three-Language Formula.

However, the problem has arisen as far as I know because of the Bihar Government's decision to adopt CBSE syllabus. Only if the Bihar School Board is to conduct its own examination, it can make suitable change in that syllabus. Otherwise, we have to ask the CBSE to change its present syllabus.

I wish the Anjuman Taraqqi Urdu Hind in general interest will also take up the matter with the CBSE, whatever the Bihar Government does.

More Urdu Lecturers in UP Intermediate Colleges

Shahabuddin's Letter to S. Hamid, 31 May, 2000

Recently Rashtriya Sahara published a report that the UP Madhyamik Siksha Board had advertised vacancies of Lecturers in private aided Inter Colleges. The numbers – Hindi 52, English 79, Sanskrit 29 and Urdu 3 – show the decline in the teaching of Urdu at the higher secondary level in UP.

Is it possible for your Association of Minority Institutions to find out the total number of such private colleges in UP and the number of those which teach Urdu as a language as well as the number of sanctioned posts of Lecturers in various languages.

The Association may also take effective steps to have more posts of Urdu Lecturers sanctioned for such Intermediate College.

*With Best
Compliments
From*



98 Mittal Chambers
Nariman Point,
Mumbai - 400 021
© 202 3390

Aligarh Muslim University

Selected Doctoral Research Theses on Islam in India and Muslim Indians

Arabic

1. Hasan, Mujtaba: Arabic words in Urdu whose Meaning and Pronunciation Forms have Changed. Arabic. 1950.
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4. Khan, Mohammad Sharif: An Analytical study of the Traditional Muslim System of Education and its Relevance to the Modern Indian Context. Education. 1987.
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6. Ali, Shamshad: Indian Muslims and the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1924. History (Centre of West Asian Studies). 1990.
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URDU

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(Contd. on Page 319)

Civil Services Examination, 1999:**Muslim Performance**

Total : 411 Muslims :	15	Percentage : 3.7
1. Syed Sabahat Azim	9. Zafar Azam	
2. Mohd. Ghulam Ali Ansari	10. Hafiz Mohamed	
3. Mohd. Salman Khan	11. Mohd. Israr Khan	
4. Zubair Riaz Kamili	12. Shah Nawaz Qasim	
5. Faisal Imam	13. P.B. Salim	
6. S. Anwar Hussain	14. Rafique Ahmad	
7. Syed Abdul Rahman	15. K.K. Ashraf	
8. Ghayas Uddin Ahmed		

**Hamdard Study Circle:
Coaching Results, 1999**

S.No.	UPSC Rank	Name	State	Community	Category
1.	25	S. Sabahat Azim	UP	Muslim	Gen.
2.	70	Md. G. Ali Ansari	Bihar	Muslim	OBC
3.	97	Zubair Riaz Kamili	J&K	Muslim	Gen.
4.	155	Gloria Gaugte	Manipur	Christian	ST
5.	175	S. Anwar Hussain	Karnataka	Muslim	Gen.
6.	214	S. Abdul Rahman	Bihar	Muslim	Gen.
7.	221	Navjyoti Gogoi	Assam	Hindu	OBC
8.	244	Shah Nawaz Qasim	Bihar	Muslim	Gen.
9.	304	Mohd. Israr Khan	UP	Muslim	OBC
10.	316	Ghayasuddin Ahmad	UP	Muslim	OBC
11.	322	P.B. Salim	Kerala	Muslim	OBC
12.	341	Sanjay M. Kaul	Gujarat	Hindu	OBC
13.	387	M.S. Sunil	T.N.	Hindu	SC

Break-up of Selected Candidates**State-wise**

UP	3	Bihar	3
Tamilnadu	1	Kerala	1
Karnataka	1	Assam	1
J&K	1	Manipur	1
Gujarat	1		

Community-wise

Muslims	9	Hindus	3
Christians	1		

Category-Wise

OBC	6	General	5
SC	1	ST	1
Muslims	9	% of Total Selected	69%
Non-Muslims	4	% of Non-Muslims among Hamdard Candidates	31%

No Muslim among**14 Major-Generals Promoted**

The ... Army headquarters (has) released a list of 14 Major Generals who will be promoted to the next higher rank of a Lieutenant General... The 14 officers approved for empanelment are: Major Generals O S Lohchab, R M Chaddha, T S (Mao) Shergill, Mahesh Vij, Arjun Ray, J R Mukherjee, Kapil Vij, V K Kapoor, A Chaki, J S Varma, J J Singh, J B S Yadav, Hari Prasad and S B Satpute...

(Source: The Indian Express, 8 June, 2000)

Supreme Court**On Reservation in Judiciary**

State of Bihar and another, Appellants v. Bal Mukund Sah and others, Respondents.

S.B. MAJMUDAR, G.B. PATTANAIK, V.N. KHARE, U.C. BANERJEE AND R.P. SETHI, JJ.

Constitution of India, Articles 16(4), 335 - Reservation for backward classes - Enabling power under Article 16(4) - Subject to constitutional limitation of "efficiency of administration" - Maintenance of efficiency in judicial administration - Is within exclusive purview of High Court - High Court has to be consulted before making reservation in subordinate judiciary.

... Articles 16(4), 233, 234, 309 - Bihar Reservation of Vacancies in Posts and Services (for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes) Act 1991, Section 41 - Reservation in judicial service - Only after consultation with High Court - Constitutional scheme under Articles 233, 234 and concept of independent judiciary mandates this - Section 4 of Bihar act enacted under Article 309 providing for reservation cannot operate so far as appointments to District and Subordinate Judiciary are concerned and is ultra vires to that extent...

... Articles 233, 234, 16(4), 320(4) - Appointment - District and subordinate judiciary - Consultation with High Court - Scope of, cannot be equated with that of consultation with service commission - Saying that policy of reservation in appointments would be outside scope of consultation with High Court by equating consultations with the two constitutional functionaries - Is not proper.

(Source: AIR 2000 Supreme Court 1296)

Reservation for Protection against Majoritarian Communalism

The governing class has obtained its power by the same system of reservations which it is now opposing on the ground of communalism...

... In asking for reservations the servile classes are not asking for anything new or anything extraordinary. The demand for reservation is a demand for protection against the aggressive communalism of the governing class, which wants to dominate the servile class in all fields of life and without imposing on the governing class any such ignominious conditions.

- B.R. Ambedkar

Anti-Conversion Bill Violates Constitution

Shahabuddin's Letter to Statesman, 23 May, 2000

I fully endorse your view that the Anti-Conversion Bill must not pass (Grand Design, 21 May, 2000) for yet another reason that by placing obstacles in the path of changing one's religion the Bill violates the Constitutional guarantee of Freedom of Religion. Moreover, if a person is subjected to undue pressure or influence to change his religion, he is always free to revert to his original religion as well as he may set the legal machinery in motion under the existing criminal laws.

If the Indian State assumes the de facto role of the defender and promoter of Hinduism, it shall no longer be a secular state.

Separate Temples for Tribal Reconverts

The Shankaracharya of Puri announced that low-cost "Swastik temples" will be built all over the country and in Nepal to allow reconverts from Christianity and Islam ... to worship. He added that the reconverts would have all the rights that Hindus **enjoy except for marriage**.

... Jagadguru Swami Nischalananda Saraswati, said ... in order to avoid any embarrassment an alternative place of worship, as prescribed in Hindu texts, would be provided... These are "Swastik temples" of Lord Ganesh... He said even he Hindus who converted to Islam in the past should be given a chance to return to their original religion if they so desired.

(Source: The Indian Express, 5 June, 2000)

Temples for the Lowly

Editorial, The Hindustan Times, 8 June, 2000

The Shankaracharya of Govardhan Peeth in Puri, Jagadguru Nischalananda Saraswati, must have been pleased with his solution for sustaining social harmony... Christians and Muslims who are to re-embrace their original faith of Hinduism at his behest can find a place of worship without giving rise to any "confrontation". Such a danger could obviously arise if the reconverted tried to enter any temple which they spotted, for those who had never been converted, as also those in the upper echelons of Hindu society, may not like the idea. Hence, the Shankaracharya has prescribed a separate set of temples (for the reconverted).

To mark them out, he has also hit upon the excellent idea of having the Swastika symbol emblazoned upon them... In more recent times, it was used by the Nazis in Germany ... to assert their superiority. In the Shankaracharya's scheme of things, however, the Swastika temples will denote inferiority, for it will be a reminder to those who enter them that the doors of the other temples are closed to them...

... The establishment of separate temples ... however, is bound to remind the reconverted that nothing has changed. They are back to the same lowly status which they had discarded and must again learn to maintain the earlier respectful distances from the twice-born. For some, it may be a cause for disillusionment.

RSS and Question of Sikh Identity

Editorial, The Statesman, 27 May, 2000

... Through several centuries of social, cultural, and religious evolution the Sikhs have forged a distinct religious-cultural identity, which they have the right to protect. The proponents of Hindutva seek to flatten this identity and subsume it within their grand Hinduising project. The RSS sarsanghchalak K.S. Sudershan's politics of aggressive assimilation is of a piece with the argument that all Indians are culturally Hindus — and that they must recognise that Hindutva, which is Indianness, is the essence of their identity. The stupidity of this argument is apparent. Hinduism hardly disposes itself to homogenisation, despite the late nineteenth century project of constructing a monolithic community out of a sub-continental entity fragmented by caste, region and language.

RSS aggression has resulted in Sikh exclusionary rhetoric, led by Mann. He is not alone. The pressure has forced Parkash Singh Badal to declare that the Sikhs are a separate community. Two demands have followed: that the RSS be banned in Punjab, and that the constitutional review committee be petitioned to provide statutory recognition for the separate identity of the Sikh community. It is too much to expect that the RSS will realise that assimilatory brinkmanship can only lead to a Sikh backlash... Though militancy is under control, it can resurface. Long-term reconciliation can work only if the fundamental concern of the Sikhs — centring around an insecurity about cultural, linguistic and regional identity — is addressed with sensitivity...

Shekhar Iyer

On Sikh Reaction to RSS

... The message from the Akal Takht is ominous. All "sinister moves" to create confusion about the "unique identity of the Sikh Panth" in the garb of promoting Hindu-Sikh brotherhood is likely to be met with stout resistance, and possibly, by radical Sikhism...

The RSS rhetoric that the Sikhs are basically Hindus is seen as a ready gunpowder to trigger a natural Sikh backlash against what is seen as a "assimilative approach."

... Without naming the Rashtriya Sikh Sangat, an offshoot of the RSS, the conclave at Akal Takht made no bones about its apprehension that the Sangh's new interest in the State had political overtones...

