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# The 11th Lok Sabha and After - Course of Action for Muslim Indians

The most important results of the General Election 1996 were well anticipated: no party has obtained a majority in the Lok Sabha and the BJP has emerged as the single biggest party. The BJP is followed in order of strength by Congress(I), JD, CPM, CPI, SP and BSP among the national parties and TMC, DMK, TDP, AD and AGP among the State parties.

Secondly, no national party with the exception of Congress(I) is represented in more than a few states. Thus all national parties have been reduced to regional status: the BJP, to UP, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan, the JD, to Bihar and Karnataka, the CPI(M) and the CPI to West Bengal and Kerala, the SP to UP and the BSP to UP and MP.

Thirdly, due to the inbuilt incogruitas of the electoral system, the number of seats do not reflect the vote percentage, either nationally or statewise.

## BJP's Pre-eminence

There is no doubt that BJP's pre-eminence is entirely due to the disunity of the secular parties and the consequent fragmentation of the secular votes. On the other hand, it would be perilous to overlook the dramatic rise in the BJP's percentage of votes since 1989 in UP, Gujarat, Maharashtra , Bihar and Karnataka.

BJP's national vote of 23% in 1996 conceals more than it reveals. Even in UP its share has gone up to an all time high of 33.4%. On the other hand, out of 52 seats won by BJP in UP, in 46, Samajwadi Party and BSP have slaughtered each other. Had they come together and assuming that they had the capacity to transfer all their votes to each other, the BJP would have been reduced to 6 seats, and at most, assuming partial mutual transfer, to 15 seats!

In Bihar, the BJP's tally of seats and percentage of votes has gone up primarily because of the alliance with the Samata Party, whose core is formed by the Kurmi-Koeri combination. Both in UP and Bihar, the Congress triped of Brahmin-Muslim-SC has totally collapsed: the Brahmins alongwith other high castes, Rajputs and Banias, have flown to the BJP; the Muslims, largely towards Mulayam Singh's SP and to some extent Kanshi Ram's BSP in UP and to JD in Bihar, the SC largely towards BSP in UP and partly towards JD in Bihar.

## Only Ideological Conflict: Secularism Vs Hindutva

The only silver lining in the dark clouds is the fact that in the country as a whole, at present only 25% of the electorate is for the BJP which, with all variations on the theme and with all its tactical manoeuvres including the projection of Atal Bihar Vajpayee's liberal face, is seeking a viable alternative to the Secular State in a Hindu State.

The only relevant ideological conflict today is not Communism Vs Capitalism nor Brahminism Vs Mandalism nor Modernism Vs Obscurantism but Secularism vs Communalism. The issue is neither the reconciliation of class antagonisms nor of accommodation of caste groups but of management of religious and cultural plurality. We have come back to the battle-lines of yesterday. There is a national consensus that the Indian state shall be a democratic state; that the Indian economy shall move towards a free economy with emphasis on private enterprises and global linkages, that the Indian society shall modernise itself to the extent possible for an ancient civilization, that the power structure must, to some extent, admit the demands of the newly emergent castes - particularly the agricultural castes, the Shudras. But there is, unfortunately, an increasing rejection of Secularism and Multi-culturalism as principles of governance. The Indian society is yet to resolve the Communal Question and the Question of National Culture, to come to terms with 'foreign' religions and cultures; it is still faced with the eternal question; what to do with the Muslims? 120 million of them; forming 1/8 of the population , rising in proportion with every decade, making increasingly strident demands for recognition and participation!

In a scarce economy and in a developing society, it is not difficult to see why the anti-Muslim phobia and, therefore, pro-Hindutva and pro-BJP leaning rises with literacy, education and income. The rising Hindu bourgeoisie continues to see the Muslim as a competitor and worse as an adversary who having secured Pakistan, should not have been permitted to compete at all and should have been kept at the margin of the Society, perhaps to replace the SC and the ST, as the latter move up the ladder and are embraced as long-lost brothers.

## Secular Front: Only Option to Contain Hindutva

The transition period is limited - the Secular forces, if they really believe in the letter and spirit of secularism, in a secular state not only in form but in content, have perhaps another 5-10 years, to come together and firmly rebuild the secular state which lies battered, ravaged and besieged. Beyond that, it will be too late. Once the BJP national vote crosses 30%, and 50% in the Hindi-speaking states, Hindutva as the principle of governance shall have become irreversible.

From a strictly national angle, under the present system, therefore, there is no option for the secular parties, including the Left, to come together with the U.F. and the Congress (never mind Narasimha Rao's pout!) and form a Secular Front, if they cannot merge themselves into a single party. Maybe, some merge, and others join hands, to form a front of viable, like-minded parties.

The lesser the number of parties, the easier will be the management of the front as so many ideological hang-overs of yesteryear, so many individual egos of the present and so many personal ambitions of the future may clash.

## Systemic Change

The other option to rewrite the rules of the game, introduce the proportional system of representation, (which will ultimately lead to proportional representation of all identifiable social groups in the power structure), adopt the presidential system, with a run-off at every level, redistribute national territory into small socially and culturally homogeneous units of manageable size, and accommodate all contiguous particularities in largely homogeneous districts, blocks and Panchayats within the small state and legislate and strictly follow a National Code for Religious, Caste, Racial, Linguistic and Cultural Minorities, uniformly at every functional level to protect the rights of all minority groups, whatever the basis of their identity. But to reach that stage, India has to embrace and put into practice not only the principles of Equality and Justice but of Fraternity and translate into reality the vision of a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural state as a model for the humanity.

## Poor Muslim Representation

To come back to more urgent, down-to-earth matters of vital concern, Muslim representation has reached an all-time low of 26, 5 of which, 3 in Kashmir and one each in Pondicherry and Lakshadweep, are marginal. In states in which 75% Muslims live the representation is as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Uttar Pradesh | 5 |
| West Bengal | 5 |
| Bihar | 4 |
| Kerala | 2 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 2 |
| Assam | 1 |
| Maharashtra | 1 |
| Karnataka | 1 |

Imagine 50% of the Muslim population, UP, Bihar and West Bengal put together is represented by 16 and the rest by 5 MP's. Consider also that out of 80 odd so-called Muslim seats, only 15 seats have returned Muslim MP's. Consider also that proportionately, there should be 65 Muslim MP's in the Lok Sabha. Consider also that of the 26, 12 are first term MP's and of the others 7 are known to be silent MP's. Consider also that many well-known faces are not to be seen in the 11th Lok Sabha - neither Ebrahim Sulaiman Sait, nor Syed Shahabuddin nor C.K. Jaffer Sharief; the Muslim community has none but G.M. Banatwalla, who has staged a come-back and S.S. Owaisi, who rarely speaks, Tariq Anwar and E. Ahamed to look up to. Consider also that no stalwarts of the secular parties (with the possible exception of R.V. Paswan and he is a Minister now) ever raise matters of Muslim concern in the Lok Sabha.

Coming to the government there was no Muslim among the BJP MP's and therefore, there was none in the short-lived Vajpayee Government (Sikander Bakht is a member of the Rajya Sabha). In the Deve Gowda government, they have C.M. Ibrahim, who has no acquaintance with the Muslim community outside Karnataka, Taslimuddin, of whom the less said the better, and Saleem Sherwani, a civilized person and that is about all!

Whom will the aggrieved Muslims approach? The BJP MP's will refuse point blank. The Left MP's cannot be permitted to recognise that religious minorities can have problems. Only the few MP's elected from Muslim concentration constituencies on Muslim support may heed their SOS, if at all, out of electoral compulsion. But their cries of anguish will largely go unheard. Over a period of time, the Lok Sabha will create the 'patriotic' impression that the Muslim Indians face no problem and all's well with Muslim India!

## Why?

Why has this happened? First, the so-called secular parties which appeal to Muslim voters for their support and sometime take a pro-Muslim stand, do not come together even in Muslim majority or in Muslim concentration seats to put up a common candidate and thus divide secular votes. Secondly, they do not put up Muslim candidates even from such seats or adequate number of Muslim candidates in other winnable constituencies. Thirdly, they put up rotten Muslim candidates who do not command any following in or rapport with the Muslim electorate, merely to fill up a blank and to gain a statistical point.

But the real fault lies with the Muslim community because

* **they do not enroll themselves as voters;**
* **they do not vote massively;**
* **they do not vote unitedly for an agreed candidate in a given constituency;**
* **they do not build up and project politically promising material as other social groups do;**
* **they do not participate in political activities and mass struggles.**

## Course of Action

Slowly but surely, a political alliance reflects a social combination. Every OBC, every SC, every ST has a political party. If the Yadavs have the Janata Dal, the Kurmis-Koeris have the Samata. If the Dusadhs of Bihar have the JD, the Chamars of UP have the BSP. If the Brahmins, Rajputs and Banias have the BJP, the Sikhs have the Akali Dal. Either the Muslim, nationally or regionally, should have a Muslim-dominated but secular party which should then link up with another secular party which represents another social segment, or, they should en masse back a party which they may not dominate but which may be sensitive to their concerns. It could have been the Janata Dal; but it has disintegrated in UP and been hijacked by the Yadavs in Bihar. It could have been the CPM but even the Muslims of West Bengal are distancing themselves; it can be the Congress **now** that it has the look of a haunted house! Can the Muslims take it over and make it livable?

## Muslim Political Workers

Muslim Indians must, for their survival, evolve a course of action:

* Muslims must raise their level of political consciousness and activity, enroll themselves as voters and participate in mass agitations, for example, of Kisans, workers, teachers, students and youth...
* More and more Muslims should join a secular political party of their choice, subject to assurance of reciprocal support from the other social groups constituting its base, and act as a pressure group within, to steer it towards the Secular Front.
* Muslim workers should strive to secure position of influence in their parties at least in Muslim concentration areas - Panchayats, Blocks/ Towns, Districts and States.
* Muslim workers should project potential and promising Muslims as candidates of their parties for elective positions in Prakhand and Zila Panchayats, Assemblies and Parliament.
* Muslim workers should pressurise their parties for party tickets to Muslim candidates for Muslim concentration Constituencies, for their fair delimitation and for appropriate location of polling stations.

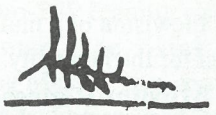
## Muslim Masses

At the time of election, it is for the Muslim masses to act

* they must use their votes
* they must use it for a common candidate - the strongest secular candidate, preferably a Muslim in a Muslim concentration constituency and in other constituencies, a non-Muslim belonging to a social group which form part of the Social Alliance.

**Political Front Must Reflect Social Alliance**

In short, the Muslim community has to act on two fronts - the Political and the Social, for forming a Secular Front and a Social Alliance which would assure them their due representation in the power structure as well as their legitimate place in society.



New Delhi,
1 June, 1996

**(SYED SHAHABUDDIN)**

## President's Address to Parliament, 24 May, 1996 (Extracts)

... Our endeavour should be to strive for a wholesome consensus on all vital national issues.

The vastness of our country, its diversity and the underlying unity are our basic strengths. India is one people, one nation with her unique culture. Government will do all that it may to ensure that harmonious relations are maintained between different communities and groups. Government is committed to provide security and protect the life and property of all people, particularly the weaker sections and minorities. Violence manifesting itself in separatist extremist, criminal and anti-social activities has no place in any civilized society and would be effectively dealt with by the Government. In doing so the Government cannot forget that political, social and economic measures are equally necessary in resolving these problems.

... Illegal immigration which has an unsettling effect will be curbed through comprehensive measures....

Jammu and Kashmir is an inalienable part of India. No attempt to interfere with our internal affairs there will be tolerated. We are keen to restore the democratic functioning of the State for which all efforts are being made to ensure free and fair polls in the state....

In order to ensure cow protection, and to impose a total ban on the slaughter of cows and cow progeny, Government will take up suitable measures.

The Government will pursue policies aimed at the real empowerment of women, so as to ensure that their dignity and rights are not violated and their full potential is realized. The Government will take necessary legislative and other steps to provide for reservation of 33% of the seats for women in all elected bodies, including State Assemblies and Parliament.

We believe in increasing state investment in health and nutrition programme...

... The long term objective is to stabilize population by the first decade of the next century. The Government will devise a system of incentives and disincentives for encouraging adoption of family planning norms.

The Government's foremost priority in the area of foreign policy will be the improvement of relations with all our neighbours in South Asia including Pakistan, bilaterally and in the SAARC forum...

... It is regrettable that Pakistan continues to instigate terrorism against India. We call upon Pakistan to respond constructively to our repeated offers to resolve all outstanding issues bilaterally. ...

## Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's Address to Nation, 19 May, 1996

... Instead of entering into a debate on 'communalism', or the true meaning of secularism, a determined effort is being made to obscure issues, to avoid an honest and meaningful debate.

**Sarva Panth Samabhav**

India is an ancient civilisation. It has always had different sects and religious practices. **WE** do not limit ourselves to one God or one Prophet or a single Book. We are a multi-religious country and we believe in the equality of all religious faiths.

It is because of this that we have never had any tension, leave alone a violent struggle on the correct path to achieve a realisation of God. "Sarva Panth Samabhav", or equal respect to all faiths is part of our civilisational consciousness. Secularism thus is integrated into our lives. India never was, and never will be, a theocratic State. My Government is committed to creating an environment of social harmony and peace.

What happened in Ayodhya on December 6, 1992 was not the result of any pre-planned conspiracy. If problems related with religion are not resolved for long period of time, then the result is what happened at Ayodhya. Every society has two methods of solving Ayodhya - like disputes - by discussions and dialogues or through legislation. In the case of Ayodhya, neither of these two approaches was pursued seriously. The dispute was before the courts for decades and remains there.

It is hardly necessary to recall that immediately after the advent of Islam in West Asia, the first mosque was built in Kerala, then ruled by a Hindu Raja. In like manner, soon after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the first church was established in India. These manifestations of different faiths are living symbols of our secular traditions. We will maintain these traditions.

...

This Government will pro-actively pursue a foreign policy based on peace, equality and cooperation. Our immediate goal is to improve our relations with all our neighbours including Pakistan.

My Government will not relent in its efforts to establish peace in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Elections will be held on schedule. The territorial integrity of our country will be preserved and protected at all costs....

# The Real Face of the BJP - The Vajpayee Mask Reveals More than it Concedes

## Siddharth Varadarajan in The Times of India, 22 May, 1996

Despite its carefully crafted rhetoric, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee's televised address to the nation could not quite succeed in keeping the darker side of the BJP safely under wraps. His elliptical reference to the demolition of the Babari Masjid -"if problems related with religion are not resolved for a long period of time, then the result is what happened in Ayodhya" - is as shocking a rationalisation of bloodshed and vandalism as the late Rajiv Gandhi's defence of the November 1984 murder of Sikhs ("when a big tree falls, the earth is bound to shake").

Far from being contrite about his party's role in the destruction of the ancient mosque, the Prime Minister has essentially said that if the people do not cooperate with the BJP's agenda of resolving "religious problems", Ayodhya-style incidents will be inevitable. Mr. Vajpayee has amplified the same portentous theme in a; recent interview to Panchajanya. Judging by his liberal use of the usual coded threats to Muslims, the assumption of high office has not made the slightest difference to the party's sense of propriety.

For example, he has stated that "if minorities continue to think in the language of minorityism, then the majority will start thinking in the language of majorityism and this will increase the gulf between the two communities". In other words, the minorities must behave - in the PM's words, they should "think of (themselves) as Indians" - or else, be prepared to accept the worst. This is doublespeak at its worst. Were those who demolished the Babari Masjid thinking of themselves as Indians? Are those clamouring for the construction of a Ram temple at the disputed site in Ayodhya thinking of themselves as Indians?

In the same interview, Mr. Vajpayee has dispelled the idea that his party is "softening" its stance on the temple issue. "Our goals are the same. it is part of our strategy as to which path we adopt at which point of time. Strategy has to always be flexible". Small consolation that this is supposed to be the soft, cuddly face of Hindutva. ...

Mr. Vajpayee's promise to uphold the law and order also rings a little hollow considering the fact that the BJP's chief ally in the Lok Sabha is Mr. Madhukar Sarpotdar, head of the Shiv Sena's group of MPs. According to Justice H. Suresh and Justice S.M. Daud's independent inquiry into the Bombay riots, Mr. Sarpotdar made incendiary speeches urging his followers to attack Muslim houses. After being arrested and released several times by the Bombay police, Mr. Sarpotdar was finally detained by the Army under the National Security Act. Illegal arms were reportedly recovered from his vehicle. Will Mr. Vajpayee be exercised about bringing the accused of the Bombay riots to trial? While he has gone on record lamenting the abolition of the Srikrishna Commission, is he prepared to push through its reinstatement?

... Only around ten per cent of eligible voters chose the BJP in the elections (the party polled 20 per cent while the nationwide turn out was around 50 per cent), but this has not prevented the chairman of the Bombay Stock Exchange and virtually every corporate notable from declaring that the party has been given a 'mandate' to govern.

The euphoria of the privileged classes is not because the party is promising a temple in Ayodhya... The real appeal of the BJP's divisive policies to them is that it provides excellent opportunity for reaping quick profits. Many corporate barons are eagerly awaiting the sale of the public sector at throwaway prices... As for the Ram bhakts, who continue to languish without adequate drinking water, electricity, homes, food and jobs 50 years after independence, well, they will always have their mandir in Ayodhya to go to.

## Vajpayee and Religious Tolerance

... Just as Vajpayee began speaking on religious tolerance, dusk fell and the muessin in the neighbouring mosques began the call to prayer. As theazam filled the air, Vajpayee was forced to increase the volume of his own speech. For the next two minutes it was hard to concentrate on what he was saying as the two voices competed with each other for attention.

Obviously, there had been a major goof-up since the azan occurs at the same time everyday. The organisers should have warned Vajpayee in advance to either wind up his speech before the muezzin's call or else to observe a minute's silence in deference to somebody else's religious belief.

You can't talk of tolerance by shouting the other person down. As a poet, Vajpayee should have been aware of this....

**(Source: The Sunday, 26 May - 1 June, 1996)**

## Smruti Koppikar
## On Muslim Reaction to BJP Government

Their disquiet is unmistakable. For the first time since Independence, Muslims face the prospect of being governed by a party that avowedly represents the majority community. The BJP is not just pro-Hindu, it has made capital from being openly anti-Muslim...

Despite its recent friendly overtures, which detractors say are compelled by political exigencies, the abiding image of the party in the Muslim mind is of cheering kar sevaks tearing down the Babari Masjid. Vajpayee's belated regrets failed to convince most Muslims. The doublespeak on Mathura and Kashi mosques hasn't inspired confidence either... Says Bangalore University professor Hasan Mansur: "It's naive to think that Vajpayee is liberal or secular-mind. He is a Trojan Horse backed by the RSS."

Across the country, reactions to the swearing-in of the BJP Government ranged from vague apprehension to plain alarm. The fence-sitters who had moved away from the Congress(I) but did not cast their lot with the Third Force hope they have not invited disaster. Those who actually voted for the BJP want to believe that the saffron rule will not be "so bad" after all. Some sections, mainly in the south, are indifferent to the developments.

From Lucknow to Patna and from Mumbai to Bangalore, Muslims have adopted a wait-and-watch approach. "it could push us into a situation of second-rate citizenship," says Zafaryab Jilani, activist of the Babari Masjid Sangharsh Samiti. These fears are tinged by their distrust of the Congress(I)....

In Mumbai, the Muslim reaction has been muted. They do not apprehend riots unless the BJP Government persists with building he Ram temple or repealing the Religious Places (Protection) Act or brings any other contentious issue to a flashpoint...

But the apprehensions are very real on other fronts. It's not just for their lives they fear, but their collective identity. Says Asghar Ali Engineer, a dissident Bohra scholar: "An anti-Muslim government can make changes in insidious ways, small changes in policies that go unnoticed but which mean an assault on the Muslim identity. We saw what the BJP government did with history books in Uttar Pradesh.

Indeed, on the flip side of the "no riots" argument, the Shiv Sena-BJP Government has scrapped the state Minorities Commission, terminated the Srikrishna Commission probing the Mumbai riots, and hustled bills on cow slaughter and uniform civil code through the Maharashtra Assembly. ... Both in Ahmedabad and Mumbai, Muslims this year faced severe problems on Bakr-e-Id when Sangh activists prevented vehicles loaded

(Contd. on page 262)

## Debashish Mukerji
## On Fall of BJP Government

... Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, and his cabinet colleagues knew their days were numbered. Their chances of cobbling together a majority in Parliament, feeble to begin with, dwindled to near zero in the days that followed. Yet watching them at work over the first week, few would have guessed they were virtually enacting a charade...

The BJP's capitulation on the choice of the new Speaker finally underscored its helpless position...

Defections, opportunistic splits and mergers have a hoary tradition in Indian electoral politics, which even the Anti-Defection Act, has not entirely curbed. Yet, despite having been given two weeks to prove its majority in the Lok Sabha, the BJP has been singularly unsuccessful in weaning away MPs from other camps into its fold. No MP wants another election in a hurry, yet no MP - apart from the few in its allied parties - is willing to support the BJP, despite it being the largest party in the Lok Sabha and thus best placed to ensure a stable government. Why?

It is not as if the BJP was laggard in its efforts to woo the smaller parties...Nowhere did the BJP succeed. Instead all these regional parties preferred to ally with the Congress - its chief opponent in its home state - rather than the BJP. Why?

Three main reasons emerged. The most important was the BJP's communal image, the apprehension of alienating Muslims - almost all the regional parties had drawn a considerable number of Muslim votes, following Muslim disenchantment with the Congress all over the country. Any alliance with the BJP, they feared, would see the Muslims returning to the Congress, particularly in states like Andhra Pradesh and Assam.

The AGP, for instance, had initially won power following the Assam movement with support solely from the non-Muslims in the state. But the defeat in the 1991 assembly elections convinced AGP's leaders they could not do without the Muslims. Accordingly this time Muslims were wooed, and indeed the AGP obtained a considerable number of Muslim votes. Thus supporting the BJP would have been disastrous for the party.

The second reason regional parties avoided the BJP was its image in southern Indian of being a pro-Brahmin, Hindi chauvinist party. "People fear the BJP will ultimately impose Hindi in Tamil Nadu," said a DMK supporter. "It is seen as a North Indian party seeking to impose the hegemony of the North on the South" ...

Thirdly, even for those practising short-term politics, the gap that separated BJP's tally from a simple majority, in Parliament, was just too large. Had the BJP tally been higher by another 40 years, the story may well have been different.

(Source: The Week, 2 June, 1996)

# Congress (I): Election Manifesto, 1996 (Extracts)

That is why the Congress has remained true to certain unchanging values. These are:

* Unity and Integrity
* Democracy based on the Parliamentary System
* Secularism
* An independent Judiciary
* Freedom of Speech and Expression and Freedom of the Press
* Stability, social harmony and development

**A New Beginning in Kashmir**

The State of Jammu & Kashmir was relatively peaceful until November, 1989.

The pitch was queered during the rule of Janata Dal. The Janata Dal was aided and abetted by the BJP.

Together they sacrificed the interests of the people of the State for political expediency. Together they destroyed the bond of trust and friendship between the people of Jammu & Kashmir and the rest of India.

The Congress has strained every nerve to rebuild this bond.

The Congress believed - and continues to believe - that the people of Jammu & Kashmir deserve a Government of their choice.

The Congress has, therefore, promised that Jammu and Kashmir can enjoy a large measure of autonomy within the framework of the Indian Constitution. Article 370 of the Constitution of India shall stand.

The Congress believes that elections - howsoever difficult - are the only way to break the gridlock in Jammu and Kashmir.

Elections have already been ordered for the Lok Sabha from J&K.

The Congress further pledges to hold elections to the State Legislature. The Congress pledges to restore democratic government in that State.

**Welfare of Minorities**

The Congress regards all Indian citizens as equal.

Yet we recognise Minorities of several kinds because we recognise the special disadvantage that they suffer and the special help that they need.

This is not appeasement. This is heeding the call of the Constitution of India.

Equal status to all people and protection of the Minorities are fundamental features of the Indian Constitution. They are also the fundamental features of any plural society.

The cornerstone of Secularism is the security of the Minorities. The cornerstone of a civil society is the security of all people. The Congress will leave no stone unturned to secure the life and liberty of all the people including the Minorities.

The Congress regards the 15-point Programme for the welfare of Minorities as a charter of duties. The programme will be reviewed from time to time, revised and updated.

For instance, a Rapid Action Force, consisting of young men of all communities, has been established. They are stationed at sensitive places. Although new, it has already shown its mettle and earned public confidence.

The Congress Government has established the National Minority Finance and Development Corporation with a capital of Rs. 500 crore. The Corporation will support projects and schemes that will promote the well-being of Minorities.