... (Various) groups have questioned the motive of the Sangat and even held demonstrations against the Parivar's Chief, K.S. Sudarshan during his visit to Chandigarh.

Some have gone to the extent of demanding immediate steps like separate cremation grounds (for) the Sikhs...

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 16 May, 2000)

Job Mar Philoxenos on Proposed Christian Marriage Bill, 2000

There is a lot of controversy about the (proposed) Christian Marriage Bill, 2000... Suspicions about the bona fides of the Bill arose because it is being introduced without enough time for deliberations and it seeks to legislate in areas where there have been no demands for legislation.

The root cause of the controversy is in the clubbing of the law of marriage with divorce. The Indian Divorce Act of 1869, applicable to Christians throughout the country, is undoubtedly an outdated legislation. Section 10 of the Act, providing grounds for divorce, is the most criticised of all its sections on the ground of being discriminatory against women. Different high courts and the Law Commission have found the section, providing for adultery as the sole ground on which a man can seek divorce but requiring a woman to prove desertion or cruelty besides adultery, discriminatory against women. There is unanimity among all concerned about removing the gender bias of the section. Likewise, all concerned agree on removing the existing requirement of a decree of divorce passed by a district court, to be confirmed by a full Bench of the High Court, as a time-consuming process of harassment.

The Act does not provide for dissolution of marriage by mutual consent...

The three changes on which unanimity exists could be brought to the statute book by merely amending the Indian Divorce Act of 1869 leaving the Christian Marriage Act of 1872 untouched. This is what the Law Commission, in its 164th report, has recommended...

However, the government has opted for the Christian Marriage Bill, 2000, which, of course, contains the welcome changes in the divorce law as well... There is much resentment about the introduction of a marriage law (and) any substitution of their customary law based on canon law... There is no need to impose such a law on them as there has been no demand for it from within the affected community.

The Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church ... and many other churches have exhaustive customary laws providing for marriage and even dissolution of marriage. The ecclesiastical courts and tribunals with original and appellate forums ... have been working exceedingly well. But the trouble arose when courts took the view that their decrees had no force of law. It is a travesty of justice that, while courts recognise a marriage solemnised by the church, it does not recognise a decree of nullity granted by it... It cannot be insisted that everyone should accept the decree of ecclesiastical courts... But when both the husband and the wife on their own free will prefer an ecclesiastical tribunal to a civil court, there is no reason why they should be denied their choice. When amending the Indian Divorce Act, 1869, the government should also provide for recognising the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical courts simultaneously with that of civil courts.

(Source: The Indian Express, 12 June, 2000)

Supreme Court

On Granth Saheb as Juristic Person

Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee Amritsar, Appellant v. Shri Som Nath Dass and others, Respondents.

M. JAGANNADHA RAO AND A.P. MISRA, JJ.

Jurisprudence – Juristic person – Concept of – Arose out of necessities in human development – Recognition of an entity as juristic person – Is for subserving the needs and faith of society.

The very words "Juristic Person" connote recognition of an entity to be in law a person which otherwise it is not. In other words, it is not an individual natural person but an artificially created person, which is to be recognized to be in law as such. With the development of society, where an individual's interaction fell short, to upsurge social developments, co-operation of a larger circle of individuals was necessitated. Thus, institutions like corporations and companies were created, to help the society in achieving the desired result. The very constitution of State, Municipal Corporation, company etc. are all creations of the law and these "Juristic Persons" arose out of necessities in the human development. In other words, they were dressed in a cloak to be recognised in law to be a legal unit. For a bigger thrust of socio-political scientific development evolution of a fictional personality to be a juristic person... May be any entity, living, inanimate, objects or things. It may be a religious institution or any such useful unit, which may impel the Courts to recognize it. This recognition is for subserving the needs and faith of the society. A juristic person, like any other natural person is in law also conferred with rights and obligations and is dealt with in accordance with law. In other words, the entity acts like a natural person but only through a designated person, whose acts are processed within the ambit of law.

... Guru Granth Sahib - -Faith with which it is worshipped and the reverential value attached to it by follower of Sikhism – Makes it a juristic person.

(Source: AIR 2000 Supreme Court 1421)

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NCM: Letter to State Government on Hashimpura Massacre

12 October, 1999

... A letter was sent by the Commission to the Secretary (Home), Government of UP on 27.8.1998 to provide details of CID report, permission accorded by UP Government for prosecution of indicted Police/PAC personnel and the status of legal proceedings regarding killings of Hashimpura youths in May, 1987.

Since no reply was received, the Commission invoked its judicial powers under Section 9(4)(b) of the NCM Act, 1992 which gives the Commission powers of 'requiring the discovery and protection any document and requisitioning any public record or copy thereof from any Court or office' and asking the Chief Secretary, Government of UP vide its notice No.10/63/97 dated 16.3.99 to produce the following documents:

- a) A copy of the report of the Judicial Commission on the killing of Muslim youths in Hashimpura (Meerut) in May, 1987.
- b) A copy of the CID report indicting 61 police personnel/officials in Hashimpura killing.
- c) A copy of the permission accorded by the UP Government for prosecution of the indicted police personnel.
- d) The progress made in the prosecution of the indicted police personnel involved in the said killings, for which permission was given by the UP Government in 1995.

The Government of UP then responded vide its letter No.1964 P6 Police 399 dated 27.5.99, informing the Commission that no judicial inquiry was conducted in case of Hashimpura riots in 1987 and after the orders for prosecution by the State Government, a charge-sheet has been submitted which is under consideration of the Court. The letter also enclosed copies of the 2 CID reports and 3 orders of the State Government for prosecution.

After careful examination of the documents submitted by the State Government of UP, the Commission has come to the conclusion that there has been a serious negligence on the part of the State Government in taking appropriate actions against the persons who were responsible for the ghastly crime of brutal killings of innocent youths belonging to the Muslim minority community of Hashimpura. The incident occurred in 1987 but the Department could complete the Internal CID Enquiry and furnish its report only in the year 1993 and 1994. Even thereafter, there was a considerable time lag in issuance of the orders by the State Government in prosecuting the guilty officials. The orders were issued only in June 1995 and May 1997. Since then there has been no progress in ensuring that the guilty officials are arrested and produced before the Court. This is not understandable as the indicted

officers are the regular employees of the Police/PAC of the State Government. Also, while issuing orders for prosecution, the State Government ignored a large number of Police/PAC personnel who were indicted in the inquiry. It also ignored to proceed against those Police/PAC officials and Army personnel who did not cooperate with the inquiry and even told lies before the Inquiry Officer, which was proved by the Polygraph Test in the Central Forensic Laboratory, CGO Complex, New Delhi. The State Government should have initiated/recommended departmental proceedings against such officials.

In view of the above, the Commission has decided to recommend the following to the State Government:

1. The quantum of compensation to the victims of barbaric custodial killings by UP Police/PAC in Hashimpura in May 1987 needs to be revised to the minimum level as decided by the Delhi High Court in the case of Smt. Bhajan Kaur Vs. Government of Delhi (1984 anti-Sikh riots). An amount of Rs.40,000/- paid in case of every death in this case is grossly inadequate which should, therefore, be revised to Rs.2.00 lakhs as on May 1987 and paid with interest to the next kin of those killed.
2. The CID inquiry report indicted 66 PAC/Police personnel, but the Government of UP initiated proceeding only against 19 personnel. Government of UP should ensure that proceedings are initiated against all indicted persons. In order to ensure speedy trial, these cases should be heard by a Special Court.
3. The State Government should also ensure that PAC/Police/ Army personnel who did not cooperate with the CID inquiry or were found telling lies before the Enquiry Officer, are proceeded against in a Departmental proceedings, as the enquiry report has indicted them as well.

The above recommendations of the Commission are in accordance with the powers conferred to the Commission under Section 9(1)(c) of the NCM Act 1992 and the State Government is required by the law to take necessary action on the same.

(Contd. from Page 294)

more honour. Take any case – from demonstrating against films to digging of cricket pitches, these rank and file have shown the tenacity to shoulder responsibility and resist. How can we forget Dara Singh? Perhaps, one day there would be campaign to honour him with some similar degree or Bharat Ratna. Okay the two – Dr. Joshi and Dara – cannot be compared yet do not forget that the ourerudite HRD Minister is charge-sheeted in the Ayodhya case...

No Progress in Prosecution of Culprits for Hashimpura Massacre, May, 1987

Siddharth Varadarajan

Four years after 19 constables of the Provincial Armed Constabulary should have gone on trial for the 1987 murder of 42 Muslims from Hashimpura near Meerut, the UP government has been unable to arrest and produce even one of them in court. Even by the lethargic, Kafkaesque standards of the Indian judicial system, the Hashimpura case is unique.

The 19 still serve in the PAC and their whereabouts are known. The court of the chief judicial magistrate, Ghaziabad – where the trial is supposed to take place – has the home address and current posting of each of the wanted men. Yet on no less than 23 occasions, the summons date has come and gone without them being brought to court. **The most recent was April 29. Since 1998, non-bailable warrants have been served 18 times but the state government has refused to execute the warrants of arrest. In February 1999, the court declared the PAC men absconders and ordered their properties confiscated. Even this has not been done.**

Had the 19 been charged with trivial offences, one might have understood the government's reluctance to follow court orders. But consider this extract from the secret 1994 report of the state CB-CID on the Hashimpura case:

"On 22.5.87 at about 8.00 PM, about 40-42 persons were taken in PAC truck URU 1493 from Hashimpura for taking them to P.S. Civil Lines or Police Line, Meerut. But S.P. Singh, Platoon Commander, instead of taking them to the above destination carried them upper Gang Nahar, Murad Nagar, Ghaziabad and shot them one by one and threw them into the canal. When some of the detenus tried to escape they were shot at... The remaining detenus were taken ... to the Hindon canal and the above Platoon Commander and PAC men shot them dead".

The CB-CID indicted 66 PAC personnel. It took the UP Government two years to sanction the **prosecution of 19 men; the rest were let off with reprimands. To date, the CB-CID report has not been made public...**

Though it is the BJP government in Lucknow which is dragging its feet, virtually every party stands implicated in this denial of justice by delay. Hashimpura occurred when the Congress ruled UP. Subsequently, the Samajwadi Party and BSP have also been in power. Yet, none has treated the case with the seriousness it demands.

... The Ghaziabad Court has made no attempt to summon the DGs of the UP Police and PAC to explain

their inability to locate the 19 accused... The CJM said he had written to the concerned authorities on several occasions for help in arresting the charge-sheeted men.

According to lawyers... the Government is playing for time. "The case against the PAC is iron-clad", said one advocate. "But as the years go by, evidence disappears, witnesses die".

(Source: The Times of India)

G.M. Banatwalla's Letter to HM Advani On Hashimpura Massacre, 1 June, 2000

... Since 1998, non-bailable warrants were reportedly issued nearly eighteen times in the matter of the mass massacre of Muslims of Hashimpura in Meerut in 1987. The UP Government has failed to execute these warrants. As late as the summon date 29th April, 2000 the accused were not brought to Court.

... The CBCID submitted its finding in February 1994 and indicted 66 PAC personnel. It took the UP Government two years to permit the prosecution of 19 relatively junior personnel, while 47 were let off with mere departmental reprimands!

In February 1999, the court reportedly declared the PAC men absconders and ordered confiscation of their properties. Even these orders have reportedly not been carried out... There is clear abdication of constitutional duty on the part of the UP Government and its authorities both in respect of (i) its failure to arrest the PAC men, who are still serving in PAC ..., produce them in the court and also to execute court orders to confiscate their properties and (ii) its brazen, illegitimate act in letting off 47 PAC men indicted of serious offence by CBCID report, with mere departmental reprimands... I urge upon you to take every appropriate action, including the issue of direction under the Constitution of India to the Government of UP to ensure justice and respect for the rule of law...

(Contd. from Page 315)

41. Badar, Bashir: Urdu Ghazal in the 20th Century. Urdu. 1958.
42. Ozair, Mohammad: Contribution of Urdu towards the Promotion of Religions other than Islam. Urdu. 1948.
43. Naqvi, Imam Murtaza: Khwaja Hasan Nizami: His Life and Works. Urdu. 1976.
44. Hashmi, Qazi Obaidur Rahman: Iqbal: His Life and Works. Urdu. 1974.
45. Siddiqui, Aftab Ahmad: Allama Shibli N'umani: His Life and Works. Urdu. 1948.
46. Hashim, Syed Mohammad: Syed Sulaiman Nadwi: His Life and Literary Works. Urdu. 1982.

Amnesty International: Report, 2000 (India)

Human rights violations occurred throughout India against a backdrop of political instability. The socially and economically weaker sections of society continued to be particularly vulnerable to human rights abuses. Attacks, often with the apparent connivance of police and local authorities, on *dalit* communities and tribal people were commonplace. Women continued to be particularly vulnerable to abuse in these contexts. Access to justice for these victims of human rights abuses remained problematic and those engaged in protecting the rights of the most vulnerable groups also came under increasing pressure, often themselves becoming the victims of abuses. 1999 saw a rise in communal violence, often attributed to Hindu groups close to the *Bharatiya Janata Party* (BJP). The government's preoccupation with matters of national security led to discussion of new anti-terrorism legislation at the end of the year. Armed conflicts in northeastern states and in Jammu and Kashmir claimed the lives of hundreds of civilians. ...

Human Rights Defenders

Human rights defenders working on a range of issues including caste discrimination, domestic violence and trade union rights came under attack from both the state and other powerful interests throughout 1999... Methods of harassment included the filing of apparently false criminal cases. Section 151 of the Criminal Code of Procedure, which allows police to preventively detain people they suspect may commit a crime, was regularly used to detain human rights defenders and suppress peaceful protests. Several activists were detained under the 1980 National Security Act (NSA).

... The government imposed increased administrative restrictions on human rights organizations. Several organizations, including those involved in an advertisement campaign at the time of the elections to raise concerns about the gender policies of the BJP, were threatened with having their registration withdrawn. Requests to visit India by UN Special Rapporteurs on torture and on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, and by the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances were not taken up by the authorities.

Impunity

There were continued concerns about the government's failure to implement recommendations made by various commissions of inquiry, by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), by state human rights commissions and by other statutory commissions.

- In August the NHRC filed a petition in the Supreme Court indicating that the government was hindering its

five-year-long investigation into the shooting of 37 people in October 1993 in Bijbehara, Jammu and Kashmir, by members of the Border Security Forces... The NHRC asked the Court to order the authorities to hand over certain files which they had refused to release.

The new state government in Maharashtra announced its intention to reconsider the recommendations of the Srikrishna Commission of Inquiry... The Commission's report had pointed to communalism in the police force which led to discrimination against Muslim communities, and incitement to riot by members of the Shiv Sena Party. The Commission's recommendations had been rejected by the former Shiv Sena-BJP alliance in the state.

Human Rights Commissions

In January the NHRC clarified its role with reference to a 1996 Supreme Court order that the NHRC should investigate human rights violations in Punjab following allegations that hundreds of bodies had been illegally cremated by Punjab police. The NHRC stated that it would restrict itself to awarding monetary compensation only to those families who could prove that their relatives were illegally cremated by police in Amritsar district between 1984 and 1994... By the end of 1999 the NHRC had reportedly received around 80 claims from individuals in Punjab.

In October an Advisory Committee, established in 1998 by the NHRC to review the 1993 Protection of Human Rights Act, finalized its recommendations. These included amendments to the composition of the NHRC and a proposal that the NHRC should be able to independently investigate allegations of human rights violations by members of the paramilitary forces, but not the armed forces. The NHRC was still considering these recommendations at the end of the year.

... The NHRC continued to monitor abuses and make recommendations.

No further state human rights commissions were established during 1999.

Special Legislation

... The Criminal Law Amendment Bill, as recommended by the Law Commission, retained many of the features of the 1987 Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA) which lapsed in 1995 and which had been used to detain thousands of political suspects without charge or trial.

The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act — which gives the security forces powers to shoot to kill and grants them virtual immunity from prosecution — remained in force in areas of the northeast and in Jammu and

HUMAN RIGHTS

Kashmir...

In February the Maharashtra Control of Organized Crime Ordinance was enacted. This gives the police widespread powers to intercept communications and allows for arrest, detention and trial procedures which do not conform fully to international standards.

In May the Tamil Nadu state government withdrew the Prevention of Terrorist Activities Bill. There had been strong objections to the legislation which bore many similarities to the TADA.

The authorities continued to use the lapsed TADA to detain people in Jammu and Kashmir by linking them to ongoing cases filed before 1995. Hundreds of people remained in detention under the TADA despite Supreme Court orders for the review of all cases.

Many individuals were detained under the 1978 Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act, which allows for widespread preventive detention.

In September and October, 25 members of the All Parties Hurriyat conference, including its chairman, Syed Ali Gilani; senior members Mohammad Yasin Malik, Javed Ahmed Mir and Abdul Ghani Bhat; and their associates were detained under the Act after they peacefully called for a boycott of elections. Their detention appeared to be punitive in character... Petitions challenging the legality of their indefinite detention were before the High Court in Srinagar at the end of the year.

Torture

Deaths in custody continued to be widespread throughout all states. Various forms of torture, including rape, continued to be used by the police and security forces. This was acknowledged by government officials, including the Attorney General; senior members of the judiciary; and NHRC officials, at an international symposium on torture held in New Delhi in September...

'Disappearances'

Reports of "disappearances" were received from Jammu and Kashmir and from Assam. Attempts by relatives in Jammu and Kashmir to establish the fate of individuals continued to be obstructed by the state, the security forces and an inadequate legal system. No substantive response was received from the government to an AI report on "disappearances", published in February, which referred to between 700 and 800 people whose fate remained unknown.

In Manipur the report of an investigation by a district judge into the "disappearance" of 15-year-old Yumlembam Sanamacha following his arrest by members of the 17th Rajputana Rifles in February 1998 was published. The report found clear evidence that Yumlembam Sanamacha had been arrested by the armed forces and that he had not escaped as they claimed. An official Commission of Inquiry into the "disappearance"

J&K State Human Rights Commission: Problems and Performance

In its second Annual Report for 1st April 1998 to 31st March 1999 ... the J&K State Human Rights Commission states that (Kashmir had) approached the government for opening ... its office at Jammu for hearing complaints from far flung areas of Doda, Udhampur, Kathua, Rajouri and Poonch districts (but the government decision (was) still awaited. This has resulted in stagnation in disposal of cases from Jammu Division.

The Commission has also reported shortage of accommodation and staff. (Since) investigating staff has not been provided to the Commission ... the investigating activities of the Commission are in abeyance.

Performance:

The commission received 227 cases during the period 1998-99. The break-up of the nature of the cases received by the Commission during the above period is as under:

Harassment	-	76
Disappearance	-	20
Death Compensation	-	14
Relief	-	20
Shifting of Detenue from one Jail to another	-	3
Application for release	-	15
Death Investigation	-	10
Rape cases	-	1
Security Cover	-	4
Custodial Death	-	22
Other Cases	-	43

District-wise break up was as follows:

Srinagar	-	68	Kupwara	-	10
Anantnag	-	30	Poonch	-	10
Budgam	-	25	Rajouri	-	10
Pulwama	-	27	Jammu	-	8
Baramulla	-	18	Udhampur	-	5
Doda	-	14	Kathua	-	2
Total				-	227

also submitted its report to the Manipur state government, but this had not been published by the end of 1999.

Death Penalty

... Home Minister continued to refer to government plans to extend the use of the death penalty for crimes including rape.

Abuses by Armed Groups

Armed groups operating in many states continued to violate international humanitarian law. Human rights abuses reported included torture, hostage-taking and killings of civilians... In Jammu and Kashmir armed groups continued to kill civilians; Hindus were particularly targeted for attack.