The Minorities Commission has been given statutory status.

The Congress Government has enacted the Protection of Places of Worship Act, 1991. The status of all places of worship as it existed on the day of Independence will be preserved. No one can now misuse any place of worship to divide Indian society.

After wide-ranging discussions and consultations with Muslim Members of Parliament, Members of Central Wakf Council and other leaders of the Muslim community, a comprehensive legislation to amend and consolidate the law relating to the administration of Wakfs has been enacted. The Wakf Act has come into force with effect from 1.1.1996.

The Maulana Azad Education Foundation has been set up as an independent entity with a Corpus Fund of Rs. 30 crore with a view to promoting education amongst educationally backward Minorities in particular and the weaker sections in general.

**Personal Law**

The Congress has made its position very clear on the question of Personal Law. The Congress believes that there should be no imposition by Government of any change in the Personal Law of any community or any section of people. Such changes, against the wishes of the community concerned, would neither be favourable nor acceptable, if attempted in the name of uniformity.

The SAARC nations took a; significant step forward and launched the SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) with effect from 7th December, 1995. They have resolved to usher in a Free Trade Area (SAFTA) by the year 2005 and preferably by the year 2000. India's pioneering role in promoting SAPTA and SAFTA has been recognised in the South Asian region and elsewhere in the world.

The Congress Government has taken every step to establish cordial and good relations with Pakistan. It proposed a series of confidence building measures that were, unfortunately, rejected by Pakistan. Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao has repeatedly said that India is ready to discuss bilateral issues with Pakistan without any preconditions and to resolve all outstanding differences peacefully.

# Janata Dal: Election Manifesto, 1996 (Extracts)

**Secularism**

Secularism , as part of our cultural ethos and basic values of our freedom struggle, has suffered grievously during the last decade owing to the rise of the forces of communalism and the collusion of the powers that be with them. We strongly caution against any weakening of secularism as it would tear apart the fabric of nation's unity and impede the nation's progress.

To extend the frontier's of social and cultural justice, progressive modulation of attitudes related to discrimination based on sex, caste and religion, some of which find sanctions in the scriptures and history books, is very necessary. Text books need to be screened to remove all such references. The need for a strong, vibrant and people based reform movement inspired by the teachings of our philosopher saints, sufis and social reformers to promote religious tolerance and intellectual dissent cannot be over emphasised.

**Social Justice**

... Janata Dal is of the considered view that reservation and such other affirmative benefits should be conferred on Dalit Christians, if necessary through constitutional amendment.

The reservation in favour of the OBCs should be extended to the judiciary. ...

The Janata Dal believes that, after the constitutional amendment adopted by Parliament in respect of reservation in promotions for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, it is only logical that the same provisions must be made for the Other Backward Classes. ...

While it is desirable to provide reservation to certain religious minorities without disturbing the reservation already given to the backward sections among them, its quantum should be determined by an independent commission.

The Janata Dal is opposed to the removal of the so-called creamy layer until the reserved quota is fully provided. ...

... Reservation policy will have to cover the private sector as well...

**Protection of Minorities Rights**

The National Front can claim legitimate pride in having curbed communal violence and provided security to the minorities (it is note worthy that communal clashes erupted mainly in Congress(I)-ruled States or in States ruled by the BJP and Congress-supported Janata Dal(S). Communal riots shall continue to be put down strongly by effective prohibition of incitement to communal passions, and by pursuing appropriate recruitment policies in the police services. A special anti-riot force shall be created so as to ensure totally impartial conduct from them. Full compensation will be provided to victims of communal and caste riots. Action will be taken against officers who fail to control riots.

Religious minorities will enjoy the fullest protection and opportunity to pursue their modes of worship, their religious beliefs and practices and develop their institutions, whether religious, cultural, educational or welfare-oriented. Complete non-interference will be observed.

Wakf properties shall be brought under Public Premises (Eviction) Act. Properties belonging to Wakf and other religious endowments shall be exempted from the Rent Control Act as a means to augment their income to fulfil their commitments.

The Minority Commission will be given statutory status. The Bihar Government has already conferred legal status on its Minorities Commission by an ordinance and a Bill is to be adopted soon.

By setting up Minorities Financial Corporations, assuring representation for minorities on various recruitment committees and boards, and giving encouragement for establishment of technical and polytechnic institutions by minorities, unemployment and economic backwardness among them shall be reduced. Concrete steps will be taken to ensure adequate employment opportunities and jobs for minorities.

Minority character of the institutions guaranteed by the Constitution shall be respected.

Certain recent actions and pronouncements of Shiv Sena-BJP State Government of Maharashtra must invite the strongest condemnation by the whole nation. Attempt to impose a common civil code on all communities without their willingness, changing of the names of cities and towns, closing down of the Urdu Academy, winding up of the Minority Commission and dissolution of Srikrishna Commission enquiring into the riots of 1993 are prejudicial to the vital interests of the nation and subversive of its unity and integrity. No less reprehensible is the harassment to which large number of Bengali-speaking people are being subjected in the name of illegal Bangladesh immigrants in various States. Janata Dal will ensure that these retrograde steps are reversed.

The Act adopted by Parliament in respect of religious shrines will be fully respected. All disputes relating to religious shrines including the Ayodhya dispute, will be referred to the Supreme Court to be settled by it under Article 138 (2).

**Language Policy**

... Gujral Committee's recommendations on the promotion of Urdu will be implemented. ...

**Smaller States**

Demands have been raised for several decades for the creation of smaller States in view of economic backwardness of certain regions within the respective States, aspirations for regional identity and large size of certain States, which causes difficulties to the people in

dealing with State level administration.

Janata Dal will appoint a Commission to go into these demands and make appropriate recommendations.

**Human Rights**

Janata Dal will assure all assistance to the National Human Rights Commission so that it continues to act independently, unencumbered by any problems.

State and district level Human Rights Commission will also be constituted.

In order to ensure that they act independently, the prosecuting counsels assisting them will be recruited by the National and State level commissions from among lawyers committed to human rights.

Human rights education will be given at school, college and University levels. It will include the message of human dignity and fraternity.

The Indian Penal Code will be revised to delete all reference which are not found to accord with human rights. In particular the misuse of x sections 107, 109 and 151 of the Penal Code will be stopped.

Special laws enacted to handle the extraordinary situations in several insurgency prone areas will be substantially reviewed to remove any possibility of their misuse.

UN conventions on torture and refugees will be ratifies.

**Jammu and Kashmir**

In Jammu and Kashmir State, the shortsighted policies of denying free and fair elections and dismissing elected State Governments shall be ended. Subversion and violence by militants shall be met with force. Open ended dialogues with all sections of public opinion on strengthening Article 370 and guaranteeing autonomy shall be held to find an acceptable solution within the Indian Union. Human rights' violations by security forces shall be strictly dealt with. Conditions of democratic civil society shall be created by holding electrons at all levels. Discussions with Pakistan will be held to resolve the dispute, keeping in view the sentiments of the people of the State.

... We will accord the high priority to improving relations with neighbours. These relations will be marked by active partnership in all areas of cooperation and continuing dialogue at all levels. Bilateral issues with the neighbours will not be allowed to fester and active effort will be made to resolve them. The current tensions in relations with Pakistan will not be allowed to come in the way of people to people contacts and of pursuing the long-term objective of fostering close and friendly relationship with Pakistan. In conducting our relations with our neighbours, we proceed on the assumption that India has a vested interest in the stability of its neighbouring countries.

We will take initiatives to revitalise SAARC particularly for moving quickly towards a free trade area in the region with adequate monetary and financial underpinnings.

## Ambedkar's on Secular State

"It (i.e. secular state) does not mean that we do not take into consideration the religious sentiments of the people. All that a secular state means is that this Parliament shall not be competent to impose any particular religion upon the rest of the people."

## Ambedkar's on Minorities

To Say that this country is divided by castes and creeds and that it cannot be an Integrated self-governing community, unless adequate safeguards for the protection of minorities are made as part of constitution, is a position which can not be denied. But minorities must be reminded that although we are today divided on the basis of sex and atomised by castes, our ideal is a united India. No demand from minority should, willingly or unwillingly, relinquish this ideal.

## V.P. Singh on Caste System

... Caste alone is not the solution. You have to have an ideological approach so that those who have not previously had a share should get one. Don't reduce it to caste but see it in a broader aspect. These are ideological aspects that social justice forces must appreciate. You cannot fight the BJP on caste alone because they will produce a Kalyan Singh. (Four) things have to be kept in mind. First, hatred is not the answer. Second, don't create new victims of caste. Third, clean up your house otherwise there will be disillusionment. And finally, you have to have ideological commitment.

**(Source: The Sunday, 26 May - 1 June, 1996)**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**(SYED SHAHABUDDIN)**
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# Anil Saxena's Analysis of BJP's Manifesto, 1996

The Bharatiya Janata Party which sought to broadbase its policies and programmes has, however, not risen above being a single-issue party with emphasis on Hindutva. The party has tried to project Hindutva plank as its USP (unique selling point). The undercurrent of Hindutva runs through the ... election manifesto...

The document contain the party's promises with regard to economy, administrative and judicial reforms, minorities, population policy, fiscal reforms and taxation, black money and corruption and foreign policy as already reported in this newspaper.

Barring its emphasis on Hindutva, a blanket decision to abrogate Article 370, disbanding of Minorities Commission, amendment of Article 30, which gives special status to minority institutions, and a total ban on cow slaughter, most other proposals and promises... are on the lines of the thinking of the present government. ...

Advani stated that under Mr. Vajpayee, whom the party was projecting as its prime ministerial nominee, the "BJP will effect the transition from swarajya to surajya with Hindutva or cultural nationalism being the rainbow which will bridge our present to our glorious past and pave the way for an equally glorious future."

The BJP will retain its cutting edge, Hindutva, which gives the party its distinct ideological character. The manifesto states this unequivocally. It says: The BJP is committed to the concept of one nation, one people, one culture, and asserts that its nationalist vision is defined by the nation's ancient cultural heritage. From this belief flows our faith in cultural nationalism which is the core of Hindutva. That, we believe, is the identity of our ancient nation-Bharatvarsha.

The party reiterates its commitment to facilitate the construction of a magnificent Ram temple at the disputed site in Ayodhya on coming to power as "this dream moves millions of people in our land, the concept of Ram lies at the core of their consciousness".

"Hindutva is a unifying principle which alone can preserve the unity of our nation. It is a collective endeavour to protect and re-energise the soul of India, to take us into the next millennium as a strong and prosperous nation. Hindutva is also the antidote to the shameful efforts of any section to benefit at the expense of others." The party holds the view that only by recognising the limitless strength of cultural nationalism, can the nation be moulded. The manifesto says: "When BJP joined the movement for the construction of Ram temple at Ayodhya, it was to strengthen just these foundations".

The BJP will impose total ban on the slaughter of cows and cow progeny by amending Article 48 of the Constitution; it will... provide tax exemption to the income of goshalas.

While for the Bangladeshi immigrants the party proposes to detect illegal immigrants, delete their names from voters' lists and arrange for their deportation without any further delay, for the Chakmas, who have fled the Chittagong hill tracts in Bangladesh in the face of persecution... the BJP is opposed to forced repatriation in the absence of foolproof security guarantees from the government of Bangladesh. It also proposes to provide citizenship to those Chakmas who do not want to return to Bangladesh and whose children were born in India.

The party will disband the Minorities Commission, which has only succeeded in feeding separatist sentiments and giving rise to imagined grievances, and entrust its responsibilities to the National Human Rights Commission.

It will abrogate Article 370 of the Constitution and adopt a Uniform Civil Code which will be applicable to every community. ....

**(Source: The Times of India, 8 April, 1996)**

## BJP: List of Candidates
## The Time of India, 29 March, 1996

The list of candidates released by the BJP suggests that the party is walking the tightrope between being firm with the VHP, which has made the acceptance of its recently-declared Hindu agenda a pre-condition for support, and not altogether displeasing it.

On the one hand, it has denied tickets to sitting VHP MPs from Varanasi and Mathura, which is considered significant both in the context of the organisation's Hindu agenda and its campaign for the liberation (sic) of the Kashi and Mathura shrines. On the other hand, it has gone as far as deciding to field the wife of TADA detenu Birj Bhushan Saran Singh from Gonda only so as to appease the VHP... It was the threat of a revolt from the VHP which is said to have clinched the issue in his favour.

The BJP's objective in allotting Mathura and Varanasi to non-VHP candidates was obviously to tell the world that the two shrines were not on its immediate agenda. While that had to be done, if only to convey that it was serious about coming to power, it is anybody's guess how the votaries of Hindu nationalism will react to the kid-glove treatment given to someone who has been held under TADA for harbouring Dawood Ibrahim's henchmen. (Since it) won the Maharashtra election by making Ibrahim a symbol of anti-nationalism...

## An Analysis of RSS Election Literature, 1996

The RSS and its wings have come out openly in the elections issuing, for the first time, handbills and pamphlets seeking support for "Hindutva".

The RSS is billing the coming elections for the Lok Sabha and some assemblies as a "tough test" for the ongoing "awakening" in the Hindu community.

This line has been taken in some handbills and pamphlets issued recently by the RSS for both restricted readership - for the swayamsevaks, its members - and for general circulation. The general circulation handbill runs into four pages and is in Hindi - "Deshbhakt janata ke naam namra nivedan" (An appeal to patriots).

It has been issued jointly by RSS sarsanghchalak (chief) Rajendra Singh 'Rajju Bhaiyya', VHP president Vishnu Hari Dalmia and two others of the RSS women's and tribal-welfare wings.

The one for restricted circulation has come from sangh sarkaryavaha (general secretary) H.V. Seshadri. it is also in Hindi and is addressed to "Priya swayamsevak bandhu" (Dear swayamsevak colleague).

This pamphlet is read out once every morning at the nearly 12,000 morning shakhas (meeting of the local units of the sangh) and 8,000 evening shakhas here. "To remind everyone of the contents of the appeal", said sources.

When the swayamsevaks disperse after the shakhas, each one is given a set of the pamphlet containing a general appeal by Rajju Bhaiyya for distribution in the neighbourhood.

An RSS activist said, "This was the first time the sangh is distributing pamphlets and handbills". Earlier, he added, messages from the brass were conveyed down the line orally.

Another first, the sources said, was the involvement of the local RSS leadership in actual campaigning. "Earlier, only the ranks were left to do the campaigning and other election work."

Now, the local leadership shikshak, who heads the sangh's basic unit, karyawahaks, prant pracharaks (district heads) and sanghchalaks - are also out in the field.

A large number of them are believed to be operating in the Outer Delhi constituency for the BJP candidate Krishan Lal Sharma, who was once a sangh pracharak (a sort of a missionary).

A third set of handbills going around is four-page long and is issued by Hindu Manch, a wing of the sangh. On the first page, it urges people to "Arise and awaken to defeat India's destructive forces".

On the last page, the manch has given an election slogan in Hindi - "Won't let caste divide us/all Hindus will remain as one/whoever thinks well of the Hindu/he or she deserves the vote."

The four-page general appeal by Rajju Bhaiyya and Mr. Dalmia said, "The coming elections will be a test of the extent to which countrymen have awakened and how conscious they are of Hindutva."

Mr. Seshadri's appeal takes the same line - "Fortunately for the country Hindus are awakening... The coming elections are going to be a hard test for this awakening."

The pitch in general is "protect the country from anti-Hindu forces". In the appeal to swayamsevaks, they have been asked to use the lessons picked up from the sangh to "free the country's polity from anti-Hindu forces".

The handbills warn of the threats to country - from "foreigner" churches, fast-multiplying Muslims, multi-nationals, corruption and degradation of women in cinema, television and advertisements.

One pamphlet said, "This worrisome situation is the result of cutting India's polity from pure Hindu nationality." It goes on to say Indians are burdened with "anti-Hindu political leadership"


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# Yogendra Yadav's Exit Poll Analysis, 1996

The eleventh Lok Sabha Elections saw the eclipse of the National Constituency syndrome which had emerged in the past two decades. Gone are the days when the entire country was like a single constituency which spoke in one, or at the most two, voices to generate the nationwide electoral waves of the '70s and '80s. The reconfiguration of Indian politics in the last decade has shifted the effective arena of electoral confrontation to the states. For an overwhelming majority of underprivileged voters, the Lok Sabha elections have become no more than countrywide state-level elections.

What looks like an unclear verdict at the national level is an artificial summation of fairly clear verdicts at the state level... It may take more than a single general election for this transition to be completed.

**BJP:**

... The BJP had added 40 seats to its kitty without having increased its vote share last time. It has emerged as the single largest party this time although its all-India vote share is 8% lower than its nearest rival, the Congress(I). What accounts for this?

In part, the party garnered more than 23% share of the popular vote, a swing of 2.7% from 1991. In multi-cornered contests, these deftly worked out alliances enabled the BJP to convert its own old votes into seats.

But the main explanation lies in the fact that BJP's entire support is concentrated in a belt which now extends from Bihar to Karnataka (north and central Bihar and Haryana were added to it this time). So its average national vote share of 20% is deceptive. In the belt, the BJP and its allies have an average vote share of 36%, compared to 23% of the Congress(I). And what is more, the BJP and allies have added 5% votes to their share in this belt since 1991. That is what enables the party to get more seats here than the Congress(I).

In the non-BJP coastal belt, it lost about 2% votes this time. The loss was of no consequence in terms of seats. But it may prove crucial to the BJP's long-term expansion plans. ...

**Congress(I):**

What distinguished the Congress(I) from all the other political formations was its famous rainbow coalition of social communities. It has always enjoyed the same level of support across various sections of society. The exit poll data shows that the Cong(I)'s worst-ever electoral drubbing has not altered this basic character of the party. Barring tribal and Christian voters, the support for the Cong(I) still falls within a 10% band (plus or minus 5%) around its average vote...

The BJP's support base is much narrower - both in regional as well as social terms. Its vote share among marginalised groups like the unlettered. Dalits, tribals and, above all, Muslims is significantly lower than its own average. Whatever its share of seats in Parliament, the BJP has a long way to go before it can claim that the people of India have given a verdict in its favour.

**Vote Share by Religion**

**If one needed evidence to prove that December 6, 1992, was a turning point in the political orientation of the Indian Muslims, it is here. At the all-India level, the Congress(I) managed to get a seemingly decent share of 28% of the Muslim votes. But it is 18% less than even its 1991 share.**

**Besides, much of it came from states where the Muslims did not have an effective non-Congress(I) option. In Maharashtra 66 per cent, and in Rajasthan 86 per cent, of the Muslims voted for the Congress(I). Wherever they had an option, they went for it.**

### State-wise Break-up of Muslim Vote (%)

| State | Cong(I) | TDP (N) | L.F. | JD | JD+ Allies | JD+SP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A.P. | 35 | 52 | — | — | — | — |
| W. Bengal | 35 | — | 63 | — | — | — |
| Karnataka | 22 | — | — | 65 | — | — |
| Bihar | 27 | — | — | — | 59 | — |
| U.P. | 5 | — | — | — | — | 83 |

The NF-LF now has a greater share of Muslim votes than the Cong(I). The consolidation of Muslim votes achieved by the SP-JD combine in UP is of a level unknown in the history of Indian elections. With the Sikhs also voting against the Cong(I). Christians are now the only minority community whose confidence the Cong(I) enjoys.

### All India Average (%)

| Religion | Cong(I) | BJP | NF-LF | BSP | State parties | Others |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hindu | 29 | 27 | 18 | 4 | 14 | 8 |
| Muslim | 28 | 3 | 48 | 2 | 10 | 9 |
| Christian | 46 | 3 | 12 | 1 | 23 | 15 |
| Sikh | 29 | 10 | 7 | 8 | 36 | 10 |

### Vote Share by Education

| Education Level | Cong(I) | BJP | NF-LF | BSP | State | Others |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Unlettered | 32 | 17 | 24 | 6 | 13 | 7 |
| Middle | 29 | 22 | 21 | 4 | 16 | 8 |
| H/School | 27 | 30 | 18 | 2 | 13 | 10 |
| Graduate | 25 | 36 | 16 | 3 | 10 | 10 |

### Vote Share by Caste

| Caste | Cong(I) | BJP | NF-LF | BSP | State | Others |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Forward | 29 | 33 | 17 | 1 | 10 | 10 |
| OBC | 25 | 23 | 25 | 2 | 18 | 7 |
| SC | 31 | 11 | 21 | 16 | 14 | 7 |
| ST | 47 | 17 | 15 | 2 | 7 | 12 |

There is a neat relationship between the level of education and the voting pattern. For the Congress(I), NF-LF and the BSP, the lower the level of education, the higher the vote share. This correlation is the strongest in the case of the JD-SP combine. It is the other way round for the BJP. Its vote share is rather low among the unlettered and exceptionally high among graduates. The tilt of the educated classes towards the BJP gives it an edge in opinion formation.

If the level of education is interpreted as a sign of social privileges, greater vote share among the highly educated does not look like a sign of political strength. The BJP still has to win the confidence of the socially underprivileged, whose vote tends to be more stable than the rest.

If all the three divides - caste, religion and level of education - are brought together, we get to see the section of society which was the strongest supporter of the BJP. **In this small group of forward caste and highly educated Hindus, the BJP and its allies secured 52 per cent of votes.**

**Conclusion:**

The CSDS exit poll reveals that behind this dramatic electoral verdict is a slow but decisive movement in the social basis of Indian politics. The rainbow of social communities brought together by the Congress(I) in the era of one-party dominance has not disappeared from the political horizon, but its slices are beginning to fall apart.

**(Source: The India Today, 31 May, 1996)**

## Percentage of Votes

| Party | 1991 | 1996 | All India Swing |
|---|---|---|---|
| Congress(I) | 36.5 | 28.1 | -8.4 |
| BJP | 20.8 | 23.5 | +2.7 |
| NF-LF | 24.9 | 20.2 | -4.7 |

## BJP's Vote Percentage

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| All India | 20.8 | 23.5 |
| BJP Belt | 30.7 | 36.0 |
| Non-BJP Belt | 8.5 | 6.8 |

## Lok Sabha: BJS/BJP - 1952-1996

| Bharatiya Jana Sangh | | Bharatiya Janata Party | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1952 | 3(94) | 1984 | 2(229) |
| 1957 | 4(130) | 1989 | 86(226) |
| 1962 | 14(196) | 1991 | 120(468) |
| 1967 | 35(251) | 1996 | 160(461) |
| 1971 | 22(160) | | |

(Figure in bracket shows No. of candidates)

## Congress(I): Resolution On 11th Lok Sabha Election Results

... Despite the unclear nature of verdict the rejection of communal ideology by the Indian people is unambiguous. The people's verdict is clearly for secular polity. The parties which are committed to secular democracy have received eighty percent of the votes despite differences between such parties. The formation of a BJP government will be a threat to the secular foundations of the Indian Republic. The country needs a stable and viable government committed to the foundational principles of the Indian Constitution. The Congress Party, therefore, has decided to take positive steps in support of the process of the formation of a government by political parties which are totally committed to secular democracy, communal harmony, welfare of the socially and economically weaker sections and minorities and rapid growth of our economy as well as to the values enshrined in our Constitution.

## Sachidananda Murthy On Electoral Verdict, 1996

... Another trend is the development of narrower vote banks which resort more and more to tactical voting, both in a negative and in a positive fashion. Thus the BJP and the Congress found themselves in the same boat as far as Muslims were concerned. If Muslims in Maharashtra went with the third front, in Karnataka and Bihar they went with the Janata Dal, in U.P. with the SP and the BSP, and in A.P. with the T.D. 3 years have gone by, but the Ayodhya demolition still rankled in their hearts.

In several states new parties came up representing the specific vote banks and they witnessed a vote surge even though they stood little chance of victory. Over one-third of the country's voters did not vote for the three major formations - the Congress, BJP or NF-LF combine - but preferred parties meant for specific vote banks or regional outfits. The growth of the Akali Dal representing Sikhs, the BSP for Dalits and the Samata Party in Bihar for Kurmis meant that national parties have to respect the aspirations of these groups if they have to forge successful social coalitions. Their old social coalitions have collapsed or have become enfeebled. ...