Attacks on Christians (January – May, 2000)

S.No.	Date	Place/State	Description			
1.	January	Philliaur, Punjab	Sts. Peter and Paul Church robbed.	21. Apr., 10	Mathura Cantt., UP	Fr. Joseph Dabre, St. Dominic School, attacked.
2.	January	Philliaur, Punjab	St. Joseph's convent robbed.	22. Apr., 11	Kosikalan, UP	Fr. K.K. Thomas & maid beaten up, house looted.
3.	Jan., 3	Gajapati, Orissa	17 Dalit Christian houses torched, 12 killed.	23. Apr., 11	Kosikalan, UP	St. Teresa's School looted, Srs. Mary and Gloria beaten.
4.	Jan., 9	Panipat, UP	Fr. Vikas of St. Mary's Church attacked.	24. Apr., 14	Khagaria, Bihar	50 Christians in Charismatic prayer attacked.
5.	Feb., 4	Rajgarh, MP	Hostel forced to close down...	25. Apr., 15	Timerpur, Bijnor, UP	Convent, three Catholic homes attacked.
6.	Feb., 20	Podiyattuvara, Kerala	Statues of Mary destroy.	26. Apr., 16	Babupet, Chanda	Maharashtra Convent tabernacle robbed.
7.	Feb., 20	Sevit, Gujarat	Protestant Church damaged.	27. Apr., 21	Agra, UP	Bajrang Dal attack 14 neo Christians.
8.	Mar., 6	Mysore, Karnataka	BD threatens Bishop Roy to install Hindu statues in Churches.	28. Apr., 22	Rajabari, Assam	Priest and 2 brothers seriously beaten in Church robbery.
9.	Mar., 8	Basara, Panipat, UP	Isa Mata Church attacked.	29. Apr., 22	Rewari, Haryana	Two nuns attacked, hit by scooter.
10.	Mar., 12	Panipat, UP	St. Mary's Church attacked.	30. May, 3	Paricha, Jhansi, UP	Chapel desecrated, nuns attacked, robbed.
11.	Mar., 12	Suryanagar, UP	Media Computer Centre robbed.	31. May, 3	Dangs, Gujarat	13 Evangelists arrested for holding prayer.
12.	Mar., 17	Changanacherry, Kerala	St. Berchman's College chapel desecrated, robbed.	32. May, 4	Patna, Bihar	St. Xavier's School Principal Fr. A.B. Peter SJ accused of sodomy.
13.	Mar., 31	Agra, UP	Police lock up two priests without charge.	33. May, 5	Kanabha, Gujarat	8 Protestant missionaries attacked with swords, Bibles burnt.
14.	Mar., 31	Bulandshahar, UP	Nirmala School attacked, nun manhandled.	34. May, 5	Bhojpur, Bihar	Mary's statue smashed.
15.	Mar., 31	Dasna-Masuri, UP	Fr. S. George, Christ Vihar School, attacked, robbed.	35. May	Uchhal Taluka, Gujarat	Rev. Jhalam Singh attacked, Church damaged.
16.	Apr., 3	Panaji, Goa	Priest and 21 Catholics wounded by police.	36. May, 9	Nashik, (MHR)	Protestant Shelter School for Tribal girls attacked.
17.	Apr., 5	Barwatoli, Bihar	5 Oraon Catholics tribals kidnapped, 2 killed.	37. May, 11	Indore, MP	Fire bomb thrown at Dialogue Centre, 3 churches attacked.
18.	Apr., 6	Mathura, UP	Sacred Heart School Principal Sr. Maria Pereira attacked.	38. May, 11	Anekal, Karnataka	Anthony Selva, Jesuit student, stabbed.
19.	Apr., 7	Belatanr, Giridih, Bihar	Holy Cross Convent watchman shot dead.			
20.	Apr., 9	Bettiah, Bihar	Jesuit Social Center (READ) stoned.			

(Source: The Indian Currents, 21 May, 2000)

NCM: Chairman's Report On Anti-Christian Violence, 27 April, 2000

The National Commission for Minorities felt concerned with various reports recently appeared in some sections of the Press relating to Christian Minority Educational Institutions at Kosi, Mathura and Agra in the State of Uttar Pradesh and decided to visit these places on 26th April to make an on the spot assessment of the situation. The Commission's assessment is (as) below:

Visit to Kosi: The Commission visited St. Theresa's school at Kosi on the forenoon of 26th April 2000... The Commission is fully satisfied that it is pure and simple a case of robbery and nothing else.

Visit to Mathura: The Commission met Fr. Joseph Dabre, Principal of St. Dominic's School... The Commission is of the view that the present matter is simply a law and order problem with no communal tinge, whatsoever.

The Commission visited Sacred Heart School... The Commission found that this was a routine problem between the parents and the Principal... There is no communal angle in it whatsoever...

Visit to Agra: The Commission ... visited the Archbishop's House and met the Vicar General... The Commission is fully satisfied ... that this too, like other problems referred to above, is simply a law and order problem and there is absolutely nothing communal about it...

Rewari Incident: The Deputy Commissioner, Rewari accompanied by Father Phillip Parmar and two nuns Sr. Ludmilla D'souza and Sr. Gertrude of Deepti Ashram, Rewari visited the Commission in Delhi on 27 April, 2000... The Commission is, therefore, of the view that this is a case of a simple road accident and that no communal meaning be attributed to it.

(Source: The Indian Currents, 4.6.2000)

Church must Lead Struggle against Fascism

... The Christians in India, a vulnerable and non-violent community, are still groping in the dark as to what to make out of these communalists attacks on them... Atrocities all over the country with frightening frequency and particularly targeting Christian missionaries and their institutions are not considered as part of a nation wide modus operandi of the Hindutva forces. Therefore, the victims are forced to see the event only as a local incident. Besides they are often helpless and accept the police version of the events as 'isolated and accidental'.

It is time that the Church leaders pose an aggressive stand rather than just merely fight for their rights whenever they are violated. It is time to fight the forces of fascism, communalism, majoritarianism and the forces of

Muslims are the Real Targets Editorial, The Statesman, 10 June, 2000

Simultaneous explosions in Christian churches as far apart as Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Goa, hard on the heels of a spate of attacks on missionaries in Western UP and the battering to death of a priest in a village just outside Mathura are not unconnected incidents... Police are assiduously suggesting that the motive is burglary. Why such brazen lies? Whose instructions are they following? (There is a) planned reign of terror unleashed on the minority community by the Sangh Parivar and their proponents ... to terrorise the community (and) to keep the Hindutva platform alive.

As the party of government, the BJP cannot be seen to be helpless, hence the central leadership make polite noises but do absolutely nothing to control its Parivar... Instead the home minister says they are not involved and the Prime Minister and calls for a national debate on conversion. The BJP's coalition partners who, it was hoped, would keep communal elements under check, are just as much to blame for their silence. Attacks on Christians have grown in intensity and frequency in the last year. Why is the Sangh Parivar suddenly training its guns on this tiny minority which they must know is in no position to, and does not intend to, threaten Hindu dominance? And answer that suggests itself is that the government has forced the Parivar to go slow on their favourite pastime - Muslim-bashing. Many coalition partners have Muslim voters whom they cannot antagonise, so temporarily the VHP can keep themselves occupied and in practice, by turning their attention to the another minority. Also as the party in power, if the BJP allow the Sangh Parivar to continue instigating Hindu-Muslim riots, it is their government which will come under flak. These are the constraints of realpolitik... If the Parivar can establish all Christian conversions are forced and therefore illegal, it must follow, by their lights, that conversions to Islam are also illegal... Very much on the agenda is control of Christian schools, institutions of excellence in great demand... If they can get the missionary schools to toe the line then shutting down madrasas and other minority institutions becomes easier. If Christians can be established as outsiders, then so are Muslims - the real target. The Parivar is fooling no one.

lies and untruth with ... non-violent means... The church should not wait for attacks on it to counter it, but must begin a campaign against forces that persecute the minorities, the Dalits, the poor and the disadvantaged in the name of 'Swadeshi' and 'nationalism' and also must fight not for themselves alone but for all of India so that our democracy and secularism can survive.

(Source: Saby Vempenny The Indian Currents, 4 June, 2000)

Dangerous Hate Crimes Editorial, The Hindu, 10 June, 2000

The ... murder of a ... missionary near Mathura ... and the bomb attacks on Christian places of worship in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Goa on Thursday reinforce the disturbing pattern of physical assaults on the minority community, its missionaries and the educational institutions run by it... The message sought to be conveyed by the perpetrators of the crime is unmistakable: to instill a sense of insecurity in the minority community.

... The Governments have almost invariably tended to see, for their own reasons, the various assaults on the minority community from the narrow viewpoint of law and order and have been overly anxious to discount the 'communal' angle... It would be unwise to write out the communal factor and refuse to see such seemingly 'isolated' and 'purely criminal' acts in the wider perspective of the anti-minority milieu that the Hindutva forces have engendered by their hate campaign... Witness the NCM's report on the Uttar Pradesh incidents, ruling out the communal motive; its finding on the basis of a flawed and cursory exercise flew in the face of facts thrown up by quite a few objective enquiries. Nothing could be more tragic and ironic than the fact that the credibility of the Commission as a protector of the minorities' rights should stand severely eroded just at the time when these communities feel increasingly threatened as a result of the vicious campaign by the majoritarian fundamentalist forces who have apparently become emboldened under the benign gaze of the BJP-led coalition ... at the Centre.

In sum, ... political establishments need to take credible initiatives towards arresting the Sangh Parivar's hate campaign...

(Contd. from Page 298)

move to hand over the Babari Masjid site to the VHP through legislation.

The MMM notes the threat to the democratic right of the Bengali-speaking people of Assam and calls for the enfranchisement of all persons who have not been declared as foreign nationals and for reservation in the Assam legislature for all ethnic groups in proportion to their population.

The MMM expresses its agony at the continuing violence in Jammu and Kashmir and welcomes the possibility of unconditional dialogue between the Government, on one hand, and the APMC and other political elements, on the other. The MMM demands a Moratorium on violence and calls for mobilisation of the people all over the country Against Violence and For Dialogue.

The MMM condemns the current spate of violence against the Christian community and expresses its solidarity with them and other minorities and calls for the formation of a united front of minorities to defend their rights.

VHP Blames ISI for Attacks on Christians Editorial, The Statesman, 11 June, 2000

... In pursuit of this wooden strategy, (VHP G.S. Giriraj Kishore) has identified the people ... responsible. They are the ISI of Pakistan. The man is not only weird, he is also ungrateful. LK Advani has consistently defended the VHP and the Bajrang Dal, saying he knows there is no criminality in them. The Acharya now retaliates saying it is Advani's responsibility to curb ISI activities... Are the public expected to swallow such rubbish. When two trains collide ... in north Bengal, it is the ISI who did it. Anyone caught with foreign exchange ... is a carrier for the ISI. Now the ogres of the ISI are targeting the Christian community, burning their churches, molesting their nuns, burning their Bibles and currently insisting on reconverting them to Hinduism... It is a wonder that the mega-cyclone in Orissa is not blamed on the malevolent agency, diverting strong winds away from the Bangladeshi coast and after increasing their velocity by means unknown, moving them over the hapless state of Orissa. The ISI have become the agency for all seasons. This is reminiscent of the pronouncements of another VHP worthy now dead, Swami Vamdev, who insisted on two propositions. One, that the Babari Masjid had forgotten to stand up and "had fallen down by itself". Two, that there was a temple of Vishnu underneath the Jama Masjid in Delhi and when asked how he knew, replied with a straight face — break down the Masjid first and you will find it!

It does seem that logic and ... argument are not the strongest points of VHP leaders. If the ISI are omnipotent, omniscient and all powerful as they are made out to be, Pervez Musharraf would be master of all of India without firing a shot... For the benefit of the VHP, there are the murders of Graham Staines and his minor sons to be taken to trial, the recent spate of simultaneous attacks on churches in Andhra Pradesh, Goa and Karnataka to be thoroughly investigated. And criminal acts like rape and molestation of nuns and other mischief to be investigated and pursued... Must all crimes be political before action can be avoided.

This hands off attitude must change. The president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of India, says he is "disappointed" by the government's response. We are not so polite. We demand an answer!

The MMM calls upon the Muslim community to assure their due and proper courage in the coming Census, in February 2001, and advises the Muslim youth in all localities to ensure correct enumeration.

The MMM expresses its solidarity with the valiant people of Chechenya and Kosovo, against whom the Russian and Yugoslavia Governments are waging full-scale war, and calls for urgent international intervention for protection of human rights and for a honourable political settlement through negotiation.

On Secularism & Sarva Dharma Sambhav M. Zeyaul Haque

Sarva dharma sambhav is merely an attitude – a noble sentiment at best – while secularism is a political category, a tried and tested mode of statecraft... The efficiency and deftness with which it goes about doing its job cannot be replaced by mere sentiments of goodwill and wishy-washy thinking, the product of a wobbly mind that would give in easily in situations of social conflict.

Since India began its history as a free, modern nation state some people have been consistently opposed to its secular Constitution and laws. They have kept up their pressure throughout the last 50 years to do away with the secular character of the state giving, at different times, different arguments for why we should do so...

The present clamour about *sarva dharma sambhav* is part of that larger anti-secular drive. As a noble sentiment there is no problem for anybody with this idea, or, for that matter, more contemporary ideas like pluralism or multi-culturalism. However, the advocates of *sarva dharma sambhav* do not believe in pluralism or multi-culturalism. For them India has only one culture – Hindu culture.

The distinction between secularism and *sarva dharma sambhav* is clear from their approach to school prayer. Advocates of the latter see nothing wrong in Saraswati Vandana in schools while the former demands that the religion of one group must not be forced on other groups. Saraswati Vandana is a prayer to the goddess of education, a goddess of Hindu religion. Muslims and Christians who pray to Saraswati without believing in her would be committing an act of dishonesty. Besides, this violates the very fundamental principles of secularism. For votaries of *sarva dharma sambhav* it may not be wrong even though one commits an act of dishonesty by praying to something that one does not believe in.

... Secularism demands that schools and educational institutions remain aloof from denominational disputes... (In USA) the opponents of (school) prayers have a valid point: the US is a multi-religious multicultural society and the introduction of school prayers would unnecessarily emphasise one religion at the cost of others. A multi-religious prayer would neither be necessary nor relevant. In any case it would be a chimera.

In fact, the education system has been consistently targeted by the protagonists of *sarva dharam*. And what has come from their tireless efforts is not an example of "equal respect for all religions" as they profess, but extreme discourtesy and animosity for Islam and Christianity...

What the selective historiography of *sarva dharma sambhav* votaries promotes is not equal respect for all religions but extreme bitterness and hostility for other.

Gadgil's Flawed Formula

Editorial, The Hindustan Times, 22 May, 2000

There is nothing new about V.N. Gadgil's advocacy of a pro-Hindutva line for reviving the Congress. Last November, in a note to Sonia Gandhi, he had peddled the same dubious formula, arguing that the description of the BJP and RSS as communal and fascist "hardly makes an impact on a majority of voters (to whom) fascism or communalism does not convey anything sinister." This time, he has criticised his own party for wrongly believing that if only the Muslims return to it, the party will secure power since such a turn of events will fetch no more than 18 per cent of votes, leaving the remaining 82 per cent of "Hindu" votes beyond the Congress' reach. That a veteran Congressman can seriously argue ... on these lines is in itself an indication of what has gone wrong with the party.

... It is clear that Gadgil believes that the end justifies the means. If fascism or communalism can fetch votes, why not opt for them? Similarly, he adopts a remarkably cynical arithmetical approach to votes. Since the Hindus constitute a majority, pander to them and get to the seat of power. There is no mention of any principle or ideal... But ... unconcern for ideal Gadgil's suggestion is flawed even on purely practical grounds.

... If the Congress today tries to take a leaf out of the BJP's majoritarian strategy and ostensibly woos the Hindus, it will ... strengthen the very adversary it hopes to outwit. For why should the voters opt for an imitator when the genuine article is there?

Gadgil is right in saying that the Hindus cannot be "ignored". But that does not mean that the minorities can be slighted. The point is that a party in a multicultural society must not distinguish between citizen and citizen. It must cater to the common good, neither appeasing any section nor discriminating against another. It is only the pursuit of an even-handed, non-sectarian policy which can ensure political success...

This is not secularism in disguise but the reverse of all that secularism stands for... By replacing secularism with "equal respect for all religions" we will give ourselves a state which does not distance itself from people's diverse faiths. It will not be secularism in disguise but a Third Reich in a Swadeshi mask.

(Source: The Nation and the World, 16 May, 2000)

We condemn any attack on minorities. But the Opposition is trying to blow such incidents out of proportion to score political points, without realising the harm it is causing to the country's image.

- M. Venkaiah Naidu, BJP Spokesman

Avijit Pathak on the RSS Agenda - Political, Cultural and Economic

... The recent debate centred on the status of the RSS – whether it is a cultural or a political organisation ... reveals the poverty of thinking. Because it fails to comprehend the politics of culture as well as the culture of politics. Moreover, it fails to ask the question that ought to be asked: how do we choose what we – not excluding the government employees – need for a sane society?

What is Cultural is Political

To begin with, let us understand culture. We often make a mistake when we argue that culture is essentially a soft domain; it is just about poetry and painting, Theatre and cinema. The deeper meaning of culture, it has to be understood, is a way of life. And this way of life manifests itself through innumerable cultural creations: from music to technology, from marriage rituals to television serials. Culture as a way of life is also a statement of power: how, for instance, the family is constituted or gender identities are constructed, how the community copes with the principle of the division of labour or how it classified, hierarchises, degrades and elevates its members... A meaningful ethnographic account reveals the dynamics of power operating through everyday/normal/taken-for-granted cultural activities and practices. In other words, there is a political meaning of culture.

It is not difficult to come across innumerable examples that demonstrate the politics of culture... It is possible to see how even apparently 'non-political' cultural creations like religion, poetry, cinema and academics have deeper political implications. Vivekananda's 'spiritual' messages did inspire the ... struggle against the ... British empire, Tagore's novels intervene meaningfully in the discourse on nationalism during the freedom struggle, Raj Kapoor's films were located in the Nehruvian agenda of nation-making, and even the growth of an abstract science like mathematics was not separable from the logic of capitalism, its fascination with measurement, quantification and profit.

As a matter of fact, these possibilities in culture have been recognised and accepted by the political agents of all kinds...

It is, therefore, not surprising that the RSS, its cultural appearance notwithstanding, does have far-reaching political implications. The RSS means many things. It means a group of 'patriots' disciplining themselves for building up a resurgent Hindu nation. It may also mean a set of ideals rooted in an 'ancient culture' that can critique the 'secular'/'Western' obsession with materialism and individualism. In other words, no matter how one looks at it, the RSS is inseparable from politics. Because its gospel of nationalism does have distinctive political meanings regarding the hierarchy of religious communities, the

location of women, tribes and other marginalised groups in the caste Hindu society. Likewise, its doctrine of a 'disciplined' life maybe seen as ... a mode of 'surveillance': a military project designed to curb the creative anarchy that individuals need to realise their own truths in life. The point we are trying to make is that there is no way the RSS can hide its political character.

... The question is: why is it that the RSS is so desperate to hide its politics? Is it because it accepts that culture is inherently good, and politics is necessarily bad? Or is it that it does not have the moral courage to praise the kind of politics it practices?

What is Political is Cultural

Politics has got its own culture. Because no political project can be accomplished without appropriate cultural practices. Democracy, for instance, is not just about elections and formation of governments. Democracy cannot become successful unless all social and cultural institutions become truly democratic in their functions and practices. Democracy ... is a way of thinking, acting and doing. Democracy, in order to be meaningful, must be a shared cultural practice.

... Gandhiji realised the negative consequences of despiritualised politics... He sought to give a refreshingly new meaning to politics. A political activist, Gandhiji insisted, must train himself, restrain his egotistic impulses and desires, grow humble, courageous and hence non-violent. In other words, politics, for Gandhiji, was a way of life, a profound cultural practice: what one should eat and drink, the kind of sexual life one should lead, and the way one should relate to the wretched of the earth.

The situation is not entirely different when we look at Marxism. Even though Marxism is a 'scientific' doctrine it fails to escape moral questions. The urge to unite theory and practice led many Marxists to plead for a non-hierarchical, egalitarian, communitarian, life-ethos. 'How to be a good Communist' was a great concern shared by many Marxists. It was felt that Marxism, in order to be accountable, must manifest itself in the cultural practices of its proponents.

It would, therefore, not be wrong to say that every political project seeks to evolve its characteristic cultural practice. For example, the kind of cultural narcissism (an attempt to spread the hegemony of the dominant religious tradition, and silence or insult alternative traditions) we have been witnessing these days is closely related to a political project that is authoritarian and exclusivist... In fact, good politics needs good culture; bad politics means bad culture.

Culture and Politics in a Sane Society

The real issue is not whether the RSS is a cultural or a

political organisation. Because its culture defines its politics; its politics dictates its culture. In fact, be it the RSS or any other 'secular' cultural group ... the essential challenge before us is to choose the kind of political culture or cultural politics that leads to sanity in human society.

The choice is always difficult. Yet, it is not altogether impossible to identify a set of obstacles to the growth of a sane society. First, what we are witnessing all over the world is the culture of consumerism... Second, we are witnessing what is being regarded as fundamentalism. Although it speaks of the importance of 'lost' cultures in order to evolve a critique of the immoral consumerism of 'Western modernity', its politics remains the same conservative politics promoting a patriarchal/hierarchical/unequal social order. This culture is against sanity. Because it destroys the richness of cross-cultural dialogue; it is too narrow to appreciate the beauty of cultural change through mutual interaction; it curtails the creative freedom of the individual; it represses the language of protest without which no civilisation can renew itself. A sane society ought to overcome these obstacles and must evolve a politico-cultural project leading to an ecological, harmonic, non-violent mode of living.