**(Source: The Week, 19 May, 1996)**

## Lok Sabha: Muslim Representation 1952-1996

| Year | MPs | Year | MPs |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1952 | 22 | 1980 | 46 |
| 1958 | 26 | 1985 | 41 |
| 1962 | 23 | 1989 | 33 |
| 1967 | 30 | 1991 | 28 |
| 1971 | 30 | 1996 | 23 |
| 1977 | 32 | | |

## Lok Sabha 1996: Party-wise and State-wise Results

| Party | Total | A.P. | Assam | Bihar | Delhi | Guja-rat | Har-yana | Karna-taka | Kerala | M.P. | Maha-rash-tra | Orissa | Pun-jab | Raj-ast-than | T.N. | U.P. | West Ben-gal | J&K | Others |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BJP | 161 | NIL | 1 | 18 | 5 | 16 | 4 | 6 | NIL | 27 | 18 | NIL | NIL | 12 | NIL | 52 | NIL | 1 | 1 |
| Cong(I) | 140 | 22 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 10 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 15 | 16 | 2 | 12 | NIL | 5 | 9 | 4 | 14 |
| JD | 44 | NIL | NIL | 21 | NIL | NIL | NIL | 16 | 1 | NIL | NIL | 4 | NIL | NIL | NIL | 2 | NIL | 1 | NIL |
| CPM | 33 | 1 | 1 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | 5 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | 23 | NIL | 3 |
| TMC | 20 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | 20 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL |
| DMK | 17 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | 17 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL |
| SP | 17 | NIL | NIL | 1 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | 16 | NIL | NIL | NIL |
| TDP(N) | 16 | 16 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL |
| SS | 15 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | 15 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL |
| CPI | 13 | 2 | NIL | 3 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | 2 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | 2 | NIL | 3 | NIL | 1 |
| BSP | 11 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | 2 | NIL | NIL | 3 | NIL | NIL | 6 | NIL | NIL | NIL |
| A. Dal | 8 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | 8 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL |
| Samata | 8 | NIL | NIL | 6 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | 1 | NIL | NIL | NIL | 1 | NIL | NIL | NIL |
| RSP | 5 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | 1 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | 4 | NIL | NIL |
| AGP | 5 | NIL | 5 | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL | NIL |
| Ind./ Others | 25 | 1 | 2 | 1 | NIL | NIL | 4 | 1 | 4 | 3 | NIL | NIL | NIL | 1 | NIL | 3 | 3 | NIL | 2 |
| **TOTAL** | **538** | **42** | **14** | **52** | **7** | **26** | **10** | **27** | **20** | **40** | **48** | **21** | **13** | **25** | **39** | **85** | **42** | **6** | **21** |

# Ajit Kumar Jha on the Myth of the Hindutva Mandate

... The BJP was not the best team but the most prepared for the match. Emerging as the single largest party with about one-fifth of the total votes polled... The BJP has formed a government in New Delhi. But does it enjoy the mandate to rule, notwithstanding Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee's popularity and the frantic efforts to muster a majority in Parliament?

Consider the following: The BJP's seat tally has gone up from 119 in 1991 to 160 in 1996, but, as unpublished official figures show, its vote performance has stayed stagnant at 20 per cent. Therefore, the gain of nearly 40 seats is neither a result of a positive swing for the party, nor the effect of any popular wave for the Hindutva brigade. Its number one status stems purely from political arithmetic of votes: the BJP did not win as much as its main rival, the Congress, lost the polls.

**Lowest Record**

The Congress has, indeed, been decimated in this elections with a lowest ever record of votes and seats. With a nine per cent swing against it, the Congress has won only 136 seats. However, its all-time low of 28 per cent vote is still much higher than the BJP's best of 20 per cent...

In fact, the BJP could not even convert the negative swing for the Congress into 'catches'. What stumped the Congress was good fielding by the regional formations and the Third Force. The NF-LF by itself polled 20 per cent while the regional parties, excluding the BJP allies, managed an additional 25 per cent - a total then of close to 45 per cent for the Third Force. Surely the 1996 mandate was for the federal forces.

The paradox of a team with merely a fifth of the total vote performing better than others with well over a quarter of votes is often blamed on the unfairness of the first-past-the-post electoral system. The BJP sympathisers argue that the Congress was until now the main beneficiary of this system in the country, that the Janata Dal and the CPM emerged as winners in Bihar and West Bengal essentially with a minority vote, and that there are several such instances in the other states. Therefore, they ask, how could, in principle, anyone castigate the electoral system when the Hindutva brigade benefits from it?

Fair enough. But other political parties only emerged as winners after crossing a minimum threshold. The Congress, for instance, only formed governments with votes ranging from 37 to 49 per cent. Whenever it reached closer to one-third mark, it sat in the opposition, as in 1977 and in 1989. For the BJP to claim a mandate with only one-fifth is like coveting a prize without really sweating for it.

**BJP lacks Mandate**

The BJP lacks not only the popular mandate but the required social mandate as well. Preliminary analysis of available exit poll data indicates that it received only three per cent of the Muslim votes, an equally low percentage of Christian votes and just 11 per cent of the Dalit votes of the country. With such a narrow social base, a BJP-led government sends a wrong signal to the minorities despite its "uncle Sikandar Bakhts". Although

broad social acceptability amongst all sections of society is not a constitutional requirement to run a government, the lack of it certainly defeats the very purpose of a multi-cultural, multi-religious, multi-lingual India.

The Congress and the NF-LF combine stand in stark contrast to the Sangh Parivar in this respect. The Congress's social dominance for nearly half a century is explained by its widespread support across communities. Even after losing a major chunk of its minority vote, the Congress has the backing of all communities, the fluctuations being within two to 3% of its national aver of 28%. In fact, its support base among Christians and tribals is substantially high hovering just below 50%. Similarly the NF-LF receives a fair share of all the minority votes, but is especially popular with the Muslims, receiving 48% of their support.

Similar to its narrow social support base is the limited geographical spread of the BJP. Although the Suraaj Rath yatra of the BJP President, L.K. Advani, originated from Ernakulam in Kerala, the BJP continues to essentially remain a north-western phenomenon. Its average support in the south continues to be below five per cent. This explains why the prime-ministerial candidature, of the CM of Karnataka, Mr. Deve Gowda, galvanised the southern regional formations even while sending jitters in the Hindutva camp. The fear amongst the southern leaders of a Hindi-Hindu invasion from the basically northern Sangh Parivar, might prove to be the Achilles' heel for the BJP...

Even in its Hindi heartland stronghold, the BJP seems to have reached its limit in terms of mobilisation. In U.P., for instance, the BJP did not improve upon its last record of one-third votes and, therefore, despite the division of non-BJP votes it only maintained its previous tally of 52 seats. In fact, the Samajwadi Party is reported to have received 22% of the votes and the BSP, contrary to all predictions, polled 20% of the votes in the state...

An isolated player aiming o come to power on its own, the BJP had approached these elections with a Chanakya like Rana niti (strategy of war) to quote RSS strongman Kailash Sarang. "In UP, in Atalji's words, we used a thorn to pull out a thorn," explained Mr. Sarang. It was the same strategy of breaking marriage alliances of the opponents by seducing one of the partners, which contributed to its fresh incursions in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and even Maharashtra.

**Division of Votes**

In other words, the puritanical Sangh Parivar was not averse to philandering as a means to a larger end. In Bihar, its romance with the Samata Party yielded a rich harvest with 18 seats for the BJP and six for their allies, a record four-fold increase. The BJP swept southern Bihar and penetrated the state's central and northern areas for the first time in its history. In MP it widened the divide between the Rao Congress and the rebels by flirting with Madhav Rao Scindia. As a result the BJP gained from 12 to 27 seats. In Maharashtra its job was made easier by the division of secular votes between the Congress and the Third Force including the eight factions of the RPI.

Will the BJP remain a ... loner or will it succeed in consummating its various alliances?

## S. Balakrishnan and Milind Kokje On Third Force Experiment in Maharashtra

The Shiv Sena-Bharatiya Janata Party alliance has humbled the Congress in 19 of Maharashtra's 48 constituencies because of a division in the anti-Hindutva vote... the alliance has scored an absolute victory in only 14 constituencies.

The alliance is reported to have polled only 2% more than the Congress which has won 35% of the votes.

The third force, which broadly represents dalits, Muslims and scheduled tribes, got 24 per cent of the votes. In past Lok Sabha elections, the Congress was able to win the support of the dalits, Muslims and scheduled tribes. But over the years, these sections have been alienated.

Political observers feel that while the Congress has largely retained the support of the Marathas, the Sena-BJP has secured a strong base among the other backward castes (OBCs) and non-Maratha upper castes who roughly comprise about 35 per cent of the population.

The shift of the dalits, Muslims and scheduled tribes away from the Congress appears to have titled the scales against the party. Last year, all factions of the Republican Party of India came together and formed the Purogami Lokshahi Morcha (PLM) along with the Janata Dal, the Bahujan Mahasangh and the left parties.

Despite the fact that the PLM was able to work out seat adjustments only on the eve of the polls, it was able to secure an impressive 24% of the votes. This, however, has not been translated into a single victory since its support was spread over virtually all 48 constituencies.

The division in votes has worked to the advantage of the alliance in as many as 20 constituencies. Congress leader Sharad Pawar had said on Thursday that the PLM, which is broadly referred to as the third force, "paved the way for the alliance's victory". ... C.M. Manohar Joshi, however, disagreed with Mr. Pawar's view. "Our votes are our votes and they have come to us", he said. When asked what would have happened if the Congress and the third front had come together, he replied: "Even in that situation, our votes would have increased and the final outcome would have remained the same." ...

**(Source: The Times of India, 11 May, 1996)**

## Uttar Pradesh: BJP - Support by High Castes and some OBC's

... Till Charan Singh left the Congress to form the Bharatiya Kranti Dal, Brahmins dominated. Singh cast up an Ahir-Jat-Gujjar-Rajput coalition. Sanjay Gandhi, propping up such Rajputs as V.P. Singh, took away the Rajputs from Charan Singh. And with Charan Singh's death, assorted Ahirs, like the Yadavs, Kurmis and so on broke away from Jat hegemony. This forms the backdrop to the rise of Mulayam Singh Yadav.

"But the Yadavs could not retain their hegemony," says Anand Kumar, a sociologist of the Jawaharlal Nehru University, "because they would not share real power with the other backward castes." This happened both during Mulayam Singh's first spell beginning December 1989 and in his second stint four years on.

In this election ... Mulayam Singh's Samajwadi Party won 16 seats and Kanshi Ram's Bahujan Samaj Party got 6 seats fighting as rivals. While the BJP won the bulk of the remaining - 52 seats in the final tally.

**Even so, in as many as 46 seats, the SP and the BSP finished either second or third. The Congress, in all these places, came fourth or fifth in the race...**

Most concede that Mayawati bullied Mulayam and that Kanshi Ram made too many financial demands. "But Mulayam Singh also tried to break the BSP by engineering elections," said Rajni Kothari, eminent social scientist, "and this gave the BSP an opportunity to tell the Dalits that he couldn't be trusted." Besides this, Mulayam Singh also promoted Yadav interests over and above that of other backward groups. This would seem suicidal...

Kalyan Singh, the BJP chief minister from June 1991 to December, 1992, is a Lodh, a backward caste. And Vinay Katiyar, the chief of the Bajrang Dal is a Kurmi, Kurmis are found in large numbers in UP. Mulayam Singh's strength, nevertheless, is derived from the Muslims who have been voting en bloc for him since his first term as chief minister, during which he had ordered firing on kar sevaks who tried to storm the Babari Masjid. But since then, Muslim voting for him has been forced...

**The BJP's base... is more evenly spread. Its vote share, rising from 7.6% in the 1989 general elections to 32.8% in 1991 is now 33.43%, and this is not restricted to any particular region of the state.**

And support for the BJP is not restricted to the Brahmins and the Rajputs (who deserted the Congress, after seeing that it couldn't give them power) or the richer and religious Ram-bhakt Kurmis (who formed a large section of the Babari Masjid demolition squad) or even the Lodhs.

In this election, such castes as Binds, Kushawahas and some Nishads voted for the BJP. A small section of Yadavs too backed it....Certainly, the Congress can do little about this just now. Its vote share dropped from 31.8% in 1989 to 18.3% in 1991 and has now touched an all-time low at 8.14%.

**(Source: The Sunday, 2-8 June, 1996)**

## Bihar: JD's Loss Due to Excessive Yadavisation

... The Janata Dal managed 22 seats while its splinter group, the Samata Party, led by Nitish Kumar, wrested six constituencies and the BJP, Samata's ally, won an astonishing 18 seats. (1991 tally: JD 34, CPI 8, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha(S) 6, BJP 5 and Congress 1).

How did this happen?

One person is that Laloo's backward caste vote-bank broke down. There have been fissures in it since he became chief minister in 1990 mainly with Yadav support (12 per cent of the population). While the Kurmis (3.6 per cent) and Koeris (4.1. per cent) have been gradually alienated from him because of extensive Yadavisation.

Excessive Yadavisation is not the only reason for Kurmi or Koeri alienation. The Kurmis, in particular, have been repulsed by Laloo Yadav's disdain for development and the lawlessness in the state in which prosperous doctors, engineers and lawyers are becoming the targets of kidnappers.

Besides, backward politics no more suits them. Like Bhumihars and Rajputs, they have come into huge new money from investments in such para-banks as Sahara and Peerless which give handsome ... returns. So, in the fight against Laloo, Nitish Kumar's Kurmi brethren felt it made better economic and political sense to be with the forward castes. The Koeris naturally went with the Kurmis.

Did the Dalits also vote for the BJP-Samata combine? Not of their own, reckons Rajni Kothari. He thinks such upper caste private senas as the Rashtravadi Kisan Mahasangh (new name for the private army of Bhumihars), the Bhumi Sena of the Kurmis, the Sunlight Sena of the Palamu landlords and the Kunwar Sena of the Rajputs - all banned - coerced the Dalits into voting for the BJP-Samata combine.

... Says Nitish Kumar... in the Assembly elections, he got 27.78 per cent of the votes and now he has got 32.5 per cent votes. So his voters have not decreased in number." Still, the Yadav-Kurmi/Koeri fracture is complete.

And Laloo, who has steadily been losing the tribal votes, has seen the BJP picking them up more and more. Much of the work among the tribals has been done quietly by the Sangh parivar affiliate, the Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram. And the BJP is reaping the benefits of it.

So, then Laloo Prasad Yadav is left with the Yadavs, the Dalits and then the Muslims. This is still considerable support. But the Muslims are turned off by him because like Mulayam Singh Yadav, he can offer them little apart from the security of their lives. Even this they are a little uncertain about since his failure to punish Hindu officers connected with the Bhagalpur riots in which a large number of Muslims were killed. But, as in UP, they have no one else to go to.

**(Souce: The Sunday, 2-6 June, 1996)**

# Saiyid Hamid on Electoral Choice

... Although the atmosphere is nauseatingly polluted, the 1996 elections may well constitute a turning point. The voter should resolve to reduce disparities and put an end to exploitation. For this purpose a radical polarisation between haves and have-nots should be brought about. All the deprived, disadvantaged and exploited sections of society such as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and Muslims, who are the educationally most backward and least assisted minority should come together. United they can fight the exploiters; divided they would fall. It is not an ephemeral or ambiguous alliance that they should piece together. It is a unity based on common interests and hinging on a programme of all-round development that they should forge... That should be our thrust for the 21st century. And imagine the spread effect of the benefit: eighty-five per cent of our population will benefit by this alignment which, given our circumstances, is the only natural course for us to follow. The divisive role of money and influence will of course operate against this natural trend; it will taper off during the next three general elections.

The other axis of polarisation will be secularism vs fanaticism; reason vs prejudice; enlightenment vs superstition; diversity vs regimentation. All the cobwebs of sophistry that the proponents of Hindutva have spun would be swept away. A multi-religious, multi-racial and multi-lingual country has necessarily to be proud of its infinite diversity. Hindutva in the context of our multi-faceted country stands for 'might is right'. We ought to reverse the adage and say that might will flow from what is right. Secularism, tolerance, mutual respect are inescapable attributes of a democratic country known for its diversity. The BJP, so deft as specious reasoning, attaches only semantic significance to matters involving freedom and well-being of a billion people. It seems to suggest that "substitute Hindu culture for Hindu religion and the objection against the imposition of Hinduism on non-believers would vanish". Whom are they out to deceive?

The electorate in general and the Muslim voter in particular should announce and insist that members returned by it should be clear about and supportive of Muslim demands for education, health facilities and employment. The first two would require the country to be mapped indicating educational facilities, existing and proposed. These should include facilities for other deprived sections.

With regard to employment, the results of efforts made throughout the country for coaching Muslim candidates for Civil Services have not been encouraging. There is no alternative but to press for reservation for a limited period. The demand unfortunately did not get the support of Muslim public opinion that would have persuaded the political parties to include it in their election manifestoes. How tragic? We could not put up a united front in respect of an issue on which no difference should have arisen. It should in fact be among the national priorities.

The two major parties are the Congress and the BJP. The latter represents militantly aggressive Hindu nationalism. Institutions denoting Muslim identity are on its hit list. BJP is blunt and bellicose, Congress is deceitful and insidiously suave. It has at the decision-making level an anti-Muslim hard-core. From the very outset it has been making promises to Muslims which it never had the intention of fulfilling. During its tenure at the Centre and in the States Muslims underwent a steep decline. It could not even provide them security nor punish those who perpetrated atrocities.

We are thus left with the third group comprising the National Front and the progressive parties. They are secular and sympathetic, at least theoretically, towards Muslims and other weaker sections of society. It is they who can be depended upon for rolling back the fascist forces, not the Congress that does not know its mind and that continues changing colour like a chameleon.

It also follows that Muslims should go all out in support of the Third Front and should not allow any considerations of creed to deflect them from the purpose....

However, apart from the present election the gradual decline of Muslim membership of the Lok Sabha warrants a review indue course of the relevant problems of the Constitution. Mr. Asaf Ali's suggestion that the best device for securing proper minority representation would be to have earmarked constituencies for Muslims under the joint electorate system.

Lastly, the electorate should quickly build up public opinion that can effectively discourage proliferation of Muslim candidates. Unless this dangerous trend is terminated concentration of Muslim population in a large number of constituencies would become meaningless.

**(Source: The Nation and the World)**

**HINDU CHAUVINISM**

**An Order to King of Saudi Arabia**
**By a Hindutva Fanatic**
**Through Syed Shahabuddin**

King of Saudi Arabia,

I ORDER you to open Shiva Temple of Mecca otherwise I ask to Christian Governments of America, Russia, England etc. to drop ATOM BOMB on you.

John Putherford

## Mujahidul Islam Qasmi on Muslim Issues

For half a century Muslims have been trying to answer questions like "when did you stop beating your wife?" The questions have always been asked by one kind of people - the pathologically anti-Muslim set.

Answering loaded questions, any answer to which surely puts them in the dock, has depleted the Muslims' energies. Allegations, charges, in fact, chargesheets, against Muslims have been a dominant motif in the yellow strand of our polity.

"For you, which comes first, the nation or Islam?" had been a favourite with the Muslim-baiters till December 6, 1992. Now they are embarrassed because this section of our population, including mediamen, policemen, politicos and Hindutva's footsoldiers proved beyond doubt that when it comes to choosing between their idea of Hinduism and India, they would choose Hinduism without a thought to India. So, the question died an unnatural death on December 6, 1992. ...

Then came the ISI, Pakistan's ... military intelligence outfit that seemed to control India with the help of Indian Muslims. That's why Rao government put nearly 70,000 people behind the bars lest they indulge in ISI-masterminded subversion.

Now it turns out that it is not the Muslims who had been getting ISI funds but super-patriots... It also turns out that it is not Muslim leaders who have ben hand in glove with the Dubai-based mafiosi Dawood Ibrahim but respectable Congressmen like former Union minister Kalpnath Rai and Brij Bhushan, BJP Member of Parliament. So, there is a lull in the media about ISI and their supposed agents in India - the Muslims. After all, there is a point to which you can carry such things. ...

We have also been castigated for mistreating our women... There is a lull on that front as well possibly because people who gather data on such heinous crimes as the burning of young women in their thousands for dowry, girl infanticide, sati and female foeticide know well who is killing all those females (13 million female foetus per year according to UNESCO as mentioned in N&W) and who is killing for dowry... People asking us loaded questions should also do some self-introspection...

... We have decided not only to refuse to discuss agenda set by Muslim-baiters and Islam-haters, we have... our own agenda...

**(Source: The Nation and the World)**

## Ausaf Saied Vasfi on Muslim Aspirations

... Muslims do not ask for the moon. They just want the rule of law, equality before law... and fair treatment at all levels... The only Muslim ambition is to live a normal Muslim life in plural India. For that they need a peaceful, congenial ambience, free from periodic chastisements, threats and discrimination.

The Muslim vote is only for those noble souls - regardless of their religious nomenclatures - who, believing in the plurality of India, care for the religious, linguistic and cultural minorities of our heterogeneous polity. Those who have the guts and capacity to rise above petty pulls of sectarianism. Those known for their probity, integrity and honesty. The thugs, the bigots, the double-dealers deserve to be discarded lock, stock and barrel.

It is in the interest of all the secularists that the secular vote is not divided - to the advantage of the communal and fascist parties and the Narasimha Rao - lead Congress. The dummy candidates, if any, ought to be rejected outrightly.

Muslims may aspire for justice political, ... empowerment right now and ... adequate representation in the Lok Sabha or the state assemblies. They want however honest, forthright and responsible representatives. There are nearly 80 to 100 Lok Sabha seats where Muslims can influence the outcome conceding that they constitute only 12.12% as officially declared, their proportionate share could be around 65. From a high of 48 to a low of 20, the actual Muslim presence has varied. This injustice has got to be done away with.

**(Source: The Radiance Viewsweekly, 31 March - 6 April, 1996)**

## Late Dr. Rasheeduddin Khan's Last Letter to Shahabuddin

... I am delighted that you are standing again for the membership of the Parliament, where you have been articulate on issues of national importance and of inter-communal harmony for building a just secular and democratic India. One may not entirely agree with all your formulations and suggestions but there is no doubt that you speak with the sincerity of your heart and the clarity of your understanding about complexity of Indian polity and politics. Further no one with an open mind would have any reservation on your active and dedicated work as a member of Parliament. In appreciation of your work and as a token of my long standing friendship, I have great pleasure in enclosing a small contribution towards your election campaign.

# UNI Analysis on Minorities Votes

**Overview**

Muslim voters in the 78-odd constituencies where the community has its sizeable presence seem to have by and large voted against the congress in the recent Lok Sabha elections.

The Muslim voters supported variety of candidates in BJP strongholds. A number of candidates were in neck-and-neck fight with the BJP candidates in the 50 constituencies studied.

But wherever there was a strong alternative candidate for congress they simply voted the Congress out of the contest. The Congress had to face hefty negative swings in those states, where there was some alternative present.

The voting pattern of the minorities have adversely affected the Congress party's performance in Kerala, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu.

In the process of defeating the BJP candidates, the Muslims voted for Congress in 12 of the 50 Muslim dominated constituencies of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh.

Out of the 28 Parliamentary constituencies where the minority voters have a dominating presence in the electorate of West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Lakshadweep, the Congress could manage to win only five seats.

**EAST INDIA**

**In East Zone comprising** Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal, the Left parties and the JD were the front runner in the parliamentary constituencies where the Muslim presence is above 20 per cent. The Left Front polled 37.5 per cent votes in such constituencies while the Congress does not seem to have lost ground in these constituencies where the Muslim voters account for about one fifth of the electorate. The party was left behind the front only by a margin of over two per cent.

In the last decade the Congress faced the negative swing of 6.20 per cent votes in high Muslim concentration Lok Sabha constituencies of East Zone, while the BJP gained by a hefty over eleven per cent votes.

**Bihar**

However, specifically in Bihar, the BJP polled 31 per cent votes in constituencies where the Muslim voters account for 20 per cent or more, improving from 21 per cent votes it polled in 1991 election. Though the JD remained front runner with 35.9 per cent vote-share in these Muslim constituencies, its votes-share declined from 43 per cent in 1991 polls.

In Bihar, the minorities voted for the JD and the Congress had to face a hefty negative swing of more than ten per cent votes. The BJP enjoyed a positive swing, but could poll only 31 per cent of popular votes. The Congress was a distant third with 16 per cent votes only. But the tactical voting phenomenon was clear in the Katihar constituency where JD candidate and the former union home minister Mufti Mohd. Sayeed was not in the main fray against the BJP candidate, the minority voters did not vote for him but they voted for stronger Congress candidate Tariq Anwar. Mr. Anwar won with a comfortable margin.

In **West Bengal's** high Muslim concentration Lok Sabha constituencies, the Left parties polled 47.9 per cent votes, showing about one per cent increase in there support base in these areas. The Congress was runner up with 40.7 per cent votes this year. While the BJP was placed the distant third in these constituencies of east zone. The Congress vote-share improved by 5.7 per cent votes in these areas. It was a neck-and-neck fight in medium concentration constituencies where the Congress polled 44.2 per cent votes against the 44.4 per cent of the Left Front. In the last decade the Congress suffered an erosion of over seven per cent votes in the high Muslim concentration areas of West Bengal, while the BJP registered a positive swing of 11.35 per cent votes. The Left Front also lost one per cent of its votes in these specific constituencies.

**NORTH INDIA**

In the high Muslim constituencies of **Northern India,** the BJP remained the front runner with 36.4 per cent votes this year. Where Muslim form more than 20 per cent of the electorate. In 1992 elections, the JD and Congress had been runner up and second runner up respectively with 21 and 19 per cent votes.

This year the BSP has emerged as the third major political entity in these Muslim areas with about 17 per cent vote-share, while SP was the second with 19.5 per cent votes in high minority concentration constituencies of northern India.

The UNI/C voter computer analysis says that in the last decade the Congress suffered an erosion of over eleven per cent votes in the high Muslim concentration Lok Sabha constituencies of Northern India, while the BJP gained by a straggering over 29 per cent votes.

**In Uttar Pradesh,** the BJP was front runner in high Muslim concentration Lok Sabha seats. It polled 36.1 per cent votes this year showing the two per cent decrees in its support-base. In 1991, the JD was runner up with 23 per cent votes in these constituencies, while the SP of Mulayam Singh under an electoral understanding with JD emerged as the runner in these constituencies with 21 per

cent votes. The BSP emerged the second runner up with 17.6 per cent votes this year, while Congress had stood third in 1991 polls with 18 per cent votes.

In Uttar Pradesh, there were many alternatives to the Congress. So the Congress was the sole loser while every one else gained from it. The Congress had to face a hefty negative swing of more than nine per cent. The 18 per cent support base of JD in such areas was shifted towards it's ally - the Samajwadi Party which enjoyed a positive swing of more than 21 per cent votes. Wherever the SP was not in a positive to give a proper fight to the BJP, the Bahujan Samaj Party became the main gainer. The BSP enjoyed a positive swing of about 12 per cent votes in these constituencies.

The Samajwadi Party of Mulayam Singh Yadav received the maximum support of the minority voters. The party was in straight fight with the BJP in as many as 21 parliamentary constituencies where the Muslim voters are deciding factor. The SP won eight seats, but lost 13 to the BJP due to acute communal polarisation among voters. The BJP was the sole gainer in these constituencies as the party won 26 of the 50 seats.

A total of nine parties were in main contest with the BJP. The voting pattern shows that the minorities have voted the best possible candidate who could defeat the BJP, irrespective of whichever party he belonged to.

In **Tamil Nadu,** the Congress was completely wiped out. While in Kerala the Left Front emerged as the alternative of the Congress and it polled 32 per cent votes, the Congress had to face a negative swing of five per cent votes together with its ally - the Muslim League.

## We Must Silence Shahabuddin - BJP

The Bharatiya Janata Party's one-point programme in this backward Lok Sabha constituency where Muslims account for 60 per cent of the electorate, is to defeat high profile sitting MP, Syed Shahabuddin. ...

But the Muslims seem determined to avert a split in their votes... It is understood that they will decide upon a "consensus" candidate from among the non-BJP contestants a few days before the polls.

The BJP is, however, unfazed. Explains Gurcharan Singh, District BJP President, "Muslim votes are bound to be scattered, however, hard community leaders try to consolidate...

The BJP is indeed in an upheat mood. Its workers are "turing" voters with the promise of building the Ram temple at Ayodhya "After Shahabuddin is silenced"

**(Source: The Times of India; 2 May, 1996)**

## Analysis by State

| S.No. | Name of State | No. of MP's | No. of Muslim | Muslim % of MP | Muslim Population %age |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | A.P. | 42 | 2 | 4.88 | 8.91 |
| 2. | Assam | 14 | 1 | 7.14 | 25.00 |
| 3. | Bihar | 54 | 4 | 7.41 | 14.8 |
| 4. | Delhi | 7 | NIL | NIL | 9.44 |
| 5. | Gujarat | 26 | NIL | NIL | 8.73 |
| 6. | Haryana | 10 | NIL | NIL | 4.64 |
| 7. | J & K | 6 | 3 | 50% | 70.00 |
| 8. | Karnataka | 28 | 1 | 3.57 | 11.64 |
| 9. | Kerala | 20 | 2 | 10.0 | 23.33 |
| 10. | M.P. | 40 | NIL | NIL | 4.96 |
| 11. | Maharashtra | 48 | 1 | 2.08 | 9.67 |
| 12. | Rajasthan | 25 | NIL | NIL | 8.01 |
| 13. | Tamil Nadu | 39 | NIL | NIL | 5.47 |
| 14. | Uttar Pradesh | 85 | 5 | 5.88 | 17.33 |
| 15. | West Bengal | 42 | 5 | 11.90 | 23.61 |
| 16. | Manipur | 1 | NIL | NIL | 7.27 |
| 17. | Tripura | 1 | NIL | NIL | 7.13 |
| 18. | Lakshadweep | 1 | 1 | 100 | 94.31 |
| 19. | Pondicherry | 1 | 1 | 100 | 6.54 |
| 20. | Others | 51 | NIL | NIL | 30.88 |
| | **Total** | **541** | **26** | **4.81** | **11.67** |

## Muslim M.P.s

| S.No. | Name | State | Constituency | Party |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Kamaluddin Ahmad | A.P. | Hanamkonda | Cong-I |
| 2. | S.S. Owaisi | A.P. | Hyderabad | MIM |
| 3. | Nurul Islam | Assam | Dhubri | Cong-I |
| 4. | Md. Taslimuddin | Bihar | Kishanganj | JD |
| 5. | Md. Shahabuddin | Bihar | Siwan | JD |
| 6. | A.A. Fatimi | Bihar | Darbhanga | JD |
| 7. | Tariq Anwar | Bihar | Katihar | Cong-I |
| 8. | E. Ahamed | Kerala | Punani | IUML |
| 9. | G.M. Banatwalla | Kerala | Manjeri | IUML |
| 10. | Qamrul Islam | Karnataka | Gulbarga | JD |
| 11. | A.R. Antulay | Maharashtra | Kolaba | Cong-I |
| 12. | S.R. Barq | U.P. | Moradabad | SP |
| 13. | S.I. Shervani | U.P. | Badaun | SP |
| 14. | Munawwar Hussain | U.P. | Kairana | SP |
| 15. | Mukhtar Anis | U.P. | Sitapur | SP |
| 16. | Ilyas Azmi | U.P. | Shahabad | BSP |
| 17. | Mohd. Idrees Ali | W. Bengal | Jahangirpur | Cong-I |
| 18. | Masudul Hossain | W. Bengal | Murshidabad | CPI(M) |
| 19. | Hannan Mollah | W. Bengal | Uluberia | CPI(M) |
| 20. | Mehboob Zahedi | W. Bengal | Katwa | CPI(M) |
| 21. | A.B.A. Choudhury | W. Bengal | Malda | CPI(M) |
| 22. | P.M. Sayeed | L/dweep | Lakshadweep | Cong-I |
| 23. | M.O.H. Farooque | Pondichery | Pondichery | Cong-I |

A.P.: 2, Assam: 1, Bihar: 4,
Kerala: 2, Karnataka: 1, Maharashtra: 1,
Uttar Pradesg 5, West Bengal: 5,
Lakshadweep: 1, Pondicherry: 1

# Muslim Representation in Lok Sabha, 1996

## Analysis by Khursheed Alam

It is interesting to note how Muslim representation in national Parliament has risen and fallen over the last four decades.... In 1952 it was 36, in 1957 it was 24, in 1962 it was 32, in 1967 29, in 1971 27, in 1977 32, in 1980 46, in 1984 41, in 1989 33 and in 1991 28.

... Although Muslims have not been voting en bloc like some others (for instance Baniyas have always voted for Jan Sangh or its new avatar BJP or Brahmins voted en block for Congress for about 40 years), there was some consistency in Muslim voting pattern. Even that consistency is no longer visible now. The seasoned psephologist Prannoy Roy emphatically rejects the myth of Muslim bloc voting.

In 1996, fewer Muslims are likely to make it to Parliament...:

* BJP, which is avowedly anti-Muslim, has not fielded even one Muslim candidate. None of its 477 candidates is a Muslim!
* CPM, which is supposed to be a staunchly secular party, has also, ironically, done the same in UP, politically the most important state in India. It has fielded only two candidates in UP, none of them is a Muslim, although on-all India level they have fielded 46 candidates, six of them being Muslim (7.89%).
* Congress has fielded 543, out of which 40 (7.36%) are Muslim.
* Janata Dal 207, out of which 19 are Muslim (9.17%)
* There are 2 Muslims out of 43 fielded by CPI (4.65%).

Interestingly, Uttar Pradesh with 85 parliamentary constituencies, shows the trend of ticket distribution to Muslims more clearly than any other state. The following are the figures:

* 11 Muslims out of 48 fielded by Mulayam Singh's Samajwadi Party (22.09 per cent).
* 23 Muslims out of 85 fielded by Kanshi Ram's BSP (27.5 per cent)
* 7 Muslims out of 85 fielded by Congress (8.23%).
* 1 Muslim out of 16 fielded by Janata Dal (6.25%)
* No Muslim out of two fielded by CPM.

This is only one side of the coin.

Sometimes people are knowingly fielded in areas where they are bound to lose. At other times Muslims are fielded to ruin the chances of (other) candidates. The only irrefutable conclusion drawn is that Muslims have got fewer tickets than their 12% share in population. Kanshi Ram's 27.5% allocation is laudable on the one hand while on the other the net effect could be that fielded against Mulayam's candidates they might undermine the Muslim cause rather than help it.

* The political leaders is even more damaging. One by one individual leaders and Muslim organisations have clearly stated in public that given the difficult choice between BJP and Congress, they would opt for the latter while the Muslim masses generally don't see the distinction between the two since December 6, 1992. ...

There are other statistics which sound impressive but nobody knows of what consequence they would be this time. Consider the following:

* There are 85 parliamentary constituencies out of 543 where Muslim vote can tilt the balance and decide the winner.
* There are 145 others where it matters a lot. ...

Quite impressive. ... However, when it comes to really making an impact there is always that slip between the cup and the lip. There are certain insidious tends. (like the) concerted moves by BJP to get as many Muslim names deleted from voters lists as possible at the time of preparation of such lists.

All these factors are found to influence the final tally.

**(Source: The Nation and the World)**

**(Contd. from page 247)**

with goats and buffaloes from reaching the markets.

Muslims draw comfort from the fact that the BJP does not have a clear mandate nor the required majority in Parliament. The BJP Government is unlikely to wipe off the Ram Temple, Article 370 and the uniform civil code from its agenda, but the politics of compromise will force Vajpayee to either defer action or put them on the back-burner, say Muslim intellectuals and moderate leaders. Repealing Article 370 requires a two-thirds majority in the House. Other changes will not be easy either... The danger, as Engineer points out, is more covert. The saffron dreams may not come true, but that's all the more reason why the BJP could force these issues on the national agenda. "We may not immediately have a uniform civil code, but there may be communal trouble because they have managed to set off intense debates about it," he says. This could result in a sharper polarisation on social and political fronts. ...

Yet according to Zahed Ali Khan, editor of the Hyderabad-based Urdu daily Siasat, "The BJP cannot afford to be anti-Muslim with its current strength, and the division between the hardliners and moderates makes it impossible to target any community"...

**(Source: The India Today, 31 May, 1996)**

# Milli Parliament: Muslim Political Bill, Patna, January, 1996 (Excerpts)

... In order to make 200 million Muslim Indians ideological citizens of this country we (should) make necessary amendments in the Constitution to make it recognize the Quranic injunction which Muslims have to follow.

... The constitution directs the ... country towards a Uniform Civil Code... This clear clash between the Quranic revelation and the Indian Constitution must be reconciled...

... To accept the Shariah as guiding principles... the present political system must be withdrawn immediately and a new system should take its place ... for which the Quran provides a model.

... It is needed to establish such a political system in which no individual is preferred to the other except those who are more God conscious.

... It is ... needed to change the present electoral system altogether.

... It is needed to adopt ... proportional representation based on a separate electorate...

... A more objective census should be conducted in the light of the principles laid down by ... Milli Parliament.

... Separate electorate should be conducted for 119 Muslim seats of the Lok Sabha...

... It is advocated to divide the country into many independent political units...

... The country can be divided into 122 independent political units each being independent and autonomous yet depending on the Center for Defence and Foreign Policy.

Each independent political unit shall be declared as the abode of a particular culture...

All cultural units should be declared as demilitarized zones and no state should be allowed to pursue any military ambition. Internal conflicts within the Federation should be solved without the use of military power. Any religious group or cultural minority willing to settle in another state, for economic reasons, or otherwise, shall have the right to do so...

...For the last 50 years the culture of majority community has been promoted in the name of secularism. Observance of Hindu rituals in official functions has created a deep sense of alienation among Muslims. A remedy to this effect can only be made through proper outlets of Muslim cultural manifestations under state patronage, atleast in areas of Muslim concentration...

... Not to minimize Hindu cultural influence but to provide equal opportunity for other cultures to manifest in our day-to-day life.

As for a lingua-franca... we must ... form a language based on the vocabulary of both languages written in Roman script...

The federal government may establish special cultural foundations in the center to cater to the needs of those people who either by their own choice, or for any reason, choose to live in any cultural unit as a minority...

... States will be ... liable for the loss of any innocent life and will pay a ... compensation to the kith and kin of the deceased within three days. In case of delay the federal government will pressurize the concerned state to pay many times more.

Not only the individual but the states shall have no right to use weapons. Terrorism whether ... by the state or by the individual will be equally condemned...

... Time has come to amend or withdraw Article 44 or any similar constitutional provision which Muslims consider a hurdle in their religious freedom.

... The states shall provide Muslims all possible help to fulfill the religious obligation and Islamic education... What is needed is to allocate educational funds in proportion to the group's numerical strength...

... The federal government shall establish separate cells for each religious... group under the Ministry of Religious Affairs... No religious group shall be given a label which it may despise...

The concept of Shariah Court shall be accepted as part of religious freedom....

... It is needed to work out an educational policy which may have room for all religious... groups... The teaching of religious belief of one community to another will bring a true understanding among members of different religious groups.

... The center shall take all necessary steps, as long as the future Muslim cultural units do not come into existence, for the development of an independent Muslim educational system.

... The center shall ... assume the full responsibility of all important Muslim educational institutions.

Each cultural state shall have the freedom to formulate an educational policy of its own choice but it will not ... include false information about any religious ... group in its curriculum...

... The centre will ensure a just time distribution for the federal television net-work.

The (state) shall guarantee to every individual the right to get education in his/her mother tongue...

... The regional state languages shall enjoy official status...

The ... cultural states ... will take effective measures to ensure economic justice in consultation with the federal government.

... Concentration of the country's resources in a few hands will be a thing of the past...

... It is ... needed to establish a riba-free economy to meet the economic aspirations of the Muslim Ummah... future Muslim republics will be instrumental in creating a riba-free economic system... The Reserve Bank of India shall provide all practical help for the establishment of an Interest free banking system...

... Every citizen (shall have) equal opportunity for his personal development/education and basic necessaries...

# Neelam Mahajan Singh on Political Role of the RSS

The recent political activism of the BJP's parent body, the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh has raised eyebrows among several political analysts. "Hindutva", has been the trump card used by RSS in fulfilling the political aspirations to capture power at the Centre. The Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh has activated all its frontal organisations to play a lead role in ensuring the success of BJP candidates...

The rank and file of RSS are a confused lot today where they do not know whether they have to be self sacrificing patriots or self seeking ... politicians. The RSS has ordered its rank and file to plunge into the political fray. This, in fact, is negation of the ideology of its founding father... Hedgewar. Dr. Hedgewar founded the RSS on September 27, 1925 at Nagpur with only five persons in its first Shakha. In the last 70 years, there has been a giant leap in the works and achievements of RSS. The aim of RSS was to knit a strong fabric for the Hindu society and to revitalise the society on the basis of Dharma and Sanskriti...

... Today RSS has more than 25,000 shakhas all over the country... As as 'claimed' to be a non-political organisation, the RSS did not participate in the independence movement as a political body. The demand for "partition of India" brought many Hindus close to RSS. The RSS projected itself as the sole agency to checkmate the alleged Congress ambivalence on Muslim intransigence.... Till date the RSS is not reconciled with the partition of India. Dr. Hedgewar, the first Sarsang Chalak had propounded the principle of building the character of an individual, i.e. Charitra-nirman won in turn would make a good society, i.e., Shisht Samaj which in turn would lead to a; powerful state, i.e., Sangthit Rashtra or Akhand Bharat. Why then has the present RSS leadership made a volte face in reversing the tenet of their founding fathers, i.e., to seek state power, then make society and then an individual?

Golwalkar, ... Deoras, both Sarsangh Chalaks, and Deen Dayal Upadhaya, founder General Secretary of the Bharatiya Jan Sangh, believed in the consolidation of a Hindu society through social upliftment of the backward, downtrodden, destitute and the less privileged...

... The Bharatiya Janata Party formerly Bharatiya Jan Sangh, is the political win of RSS, something which had not even been envisaged by Dr. Hedgewar....

After Independence, Golwalkar had told Nehru that while Nehru could take charge of an Independent India, the RSS would undertake national reconstruction.

The RSS has created men of sterling quality, dedication and selflessness. However, lust for political power has made RSS to take a detour... The reasons of changing values of RSS are many. it no longer wants to play a "behind the scene" role. Sam, Dam, Dandha, Bheda is fully put to practice by none other than RSS top hierarchy.

From 1967, the Bharatiya Jan Sangh was on the rise. From 5.8 lakh in 1991, the RSS membership rose to 7 lakh in 1980. In 1996, it has more than 35 lakh members.

The mistake that RSS has committed is in "front man" projection of L.K. Advani as the epitome of the RSS ideology, Hindutva, Swadeshi and honesty". But it did not hesitate for a minute to axe L.K. Advani and project Abki Bari Atal Behari....

The Ram Janma Bhoomi Shilanyas, and the Hindu frenzy resulting in Jai Shri Ram, Bacha Bacha Ram Ka, Mandir wahin Banayenge, resulted in mass hysteria amongst the Hindus in favour of BJP as a party with difference. The Rath Yatra of Advani further whipped up the Hindutva wave.

Just as Congress has been using the minority Muslim vote bank, the RSS and its baby, BJP, has been using the 'Hindu vote bank'. Needless to state both parties have done precious little for either the Hindus or the Muslims. ...

Now the RSS leaders like the Congressmen don a political topi. From the divine saffron flag which is the epitome symbol of sacrifice for the motherland for RSS, this political capping can turn disastrous for its socio-cultural-economic consolidation of the Hindu society.

RSS policy of double-speak and dual role...social and political are sapping its foundation. Now RSS is dwarfed by the political paper mask of BJP. The ... thought of forming the Government at the Centre made RSS throw all caution to the air.

The RSS had given a call for all trans-Hindu forces to combine against Congress and other parties. it will not be a surprise, if tomorrow the RSS tells Bharatiya Janata Party to join hands with Congress to form the Government. If this happens what then what will be the difference between the Congress and RSS? Rajendra Singh must save Rashtriya Swayam Sevak from political disaster.

Once again the RSS chief ... Rajendra Singh and his team should ... go close to the aims of ... Hedgewar, if they wish the saffron flag to fly high.

RSS would remove the ugly political mask.... The RSS should follow its path to achieve its goals with dedication and not desire. This alone will restore lost glory of RSS as a social-cultural organisation... (which) can consolidate the Akhand Bharat.

**(Source: The Hindustan Times, 19 May, 1996)**

# N.V. Subramanian on RSS-BJP Politics

... In March, 1996 at a three-day Pratinidhi Sabha in Lucknow, the RSS had first given indications that it would be backing any political party which would carry forward its Hindutva agenda.... Said Seshadri in Lucknow, "they (meaning the Hindus and the Hindu activists) will have to strive to their utmost to rouse voters to their national duty of electing such parties and persons who have proved by post history that they stand firmly committed to tackle the problems and dangers of the Hindu society on a priority basis."

The problems Seshadri enumerated included infiltration of Bangladeshi refugees, the slaughter of cows, the activities of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) in the border areas, the declining population of the Hindus as against an increasing population of the Muslims, and so on.

Seshadri never said anything about supporting the BJP exclusively. This was to pre-empt any change of electoral malpractice...

But it was clear that the RSS was determined to influence the general elections. ... Several high-level meetings were held and it was decided to bring all the affiliates of the RSS into this work. This had been done before in a much smaller way in 1957 when M.S. Golwalkar was the RSS chief and the Jana Sangh needed the RSS backing, and in 1977 during the Emergency when Balasaheb Deoras was head and the outfit had given its support to Jayaprakash Narayan against Indira Gandhi. ...There are something like 38,000 upashakhas of the RSS and if you allow ten members per upashakha you have a staggering 38 lakh volunteers.

On top of this, the RSS got all its politically and religiously-oriented affiliates to pitch in. A long exhortation addresses to Hindus to support Hindutva politicians and parties was signed by Rajendra Singh ... with Vishnu Hari Dalmia, president of the VHP, Usha Chati, chief organiser of the Rashtriya Sevika Samiti, the RSS' women affiliate, and Jagdev Ram, president of the Akhil Bharatiya Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram that works with tribals.

Moreover, the RSS convinced other non-RSS agencies to work with it on this. Among them were Vinobha Bhave'a Sarvodya Movement and the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha...

The RSS has been seeing this election as a sort of make-or-break one...

.. Before all the results were out and the BJP looked like doing well ... the RSS was being very accommodative.

(RSS spokesman) stressed that the BJP's manifesto would not be imposed on future allies. "We are very keen about national integration and social harmony and the details can be worked out later," he said.

Would the BJP insist that its allies also agree to abrogating Article 370... "We could take it up later".

And would the BJP insist with its allies that the temple had to be constructed in Ayodhya within this term? "This thing can also be taken up with them later."

"We should not insist upon these thing now", he went on. "The other parties may or may not agree. The idea is to work out which part of the manifesto is to be operated now and which later. it is a matter of strategy".

But (he) insisted that in the end there would be no compromise on the RSS-BJP's main ideology. "There is no going back on opposing cow slaughter or abrogating Article 370". "If any party says that don't construct the temple in Ayodhya we are not going to agree. But equally we won't overturn the table just to have the temple in Ayodhya."

He also said that while the RSS would like the temple to be constructed within a week, it would in no case force the issue or do anything which would be construed as illegal.

... Asked which parties would be backing he BJP, he said that he would rather concentrate on MPs. "We are not asking anyone to cross over," he said. "But we would like those MPs who believe in our ideology to form groups in whichever parties they may be and come out without attracting the Anti-Defection Act."

But all that was then when the first round of results had come in. The RSS-BJP had something to go by. Of course. ...The BJP did less well than it thought it would... The BJP (is) engaged in looking for partners. If you assume, for the moment, that neither the Congress party nor the Janata Dal breaks up and a faction joins the BJP, the party has to woo a whole range of regional formations, among them the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), the Dravida Munnetra Khazagam (DMK), the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), the Tamil Maanila Congress (TMC), the Congress (Tiwari), the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP), the Shiromani Akali Dal, apart from the Samata Party, the Shiv Sena and the Haryana Vikas Party to get just a simple majority in the Lok Sabha.

The BJP component in such a government will be less than 60 per cent. And if the BJP tries to gain a comfortable majority, it will go even lower, per centage wise, in its own government. How much of a BJP government would it be then? And, how much Hindutva commitment could the RSS get from it...

Several senior RSS functionaries who have refused BJP tickets for the second or third time now, have a basic objection to seeking power itself.

Their example is Golwalkar, the second RSS chief, who put character-building and organising Hindus above the search for power, and was, for the most part of his term, a reluctant backer of the BJP's earlier avatar, the

Jana Sangh.

Others find the BJP itself objectionable. The foremost among them is Dattopant Thengdi, who controls the BMS (1989 strength: 4.91 lakh), the ABVP and the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh, and has emerged as a power centre in the sangh parivar and is, in some ways, more powerful than even Rajendra Singh today.

Thengdi forced the swadeshi issue on a reluctant RSS and his men have battled the BJP each time it has compromised on the swadeshi question. ...

Thengdi and Advani are on less than friendly terms too. And any future clash in the sangh parivar is likely to be between these two titans. Thengdi, however, is ageing and unwell and, therefore, hard-pressed to leave behind a strong second and third line of leadership. But he has already put in place hardline cadres. ...

In one sense, Thengdi represents the Left view in the sangh parivar without being communist. Advani, by that definition, is right. Moderates, like Rajendra Singh, Seshadri, and so on, are per force middle-of-the-road.