It is in this context that the agenda of the RSS has to be situated. Does the RSS have an alternative economic agenda to fight the irresistible march of global capitalism, and overcome the seduction of consumerism? Is the RSS open and critical enough to fight fundamentalism, and embrace the spirit of plurality and autonomy? In other words, is the RSS capable of creating a new agenda for a sane society...

(Source: The Mainstream, 20 May, 2000)

RSS: Seshadri Chari's Views

Founded in 1925 by Hedgewar ... the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) aims at organising Hindu society as one strong, indivisible entity to achieve all round development of the country. The Sangh believes that dharma and 'sanskriti' (our uninterrupted cultural heritage) form the bedrock of our ancient civilisation... Hindutva has a world vision and the Hindu society has a world mission.

... With a view to finding solutions to various problems, 'swayamsevak' are encouraged (to) start new institutions or join an existing one. Naturally, these organisations are autonomous, they have a constitution of their own, and are not affiliated to the RSS. But the persons working in such organisations do continue to derive inspiration from the RSS... The BJP is one such organisation in the political field... There is, therefore, nothing like somebody being "in-charge of the BJP".

... In the Hindu thought, politics is only one aspect of social life. The RSS considers the individual to be an effective instrument of change in society and united efforts of a group of such individuals is alone the guarantee for change in society. The BJP is striving to bring about a

RSS Chief Sudarshan For Unity in Diversity!

... Unity in diversity is our principle... Those who adopted the principle of unity in uniformity ... were not successful nor will they ever be... Whoever tried to destroy diversity were ... that went against nature... People from all over the world representing different cultures ... religions and lifestyles came to India and they are living in their own style and they have all the freedom to do so.

... The Muslims kept themselves away from the national mainstream because the religious fundamentalists want to keep them isolated. However the educated and intellectuals have begun to realise that they have to adopt the principle of unity in diversity.

... Hindutva was not the name of any community in particular - it is the concept of cultural nationalism... Only Hindutva has the capacity to accept, imbibe and absorb all religions...

(Source: The Organiser)

Shahabuddin's Response Letter to The Organiser, 8 June, 2000

In the latest issue of the Organiser, Shri Manik M. Kher has quoted the RSS Chief Shri Sudarshan in full support of the concept of 'unity in diversity'. However, Sudarshanji is also reported to have stated that the Muslim Indian community is yet to adopt this principle and that Hindutva has the capacity to **absorb** all religions. Here lies a contradiction.

Muslim Indians are equally committed to the concept of Unity in Diversity. That is why they want to maintain their religious identity in a multi-religious country and they do not want their religion to be absorbed by the dominant religion, in the name of Hindutva or cultural nationalism. Indeed the very concept of **one culture for the nation** is a negation of the principle of Unity in Diversity. We are living in the age of Multi-culturalism.

change in society in its own way.

.. Shri Guruji (M. S. Golwalkar) is likely to have found (Savarkar's thought) generally in agreement with his own concept of a Hindu nation. The RSS believes in cultural nationalism. A person who accepts this land as his country and owes unquestioned and primary loyalty to it, owns the basic features of her heritage and culture, imbibes and manifests them in life can be said to be a Hindu national, irrespective of the faith he follows for his spiritual salvation. Many, not-born here, have acclaimed this country as their 'punyabhoomi'.

The RSS upholds that this is Hindu Rashtra... But the concept of Hindu Rashtra is absolutely different from what is known as a theocratic state... Hindutva is not a religious dogma. One should understand the distinction between Rashtra (nation) and Rajya (state). Hindu Rashtra is a geo-cultural concept.

(Source: The Hindu, 20 February, 2000)

Aradhana Kalia

On Hauz-i-Shamsi, New Delhi

Over the years, several structures were built to meet the water needs in the historical city of Delhi. But as modern technology came in people became dependent on piped water and in the bargain forgot the use of the old water harvesting techniques.

Hauz-i-Shamsi was built by Iltutmish in 1230 AD to meet the water requirements of people residing in Mehrauli. Seven centuries later the structure still exists. It has withstood vagaries of the weather, but it no longer serves the purpose for which it was built.

Today, the Hauz — an artificially created water body — lies in a state of disuse. Its water, once considered sacred, is polluted today... As many as 25 historical water bodies in various parts of the Capital can be revived to supplement the water requirement. A large number of them have however, gone dry. And in the few, which are still wet, the quality of water is very poor.

A large lake of 1,20,000 square meter area in front of the Tughlaqabad Fort is completely dry. The lake took care of the water requirements of the entire fort built by Ghiyathu'd Din Tughluq (1321-25). Besides the lake, there are seven baolies (stepwells) inside the Fort. All these, which could have served as store houses for substantial amount of water are dry today... They can be made functional after desilting, cleaning, repairing and deepening. "The need is not just to preserve these structures as mere architectural heritage, but also natural heritage"...

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 16 May 2000)

Government Statement

On Excavation Work at Fatehpur Sikri

The ongoing excavation by the Archaeological Survey of India at Bir Chhabili —ka-tila in Fatehpur Sikri in District Agra has yielded thirty four pieces of sculptures. Some of them are of the Jain Tirthankaras namely, Rishabhanatha, Sambhavanatha and Kunthunatha and a few are of Jain Goddesses Ambika and Saraswati, all datable to the 9th – 11th century A.D. The site lies in the prohibited area of the centrally protected monument of Fatehpur Sikri.

(Source: LSUQ No. 4162/20.4.2000 by G.S. Rajukhedhi & S. Venugopal)

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Delhi Urban Heritage Foundation Historical Buildings for Conservation

Three old buildings of historical importance in the walled city would be adopted for conservation (as decided by Lt. Governor Vijai Kapoor at a meeting of the recently-reconstituted Delhi Urban Heritage Foundation. The three buildings are Delhi College and Anglo-Arabic School at Ajmeri Gate, a school building at Kucha Patiram and the Old Stephen's College at Kashmere Gate.

This was the first meeting of the Foundation which was reconstituted under the chairmanship of the Lt.-Governor consisting representatives of DDA, Delhi Government, Union Ministry of Urban Development, ASI Director-General, NGOs and eminent historians.

The guidelines for the appropriate utilisation of the three buildings is yet to be framed (but they) would be preserved by the Delhi Urban Heritage Foundation or by the Delhi Government.

... According to a recent survey by the INTACH, 1,208 buildings have been identified which have a historical importance and background...

It was also decided that the Mehrauli heritage zone, that has many historically significant structures, would be developed as an archaeological park. Similarly, Sultan Ghari Tomb and its precincts with scattered ruins should be conserved in keeping with long term objectives of ... regeneration of this area.

Directions were issued that the Tughlaqabad Fort area ... should be properly landscaped and preserved.

... Urgent attention should be given towards preservation of the grave of Razia Sultana, Shalimar Garden, the Old Yamuna Canal, Agersain Baowli and so on.

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 1 June, 2000)

On Commercialisation of Monuments

... It is (not) right to use monuments for such purposes and I will never be convinced otherwise. I am very angry and I find the whole thing totally disgusting. These monuments cannot take such big crowds. I don't buy the argument that money needs to be raised this way to preserve and protect the monuments, for the ASI has enough money to do so. Of course, the Hauz Khas monument was left in a mess after the show, and the ASI should have foreseen that. This Pramod Mahajan should have his pants pulled down and kicked on his behind. And you can publish that.

- Khushwant Singh

Nalin Verma

Muslim Folk-Singers in Bihar

Chakmundi, (a) north Bihar village is inhabited by Muslim fakirs who sing to their sarengis to earn a living...

Chakmundi has kept alive for centuries the Sorthi Birjabhar, Raja Bharathari, Gopichand, Rani Saranga and several other forms of folk music, now vanishing from most parts of the country. But tuberculosis has proved a deadlier adversary than Time, threatening to wipe out ... the men who make it.

Four out of five villagers suffer from tuberculosis, people here say. Seventy died of the disease in the past two years. Many are waiting for death.

... The villagers said the DM has ignored repeated requests to visit Chakmundi.

Their MP – the high-profile Ram Vilas Paswan – too has kept away.

There is a government hospital at this village of 200 families, but its doctor rarely shows his face...

(Source: The Statesman 27 May, 2000)

Hindu Shrine Serviced by Muslims in Kashmir

Muslims selling flowers, milk and incense sticks to be offered to a goddess at a shrine here goaded their Hindu brethren to say special prayers for peace in the insurgency-battered Jammu and Kashmir (at) the shrine of Khir Bhawani, revered by the state's Hindus as the protector of Kashmir Valley...

1000 Kashmiri Hindus ...came from Jammu to participate in an annual festival at the shrine, located about 25 km north of Srinagar. The temple is situated in the middle of a pond where the devout pour milk and shower flower petals to please the goddess...

(Source: The Statesman, 13 June, 2000)

Polyandry in UP

Following in the footsteps of the mythical Pandavas, two brothers from Belwa village in Uttar Pradesh's Gorakhpur district have embraced polyandry. Bali Ram, 38, and Ramdeo, 23, married Geeta, 30, on February 24...

... Since Geeta's parents were opposed to the marriage ... the *barat* started and ended at the grooms' house since the bride was already staying with them...

It took five years for the trio to (get finally married)... During this period Geeta gave birth to two sons and a daughter...

The marriage was guided by practical considerations... Had the brothers got married separately, their two bighas of land would have got fragmented...

(Source: The Week, 9 April, 2000)

Utpal Parashar

Witch-burning in Assam

Thirty-year-old Sukubala Devi had nothing to do with the mysterious death of her 27-year-old neighbour Suren Proja. But that did not deter the elders of Adabari tea estate in Sonitpur district from branding her a witch and murdering her.

... Suren's family members allegedly poured kerosene on her and set her afire in full public view...

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 18 May, 2000)

Socially Approved Prostitution in MP

... A hot favourite stop-over for truck drivers whizzing past Madhya Pradesh's ...the 150 kilometre-long highway connecting Ratlam to Neemuch, (are) the khilwadis, women of the Banchhada tribe who are pushed into prostitution as young girls.

The Banchhadas are a denotified tribe, and the men, notorious for being lotus-eaters, induct their womenfolk into the flesh trade. Tradition has demanded that the eldest daughter of the family is inducted into the flesh trade and she eventually emerged as the bread-winner. But now ... no daughter spared. By the age of 12 to 14 years, the girls are pressed into 'service' by their parents...