It is in such an ideological crossroad that the sangh parivar now stands... This was bound to occur. When K.B. Hedgewar launched the RSS in September 1925, it was nine years since the Congress and the Muslim League had agreed to a separate Muslim electorate for the Legislative Councils; five years since Mahatma Gandhi's support to the Khilafat Movement that many Hindu revivalists thought would encourage Muslim separatism ... and four years since riots in Malabar in which there were some forcible conversions.

But till his death in 1940, Hedgewar refused to turn the RSS political, and this resolve continued with his successor, Golwalkar. V.D. Savarkar, the Hindu Mahasabha supremo, who first fleshed out Hindutva, later adopted by the RSS, broke off with Golwalkar just because of the latter's determination not to turn the RSS political.

Most say this reluctance was so as not to incite the British to ban the RSS. But this anathema for politics continued after the RSS was banned for a year in connection with Mahatma Gandhi's murder until 1951, when Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, quitting Jawaharlal Nehru's Cabinet over differences over Pakistan, formed the Jana Sangh.

Golwalkar's first preference was to come under the Congress umbrella. And it was only after Sardar Patel, his ally in the Congress, couldn't get Nehru or the bulk of Congressmen to accept RSS cadres in the Congress, that Golwalkar reluctantly gave his blessings to Mukherjee.

The Jana Sangh, in the five general elections till Golwalkar died in 1973, performed only marginally better in 1967, winning 35 of the 250 seats it contested, bagging 9.57 per cent of the votes. It was a track record that Golwalkar could have found barely satisfactory. In 1956 itself, he had banned RSS transfers to its affiliates, especially the Jana Sangh, returning the RSS to character-building work. Balasaheb Deoras, later to succeed Golwalkar as sarsanghchalak, withdrew from the RSS that year only to return in 1962 when the ban was lifted.

Golwalkar's own idea of politics was to establish a dharmasatta in India. Researching why the bulk of Hindus couldn't be converted in successive Mughal and British rules, he concluded, in an essay on the subject in his Bunch Of Thoughts, that "the basis of our national existence was not political power".

"Otherwise," he went on, "our fate would have been no better than that of those nations which remain today as only museum exhibits. The political rulers were never the standard-bearers of our society. They were never taken as the props of our national life."

"Saints and sages, who had risen above the mundane temptations of pelf and power and had dedicated themselves wholly for (sic) establishing a happy, virtuous and integrated state of society, were its constant torch-bearers. They represented the dharmasatta. The king was only an ardent follower of that higher moral authority.

Golwalkar's quest wasn't woolly-headed. Ashish Nandy, the well-known social scientist, nearly 20 years later, did a similar study of Indians under the British Raj (The Intimate Enemy. Loss And Recovery Of Self Under Colonialism). It was empirically sounder than Golwalkar's study, nor was it coloured by any attempt to apply any of the findings to modern times.

And Golwalkar had one that. In his scheme of dharmasatta, political power would be one point of a triangle separate from economic power, which would be the triangle's second point. And each of them would be checked by a countrywide collegium of saints and sadhus.

RSS top-rankers will still tell you that Golwalkar's dharmasatta had no anti-Muslim bias and that the English of dharma is not really religion. May be not.

Yet, the dharmasattas, by Golwalkar's own admission, came up in response to Muslim and later British Christian proselytising efforts. So, latter-day dharmasattas wouldn't really be able to overcome that world-view. After the Christian British left, there were only the Muslims remaining in large numbers. So, any dharmasatta... at least implicitly, anti-Muslim.

Anyhow, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), set up in 1964, was entrusted with getting all the various Hindu sects and mutts together to possibly make such a collegium...

Then, separating economic power from political power was part of the Jana Sangh's ideology of greater privatisation. By the time Golwalkar died in 1973, a framework for organising national society was in place.

Ten years after he died, the VHP began the Ayodhya agitation and 16 years later, the BJP won 54 seats more than the Jana Sangh at its best in 1967. And both were affected by their respective growing strengths.

In December 1992, frenzied cadres of the VHP demolished the Babari Masjid. And by then, corruption was as much there in the four BJP state governments as in the Congress regimes before them. ...

The saints, after December 1992, were being hardly seen as that. Politicians were chummy with industrialists. And the dharmasatta, for whatever it was worth, was finished even before it had been set up.

Among the few senior functionaries in the sangh parivar to be genuinely disturbed by the Ayodhya episode was Thengdi. "If he had his way," said a Thengdi follower, "Ashok Singhal and Vishnu Hari Dalmia (of the VHP) would have no more been part of the sangh parivar for what happened in Ayodhya that day."

And again it is Thengdi who id livid about the BJP's politician-industrialist nexus in Golwalkar's dharmasatta spirit. But in the BJP, few see any wrong in it.

Just now though, there is a cease-fire on in the sangh parivar. The BJP, in the process of government-making, is having to back down from many of its old positions. And not everyone is unhappy with that.

Thengdi has such swadeshi friends as George Fernandes and Chandra Shekhar who will make any sell-out impossible. In dealing with the DMK, Dravidian consciousness has to be borne with if not accepted.

Then the Asom Gana Parishad did so well because its president Prafulla Kumar Mahanta campaigned extensively in Muslim-majority areas of Assam that were previously Congress strongholds. In dealing with Mahanta, therefore, talk of Muslim appeasement has to be muted if not forbidden. And the newly-elected Shiromani Akali Dal MPs would care to be treated as Sikhs and not as sword-arms of the Hindu religion.

... After Ayodhya it takes little imagination to picture crazy mobs storming the disputed mosques in Mathura and Varanasi followed by riots and bomb blasts.

Such a thing could also produce visible cracks in the sangh parivar. Before the Ayodhya episode, the Thengdi group had begun building bridges with the National Front-Left Front through a series of meetings. After the demolition, all such contacts ceased. ...

Thengdi, after all, is of Vajpayee's generation that saw Muslims in wars against Pakistan in 1947-48, 1965 and in 1971 and as co-sufferers with Hindus during the Emergency...And finally, last fortnight's general elections do not show the RSS' door-to-door campaign to have had any great effect. The RSS accepts this.

The BJP did well in Madhya Pradesh because of infighting in the Congress. In Bihar and Haryana, sensible seat-sharing arrangements produced results. In UP, Mulayam Singh Yadav upset its plans of a runaway victory. And in the south, it was decimated.

Gujarat was bad for PR too... The BJP looked like being just any other party in just any other election. ...

**(Source: The Sunday, 19-25 May, 1996)**

## RSS: Lok Jagran Abhiyan

The Sangh parivar has launched yet another front to strengthen its information campaign. The new front will operate under the banner of **'Lok Jagran Abhiyan'**. ...

The front's campaign will highlight issues ranging from national integration to cow slaughter, infiltration and espionage activities of a neighbouring nation, appeasement of the most significant minority, the electronic media's attack on Hindu culture and other issues that it considers crucial.

Even while calling their campaign as an effort to influence the common man, the Lok Jagran Abhiyan will desist from holding mass meetings. A single activist deputed for one block will conduct a person-to-person campaign. He will also use the other front organizations like the Swadeshi Jagran Manch, Hindu Jagran Manch, Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the parent body, the Sangh, to gain support in urban and rural areas.

Intellectual discussions will be conducted at the personal level to reinforce the ideological base of political, religious and social programmes of the Sangh parivar. While seeking to deny that the decades-old 'shakhas' are proving ineffective in strengthening its mass base, the new ideological propagators maintain that this campaign is different from its usual efforts at cultural indoctrination. ...

Apart from retired civil servants and some ex-army officers, the front consists the individual entrepreneurs and professionals. There will be both full-time as well as part-time activists. Most of the committed activists are middle-aged. ...

## Mani Shankar Aiyar on Sangh Parivar

... The sangh parivar... showed at Ayodhya how utterly untrustworthy it is. The same lies, prevarications, dishonesty and dissimulation are still the characteristics which make the sangh parivar believe that despite securing less than a third of the seats in the Lok Sabha, its tryst with destiny has come. ...

It was moral bankruptcy that charaterised Advani's leadership of the BJP at Ayodhya; it is the same moral bankruptcy that now characterises Vajpayee's doomed attempt at insinuating himself into the gaddi without the people's sanction to do so. When it comes to the crunch, there is no choosing between Advani and Vajpayee. Both are gentlemen of the utmost personal charm; both, however, are leaders of the most dangerous political party in the country.... Atalji's .. political visage... is of the religious extremists and narrow-minded zealots who make the running in the sangh parivar.

True, the sangh parivar has over these 40 years moved so far down the road of fanaticism that Vajpayee looks like a moderate when viewed against the background of ... his RSS puppeteers...

**(Source: The Sunday, 26 May - 1 June, 1996)**

# Sikhism and Islam: A Plea for Better Understanding

## Editorial, The Sikh Review, April, 1996

Every now and then we come across busybodies who are keen to foster the fiction that Sikhism is, in some ways, antagonistic to Islam. References to communal riots at the time of India's Partition in 1947 and the chronicles of conflict during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries serve as grist to their mills of ill-will. Even the Hindu fraternity, with whom the Sikhs have close cultural bonds, generally feel comfortable with - if not gloat over - the notions of Sikh-Muslim conflict. They are naturally interested that the truth remains buried under layer upon layer of facile misconceptions. ...

The message of the Gurus as embodied in Guru Granth Sahib, is rooted in devotion to One God and love of His multitudinous creation that exists and moves in His Hukam. A comparative and revert study of the Holy Quran (albeit in translation) and Guru Granth Sahib reveals an amazing similarity of these basic truths... Iqbal, whose inspiring verse:

"Chisti ne jis zamin mein paigham-e-haq sunaya
Nanak ne jis chaman mein vahadat ka geet gaya"

still reverberates in the subcontinent, is credited with the view that Guru Granth Sahib's opening scripture, Japuji is a commentary on the Holy Quran. Japuji speaks of "Suniya maniya, mann kita bhau" - how listening and believing and committing our faith to God's love are essential to faith. Likewise, the term Zikr in Arabic means remembrance - synonymous with Naam Simran in the Sikh parlance. Japuji's exhortation "Suniye dookh paap ka naas" - recited daily by every Sikh - is reminiscent of the Quranic edict:

"Innas salaate tonhaa anil fahshaaye wal Munker wa la Zikrul Laahe Akbar"

**(Surah XXIX - 45)**

Similarly, the term Tajalli in Arabic is the exact equivalent of darshan in Gurbani - experiencing God's majesty in one's mind. Sikhism is wedded to the Holy World as the Guru, and not to Gurus' physically. The Holy Quran too insists that the Prophet must not be worshipped as God. Its Sura 76 implies "continuous revelation", while Sura 98 speaks of "an apostle from Allah reading sanctified pages from the eternal scripture" - concepts substantially in accord with the Sikh philosophy. Doesn't Guru Granth Sahib say:

"Nanak ko khud khasam meharvan
Allaho na visare dil-ji-pran!"

**(SGGS:1138-3, M.V)**

i.e. Nanak speaks of the merciful Lord whom we must never forget (but remember) with all our heart and soul. Or, listen to this: "Allah pakang-pak hai, sak karo, je dusar hoey" (SGGS:727-10 Kabir) which roughly translates: God is the purest of the pure. Believe, beyond doubt, that he has no rival. Nor can He be confined to the temple or mosque: "Allah ek masit basat hai, avar mulakh kis kera" (SGGS: 1349-10 Kabir), i.e. if God dwells only in the mosque who is in charge of the rest of the territory? - a precept Guru Nanak so disarmingly demonstrated during his visit to the Holy Mecca.

Great many of such gems of wisdom are strung together in the two holy scriptures, beckoning us to extend our understanding of the spiritual message of Sikhism and Islam.

What probably irks the ordinary Muslim, or Sikh, is the historical events and the tragic clashes in the pre-Partition days. Many tendentious versions of history have soured their relations and tended to widen the gulf between the two communities. Much of the rancour and prejudice arises from misuse of religion and its symbology by kings and potentates to perpetuate their own hegemony. If one equates the Mughal rule with Islamic rule, the earlier Lodhi kings, whom Babar replaced, will have to be written off as non-Muslim. Jahangir's execution of the great martyr Guru Arjan Dev, under the Mongol code of Yasa, was certainly not provoked by any fear of "Islam in danger" ...

... Our insights of the past history need a saner and unbiased reinterpretation for the sake of harmonious relations. History books only make matter worse. Kings and dynasts, in most times and ages, have been despotic and cruel. We believe that one must not adopt confrontationist postures over the past. The martyrdom of Guru Arjun and Guru Tegh Bahadur,and execution of two younger Sahibzadas of Guru Gobind Singh, are rooted indeed in the historical tradition - not in any theological clash between Sikhism and Islam.

Even in terms of history, there are many more events that unite us than those that may seem to divide. Guru Nanak's life-long companion, Bhai Mardana - a Muslim - sang the hymns of Divine love to carve out a permanent place in the hearts of every devout Sikh. Guru Arjun honoured Hazrat Mian Mir of Lahore by asking him to lay the cornerstone of the holy Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple) Amritsar. Pir Burhanuddin @ Budhu Shah of Sadhaura fought the Mughal hordes side by side with Guru Gobind Singh, losing his sons in the battlefield.... And who can forget the daring deed of the Pathan brothers, Ghani Khan and Nabi Khan, who helped Guru Gobind Singh escape the Mughal dragnet in the early years of eighteenth Century?

But far more abiding in the Sikh-Muslim relations is the bond of moral and spiritual values: monotheism, equality, and the revealed scriptures. Guru Granth Sahib incorporates the kalam not only of the Gurus, and saints like Kabir, but of the Sufi seer, Sheikh Baba Farid. Indeed on moral and socio-cultural plane. Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs have reason to rejoice in the common heritage of the sacred literature, language, art, architecture and the myriad ways in which our lives in India and outside are intertwined. (We should reject) those who try to drive a wedge between the communities who share such a glorious culture.

## National Foundation for Communal Harmony, 31.12.1995

| State/District | Period of Riots | No. of Beneficiaries |
|---|---|---|
| **Andhra Pradesh:** | | |
| Hyderabad | September, 1991 | 9 |
| Adilabad | December, 1992 | 23 |
| Nizamabad | December, 1992 | 4 |
| West Godavari | December, 1992 | 3 |
| **ASSAM:** | | |
| Dhubri | December, 1992 | 8 |
| **BIHAR:** | | |
| Sitamarhi | October, 1992 | 31 |
| Paschmi Singhum | August, 1991 | 4 |
| Munger | December, 1992 | 6 |
| Katihar | January, 1993 | 3 |
| Madhubani | December, 1992 | 2 |
| **DELHI:** | December, 1992 | 16 |
| **GUJARAT:** | | |
| Ahmedabad | December, 1992 | 96 |
| Bharuch | July & December, 1992 | 35 |
| Baroda | January, 1993 | 3 |
| Surat | December, 1992 | 159 |
| **KARNATAKA:** | | |
| Belgaum | July & December, 1992 | 27 |
| Uttar Kannad | April, 1993 | 18 |
| Chitradurga | December, 1992 | 2 |
| Dharwad | December, 1992 | 3 |
| Gulbarga | December, 1992 | 2 |
| Dakshini Kannada | December, 1992 | 6 |
| Bidar | December, 1992 | 8 |
| **MADHYA PRADESH:** | | |
| Bhopal | December, 1992 | 140 |
| Ujjain | December, 1992 | 5 |
| **MAHARASHTRA:** | | |
| Bombay | December, 1992, January & March, 1993 | 255 |
| **RAJASTHAN:** | | |
| Jaipur | December, 1992 | 27 |
| Tonk | December, 1992 | 16 |
| **UTTAR PRADESH:** | | |
| Allahabad | December, 1992 | 8 |
| Bareilly | December, 1992 | 8 |
| Faizabad | January, 1993 | 4 |
| Haridwar | December, 1992 | 2 |
| Kanpur | December, 1992 | 50 |
| Lucknow | December, 1992 | 12 |
| Varanasi | November, 1991 & December, 1992 | 33 |
| | **Total:** | **1,028** |

## Bhagalpur Riots, 1989: A Sociological Analysis by Rowena Robinson

There cannot be a sociology of India which ignores the study of communalism and communal politics and violence. The analysis of communal violence is essential not only to perceive the social conditions involved in its origin but also to understand the fundamental implications for the relationship between the state and society in India today. It is out of such concerns that this essay on the Bhagalpur riots is being written.

**Conclusion:**

This essay has attempted a detailed analysis of the Bhagalpur riots. The approach differs both from writers who lay the blame for the riots solely on economic or political 'causes' and those who argue that riots are a spontaneous eruption of primordial instincts or deep-rooted antagonisms. It is more sophisticated than that as there is an interweaving of the political, the economic and the religious. These are difficult to disentangle at the existential level. Again, instead of seeing the riots merely as spontaneous eruptions, the essay has tried to show how communal ideologies were gradually spread in an organized manner at this particular historical juncture.

In addition, the essay has attempted to analyze the constitution of crowds and networks through which they were mobilized for the killing and looting. It is important for us to cease talking in vague terms about 'mob' violence. As social scientists we need to flesh out our descriptions with accuracy and detail. Collective violence needs to be understood both in terms of the ideology that underpins it and the form and organization it takes.

The essay also has attempted a critique of an earlier analysis of the Bhagalpur riots made by Pandey (1991). While not rejecting his concerns, at attempt was made to redress certain significant problems perceived in his approach. it remains important for us to locate the local within a larger, national political context. An understanding of the role of the state at the local level is also essential.

What has been offered in this paper, therefore, is an examination of the Bhagalpur riots in a perspective which takes into account these interconnections. The analysis located itself on a middle terrain where the local and external, the view from above and that from below, meet. it has shown that keeping the two artificially apart can prove self-defeating. Only by bringing together the local and the national can we comprehend the spread and intensity of the communal ideology which could account for the kind of violence perpetrated in Bhagalpur. Again, the role of the state forces cannot be kept out of our analyses.

**(Source: The Social Action, April-June, 1996)**

# Texts Silent on Ayodhya Site

## Rabisankar Banerjee, Reader in Sanskrit, Jadavpur University, Calcutta

**... The extant editions of Valmiki Ramayana have not given the slightest hint about the exact position in the city of Ayodhya where Rama was born. Nor do other court epics like Kalidasa's Raghuvamsa, Bhatti's Ravanavadha, Kumaradasa's Janakiharana and Dhananjaya's Raghavapandaviya contain any hint as to the exact location of the birthplace of Rama. Bhasa, an ancient Indian playwright, wrote two plays on the Ramayana tale - Abhiseka and Pratima; Bhavabhuti added two more, Mahabiracarita and Uttaracarita. Another playwright, Jayadeva, wrote Prasannaraghava at a later date. All these authors are silent on the question of the exact location of Rama's birth in Ayodhya.**

The great Valmiki and all these later poets and playwrights have in fact given the airy nothing of the Ramayana a habitation and a name to the effect that the saga of Ramayana occurred in a city called Ayodhya. But none of them seem to be interested in pinpointing the exact location of Rama's birthplace. The entire tale of the Ramayana as adumbrated in the extant Sanskrit Ramayana did not attain its present final shape even at the time of Banabhatta, the author of Harsacarita. The date of Bana is a settled fact as he is referred to in Hiuen Tsang's report on Emperor Harsha's regime in India in the middle of 700 A.D.

In the Harsacarita, Bana has noted the names of great poets and the salient features of their poems, but he has omitted Valmiki. This is significant...Bana has adopted the simple style of prose in both Harsacarita and Kadambari, especially in conversations. He has also referred to various characters in the Ramayana. But he omitted the great Valmiki's name because the Ramayana was yet to attain a final form and Valmiki as an epic poet did not have as much of an impact on Bana as Vyasa, the author of Mahabharata, and this is why the name of Vyasa appears as number one in the list.

Anandavardhana (900 A.D.) the most prominent literary critic in India at the time, cited both Ramayana and Mahabharata as two glaring examples of poetry par excellence which he calls Dhvani Kavya. Anandavardhana has given a soul-stirring exposition of the Mahabharata and mentioned Santa... But he has not explained how pathos (Karuna) forms the inner meaning of the other epic, Ramayana. Nor has any follower of Anandavardhana at a later period like Kuntaka or Bhoja given an exposition of the import of the Ramayana.

... All this goes to prove that Ramayana in its present form did not attain prominence as a cohesive epic poem in the days of Anandavardhana. Kalhana starts his tales of the kings of Kashmir in Rajatarangini with King Gonanda who was contemporaneous with Yudhisthira. Kalhana relates the story of King Avantivaraman who passed away while listening to the Bhagavadgita. This shows that the Mahabharata together with the Bhagavadgita eclipsed the Ramayana. The Ramayana tale was a popular folk tale just like the folk tale of King Udayana and Vasavadatta which was presented in the form of several dramas at various points of time. The village folk, as Kalidasa observed in Maghaduta, were aware of these folk tales. **BJP has now discovered a place which it has identified as the spot where Rama was born. The middle ages saw the advent of Tulsidas who wrote anecdote after anecdote in Ramacaritamanasa, but did not bother about the exact location of Rama's birthplace. No BJP leader has yet given a cogent argument to substantiate the contention that the mosque built by Babar stands on the very spot where Rama was born.**

Valmiki's great epic seems to have failed as a poem par excellence, since its readers in UP and Bihar try to single out a spot as Rama's place of birth and try to erect a temple there even by committing murderous assault on those who oppose their idea. ...

## Vijay Sanghvi

## On Babari Masjid Issue in the Parliament

... The BJP leader had found Narasimha Rao the best P.M. since Lal Bahadur Shastri and the BJP chief L.K. Advani had even travelled to America to sing paeans for Rao and his government's economic liberalisation programme. This honeymoon lasted till the BJP found it necessary to consolidate its own political base and enlarge its geographical reach to other states so that it can realise its dream of ruling from New Delhi. Its belief that the Ram Janmabhoomi temple controversy had contributed to its sudden rise from two members in the 8th Lok Sabha to 70 in the 9th and 117 in the 10th Lok Sabha. Hence it decided to exploit the same card again in July 1992 when it refused to bow to the Supreme Court and wanted to hold the kar seva for construction of a temple on the controversial site in Ayodhya. That ended the honeymoon between the Narasimha Rao government and the BJP which had functioned for almost a year as the royal opposition. Its political compulsion for growth was to name the Rao government as its main enemy. Though the Rao government survived the scare as demolition of the disputed structure of the Babari Masjid was still not on the BJP agenda, its ordeal had begun then with an end to politics of consensus.

The fifth session of this Lok Sabha became really stormy because of the demolition of the disputed structure at Ayodhya not by design but by conspiracy of vandals who had assembled for a religious ceremony organised by the BJP and its front organisations. The traumatic shock and consequent riots in differentparts of the country as well as dismissal of the BJP governments in four states were the issues that had dominated 18 sittings in the fifth session. ...

**(Source: The Hindustan Times, 10 March, 1996)**

# Harinder Baweja on the Electoral Farce in Kashmir

The farce unfolded just when things were showing signs of changing. When there was a faint glimmer of hope. When disenchantment with militancy was finding a voice and when several former militant leaders were talking to the Indian Government in what appeared to be a rejection of the Pakistani card. And even as ordinary Kashmiris appeared to be in a mood to reject violence as the vehicle for azaadi and the slogan for independence was giving way to talk of autonomy, they found themselves being ushered into another period of alienation and anger. On May 23, when elections were held in Baramulla and Anantnag for two parliamentary seats, democracy once again took a severe beating in the Valley. Voters were herded to polling stations by security forces and forced to cast their votes.

In the run-up to the election, other militant groups had issued threats to stymie the process. They succeeded in some measure: candidates did not come calling on voters. But those who did were the men in olive green. Descending on village after village in the early hours of May 23, their message was the same: Cast your vote, we will come back and inspect the marks on your fingers. And they were there in strength, ostensibly to guard the 26 candidates, mostly from among surrendered militants, contesting as Independents and several from the Congress and the BJP, which put up migrant Hindu candidates in the hope of getting them elected on absentee ballots. The National Conference and the Hurriyat had boycotted the poll.

The troops instilled not confidence but fear and loathing. They were out in strength - the Valley crawling with over one lakh of them, drawn from the army, the BSF and the CRPF. That's how the residents of Anantnag and Baramulla woke up that morning when tension ran high and the clouds hung low, casting a bleak shadow over the Valley. Still others woke up to announcements from mosques - a mohalla elder asking them to proceed to the booths. It was what they had feared and they had little choice in the matter...

... Many residents who were forced to go to the polling booths said that security men had threatened that those who did not vote would never be allowed to open their shops again. And as more and more groups of frightened, fear-stricken people made their way towards the polling stations, it was clear that the elections after a violence-punctuated gap of seven years, were being held in the shadow of the gun.

... The election was being rigged once again. Kashmir's history was being repeated. Ballot-boxes were not being stuffed like they were in 1987... But as in the past, candidates were being thrust on them. The decision was not theirs and the candidates chosen did not reflect aspirations.

The two constituencies of Baramulla and Anantnag saw unexpectedly high turnouts of 35 and 43 per cent but the voters came, not to give their "mandate for the return of peace and democracy"... But only because of the fear of the gun - a refrain that echoed through the Valley....

...It became clear that the administration had carefully plotted its strategy. Herding the voters to booths was only the first step in the drama that unfolded under the overcast skies. Rules were flouted and changed to accommodate the numbers lining up in serpentine queues - people whose names did not figure on the voters' list were allowed to vote. At some places, they were told who to vote for, and at others, some voters made their anger known by stamping four different symbols at the same time. They had no choice - for if they could have done as they wished, the turnout would have been 10 to 20 per cent as estimated by the Home Ministry and the intelligence agencies...

But the security forces-driven administration, spurred by a percentage game, came close to achieving a similar turnout as the elections held under normal circumstances. Determined to usher voters out of their homes, they first went for the men while the afternoon was reserved for the women who were brought out in the 'second phase' - a dead give-away that people were not coming out voluntarily. ...The troops returned to the villages, voter's lists in hand, to bring out the women and those who had not already voted. Why troops should be moving around with these lists...

... This must have been the only place in the country where polling agents were not present in booths. The polling staff, brought in from Delhi, Punjab and Haryana, all wearing bulletproof vests, were themselves quite surprised at the turnout. Expecting large-scale violence, they in turn, after staying in the protective custody of the security forces, revealed that the voters had been brought there forcibly and, aware of the fear that had gripped the Kashmiris, were quite willing to put the ink mark on their finger-nails....

... Given the fact that it was the rigging of the 1987 election that saw the advent of the Kalashnikov in Kashmir, forcing voters into booths is hardly likely to contain the insurgency that was born of a farcical election. When election agents campaigning for the MUF decided to pick up the gun and launched the movement for independence.

And it is with the use of the gun that the security forces made yet another blunder that has only added to the complexities of the Kashmir crisis. By fielding former

militants and giving them all-out support, the army and the BSF only reinforced the sense of alienation...

By encouraging surrendered militants to don the political mantle, the men in olive green are only creating more problem areas...The surrendered militants are now behaving like mini warlords... And it is with the help of these surrendered militants that the security forces came up with impressive turnout figures 50 to 60% in some segments.

... Kashmir is back at a crossroads, with the people feeling dejected, defiant and alienated. The militants have found an emotional issue - something that the movement had been lacking in the past one year - to try and bring people out of their homes once again. An assembly elections too will be pushed through, what seems to have been pushed instead are the Kashmiris who have only emerged with one feeling - not being given the chance to make their own decisions during an election. The poll percentage has shot up from 5 per cent in 1989 to 40 per cent in 1996 - a figure that represents neither the aspirations nor the will of the people. ...

**(Source: The India Today, 15 June, 1996)**

## Sabina Inderjit on Election in J&K

"People came on their own and voted, and in large numbers" was the state government's statement, while the refrain among the Kashmiris was "we were threatened, taken out of our homes and forced by the Army to vote".

Amid these claims and counter-claims, polling was held in the Baramullah and the Anantnag Lok Sabha constituencies.. under unprecedented security. Uniformed men could be seen swarming the districts in the Valley as mediapersons travelled through towns and villages in the area. The state government, however, denied all involvement of the security forces in the polling process. It maintained that "there had been no incidence of violence, no rigging, no booth capturing and no complaint by any candidate". The Army was only ensuring an environment for elections. ...

**(Source: The Times of India, 24 May, 1996)**

This inaccurate image of Islam became one often received ideas of Europe and it continues to affect perceptions of the Muslim world. The problem has been compounded by the fact that, for the first time in Islamic history, Muslims have begun to cultivate a passionate hatred of the West. In part this is due to European and American behaviour in the Islamic world... We should also remember that 'fundamentalism' has surfaced in most religions and seems to be a worldwide response to the peculiar strain of late 20th century life... It is wrong, therefore, to assume that Muslim extremists are typical of their faith."

**Muhammad - A Biography of the Prophet; by Karen Armstrong.**



## Abida Samiuddin on the Myth of the Muslim Growth Rate

Will Muslims outnumber Hindus in near future? "A minority can become a majority only when three conditions are jointly met: the minority constitutes a significant proportion of the population, the population growth rate differential is large and the duration is long", says Malika B. Mistry. Thus even if differential growth rate of the two communities remains as it is (an unlikely contingency), she maintains, "Muslims can not become a dominant group in India in the foreseeable future".

As a matter of fact a number of studies have found differences in fertility of Muslims and non-Muslims due to socio-economic differences rather than religion. Once these differences are accounted for, the fertility differences between Muslims and other religious groups will disappear. "Rele and Kantikar (1977) utilising data from Greater Bombay observed greater reduction in fertility differentials between other religious groups once the socio-economic variables were controlled... Many studies have shown that education is one of the most important social factors affecting fertility behaviour."

The projected image of Muslim women that they do not respond to the changing socio-economic circumstances must be understood in the backdrop of their literacy rate. According to a 1995 survey the literacy rate of Muslim women is 22% in comparison to their Hindu counterparts which is 44%.

It is also worth noting that majority of the Muslims live in pockets and in most of the urban slums the family planning services do not exist. According to a survey conducted by Shahida Latif (1990) in nine major cities, lack of education and employment were the major problems of Muslim women. Further, there is an inverse correlation between fertility rate and income: higher the income lower the fertility. Economic backwardness of the Muslim community needs no supporting statistics; it is an established fact.

Different religious groups are undergoing demographic transition at varying paces. Improving the socio-economic conditions of the community, changes in the social institutions, ameliorating the status of Muslim women and their work participation will help check the rising Hindu Muslim fertility differentials. ...

**(Source: The Nation and the World)**

## Gandhiji on Motherland

"All those who are born in this country and claim her as their Motherland, whether they be Hindu, Muslim, Parsi, Christian, Jain or Sikh, are equally her children and are, therefore, brothers, united together with a bond stronger than that of blood." **(Source: Harijan, 8.9.1946)**

# Supreme Court on Social Democracy and Secularism

Mrs. Valsamma Paul, Appellant v. Cochin University and others, Respondents.

WITH

Kerala Public Service Commission, Appellant v. Dr. Kanjamma Alex and another, Respondents.

**K. RAMASWAMY AND B.L. HANSARIA, JJ.**

**Constitution of India, Preamble - Social democracy - Meaning and contents.**

Social democracy means a way of life which recognises liberty, equality and fraternity as principles of life. They are not separate items in a trinity but they form union of trinity. To diverse one from the other is to defeat the very purpose of democracy. Without equality, liberty would produce the supremacy of the few over the many. Equality without liberty would kill individual initiative. Without fraternity, liberty and equality could not become a natural course of things. Articles 15(4) and 16(4), therefore, intend to remove social and economic inequality to make equal opportunities available in reality. Social and economic justice is a right enshrined for the protection of society. The right to social and economic justice envisaged in the Preamble and elongated in the Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of the Constitution, in particular, Articles 14, 15, 16, 21, 38, 39 and 46 of the Constitution, are to make the quality of the life of the poor, disadvantaged and disabled citizens of the society, meaningful.

**Secularism - Is bridge between religions - Provides security to followers of all religions.**

Pluralism in the keynote of Indian culture and religious tolerance is the bedrock of Indian secularism. It is based on the belief that all religions are equally good and efficacious pathways to perfection of God-realisation. It stands for a complex interpretative process in which there is a transcendence of religion and yet there is a unification of multiple religions. It is a bridge between religious in a multi-religious society to cross over the barriers of their diversity. Secularism is the basic feature of the Constitution as a guiding principle of State policy and action. Secularism in the positive sense is the cornerstone of an egalitarian and forward-looking society which our Constitution endeavours to establish. it is the only possible basis of a uniform and durable national identity in a multi-religious and socially disintegrated society. It is a fruitful means for conflict-resolution and harmonious and peaceful living. It provides a sense of security to the followers of all religious and ensures full civil liberties, constitutional rights and equal opportunities.

**Secularism - Inter-caste marriage and adoption - Are means to achieve it - Must be recognised.**

Inter-caste marriages and adoption are two important social institutions through which secularism would find its fruitful and solid base for an egalitarian social order under the Constitution. Therefore, due recognition should be accorded for social mobility and integration and accordingly its recognition must be upheld as valid law. ...

**(Source: AIR 1996 Supreme Court 1011)**

## Supreme Court on Succession and Inheritance in Muslim Law

### (I)

Newanness alias Mewajannessa, Appellant v. Shaikh Mohamad and others, Respondents.

**K. RAMASWAMY AND B.L. HANSARIA, JJ.**

**Mohammedan Law - Partition - Classes of heirs - 'A' predeceasing father, leaving behind a son - Father would get 1/6th share in estate of 'A'.**

**Mohammedan Law - Partition - Claim of residuary - Widow dies leaving behind only two daughters and one full sister - Each daughter would get 1/3rd share in a estate of widow - Remaining 1/3rd shares would be taken by full sister as residuary....**

**(Source: AIR 1996 Supreme Court 702)**

### (II)

Meethiyan Sidhiqu, Appellant V. Muhammed Kunju Pareeth Kutty and others, Respondents.

**K. RAMASWAMY AND G.B. PATTANAIK, JJ.**

**Muslim law - Property of Muslim minor other legal guardians competent - Demise of father - No Property Guardian appointed by Court - Sale by mother who is not guardian is void.**

**(Source: AIR 1996 Supreme Court 1003)**

## Bombay High Court On Guardianship in Muslim Law

Abdulsattar Husen Kudachikar, Appellant v. Mrs. Shahina Abdulsattar Kudachikar, Respondent.

**A.V. SAVANT, J.**

**Muslim Law - Appointment of a guardian of a minor - Minor son aged 5 years - Mother is entitled to custody - Mother not likely to remarry and earning Rs. 3,000/- p.m. - Father, a medical representative and was required to tour - He was also remarried - Held in the circumstances minor's welfare would be safer with his natural mother - Father allowed to visit the child during weekends and vacations - Question of taking him away during long vacations could be considered if at all, only after he completed 7 years of age.**

**(Source: AIR 1996 Bombay 134)**

## Gauhati High Court
## On Marriage & Guardianship in Muslim Law

Musstt. Rahima Khatoon, Appellant v. Musstt. Saburjanessa and others, Respondents.

**Smt. M. SHARMA, J.**

**Muslim Law - Marriage - Essentials - Any type of writing, any religious ceremony not essential - Even presence of Mullah, Kazi at the time of contact between parties can be dispensed with.**

**Muslim Law - Guardianship of person and property of minor daughter - Mother of said minor married another husband on death of former husband - Second marriage proved by registered document 'Kabilnama' - Such mother not entitled to said guardianship - Grant of guardianship to paternal grand-mother of minor, proper.**

**(Source: AIR 1996 Gauhati 33)**

## Andhra Pradesh High Court
## On Wakf Board

Sri Yusuf Qureshi and others, Appellants v. Moulana Mohammed Jamaluddin Deccani and others, Respondents.

**M.N. RAO AND B. ATCHUTANANDA SWAMY, JJ.**

**Wakf Act (29 Of 1954) - Section 11 - Wakf Board - Appointment of members - Order by Government - It can be inferred that Government was fully aware of their eligibility. ... Relevant file submitted to Chief Minister through Minister in-charge - Order appointing members by Chief Minister thereafter - No violation of Business Rules.**

**(Source: AIR 1996 Andhra Pradesh 187)**

## Amnesty International's Report on India, 1996 Human Rights Violations and Abuses

**Minority Groups**

The "minority" status of a group of people can be difficult to define because ethnic, religious and cultural differences suffuse the country. Some communities are national minorities, such as Muslims, Sikhs and Christians.

But at a local and regional level, even the majority can be in a minority situation. Similarly, local power structures can mean that a community that is disadvantaged in one region may not be so in another.

Politics in India are increasingly being defined on communal grounds. The resultant inter-communal tension puts an onus on the state to provide communities under threat with protection, and to ensure the peaceful co-existence of people with ethnic, religious or cultural differences.

However, it is in situations where state interference has been called for that some of the worst violations have occurred. In the past Amnesty International has responded to reports of communal bias in policing in Bombay and in the activity of the armed forces in Jammu and Kashmir.

Also reported has been the abuses directed against Muslim communities, for example by the Provincial Armed Constabulary in Uttar Pradesh.

**(Source: AI INDEX: ASA 20/05/96 - March, 1996)**

## Secular Imperialism
### Editorial, The Indian Express, 26 Mar., 1996

... Secularism implies a strict divide between the spiritual and the temporal matters, between the church and the state. Yet another approach allows a greater role for the state in religious matters... Benign humanism attempting to reassert the dignity and freedom of man against ecclesiastical tyranny in turn becomes a totalitarian humanism unwilling to allow an autonomous space for the sacred. As it evolved in the past 500 years or so in Europe, there has been a constant tussle between the two versions of secularism.... The Supreme Court judgement, upholding the Andhra Pradesh Charitable and Hindu Religious Institutions and Endowments Act, 1987 abolishing the hereditary rights of archakas, mirasidars and gamekars, seems to favour the expansionist role of the secular state. Justice K. Ramaswamy's observation, "In view of the settled legal position that 'the appointment of an archaka is a secular act..." reopens the debate about the scope of secularism.

It has to be asserted that traditions and customs, unless they are inhuman and patently unjust, need not conform to an egalitarian ethic of modern jurisprudence. The hereditary rights of the archakas is a customary practice, which could either fade away or be changed without state intervention. While the Andhra Pradesh Act provides for the continuance of traditional rituals of worship according to the precepts of the agamas - the texts detailing modes of worship in temples - it orders changes in the position and hierarchy of the priests. Though it is the devasthanams or the temple administration boards which are to contribute to the corpus fund out of which the salaries are to be paid, the state will remain the regulating authority. Is there any compelling need for a secular state to tamper with the priestly tradition? ...

# Sabeeha Bano on Muslim Women's Voices
# Expanding Gender Justice under Muslim Law

An opinion survey among Muslim women in a section of Delhi indicates that while the enactment of a Uniform Civil Code is a difficult proposition, the objectives sought to be promoted through the enactment can be achieved equally well by a process of reform of personal laws through the internal initiatives of different communities.

... The data presented here was collected from a sample of 200 respondents drawn from the Muslim localities in and around the Jamia Millia Islamia in Delhi as part of a larger study designed to find out women's understanding of the Koranic and Muslim Personal Law provisions relating to divorce, marriage and inheritance, etc. ...

Since one of the areas at the centre of the controversy over the enactment of Uniform Civil Code is that of marriage and divorce, the respondents were asked a series of questions about marriage and divorce. Of all the respondents, 86 (43 per cent) reported that their formal consent to the marriage was sought by their parents, and as many as 113 (57 per cent) said that no formal consent to their marriage was sought from them. Again, 198 (99 per cent) were married through a 'nikah' ceremony. The payment of mehr promised by their husbands at the time of marriage ranged as low as Rs. 100 and as high as Rs. 40,000.... Interestingly, as many as 37 (19 per cent) respondents reported that they did not know what was the mehr fixed at the time of their marriage.

For all the respondents except one, their present marriage was their first marriage. If is often believed that the ease of divorce in the case of Muslims results in frequent casting away of the wife. If our data is to be relied upon, it would seem that **divorce is not very common among Muslims.** This is as true of men as much as women as our question with respect to the marriage of the respondents' husband shows that in the case of 187 (94 per cent) respondents their marriage to their present husband was also the first marriage for the husband. Only in eight (4 per cent) cases the present marriage of the husband was his second marriage and in one case the present marriage was a fourth marriage. Of those husbands whose present marriage is not their first marriage, only eight (4 per cent) had divorced their wife and three (2 per cent) had married a second time af ter having been widowed earlier.

Even though the overwhelming majority of the respondents have never been divorced and only eight (4 per cent) have married husbands who had been widowed or divorced earlier, the large majority of them are of the view that the practice of triple divorce is iniquitous to women. As many as 164 (82 per cent) felt that the practice of triple divorce should be abolished completely, while 20 (10 per cent) thought otherwise and another 17 (8 per cent) did not show a firm opinion on this matter.

On the question of polygamy as many as 173 (88 per cent) want the provision for polygamous marries to be abolished completely, 14 (7 per cent) think otherwise and 13 (7 per cent) are undecided. Accordingly, on an overall assessment, as many as 76 (38 per cent) respondents felt that Muslim personal law discriminates against women, 70 (35 per cent) thought otherwise and another 54 (27 per cent) were undecided.

If such a large proportion of women feel that the provisions of Muslim personal law relating to triple divorce and polygamy are iniquitous to women and should be abolished or that Muslim personal law discriminates against women, the question naturally follows what they feel about how the reform of the law should be effected. Of all the respondents 76 (38 per cent) felt that Muslim personal law should remain unaltered which, in other words, means that in their opinion the personal law needs no reforms. The remaining respondents thought that changes or reforms in specific areas were called for. As many as 73 (37 per cent) felt that reform in respect of polygamy was called for, 62 ( 31 per cent) felt that reform in respect of custody of the child in the event of separation or divorce was called for, and 58 (29 per cent) said that the provisions regarding maintenance to a divorced or separated wife needed reform . Only one respondent also said that reform in respect to a woman's right in paternal property was required.

The broad consensus which seems to be emerging in Indian society with respect to the enactment of Uniform Civil Code is that such an enactment is a difficult proposition, but the objective sought to be promoted through the enactment of Uniform Civil Code can be achieved equally well by a process of reform of the different personal laws through internal initiative of the communities themselves. .. Discussion Data from the respondents shows that there is a clear understanding of the need for this kind of reform as well as a clear understanding of the areas where such reforms are called for. Our respondents' specific answers also go to show this broad consensus. The respondents were asked to indicate whether a Uniform Civil Code should be enacted, or Muslim Personal Law should be retained as it is, or it should be reformed. Only 29 (14 per cent) respondents said that Muslim Personal Law should be replaced with a gender-just Uniform Civil Code, and a roughly equal number 30 (15 per cent) felt that Muslim Personal Law should be retained as it is. Of the remaining respondents, 35 (17 per cent) felt that Muslim Personal Law should be retained with minor changes and another 57 (29 per cent) said that **Muslim Personal Law needs drastic reforms, but that these changes should be brought about within an Islamic framework.** There cannot be clearer indication for the leaders of the community and greater reason for them to initiate the process of reform than this testimony.

**(Source: The Economic and Political Weekly, 25 November, 1995)**

# Hasan Abdullah on New Agenda of Muslim Indians

The vertical and horizontal stratifications in Indian society, including the Muslim community, are well known. However, for most people, even today, the primordial identities such as religion and caste arouse passions (despite) the rational and larger identification as a human being. ...

The perceived discrimination and threat to life, whether realistic or exaggerated, on the part of Muslims, in addition to a host of other factors, provides an objective basis to the category called Indian Muslims. And, as society becomes increasingly competitive and self-centered, this primordial identity is exploited by the reactionary forces to serve the vested interests disguised as those of the community...

Today there exists only a fringe, apparently well funded and with questionable sources of funding, which is trying to keep Indian Muslims completely isolated. ...

The self-appointed vote-brokers of the community, though exposed by the demolition of the Babari Masjid... have quickly adapted themselves to the emerging situation. They have kept the agenda of Babari Masjid and Muslim personal Law at the back burner and are trying to emerge as the saviours by projecting the agenda of employment and demanding reservation in jobs and education for Muslims. Nevertheless, today they are forced to admit the absence of a monolith Muslim community. ....

Of late, the integrity of the reactionaries championing 'Muslim interests', is becoming increasingly suspect in the eyes of ordinary Muslims who perceive and identify themselves as Muslims - consider their primordial identity as overriding all their other attributes. The process has accelerated on account of several factors, the most important being the emergence of a sizable educated middle class among the Muslims in the North who will no longer allow the continuation of the agenda of yesteryear.

The agenda has to change, and reflect, in however distorted a form, the aspirations of this emerging section of educated Muslims. Taking a cue from the 'Mandal' phenomenon, the issue of reservation of seats in educational institutions and government jobs has come to occupy the centre-stage of reactionary politics. Fed on isolationism all their lives and faced with the prospects of unemployment in an increasingly competitive, demanding and also shrinking job market, and with the ascendancy of reactionary forces in all spheres of life, locally as well as globally, the educated Muslims appear to be getting misled by the propaganda on reservation.

But significantly enough, education is being stressed and sincerely espoused by senior educated Muslims, and the backwardness in this aspect is being perceived to be the fundamental reason for the poor socio-economic stage of the community. Now it would be no longer feasible for the vested interests to perpetuate the iniquitous social order through bribing (in the lager sense) the minuscule educated class and maintain their hegemony. ...

What is most significant about ... recent developments is that the Muslim community in North India, the abode of reactionaries and the most backward in all senses of the word, is not only involved, but is leading the educational movement.

It should be noted that the people and organisations associated with the mission of spreading education among Muslims are trying to carry the entire community along. If on the other hand the theologians of all the significant sects appeal to Muslims to support these efforts, on the other we find eminent intellectuals... and almost everyone of the (non-Left) Muslim educated elite lending their support to this renaissance.

Also it is significant that the discredited political leaders are, by and large, ... missing from the scene, although they are trying to appropriate the issue of 'reservation for Muslims' about which a section of people involved in the education mission are also quite agitated.

There are several other important indictors reflecting this shifting focus towards education.

... The replacement of the Babari Masjid by education as the focus of attention by the dominant section of Muslim community is a development of immense import.

It, therefore, becomes obligatory on the party of the progressive people of the country to participate in this ... awakening and not to let the reactionaries hijack and sabotage or distort the vital process of the churning...

**(Source: The Indian Observer, 15 May, 1996)**

"... It can safely be asserted now that the father of Muslim Nationhood was not Mr. Jinnah but Sir Syed: That all the arguments that Mr. Jinnah later advanced for partitioning the subcontinent were not only the same which Sir Syed used while opposing the Congress, but were apparently copied from the latter's utterances, because even the words used by Mr. Jinnah are, at places, the same as in Sir Syed's speeches and writings". (Rafiq Zakaria, Rise of Muslims in Indian Politics, Somaiya, p. xii)

# Mohammed Haji Saboo Siddik Polytechnic, Bombay

## An Introductory Note

... Mohammed Haji Saboo Siddik was born in 1885. Before he died at the young age of 23, he had provided, among other endowments, a sum of Rs. 18 lakhs for giving technical and industrial education for poor Muslim students by building an institute by the name of Mohammed Haji Saboo Siddik Institute.

Today, the autonomous M.H. Saboo Siddik Polytechnic, a unit of the M.H. Saboo Siddik Institution of Engineering and Technology, is being managed by the Anjuman-i-Islam as the Sole Trustee. It's assets exceed Rs. one crore.

The Institution was founded in 1936 as a trade school for turning out artisans in industrial arts and crafts. A major reorganisation in the curriculum took place in 1944 as a result of which a few more trade and certificate courses were started and a technical high school was also opened. In 1958, a three year diploma course in Civil Engineering was started and in 1963, two more diploma courses in Electrical and Mechanical Engineering were added. A three year diploma course in industrial electronics was started in 1981. In 1987, a three year diploma course in computer engineering was also started.

...

In the 70s, new certificate courses in television servicing, refrigeration and air-conditioning, interior design and decoration, diesel mechanic and mechanical draughtsmanship were introduced alongwith two vocational courses in electrical and mechanical engineering maintenance in the junior college section of the technical high school.

The M.H.S.S. Polytechnic also provides Continuing Education Programme (CEP) of six months duration (part-time courses) for trade courses such as two wheeler scooter mechanics, turners and fitters, welders and fabricators, book binding, desk top publishing (six months course), plumbing, civil D'men, tailoring, embroidery and screen printing (textile) for girls, screen printing (paper), radio and TV, mechanic training and courses in public speaking (eight week course). The CEP is a boon for drop-outs and factory workers.

The Polytechnic runs six months trade courses at the Community Polytechnic Extension Centres at Sopara, Uran and Padga in refrigerator and air-conditioning mechanics, motor winding, wireman, carpentry (furniture making), motor and diesel mechanics...

The Polytechnic provides for high quality, equitable and accessible training... to contribute to the economic and social development of society. It serves industry through ... post-secondary, continuing and non-formal education and training programmes that respond to rapid technological and social change. ...