According to rough estimates, the tribe has more than 20,000 members sprawled over the districts of Mandsaur, Neemuch, Ratlam, Indore, Ujjain and Shajapur. Among these, nearly 5,000 women are in the flesh trade. However, Banchhada men do not marry women who are engaged in the trade... The khilwadis, on the other hand, are free to scout for their partners outside the community. Banchhada children fill in only the names of their mothers in official records...

District Women and Child Welfare Officer Sandhya Vyas says: "We tried our best to rehabilitate the women but our efforts were not up to their expectation..."

District Collector Anurag Jain observes, "We can't keep a round-the-clock vigil but can only act as motivators. The decision to leave the profession has to come from within".

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 13 June, 2000)

Woman Sacrificed for Treasure

... A woman was beheaded by two young men who said they were "acting on God's orders" and in the belief that they would be led to a hidden treasure (if they) "sacrifice" three women... They found their first victim ...and had begun their search for two more when the police caught them...

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 18 February, 2000)

Nikhil Chakravarty

On Indo-Pakistan Reconciliation

... There is a whole range of historical experience behind our attitude (towards Pakistan). Many ... had seen in the days before Independence how the Muslim League's Pakistan policy could be exploited by the British to put obstacles in the way of the national struggle for freedom. So, when Pakistan was born, it was but natural on their part ... to nurture bitterness against the new born state. This anti-imperialist trend getting merged with anti-Pakistan attitude was further strengthened when in the mid-fifties, Pakistan formed part of the US military network. Thus the anti-US feeling also got expression in renewed anti-Pakistani attitude... (This) outlook influenced a considerable section in the External Affairs Ministry.

Then came the Chinese hostility towards India culminating in the military aggression in 1962. The Sino-Pak entente following the Chinese attack further intensified the bitterness ... against Pakistan.

In this way, one has to take into account the fact that the traditional resistance to come to a closer understanding with Pakistan was essentially the product of an anti-imperialist outlook. For this section to demarcate itself from the rabid communal hostility ... was not very difficult under the statesmanship of Nehru, who, while strongly condemning the imperialists trying to exploit Pakistan's weakness, was never tired of reiterating that India wished well of Pakistan. In fact, Nehru did not hesitate to criticise those who thought that a solution of the Indo-Pak problem lay in the disintegration of Pakistan itself.

Once Nehru's overpowering influence was removed, things were allowed to drift: with the result that the reactionary forces in Pakistan also took it into their head that military action against Kashmir might pay dividends. The result was the war of 1965. In contrast, one cannot fail to note that Nehru never allowed things to drift to a position where a full-scale war between the two countries could take place. Even the conflict in Kashmir was localised...

In retrospect, it is to be admitted today that the Indo-Pak war of 1965 was (a) useless and wasteful war that should never have taken place; for, it was a war, which denuded both the countries of precious resources and contributed to a large measure towards subsequent economic crisis. While a large body of opinion in both the countries looked upon the 1965 conflict as a patriotic war in defence of their own frontiers, one cannot escape noticing that a renewed incentive to communalism in both the countries was provided by this war itself. In India, the Jan Sangh's arrival on the national scene as a major

Dileep Padgaonkar

On Ideological Foundations of Hostility

... Encounters between Indians and Pakistanis are charged with an emotional content that you seldom come across when estranged peoples get together. Curiosity is of course very much at work. But so are fear and longing, nostalgia and affection, hopes of reconciliation and cynicism about any live-and-let-live prospect, not to speak of an abiding suspicion about each other's motives and ambitions.

Somewhere along the line you also witness feelings of rage and shame that successive governments in the two countries have been taking their peoples for a ride over the past fifty years...

... The malaise ... to a very large extent, must be traced to the ideological foundations of the two countries. The very creation of Pakistan was premised on the assumption that Hindus and Muslims of the sub-continent constitute two separate "nations". Their religious beliefs and practices, their value systems, their culture irrevocably set them apart.

That assumption continues to guide the policies and actions of Pakistan despite two facts that palpably exposed its inadequacy: one, the creation of a separate homeland for the Sub-continent's Muslims did not settle the fate of millions of Muslims who chose, either voluntarily or through force of circumstances, to remain in dependent India. And two, the emergence of Bangladesh as a sovereign country deprived the two-nations theory of its bite.

It would be naïve for anyone to expect Pakistan's ruling elites, especially the omnipresent armed forces, to even think of re-appraising the ideological foundations of the country... No Pakistani, even the most liberal one, is comfortable with leftist and liberal claims about the "composite" nature of the sub-continent's culture. Such claims are inevitably regarded – as do claims about the superiority of Indian secularism – as an insidious avatar of the domineering urge of the Hindus. This skepticism gains an edge of urgency every time the votaries of Hindutva perpetrate their misdeeds like the felling of the Babari mosque.

For people-to-people contacts to be meaningful, it would therefore be necessary for the peace activists in Pakistan to build public opinion in their own country against officially-sponsored anti-India propaganda and terrorism across the borders. And it would be necessary for their Indian counterparts to relentlessly struggle against the depredations of religious extremists, Hindu, Muslim or any other. These burdens of history are the "core" issues not nuclear bombs or Kashmir...

(Source: The Times of India, 7 May, 2000)

USA - A Major 'Muslim Society'

Ambassador to Pakistan William B. Milan on Muslim Americans

... The USA is now a major "Muslim society" with Muslim citizens in this country numbering between six and seven millions... The USA is against terrorism, not Islam... Muslim Americans comprise the fastest growing religious group in the USA.

The simple reason that the United States is not an opponent of Islam is the fact that the United States is itself a major Muslim society... Between six and seven million American citizens are Muslims. Another way of putting this fact is that the American Muslim population is larger than Jordan's and larger than the combined population of Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman put together. Muslim Americans are found in every state and region of the country; they contribute to every part of the American economy - from labourers to company executives; they serve in the United States armed forces; and they are officials in all government departments, including the diplomatic service.

Most of these Americans, or their parents, have come from Muslim nations like Pakistan, Lebanon, Egypt and elsewhere. Like other immigrant groups they are deeply involved in the creative process of adapting to American society while at the same time preserving their faith and their culture. Admittedly, they are facing problems and instances of misunderstandings, as have other immigrant groups; but they are constantly becoming more effective in organising social pressure, political power and their legal rights to solve these problems. Under such circumstances, the calls by certain religious extremists for Muslims to declare war on Americans are ridiculous. These six million people are Muslims and Americans. They represent the fastest growing religious group in America today.

This large community within American society is having a constructive effect on us. The strong family bonds of Muslim families and their high standards of behaviour strengthen these factors in the larger society. The thousands of mosques that dot the American landscape from Washington, DC, to Los Angeles, California, are artistic contributions to the fabric of our cities. The need to perform daily and Juma prayers is causing employers to rethink the work week in more flexible ways; and the codes of dress preferred by many Muslim families are challenging schools and even the armed forces to liberalise dress codes. None of these changes take place without friction and resistance, but the adjustments that American Muslims are fighting for present healthy challenges for America to become a more inclusive, multi-cultural and tolerant society than it has ever been before.

My appeal today, then, is that we all rise to the challenge of rejecting the easy but misleading temptation to regard each other as mutual enemies... if we all strengthen our efforts towards increased mutual understanding, greater democracy, more tolerance for minorities, a higher standard of human rights, and broader inclusion of all social groups in our political systems, we will not only reduce the suspicions between the United States and Muslim countries, we will also make each of our own countries a stronger and more just societies.

The USA encourages and supports the development of societies that are tolerant, inclusive and democratic but it does not seek to export to other countries its political institutions as uniform models...

...My own country has not fully realised the goals of tolerance, inclusiveness and democracy. These are goals toward which we strive. They are goals towards which we encourage others to strive. That is why our Congress has passed a law requiring us to issue a report annually on the status of human rights in countries around the world, a report on which we would, ourselves, not make a perfect score...

The problem stems in great part from the fact that those Americans who fear Islam and those Muslims who see the US as the enemy confusing Islam with terrorism... The US government does not share this confusion, nor do most of the American people, nor I am sure ...most Muslims. But this confusion, on the part of a very small minority of all of us, is very pernicious.

The US is not at war with Islam; it is at war with terrorism. While terrorism is nothing new in human history, it has become in recent decades the favourite weapon of those who have so little popular or moral support that they cannot press their demands through the political processes or appeal to popular opinion. Resorting to terrorism is not exclusive to anyone religion, region or political platform.

(Source: The Nation and the World, 16 May, 2000)

Norway: Permission for Azan

For the first time in the history of Norway, which has about 36,000 Muslims, official permission was accorded on March 28 for Azan (on) an appeal submitted by the Muslims to the ... Municipality of Ghamel ... in East Oslo...

(Source: The Radiance Viewsweekly)

Chronology of the Month

(16 May – 16 June, 2000)

NATIONAL POLITICS

Party Politics: *BJP suffers a stunning defeat in an Assembly bye-election in Etah from rebel Kalyan Singh's Rashtriya Kranti Party. Kalyan Singh seeks Muslim support to defeat BJP in UP. *BJP draws blank in W. Bengal civil election (30 May).

*RSS asks cadre to stay away from politics and to concentrate on Sangh network (6 June). Criticises Government's economic policy (11 June). Warns Centre on meat export (15 June).

*JD(U) faces crisis of identity, rising tension between JD(S) and Samata (24 May).

Congress: *Rising leader Rajesh Pilot dies in car accident (11 June). Death nationally mourned. *K. Rahman Khan, Dy. Leader in Rajya Sabha rejects Gadgil's plea for Congress promoting Hindu interests (22 May).

*Stages a come back in W. Bengal in civil polls, without joining TC's Mahajot (30 May).

*Calls for Advani's resignation in view of bailable warrant by M.P. High Court for election offence (9 June)

*Rashtriya Lok Dal Ajit Singh snaps ties with Congress in UP.

*NCP anniversary celebration is a damp squib (10 June).

*Left: Basu joins ex-PM's caravan in continued search for alternative (24 May). *Meeting convened by Chandra Shekhar at Bhondsi flops (28 May).

*Dalits: Some Dalit leaders seek alliance with Dwijas, now led by BJP.

Constitution Review: *Commission fails to distribute questionnaires, seeks suggestions from public (15 June).

Reservation: *Sonia Gandhi calls for legislation for fully implementing SC/ST reservation (25 May).

*Delhi University teachers urge exemption of teaching posts from reservation.

*Kerala Government adopts modified guidelines for identifying 'creamy layer' (24 May).

*Jats included by Delhi in OBC List (2 June).

Election: *CEC Gill seeks full disciplinary control on government staff on election duty (3 June).