### Courses at the Polytechnic at a Glance

**Engineering Diploma Courses:**
1. Civil
2. Mechanical
3. Electrical
4. Industrial
5. Computer
6. Interior Design & Decoration

**Engineering Diploma Course (Part-Time):**
1. Civil
2. Mechanical
3. Electrical
4. Industrial

**Continuing Education Programme**
1. Refrigerator/A.C. Mechanic
2. Civil Draughtsman
3. Welder & Fabricator
4. Turner & Fitter
5. Wireman
6. Radio & Television Servicing
7. Two Wheeler Scooter Mechanic

**Certificate Courses**
1. Licentiate in Electronic & Radio Servicing
2. Licentiate in advance electronic & Video Servicing
3. Computer Operation
4. Architectural Draughtsman
5. Refrigeration/A.C. Mechanic
6. Wireman
7. Construction Supervisor
8. Desk Top Publishing (Part-time)

**Trade Certificate Course (ITI)**
1. Fitter
2. Mechanic Motor Vehicle
3. Refrigeration & A.C. Mechanic
4. Mechanic Diesel
5. Draughtsman (Mechanical)

## Aftab Husain Kola on Bhatkal College

The Anjuman Arts Science and Commerce College established in 1968 at Bhatkal, Karnataka, has over the years grown into a famous college catering to over 1200 students. ... Established in the Islamic Anglo-Urdu High School building (it was) later shifted to the present campus on a hillock... sanctioned by ... Government of Karnataka, under orders from the then C.M. Devraj Urs.... The college alumni have done well academically on the university level. On the sports front the college has to its credit scores of university blues especially in the field of tennis, volleyball and kabaddi...

Seminars have formed a major part of the extra-curricular activities... A two-day all-India seminar on Socio-Economic Impact of the Proposed New Educational Policy and the Role of Minorities in 1982 was an instant success. The college's NCC wing has many feathers in its cap. Its students have had the honour of representing Karnataka in the Republic Day Parade. ...

Infrastructurally... apart from adequate number of classrooms, the college is well-equipped with laboratories, a library stacked with more than 15,000 books and subscribing to around 75 journals...The efficient and highly experienced teaching faculty led by an enterprising principal is the college's pride. Notwithstanding the fact that the college is run by Anjuman Hami-e-Muslimeen, a minority trust, it draws students from all religious groups....

(Source: The Nation and the World)

## All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat

**I - Life Members:**

1. Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi
2. Zulfiqarullah
3. Syed Shahabuddin
4. Mohd. Sirajul Hasan
5. Syed Ahmed Hashmi
6. H. A. Husami
7. Syed Nizamuddin
8. Abdul Kareem Parekh
9. Ebrahim Sulaiman Sait
10. G.M. Banatwalla

**II- Ex-Officio:**

1. G.M. Memon, Gujarat
2. Maqbool Ahmed, W.B.

**III - Institutional Members:**

**Uttar Pradesh Muslim Majlis**

1. Khalique Ahmad, Allahabad
2. Khalid Sabir, Delhi
3. Alam Badi, Azamgarh
4. Mahboob Ahmad. Allahabad
5. Hafizur Rahman, Moradabad

**Majlis Ittehadul Muslemeen, Hyderabad**

1. Sultan Salahuddin Owaisi
2. Akbar Nizamuddin
3. Ahmed Pasha Qadri
4. Asaduddin Owaisi
5. Syed Sajjad

**Markazi Jamiat Ahl-e-Hadees**

1. Abdul Wahad Khilji, Delhi
2. Sulaiman Sabir, Delhi
3. O.R. Wafa Siddiqui, Bhopal
4. S. Haq Usmani, Delhi
5. Zameerul Haq, Patna

**Markazi Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind**

1. Mohd. Abdullah, Meerut
2. Faquihuddin, Delhi
3. Mohd. Abid, Maharajganj
4. Md. Umar, Ahmedabad
5. Sayeed Ahmad, Muzaffarnagar

**Imaarat-e-Sharia, Bihar & Orissa**

1. Mujahidul Islam, Phulwari Sharief
2. Zameer Ahmad

**All India Shia Conference**

1. Pr. Anjum Quder, Calcutta
2. K.H. Naqvi, Lucknow
3. Shariful Hasan Naqvi, Delhi
4. Asghar A. Rizvi, Delhi
5. Mehdi Raza Khan, Lucknow

**Jamiat-e-Islami-e-Hind**

1. Md. Shafi Moonis, Delhi
2. Mohd. Jafar, Delhi
3. Rasheed Usmani, Delhi
4. Syed Yusuf, Delhi
5. Abdul Qayoom, Delhi

**National Conference**

1. Saifuddin Soz
2. G.R. Matto

**IV - Individual Members**

1. Mohd. Saalim Qasmi, Deoband
2. Mohd. Naseem Hamid, Kanpur
3. Habeeb Rehan Nadvi, Bhopal
4. A.R. Sherwani, Delhi
5. Ahmed Ali Qasmi, Delhi
6. Kalbe Sadiq, Lucknow
7. Mohd. Qasim, Madras
8. Riaz Umar, Delhi
9. Bahauddin Farooqi, Srinagar
10. Masood Khan, Delhi
11. Sulman-ul-Husaini Nadvi, Lucknow
12. Junaid Ahmed Banarsi, Bombay
13. Fuzail Hilal Usmani, Malerkotla
14. Iqbal Husain Khan, Allahabad
15. Mohd. Wali Rahmani, Patna
16. Ashraf Ali, Bangalore
17. Arshad Qidwai, Delhi
18. Abdul Mughni, Patna

(Contd. on page 284)

## Jamiat-Ulama-i-Hind: General Session, Bombay, 27 - 29 October, 1995(Resolutions)

### I- On Muslim Personal Law

... The Jamiat-Ulama-i-Hind... emphasises that the Muslim Personal Law is an integral part of Islam and any attempt to promulgate a Common Civil Code is interference in Islam... (and demands) the doors of interference... should be closed for ever.

It is a matter of regret that due to mental reservation not known, the government has not paid any attention to this extremely important issue. This attitude of the government emboldens the disruptive forces of the country to injure the spirit of democracy.

Therefore, the JUH demands ... that Article 44 should be deleted from the Constitution. ...

### II- On Babari Mosque, Gyan Vapi Mosque and Mathura Mosque

1. That ... the culprits involved in the outrage on December 6, 1992 ... should be arrested and suitably punished according t the law of our land.
2. Babari Mosque should be reconstructed at its original site according to the promise made by the P.M.
3. Adequate arrangements should be made for the protection of Jama Masjid Gyanvapi, Varanasi and the Idgah at Mathura...
4. The law relating to the protection of religious places should be strictly enforced and any move against religious places existing since before 1947 should be treated as a criminal offence. ...

### III- On Wakf Properties

1. Wakf properties be exempt from rent control laws.
2. Illegal/adverse possession of Wakf properties be vacated.
3. Special Wakf tribunals be set up for speeding up the adjudication of Wakf cases in every district...
4. Cases relating to Wakf properties be exempt from court fees.
5. The working of Wakf Board should be improved and their annual reports ... should be published. ...
6. Wakf Law be enforced throughout the country.
7. Central Wakf Council should be activised. ...

### IV - On Educational and Economic Backwardness of Muslims

1. The government should pay special attention to the provision of educational facilities for the minorities...
2. Reservation should be provided for Muslims in services and higher education according to their ratio in population. ...
3. For the ... religious education of children Maktab should be established in every locality.
4. Muslims should ... set up their own minority institutions including ... for technical education....
5. Residential hostels should be established in educational centres and cities...
6. A high level All India Educational Council should be set up to keep a watch over these matters. ...

# Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada on Azad & Pakistan Movement

... Maulana Azad took leading part in the Khilafat Movement along with Ali Brothers and had to undergo imprisonment. Azad was associated with the Congress and continued to be so till the end. Maulana Azad joined the Muslim League on December 10, 1913 and was associated with it till 1928. Addressing the Muslim League Session at Calcutta in January, 1928 Azad endorsed the Delhi proposal of Quaid-i-Azam. He said: "Delhi opened the way to the creation of such a state of affairs as would guarantee them a proper share in the future of India. Their existing small majority in Bengal and the Punjab was only a census figure, but the Delhi proposals, for the first time, gave them five provinces of which no less than three (Sindh, the Frontier Province and Balochistan) contained a real overwhelming Muslim majority. If the Muslims did not recognise this great step, they were not fit to live. There would now be nine Hindu provinces against five Muslim provinces; and whatever treatment Hindus accorded Muslims in the nine provinces. Muslim would accord the same treatment to Hindus in the five provinces. Was not this a great gain? Was not a new weapon gained for the assertion of Muslim rights?

In 1935 when Rajendra Prasad was negotiating with Quaid-i-Azam, Maulana Azad wrote to Rajendra Prasad on February 18, 1935 to take full advantage of the situation as he had found Jinnah in a conciliatory mood and considered him a person who could deliver the goods on behalf of the Muslims.

In a letter written to Rajendra Prasad on August 15, 1938, Azad made a critical evaluation of the Congress policy on the communal question, making a retrospective analysis of the communal question since 1928, he concluded that the Congress had delayed the solution of the Hindu-Muslim question. That was the main reason why it had taken such a complicated turn at that moment. His contention was that if "we had settled the matter at that time (in 1928 Jinnah was asking for reservation of seats in the Punjab and Bengal in case adult franchise was not established), the whole misunderstanding between the Congress and Muslims would have disappeared for ever".

From 1939 till 1946, Maulana Azad remained the President of the Congress and was critical of the Pakistan scheme. In July, 1940 in response to the cable of Azad, Quaid-i-Azam replied:

'I refuse to discuss with you, by correspondence or otherwise, as you have completely forfeited the confidence of Muslim India. Can't you realise you are made a Muslim 'show-boy' Congress President to give it colour that it is national and deceive foreign countries. You represent neither Muslims nor Hindus. The Congress is a Hindu body. If you have self-respect resign at once"

**Azad's Scheme:**

On August 22, 1940, Maulana Azad sent a draft scheme to Gandhiji for Hindu-Muslim compromise. This was intercepted by the British Authorities but after security was forwarded to Gandhiji. Following is the outline of the Azad's scheme:

(a) The future Constitution of India must be federal with fully autonomous units in which the Central subjects must be only of an All-India nature and agreed upon by the constituent units.

(b) The units must be given the right of secession.

(c) There must be joint electorates in both the Centre and the province with reservation of seats and such differential franchise as may be needed to make the electorates reflect the strength of population of the communities.

(d) There must be parity of Hindus and Muslims in the central legislature and the Central Executive till such time as communal suspicions disappears and parties are formed on economic and political lines.

(e) There should be a convention by which the Head of the India Federation should in the initial period be Hindu and Muslim by turn."

On receipt of this letter, on August 16, Gandhi sent a wire, "your letter I think should not be published. Writing fully." In the letter of the same date, Gandhi wrote:

"I did not infer from your letter that you are writing about my Hindus. Whatever you have in your heart has not appeared in your writing. But don't worry. We will talk the matter over when next we meet if you so desire. Whatever you want to say about the communal problem should not be said without consulting me and the Working Committee. I am also of the opinion that it would be better to keep quiet... party can give its opinion after consultations with you. They have the right to do so. Besides, it is their duty. My opinion differs from your (sic)... I do not feel the urge to do anything hasty."

**Azad's Personal Views before Cabinet Mission:**

On April 3, 1946 Maulana Azad met the Cabinet Mission. After concluding observations in his capacity as President of the Working Committee of the Congress, Azad said: "He wish to make view personal observations. The most important observation was: "There is at least one proposal in the Sapru Committee's Report, which deserves consideration though it has been overlooked in the heat of controversy. The report had visualised a Central Government in which Hindus and Muslims would be in equality but on the basis of joint electorates. Personally (he) felt that his proposal should be considered further." Sir S. Cripps asked whether the Maulana would himself agree that it will be necessary to have an Interim Executive which would have equality or near equally of Hindu and Muslim members. Maulana Azad said this had

**(Contd. on page 280)**

# 'Secular Worms Crawl Out of their Holes'

## Excerpt from Weekly Column of Executive Editor, Dopahar ka Saamna (Hindi), Feb. 3, 1996

Mumbai's Fench-cut dadhiwalas and Khadidharis (reference to the city's Marxists, "pseudo-secular" intellectuals and Gandhians... have been so wounded by the scrapping of the Srikrishna Commission as if they have been orphaned.

Who knows in which holes these dadhiwalas hid themselves when Mumbai's anti-national and pro-Pakistani Muslims butchered mathadi workers and even attacked policemen who were trying to bring back peace in Pydhonie area... These are the same dadhiwalas who came out on the streets to protest when the Babari structure was demolished in Ayodhya...

It should be remembered that this entire lot calls itself secular but their actions are always pro-Muslim... I would like to ask these Hindu hypocrites why they don't organise dharnas to protest the activities of Muslim extremists in Kashmir... (and) to demand the safe return of 4.5 lakh Kashmiri Hindus?...Believe me, even if their mothers or sisters were to be raped, these secularists would not respond with the same sense of urgency. Nothing is as important to them as worship of Muslims.

We do not deny that the Shiv Sena and Shiv Sainiks played a major role in the Bombay riots. Infact, we feel proud to affirm this fact. But, it must not be forgotten that it is not we who sparked off the riots. On December 6, 1992, angry Hindus removed Babar's kalank (shame) in Ayodhya and two thousand miles away, Mumbai's Pakistan-loving Muslims developed a stomach ache.

The bloody reaction was immediate. The Pakistanis who launched their anti-India war on the night of December 6 continued for a whole month. On the instructions of his father, Dawood Ibrahim (underworld don allegedly the main brain behind the bomb blasts in Bombay), defence minister Sharad Pawar rushed to Bombay to provide all possible assistance to the terrorist acts of the traitors... Policemen were scared to step out of police stations.

Hindus were being openly slaughtered. Cries of "Pakistan Zindabad, Hindustan Murdabad" had rent the air. Inside their own country, Mumbai's Hindus were terrorised with slogans like, "Burn the Hindus", "Wipe out India from the map of the world"... Hindus of independent India were being killed like slaves.

Until then, Shiv Sainiks and the Shiv Sena chief had kept their patience. Appeals were made to Muslims to stop the massacre. But they would not listen. They had a field day from December 6, 1992 to January 9, 1993. it is only after all this that the Sena responded. And, no doubt, first the sainiks and then ordinary Hindus taught a lesson to the rioters...

Did the Bearded secularists emerge from their holes then? Had they lost their underwear in December, 1992? These impotent secularists remained mute spectators to the atrocities committed against Hindus between December 6, 1992 and January 9, 1993... Why do they never cry over the killing of Hindu sons?

... Should the Shiv Sena take action or arrest these defenders of Hindus? Isn't this as if we sending our own freedom fighters during the independence struggle to the gallows?In fact, what is needed is that the present ruling alliance should honour all those people who had been humiliated earlier by the police or the inquiry commission. Those sainiks who were arrested under TADA or NSA (National Security Act) should now be declared "not guilty" and released.

This is the expectation of 90% of the people of Mumbai. If they had held the Sena and the BJP guilty... they would not have voted them to power in the 1995 assembly elections. This mandate from Mumbai authorises the alliance government to undo the earlier wrongs by crapping the Srikrishna Commission... By beating their breasts... secularists are committing a second mistake. Don't lose patience, this mistake too will be set right.

**(Source: The Communalism Combat, March, 1996)**

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**(Contd. from page 279)**

not yet been considered by the Working Committee but he could do this had not yet been considered by the Working Committee but he could do his best to promote this idea. Personally, he seriously doubted whether Congress would agree to parity at the present time."

On April 15, 1946, Azad made the first of his private approach to the Mission. Azad sought an intimation of the Mission's intentions in its interview with Jinnah, so that he might advice upon the likely Congress reaction. Cripps saw him but their conversation is not recorded".

It seems that on or about April 27, 1946 Maulana Azad wrote a private letter to Cripps, in which he said that there was no need for the Cabinet Mission to worry too much about Gandhi or his misgivings. ...

On May 25, 1946 Azad wrote two letters to Lord Wavell, one official as President of the Congress and the other personal letter. In his personal letter Azad wrote:

"This is a; personal communication which will, I believe, help to give you a clearer appreciation of the situation and arrive at a solution acceptable to all of us".

In his book "India Wins Freedom", Maulana Azad is critical of Gandhi, Nehru and Patel. About Nehru, Maulana Azad observed "Jawaharlal's mistake in 1937 has been bad enough but his mistake of 1946 (statement regarding Cabinet Mission Plan) "proved even more costly".

# Kuldip Nayar on Past's Shadow over Indo-Pakistan Relations

... Thinking in the South ... has undergone a sea change in the last few years. At one time Pakistan was too distant and Kashmir a North Indian obsession, not now.

Two developments have upset the South. First, many of the military and paramilitary men, who have died in Kashmir, hailed from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu... Kashmir is now part of their personal tragedy. And since Pakistan is seen assisting the Kashmiri militants, anger has got transferred to it.

Second, every bomb explosion or an incident of sabotage is traced to the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan. Militants, whether in the North-east, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh or elsewhere, are believed to be getting arms, training and money from the ISI....

The Government of India puts all the blame on Islamabad and every incident is attributed to it. The media reports all that officials give out, without challenging its authenticity. Minds have got conditioned. The South has begun to be as much influenced as ... the North... There is no sane voice heard or reported from Pakistan. The same is more or less true of India. It appears that the hawks on both sides have taken over.

Not long ago, threats to Pakistan at public meetings evoked no applause... But now, whenever they want to play to the gallery, the politicians bring in Pakistan. Some ... even go to the extent of mentioning Pakistani and Indian Muslims in the same breath so as to suggest ... a connection.

The liberals, if not the rulers, have to think hard how to tame the rivers of hatred which are flowing unchecked on both sides... Hostility is increasing by leaps and bounds. The three wars have not solved any problem. The fourth one is difficult even to visualise because the two countries have reportedly acquired nuclear device.

How do you bring down the temperature? No discussion, much less a sense of accommodation, is possible if the atmosphere remains tense. True, Kashmir is on the top of Pakistan's agenda. It is equally true that the Shimla agreement has made it clear that the Kashmir question is yet to be settled.... At present no government either in India or Pakistan ... can rise above populism while discussing Kashmir.

It is also naive to believe that the settlement on Kashmir will bury the hatchet between India and Pakistan. There are many hatchets to be buried. Kashmir is only a symptom, not the disease. The disease is the anti-India feeling in Pakistan and the anti-Pakistan feeling in India. It has also largely to do with the 150-year-old chasm between Hindus and Muslims in the subcontinent. ...

It is the same challenge facing us over and over again in a different shape. The past is too much with both countries. And it is not the recent past. It dates back to the times when the Muslims advanced their claim to national expression on the basis of religion and when the Hindus... say that all Indians were the same.

And history has been distorted to serve parochial ends. Wars between kings and overlords have been understood as wars between Hindus and Muslims. Muslims recall the days when they ruled India and Hindus see themselves as the rightful owners of Aryavarta (the land of the Aryans), treating others as intruders or plunderers....Nothing will be more futile than the argument whether partition was the answer... There was no other way out...

Has partition served the purpose of Muslims? I do not know. As far as Muslims in India are concerned, they are still paying the price. At least North India has not yet forgiven them.

In Pakistan people avoid the word 'partition'... I have heard they say that they are happy that at least they have 'some place' where they feel secure, free of 'Hindu domination' or 'Hindu aggressiveness'.

I do feel that the Muslims have been the biggest losers as they are now spread over three countries - India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Imagine the influence that their numbers - their votes - could have commanded in the undivided subcontinent! They would have been more than one-third of the total population.

Whatever the past, it is history. We have to begin afresh. The new relationship will have to be built brick by brick... Geography has thrown us together. We come from the same stock. Outside the subcontinent we get along very well. In several ways we are complementary to each other.

New Delhi should take the initiative to mend fences with Pakistan. By raising walls on the borders, we will only heighten mistrust and suspicion... To begin with, India should liberalise its visa policy... Ours is an open society. That is our strength...

**(Source: The Indian Express, 18 March, 1996)**

## Soli J. Sorabjee
## On Hindutva Vs Bharatva

... Will the BJP government last? Much depends on the official stand of the government in Parliament on the issue of minorities and its economic policies. Will it shed its obsession with demolishing mosques? Can Hindutva not be replaced with Indianness or Bharatva? How sincere will it be in the fight against communalism, casteism and corruption? Will it be able to resist the blandishments offered by the tribe of Ambanis and Hindujas....

**(Source: The Times, of India, 17 May, 1996)**

## Sabita Goswami On Santhal Massacre in Bodoland

The serenity of the lush green villages of Kokrajhar district of west Assam were suddenly shattered by war cries and drum beats. The ethnic cauldron that is Assam had erupted once again. The spark had been provided by the elections; the blood-letting by the Bodos began within 24 hours of the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) taking over the reins of the state.

... The entire Kokrajhar district is reeling under an emotional frenzy that has left many dead and more than two lakh homeless. Even as hundreds of thousands of Santhal adivasis flee their homes the authorities are trying to recover charred bodies from the smouldering houses.

The simmering tension in the Bodo Autonomous Council (BAC) areas came into the open with the recovery of decomposed bodies of three Bodo women on May 10. Although no one knows how they died, the Bodos had picked their target for revenge: the Santhals. On the night of May 14, Bodo tribals torched the forest villages of the Santhals...

Within 24 hours, the violence had engulfed the entire Kokrajhar district and entire villages were razed to the ground. From National Highway 31, one could hear screams and the sound of the madal (drum) that the panic-stricken Santhals were beating to signal danger. Thousands of adivasis fled to Alipurduar in West Bengal. The Santhals, too, targeted the Bodos residing near the Santhal villages, leading to a Bodo exodus as well.

In the run-up to the elections, the Bodoland Statehood Movement Council (BSMC) and the People's Democratic Front of Bodoland (PDFB) had forced the other political parties to withdraw their candidates in the Bodo areas. In the Santhal-dominated Gosaigaon, however, the adivasi Congress candidate Mithius Tudo and the AGP candidate, Rajendra Mushahary, a Bodo, remained in the fray. The Bodos then warned the Santhals not to support the Congress candidate. But the adivasis are believed to have voted Congress, leading to a split in the votes which gave Mushahary victory. This only further angered the two Bodo parties whose main poll plank was continuing the agitation for Bodoland. The AGP was against granting even autonomy to the Bodos, not to speak of a separate homeland.

Even as a strange inertia weighed down the administration the arsonists struck. Mushahary's house was a prime target; it was burnt down. The Director-General of Police, who apparently had intelligence information on post-poll violence even on May 10, was nowhere to be found. He had allegedly left the state without informing even the Home Commissioner!

The new government, too, was caught on the wrong foot. In its election manifesto the AGP had declared that it would not deploy the army in the state. Obviously, Chief Minister Prafulla Kumar Mahanta was hesitant to call the army in hours after he had assumed office. But Kokrajhar was burning and the violence was spreading to Bongaigaon district. The army was ultimately ordered out of the barracks to contain the violence. And with a new Director General of Police taking charge, the police administration too was back on the rails. ...

The ethnic violence has once again brought to the fore the issue of boundary demarcation int he BAC areas. These areas have witnessed several ethnic clashes since the demand for a separate Bodoland surfaced. There have been clashes between immigrant Muslims and Bodos and Bodos and non-Bodos. The Santhals have participated in the agitations but this is the first time that clashes have taken place between the Santhals and the Bodos. ...

**(Source: The Week, 2 June, 1996)**

## UK: SOAS Chair of Islamic Studies

The Governing Body of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, and the University of London's Vice-Chancellor have approved the establishment of a new chair entitled "The Kind Fahd Chair of Islamic Studies.... made possible by a 1,000,000 pound (one million pounds Sterling) endowment provided by ... King Fahd...

The new Chair will promote scholarship and research in the study of the Qur'an and Hadith from Arabic sources. In addition it is hoped that the Chair will lead to a graduate masters programme in the study of the Qur'an and Hadith from Arabic sources and establish a research centre in Islamic Studies. ...

## Russian Muslim Bodies Unite

Two Russia's biggest Muslim organisations - the Russian Muslim Union and the Nur Movement - signed an agreement in Makhachkala, the capital of Dagestan, to come up with a single position on the upcoming presidential elections... on June 16. ...

Russia has an estimated 12 to 20 million Muslims, and the number of Muslim organisations in the country come to 2,294.

# Jay Willoughby on the Cham Muslims of Vietnam

During the Vietnam War, the Cham Muslims of Vietnam supported FULRO (the French acronym for the United Front for the Liberation of Oppressed Races).

FULRO, an organization of non-vietnamese ethnic minorities living in Southern Vietnam, wanted to establish a separate military action against the Communists.

... In 1979 its members sought refuge in Cambodia (and) resettlement in North Carolina. Hanoi is still wary of this group and does not allow Cham Muslim leaders in Vietnam to have contact with officials of any overseas groups.