Corruption: *Law Commission recommends forfeiture of disproportionate assets of corrupt officers (7 June).

*Chief Vigilance Commissioner seeks powers to investigate officers of All India and Central Services without prior Government permission (7 June).

Terrorism: *Government circulates draft Anti-Terrorism Bill as approved by Law Commission to political parties (17 May). Allays journalists' fears. Congress denies support (30 May).

Education: *Government withholds information from Parliament about RSS affiliate, Vidya Bharati, which runs 6000 schools and is known for its 'Hindutva' textbooks (1 June).

*ASI develops saffron slant in excavation and conservation policy, allege eminent scholars (6 June).

Population: *Health Minister Thakur proposes legislation to enforce two-child norm (29 May).

Conversion: *VHP and Bajrang Dal reiterate the demand for legislation against conversion and for ouster of foreign missionaries (26 May).

*72 tribal Christian in Orissa reconverted to Hinduism (2 June). Puri Shakaracharya promises them separate temples.

Human Rights: *NHRC directs Orissa to pay compensation to illegally retained boy (3 June).

*Finds UP accounts for more violations than rest of country (7 June).

*Amnesty International castigates India for persistent violation of human rights.

Small States: *Kantaparis in North Bengal demands separate State (29 May).

Foreign Policy: *Advani seeks nuclear and intelligence tie-up with Israel (15 June).

*India express concern at forced deposition of PM Choudhury and presses for restoration of democracy in Fiji (30 May).

BABARI MASJID QUESTION

Mandir Construction: *VHP announces plan for Rath Yatra from Jaipur to Ayodhya to carry stone pillars etc. for putting up full-scale model Mandir to remobilise waning support (3 June). BMMCC calls for ban. Congress demands clarification (14 June).

*VHP says date and method to begin construction shall be finalised by Dharam Sansad during Kumbh Mela in January 2001 (4 June).

Liberhan Commission: *Former Home Secretary UP Prabhat Kumar (now Cabinet Secretary) summoned by Commission under warrant of arrest (23 May). Denies any prior perception of threat to Masjid in his deposition. Confirms that the CM Kalyan Singh barred central forces from resort to firing under any circumstances (9 June). The UP intelligence had SNP Singh contradicts Kumar (14 June).

Violence in Ayodhya: *Mahant Jagdish Das of Hanuman Garhi shot dead (16 May). GOI order CBI probe in bomb-blast in Faizabad in which Mahant Ram Chandra Das Paramhans and 10 others were injured (30 May).

KASHMIR QUESTION

RSS: *In a major shift, RSS seeks consensus on trifurcation of State, with separate statehood for Jammu and Union Territory status for Ladakh and a Security Zone for Hindus in Valley (23 May).

*Panun Kashmir supports proposal (24 May). Buddhists demand separate region for Ladakh (13 June).

Government-Hurriyat Talks: *Government rules out tripartite talks (29 May). Home Minister Advani hopeful of talks in 6 months (30 May). Congress and CPI want unconditional talks. National Conference sees no

CHRONOLOGY

objection to dialogue (3 June). National Seminar in Srinagar supports 'talks for peace' (4 June). Hurriyat sees malafide in talks offer to deceive world opinion and reiterates its stand (7 June). Shabbir Shah supports Pakistan's involvement in peace talks (6 June). Yasin Malik calls for Intifada against Brahmanical imperialism (14 June).

*Visiting Muslim leaders Syed Shahabuddin and Mahmood Madni support unconditional dialogue and propose mobilisation of people against violence and for dialogue (6 June).

National Conference: *Farooq Abdullah seeks 'greater autonomy' as panacea and the only solution (23 May).

*BJP opposes autonomy (15 June).

Militancy: *Rockets fired at J&K Assembly (19 May). Grenades hurled at State Secretariat (23 May).

*Ex-Minister and Shia leader Iftexhar Ansari survives bomb attack. 11 killed (2 June). Hurriyat condemns blast.

*Anti-militancy operation continues. Government to issue identity cards to residents along Indo-Pak border (31 May).

*JKLF leader Amanullah Khan calls **Pak-based militants threat to Kashmir Movement** (3 June).

Custodial Killings: *Hurriyat organises 2-day Bandh against custodial killings (25 May).

*Sopore people mourns and buries 6 youth killed in encounter (25 May).

*Pulwama people protests against alleged killing of youth in army custody (2 June).

*Pampore people protests against custodial killing of a youth (3 June). Massive protest demonstration in Srinagar for another killing (11 June).

Government: *Pandian Commission begins hearings in Brakpora firing (17 May).

Hurriyat: *Hurriyat objects to division on religious lines (24 May). *Postponement of election of Chairman exposes cracks (29 May). UK-based Kashmiri leader Ayub Thakur calls for sinking differences (13 June).

Muslim Delegation: *A 3 man Delegation led by Syed Shahabuddin visits Valley (31 May – 6 June); meets Governor, CM and leaders of Hurriyat and all political parties; interacts with human rights activists and jurists. Visits Chattinghpore, Achhabal and Sopore to meet next-of-kin of recent victims; proposes moratorium on killings and unconditional dialogue (6 June) – [See Statement].

PIPF: *Holds conference on Peace and Justice in Srinagar and issue Srinagar Declaration calling for immediate and unconditional talks (12 June).

Pakistan: *Pakistan's C.E. Musharraf proposes Kashmir as the **only** agenda for talks with PM Vajpayee (25 May).

*Pakistan F.M., A. Sattar, supports Hurriyat's agenda of independence (5 June).

USA: *USA official Pickering warns against escalation of border conflict (24 May).

*GOI denies report of US-sponsored negotiations. USA denies reports on mediation (8 June).

OTHER MATTERS OF CONCERN

Infiltration: *Congress rejects proposed repeal of Tribunal Act but remains silent on definition and safeguards for indigeneous people (17 May).

*Delhi police launches deportation drive against Bangladeshi immigrants; harassment of genuine citizens and destruction of evidence by police alleged (12 June). JUH and Shahabuddin voice protest.

*Preparatory to Assembly elections, Assam plans to deport 12,000 persons found to be illegal Bangladeshi immigrants by Tribunals because they had not registered under Foreigners law.

*CPI(Assam) demands 26 January, 1950 as cut-off date and supports restructuring of constituencies to divide Bengalis (5 June).

AMU: *Former Ambassador Hamid Ansari appointed as Vice-Chancellor (23 May). On joining promises democratic functioning and better academic standards (30 May).

*Staff Association demands probe on illegal decision of former VC (28 May).

Masjids: *Delhi Court summons Abdullah Bukhari, Imam of Jama Masjid, Delhi, in case related to unauthorised construction. (7 June).

*Mumbai Municipal Corporation demolishes an unauthorised Masjid; 1 killed in firing (7 June).

Religious Places Bill: *JUH demands repeal of Acts restricting construction and repair of religious places in MP, Rajasthan and W. Bengal (23 May).

*AIMPLB Working Committee reiterates stand and calls upon heads of Muslim institutions to defy police harassment.

Education: *Ex-Minister Saifuddin Soz proposes All India Madarsas Education Board (24 May).

*UP Government bars post-graduate education to those getting less than 50% marks (30 May).

Personal Law: *AIMPLB expresses willingness to have talks with NCW on status of Muslim women (1 June).

*AIMPLB President Qasmi denounces Panigrahi judgement on extension of Iddat till remarriage (14 June).

*Law Minister Jethmalani reiterates national policy against interference in personal law (16 May).

*Law Commission proposes equal property law (27 May).

Public Employment: *Muslims account for 3.5% (highest ever) of successful candidates in Civil Services Examination, 1999 (25 May).

Cow Protection: *GOI proposes set up National Commission for Protection of Cows (17 May).

Anti-Christian Violence: *12 injured in bomb blast in Church in Machhlipatnam, AP (22 May). School Principal near Mathura murdered (7 June). Blast rocks Churches in AP, Goa and Karnataka (8 June). Christian preacher killed in Punjab (11 June). Priest beaten up in Orissa (14 June).

*CBCI head Archbishop Lastic denounces violence and government's silence (9 June). Leads Christian Delegation to PM (12 June).

*BJP sees hand of ISI behind anti-Christian violence-(9

June). Vajpayee says minorities are safe (12 June). BJP asks Hindu and Christian groups to end hate campaign (13 June). *Congress demands judicial probe in AP blasts (11 June). *UCFHR calls for minorities alliance and NDA partners to review support to BJP.

*PUCL demands high level judicial inquiry (11 June).

Bohra Community: *Bohra dissident leader Asghar Ali Engineer demands anti-excommunication law (22 May).

Urdu: *Government promises high level committee to include more minority languages in 8 Schedule (9 June).

Census: *Asad Madni and Syed Shahabuddin ask Muslims to be vigilant during Census 2001.

Other Minorities: *Punjab CM Badal asserts separate Sikh identity (22 May).

JMI: Ashwini Kumar Enquiry Committee justifies police action in Jamia but finds excessive use of force (13 June). Non-withdrawal of cases regenerate unrest.

Muslim World - Syria: *Son Bashar succeeds Hafiz al Asad, as President and C-W-C.

Pakistan: *Ex-PM Benazir seeks ban on training of 'Mujahideen' in Madarsas (24 May).

*Film 'Jinnah' released in Pakistan (2 June).

*Ex-PM Sharief vows to expose Kargil debacle (13 June).

Chechenya: *Russian Field Commander calls upon government to conclude war (7 June).

Commemoration: *117th birth anniversary of Savarkar

organised officially by MCD (28 May).

*16th death anniversary of Mufti Atiqur Rahman observed by Burhan.

Obituary: Maulana Ahmad Ali, President, JUH, Assam, 85 passes away in Bombay (11 June).

*Sayeed Khan, well-known social worker of Delhi passes away in Delhi (30 May).

(Contd. from Page 331)

political force can be traced to the Indo-Pak war of 1965...

In the changed context, it is no longer possible to maintain an anti-Pakistan stance without helping the cause of communalism in this country. For, it is in the climate of Indo-Pak cold war that communalism thrives best not only in Pakistan but in India as well.

The question assumes added significance since the very foundation of Indian secularism can be effectively undermined by the communal forces getting a fresh impetus by stepping up anti-Pak hot air; in short, one cannot afford to be anti-Pakistani today in one is interested in combating communalism at home. And until communalism is fought and destroyed, there can be no stability for Indian democracy...

... The time has come for the progressive forces to take up a full-scale crusade for mass understanding of the need for rapprochement with Pakistan...

(Source: The Mainstream 29 April, 2000)

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