After 1975, many ... Cham leaders and elite were sent to reeducation camps in the north. One Cham member is known to have spent nearly 13 years in a camp near Hanoi. He and others were only allowed to return to their homes after convincing the authorities that they had no political interest...

Most Vietnamese do not understand the Cham language, or Malay (the language used by the Cham for instruction and the Friday khutbah) or Arabic (the language of Muslim prayer).

As a result, Hanoi prohibited the making of Friday khutbahs without the presence of a government representative, who had the speech translated word for word. Permission also had to be obtained from local and county officials for jum'ah and 'Id prayers, or any congregational gathering. Local Islamic schools were shut down and the people were ordered to learn ... Vietnamese so that the two peoples could understand each other. The government made arrangements to send teachers into the Cham areas to teach... Vietnamese. By 1978, Hanoi, apparently convinced that the Cham represented no threat, eased some of the restrictions.

Although politics is monopolized by the Communist Party, since 1986 Hanoi, using the Chinese model, has loosened economic and social controls.

Today, they... experience few, if any, restrictions on their religious activities. During Ramadan iftar gatherings and tarawih prayers, no government officials are present to supervise the events. The Muslims invite police, armed forces, and government official to join them in 'Id festivities. Many do, and there is no apparent tension or ill-feeling on either side.

**Cham Muslim Communities**

Cham Muslims are concentrated mainly in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), the provinces of Tay Ninh and Chau Doc, and the city of Phan Rang and surrounding villages.

Hanoi has one mosque for the foreign diplomatic community, but there is no local Muslim population. Ho Chi Minh City has thirteen mosques.

Several of these have a selection of Arabic and Jawi (Malay written in the Arabic script) literature and some copies of the Qur'an... The Cham Muslims' understanding of Islam is quite limited.

Tay Ninh province has approximately 500 Muslim families. Of these, 50 live in Thi Xa City, which has a mosque that was built some 20 years ago. Tan Chau and Suoi Day each have a mosque serving approximately 200 families. Tan Binh has a mosque to serve its 20 Muslim families. Chau Doc, which has more Muslims than Tay Ninh Province, has more than ten mosques.

Most Muslims in these two provinces are farmers. The Islamic books they have are more than one hundred years old. The imams have some copies of the Qur'an and books in Jawi, but the general population has no Islamic literature. There are Muslim schools for the children, but learning is by ... memorization and without comprehension... Mosques suffer from years of neglect, due to the poverty of local communities... Many mosques are now too small to accommodate the worshippers on Friday and during community gatherings. In most mosques, the men pray in the mosque itself and the little porch that typically runs around each mosque, while the women pray in the back of the outside...

Since the late 1980s, Hanoi has allowed Muslims and other religious groups to receive overseas funds for the repair or expansion of their religious buildings, but construction of new facilities is apparently not allowed. On the main highway between Phuoc Nhon and Saigon (about 350 kilometers)... many Catholics churches have obviously benefited from this infusion of money.

In order to educate their children, almost all Muslim communities in Vietnam want to build schools, whether as a mosque extension or as a separate building. Children in Vietnam... are taught in Vietnamese. The Cham Muslim schools... teach the Cham language and culture, as well as Islam. These schools do not impart the "modern" knowledge, which is taught in the Vietnamese schools and is essential to get ahead in contemporary Vietnam.

The shortage of basic Islamic literature is one of the factors for the very low level of Islamic knowledge, even among mosque officials. Since the final conquest of Champa in the 1940s, the official policy of every Vietnamese dynasty-monarchy-regime, regardless of ideology, has been to isolate the Muslims from the larger Muslim-world... (and to) assimilate them.

Also, after various military conflicts, the Cham (usually the losers) saw their elite either executed or exiled. As a result, almost no Cham Muslims today can understand the Qur'an, even though they read it. Only a few of the educated Cham understand Hadith and other literature.

The language of Islamic literature and instruction is Jawi, Rumi, or Malay written in the Latin script as in

Malaysia and Indonesia; although not much literature is available.

Islamic material can be sent directly to people in Vietnam, but it is long process and there is no guarantee that Hanoi will not return it. ...It is much easier for visitors to hand carry literature in and then leave it behind. Now that the once restricted dispora of Cham Muslims are allowed to enter Vietnam, many do this when visiting relatives...

Hanoi now allows qualified young people to study abroad, but most Cham Muslims are not high school graduates. The young Chams seem to have two choices: either follow their parents into the traditional occupations of farming or fishing, or else move to Saigon or a large regional city in hopes of finding a job.

This is often the only way to earn enough money to ease the hardships of a typical Vietnamese family. There is almost no incentive to become a guru (a religious instructor), for they receive no fixed salary and are dependent on what the parents of their students can afford to pay them, either in cash or in kind. Cham parents do encourage their children to acquire a modern education...

There is massive poverty in the rural areas. Those living in rural areas labor in the rice fields...

The real Muslims have maintained their faith through their contacts with Malay and Cham Muslim communities living in Cambodia and near the Cambodian-Vietnamese border.

Although a minority, their ranks are increasing with converts... Until 1975, there was a thriving foreign Muslim community in Saigon, made up of mainly Indian and Pakistani merchants and immigrants who had intermarried with the local Muslims...

After the verification of Vietnam, these Muslims were expelled. At the present time, there are hardly any foreign Muslims left in Vietnam, except for... diplomats and representatives of foreign organizations or companies, but the Cham have very little contact with these Muslims because the Cham live mainly in the north.

Vietnam is unique in one aspect. The local Muslims claim that they have a very positive image in the eyes of the Vietnamese. The few Vietnamese who have converted to Islam have not faced any reprisals.

Muslims are apprehensive that problems with Cambodia or more recently incidents with China, both over the northern border ares and over the Spratley Islands in the South China Sea, could alter the present positive environment dramatically.

In appealing to the world Muslim community, the Cham Muslims say that although they are a little known and insignificant minority, they should not be ignored by the ummah. It is amazing that they are still Muslim after centuries of isolation and hardship. They feel that their endurance should be rewarded...

**(Source: The Islamic Horizons, July/August, 1995)**

## TANZEEM: Organised Constructive Programme in Thane District, Maharashtra

... The Tanzeem is a charitable organisation for the welfare of the underprivileged Muslims residing in the rural areas of Thane district. They are invariably daily wage earners whose lives have been disrupted from time to time by communal clashes. The Tanzeem was formed following the communal clashes in 1970... In the following years the organisation has been able to institutionalise itself and has brought about a change in the lives of the underprivileged... (under its) care. The (present) activities include the following:

**Education:**

(a) The Tanzeem has set up 11 secondary schools in remote areas of the district... Education is free and ... facilitated by providing students with educational material, travel allowance....

(b) The Tanzeem manages two government-aided technical schools for boys and girls with 26 different courses including short-term technical courses in motor winding and electricity.

(c) The Tanzeem has set up Arabic madarsas in 40 villages.

**Welfare:**

(a) A monthly stipend is provided to over 100 widows for sustenance.

(b) A "Baitul Mal" provides financial aid to individuals for starting small business.

(c) Financial aid to needy and deserving students.

**Legal Aid:**

The Tanzeem provides legal aid in cases relating to individuals as well as the community e.g. The Jawahar Dargah Case.

**Construction of Mosques:**

The Tanzeem has helped in construction of mosques in 8 remote places.

**Liaison Work:**

The Tanzeem helps the needy in getting assistance from government agencies.

**Medical Camps:**

The Tanzeem has organised free medical camps to provide basic health care to children and women.

For details, please write to:

**The President,**
**Thane District Muslim Welfare Organisation,**
**Lucky Compound, Vanjarpatti Naka,**
**Bhiwandi - 421 302 (Maharashtra).**

**(Contd. from page 278)**

19. Suhail Ahmad Khan, Patna
20. Manzoor Alam, Tonk
21. Iqbal Mirza, Ahmedabad
22. A.S. Kashmiri, Deoband
23. Aminul Hasan Rizvi
24. O. A. Rahman, Calicut
25. Abdul Qadir, Allahabad
26. Syed Hamid, Delhi
27. A. Haleem Nadvi, Delhi
28. S. H. Abdi, Lucknow
29. M.A. Khan, Hyderabad
30. A.R. Qasmi, Delhi
31. Tahir Mahmood, Delhi

## Muslim Renovate Temple

In Sonepur and Narayanpur - two small towns in Western Orissa... a Muslim buys the 'Ram Sila' (for use in the proposed Ram Temple in Ayodhya) as a token of respect for Lord Ram. Similarly a Hindu woman bows her head before the mosque, only for one conviction she had inherited, 'God is one and Universal'

In Sonepur, a group of Muslim youths have reconstructed a ruined Hanuman Temple, hardly 50 meters away from the local mosque... As the evening prayer in the mosque finishes, a horde of Muslim residents with typical ritual attire enter into the Hanuman temple to offer their prayer...

It is spiritual equanimity, the act of forgetting all false masks to reach to the Divine, says Sikandar Ali while touching the steps of the temple.

The Hanuman Temple Committee, formed for the revival and construction of the temple, has a Muslim as its head. "The temple is just in our vicinity. It was painful to see a place of worship in ruins. So we thought it could be revived and used as a symbol of peaceful co-existence", says Wahid Mohammad, 25 the president of the committee.... When the Muslim youths came with the plan, the local mosque committee supported them. ...

In 1991... Muslim youths with some Hindu counterparts started the annual Ganesh Puja festival...

Thirty two kilometers away from this town is Narayanpur known as the twin town of Sonepur... The mosque with the chariot of Lord Jagannath in its custody is the first scene that one meets during a visit to the place. Here during the Ramlila, Muslim youths enact the character of Ram and build the bow and arrows for the players.

... Ramlila, Ganesh Puja and Saraswati Puja are the important Hindu festivals, Muslims celebrate these with reverence. During these festivals, they observe fasts and take only vegetarian food. Moreover, the senior most member of the Muslim community gets treatment at par with the Hindu head priest during the Rath Yatra....

## Vow for Vegetarianism

The Bihar Governor, Dr. A.R. Kidwai, has taken a vow to remain vegetarian for the rest of his life ... on the eve of Sri Sammed Sikharji (while) participating in the Shatabdi Samaroh of the All India Digamber Jain Mahasabha to carry out Pran Pratishtha Mahotsav in Madhya Lok Sansthan of Panch Kalyanak Mahotsav....

## Rakshat Puri
## On Diffusing Communal Situation

Last week a communal fracas was narrowly averted, due to the elders in two communities. The incident took place in a thickly populated suburb of the Capital. The suburb, Seelampur in north-east Delhi, is home to members of all the major communities. Somebody, obviously with the intention of causing communal violence, managed surreptitiously to place a piece of meat in the courtyard of a shrine.

There was of course an uproar when the discovery was made in the morning. Rumour spread and tension mounted. But the elders of the two main communities... immediately came together and decided that enough was enough of violence in the name of religion. Communal disorder had helped only either some politicians or agents provocateur or elements seeking other kinds of gain.

The elders talked among themselves, reported the matter to the authorities, together came out to quash rumours and disperse the tension which rises habitually on such occasions, and together undertook to wash and purify the violated area of the shrine. The potentially violent incident and the wise way in which they ... dispersed the tension leads the mind inevitably to dwell on the need for wider understanding of the difference between being religious and being "up-and-fighting" for "religion".... Some aspects ... need to be reflected upon... The first of these is that religion is a very personal belief. A person who recognises this for himself is likely to recognise it in the case of others. No matter how public the prayer sessions, the prayer itself is and has to be entirely personal.

The implication of this - a second aspect - is that in religion it seems necessary for one to pray oneself and not to impose one's ways of prayer and worship on others, who must be presumed to have their own private and personal religious beliefs, needing to be respected. This leads on to the third aspect - that religious devoutness is to be distinguished from religious fanaticism. Devotion comes from prayer by oneself. Fanaticism arises from a comparison of one's own religious belief with another's and an aggressive assertion that it is superior.

There is no known objective way to compare personal religious beliefs. All that might be said is that any personal religious belief which brings harm to another or violates the law needs to be condemned. For example, such things as the killing or maiming of "witches", human sacrifices, other kinds of socially harmful and legally violative superstitions, the deliberate rousing of religious passions for personal or party political gain and so on.

All considered, then, the elders of Seelampur have indeed set an example for others to follow.

**(Source: The Communalism Combat, May 1996)**

# Qeyamuddin Ahmad: The Wahhabi Movement in India, Manohar, New Delhi

## Review by Tilak D. Gupta

The book tells us the fascinating story of a movement that began with the objective of restoring the purity of Islam among he Muslims in the Indian subcontinent but grew to reveal strong anti-colonial overtones. In a way, the Wahhabi movement of the 19th century demonstrates both the possibility as well as the limitations of religious fundamentalism as a weapon against colonialism.

Much has been written on the Wahhabi movement since William W. Hunter's account of this anti-British rebellion. Yet, the movement in all its complexities, perhaps, still remains inadequately understood. Qeyamuddin Ahmad's study, drawing on varied English, Arabic and Persian records of the time, indeed, helps to enhance our understanding of the subject.

The author quotes from various contemporary sources of depict the nature of resentment among the Muslim aristocracy in particular against the East India Company's spreading tentacles over the country in the late 18th and 19th century. The steep increase in land revenue rates, resumption of rent free land holdings enjoyed by the Muslim gentry and the growing commercial hegemony of the company, argues the author, provide the economic backdrop for the Wahhabi movement. Besides, the unIslamic rituals adopted by the Indian Muslims and the prevailing corruption and extravagance among Muslim rulers, he points out, brought forth the urge for socio-religious reforms.

Ahmad makes an interesting point when he says that the economic decline of the erstwhile rulers led to their reduced capacity to patronise the scholars and theologians. That may partly explain the fact that spiritual figures were often influenced, overtly or blatantly, against the company's regime.

Sayyad Ahmad, the inspiration behind the Wahhabi movement, by way of his theologian-soldier background, was seemingly well suited for playing the role of a vanguard. The socio-religious manifesto of the movement fashioned by him, of course, urged its followers to return to the purity of Islam.

The author despite his sympathetic attitude to the movement concedes that Sayyad Ahmad was rather harsh on some of the Sufis whom he considered responsible for the present degradation of Indian Muslims. ... Some earlier works have also sought to highlight this fundamental aspect of the movement.

That the Wahhabis under Sayyad Ahmad fought, for a while, the Sikh durbar of Lahore in the North West Frontier areas, too, has prompted some authors to overlook the movement's anti-British nature. The book under review seeks to put the record straight by drawing attention to the developing anti-colonial character of the Wahhabi movement, specially at its later stages.

Drawing on many hitherto unpublished sources Ahmad has... shown that the anti-British aspect of the ... movement "was gaining ascendancy, more clearly since 1840". In fact, the book breaks fresh grounds in detailing and analysing the reorganisation of the movement after the demise of Sayyad Ahmad (1736-1831) in the battle of Balakote...

The author underscores the fact that Wahhabi leaders were among the first in colonial India to have been tried and convicted on grounds of waging war against the British empire. The description of the state trials of the Wahhabi leaders at Ambala, Patna, Raj Mahal and Malda, between 1863 and 1871, and the suffering of the Wahhabi prisoners at Andamans, bear ample testimony to this fact.

The author, however, enters a disputed terrain when he opines that Sayyad Ahmad, represented "a happy blend of spiritual enlightenment and practical efficiency" in his socio-religious ideas. It is one thing to grasp the objective reasons behind the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the early period of British rule but quite another to justify it. Given the insufficient evidence, his suggestion that the support base of the movement broadened in the course of time to include non-Muslims, remains debatable.

... Ahmad is on much stronger grounds when he reiterates that "the Wahhabi movement does not fit neatly into any one of the categories into which the study of the history of early resistance to foreign rule has been divided chronologically and thematically".

The movement, as it appears from the book, at one level, was the continuation of the inherent anti-firangi mindset of the Muslim ruling classes. At another plane, it also had an agrarian content in spite of its communal exclusiveness, as evident from the struggles led by Titu Mir in Bengal... Such communal exclusiveness is understandable in the social milieu of the 19th century...

## K.M. Munshi on Ali Brothers

"Even during their honeymoon with the Congress, the Ali Brothers (Shaukat Ali and Muhammad Ali) were not slow to shout from the housetops that the Muslims were a master Race qua the Hindus. Muhammad Ali declared: 'Yes, according to my religion and creed I do hold an adulterous and a fallen Mussalman to be better than Mr. Gandhi'

## Some Books of Interest

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| AHMAD, QEYAMUDDIN | : | The Wahhabi Movement in India. New Delhi: Manohar Publishers & Distributors. |
| AMMAN, MIR | : | A Tale of Four Dervishes. Translated by Mohd. Zaki. Penguin Books. |
| CHAKRABARTI, DILIP K. | : | The Archaeology of Ancient Indian Cities. Oxford. |
| COWASJEE, SAROS & DUGGAL, K.S. (ed) | : | Orphans of the Storm: Stories of the Partition of India. |
| GAUTIER, FRANCOIS | : | Rewriting Indian History. New Delhi: Vikas. |
| HIRO, DILIP & | : | Between Marx and Muhammad: The Changing Face of Central Asia. Harper Collins. |
| HYDER, QURRATULAIN | : | The Sound of Falling Leaves. Sahitya Akademi. |
| JAYAWARDENA, KUMARI | : | Women, the State and Cultural Identity in South Asia |
| KHAN, SARDAR SHAUKAT HAYAT | : | The Nation That Lost Its Soul. Lahore. |
| MAHMUD, SHABANA | : | Urdu Language and Literature: A Bibliography of Sources in Europea Languages, London, Mansell, 1992 |
| MALIK, YOGENDRA K. & V.B. SINGH | : | Hindu Nationalists in India: The Rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party. Vistaar. |
| MATTHEWS, DAVID | : | An Anthology of Urdu Verse in English. Oxford. |
| MUSHIR-UL-HASAN (ed) | : | India Partitioned ( 2 Volumes). Roli Books. |
| SHIV K. KUMAR | : | Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Selected Poems. Viking. |
| SINGH, TAVLEEN | : | Kashmir: A Tragedy of Errors. Viking. |
| SMITH, ANTHONY D. | : | Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era. |



* **NAJMA HEPTULLA** elected to the Executive Council of the 135-member, Inter-Parliamentary Union. New Delhi, 15 October, 1995.

* **HAMIDULLA** gets Bihari Puraskar, 1995. New Delhi, 19 October, 1995.

* **WAHIDUDDIN KHAN** selected for Award on completion of second year by Delhi Government. New Delhi, 22 November, 1995.

* **RAZIA PATEL** selected for K.K. Birla Foundation Fellowship, 1995-97. Patna, 23 November, 1995.

* **E.A. SIDDIQ** awarded Norman Borlaug Award. New Delhi, 9 December, 1995.

* **AFZAL AHMAD** awarded Shiromani Award. Aligarh, 14 December, 1995.

* **ABUL HASAN SIDDIQUI** receives membership of New York Akademy of Sciences. Aligarh, 14 December, 1995.

* **FAROOQ NAZKI,** Kashmiri selected for Sahitya Akademi Award for 1995. New Delhi, 15 December, 1995.

* **REFAT SAROSH** awarded Sahitya Akademi's Urdu Translation Award. New Delhi, 16 December, 1995.

* **ARUNA ASIF ALI** selected for National Citizen's Award, 1994. New Delhi, 25 December, 1995.

* **MOHD. MASON MIAN LASKAR** receives Shram Shri Awards. New Delhi, 27 December, 1995.

* **PALOLI MD. KUTTY AND K.E. ISMAIL** appointed Minister for Local Governments & Wakf and Revenue respectively in Kerala Government. 22 May, 1996


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| 1994 | 200 |

# Chronology of the Month
## (16 April - 15 May, 1996)

### NATIONAL POLITICS

**Constitution:** Supreme Court leaves it to Constitutional Bench to decide the issue of use of religion in election **(16 April)**.

**General Election:** Held in three phases (27 April, 2 May and 7 May), results in a hung parliament, as universally predicted, with the BJP emerging as the single largest party, the Congress as the second and the L.F. as the third **(10 May)**. Lok Sabha dissolved **(11 May)**. New Lok Sabha formally constituted **(15 May)**.

**Formation of Government:** P.M. Narasimha Rao resigns **(10 May)**. Congress Parliamentary Party re-elects Rao as Leader, despite anti-Rao campaign. Congress CWC and then PP decide to oppose BJP and support 'secular forces' on forming government **(12 May)**. Congress offers to support CPM Leader Jyoti Basu as P.M. of a LF-JD Government. CPM decides against leading or even participating in coalition government **(13 May)**. BJP seeks support of DMK, TDP, AGP (Tamilnadu, AP and Assam) but fails. Akali Dal pledges support to BJP **(13 May)**. Third Front under leadership of Deve Gowda, consisting of JD, SP, LF, DMK, TMC, TDP, AGP and Congress(Tewari) stakes claim to form government and seeks Congress support **(14 May)**. Congress extends written support **(15 May)**. Shiv Sena leader Thackeray threatens 'chaos' if BJP-Shiv Sena not allowed to form government. In the meantime, President Sharma invites BJP Leader A.B. Vajpayee to form government **(15 May)**. Move criticised by many jurists.

**Congress:** P.M. Narasimha Rao warns against tinkering with personal law **(2 April)**.

**JD:** Manifesto released **(15 April)**.

**Left Parties:** CPI and CPM differ on joining coalition government.

**BJP:** Vajpayee denies any switch on Hindutva **(18 April)**. Advani's Yatra receives lukewarm response **(21 April)**. Vajpayee threatens to prosecute Rao, when in power **(22 April)**. BJP restores Ayodhya issue to Centre stage by insisting on mentioning it in party's election speech on AIR **(24 April)**.

**Corruption:** Governor Sheila Kaul resigns for alleged involvement in Housing Scam **(21 April)**.

**Assam:** CM Saikia passes away **(21 April)**. AGP wins elections and forms government **(15 May)**.

**Muslim Politics:** ***Qaumi Mushawarat Committee** appeals to Muslims to support Congress candidates in the absence of effective candidates of other secular parties, in order to defeat BJP **(26 April)**. ***Shahi Imam's Advisory Council** appeals to Muslims to defeat communal and anti-national forces by voting for ' a formidable secular party/group in the State'. Largely interpreted as support to Congress, though some members of Council reject Congress credentials as secular party **(19 April)**. Abdullah Bukhari confirms 'no support to any party' **(21 April)**. BJP complains to Election Commission **(20 April)**. Maulana A.K. Parekh rules out third force and appeals to Muslims to distinguish between those who demolished Babari Masjid and those who could not protect it **(22 April)**. All India Religious Leaders Conference supports secular forces **(25 April)**. All India Tablighe-Seerat supports Congress **(3 May)**. Bombay Ullema Council supports secular alliance. Majlis-e-Ulema Bihar supports Congress **(4 May)**. Congress actively courts Muslim theologians and divines for support. Shahabuddin reiterates call for support constituency-wise to the strongest secular candidate.

### KASHMIR SITUATION

**Political:*** Hurriyat leaders arrested in Srinagar on way to Army Hqrs. in Srinagar to serve Quit Kashmir notice **(18 April)**.

* Hectic preparations made for Lok Sabha election in State. * Hurriyat leaders attacked by 'militant elements' **(9 May)**. * Government employees begin 18 day strike **(13 May)**. * Hurriyat alleges conspiracy to blow up its Hqrs. **(14 May)**.

**International:** *OIC Contact group issues pro-Pakistan declaration. India accuses OIC of encouraging terrorism.

* US State Dept's Annual Report on Terrorism alleges 'official Pakistan support to militants'.

### BABARI MASJID QUESTION

**Maintenance of Status-quo at site:** Supreme Court stays Allahabad H.C. order. Lifting restriction on Darshan and Pooja in make-shift temple **(23 April)** and permits an appeal against the H.C. Order **(10 May)**. Singhal arrested while defying order.

### OTHER MATTERS OF CONCERN

**Wakf:** Government seeks extension of time for demolition of unlawful Wuzukhana in Jama Masjid **(22 April)**. H.C. grants 3 week extension **(23 April)**. Wuzukhana demolished **(11 May)**. Proposed construction of another Wuzukhana challenged.

**Id Greeting:** President Sharma extends Id greetings to Muslim community **(28 April)**.

**Commemoration:** *Seminar held in Hapur to commemorate 125th birth anniversary of Baba-e-Urdu Moulvi Abdul Haque. Urs of Khwaja Hasan Nizami in Delhi **(6 May)**.

**Obituary:** * Eminent academician Rasheeduddin Khan, 72, passes away in New Delhi. Condolence meeting **(4 May)** attended, among others, by V.P. K.R. Narayanan, Karan Singh, I.K. Gujral, V.C. Upendra Buxi and Abid Husain.

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