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VOL. NO. XVII NO. 198**CONTENTS****JUNE, 1999**

*Achievement, 282, *Chronology of the Month (16 April - 15 May, 1999), 287, *From
the Editor's Desk: Human and Muslim Goals for the Coming Century, 242.

AMU	: Late K.M. Panikkar on the AMU.	274
Babari Masjid Education	: MHA: Annual Report, 1998-99 on Babari Masjid Issue.	258
	: M/HRD's A.R. 1998-99 on Central Schemes for Minority Education.	270
	: Govt. of A.P.'s Order on Minorities Educational Institutions.	271
	: S.C. on Recognition and Management of MEI's.	272
	: Shahabuddin's Letters on VHP Propaganda about Madarsas and on Opening of More Primary Schools in Muslim Areas.	
Empowerment	: Declaration of National Convention on Empowerment of Muslim Indians, 9 May, 1999.	244
	: Extracts from Inaugural Address of Mr. Justice A.M. Ahmadi.	245
Foreign Contribution Government	: Government Report on Inflow of Foreign Contribution, 1996-97.	277
Haj	: MHA: Annual Report, 1998-99 (Extracts).	256
	: Report on Haj, 1999.	260
	: Shahabuddin's Letter to MEA, 5 May, 1999.	262
	: Composition of Haj Goodwill Delegation, 1999.	
Human Rights	: A.I. Convention on Human Rights and the Minorities.	275
	: Cases of Human Rights Violation and Payment of Compensation.	276
	: MHA: Annual Report on National Human Rights Commission.	
Indo-Pakistan Relations	: Pakistan Foreign Minister's Statement, 8 March, 1999.	283
	: K.R. Malkani on the Fall-out of the Pus Ride to Lahore.	284
Kashmir Question	: Report of the State Autonomy Committee, April, 1999.	264
	: MHA: Annual Report on J&K, 1998-99.	265
	: Syed Mir Qasim's Proposal "Autonomy on Both Sides of LOC and Soft Border".	266
	: A. I.'s Report on Disappearance in J&K, February, 1999.	268
Muslim Politics	: R. Krishnakumar on the 50 Anniversary of I.U. Muslim League.	254
Muslim World	: MEA's A.R., 1998-99 on India's Relations with Muslim World.	285
	: Turkey Foreign Ministry's Statement on Kurdish Problem.	286
National Honour	: Commemorative Stamps, 1947-98 in honour of Muslim Personalities.	282
National Politics	: Saifuddin Soz's Statement on Fall of Vajpayee Govt.	248
	: CPI(M)'s Statement on fall of Government.	
	: Shubha Singh on BJP's Loss of USP.	
	: Ajaz Ashraf on Congress Strategy in Bihar and UP.	249
	: H. Khare on Congress(I) Miscalculation and Image of Sonia Gandhi.	250
	: CPI & CPI(M): Statements on Various Subjects.	
	: Rumbings in Muslims of UP against Mulayam Singh.	252
	: Thackeray: A Façade for Sangh Parivar.	
	: Insaf Morcha: Statements on Formation of National Secular Alliance, 19 April, 1999 and on Mulayam Singh Yadav's Stand on Formation of Congress-led Government, 28 April, 1999.	253
Other Minorities	: Buddhist Scholar Tulsiram on Buddhism as a Distinct Religion.	280
	: Joginder Singh on Sikh Shrines in Delhi and Karan Singh on Hinduism and Hindu 'Minorities'.	281
Overview	: Neera Chandhoke on the Limits of Tolerance.	246
Partition	: Rafiq Zakaria on Tragedy of Partition.	279
Personal Law	: Bombay High Court's Judgement in Jaitunbi Case.	259
Reservation	: NCM on Representation of Minorities in Legislatures.	247
	: Asok Mitra on How the Caste System Deprives Lower Castes.	
Religious	: Shahabuddin's Letters to Wahiduddin Khan on Performance of Hindu Rite and to A.A. Engineer on Indian Unity and Religious Synthesis.	263
Assimilation	: Report on 'Muslim' Devotees of Hindu gods.	
Situation Report - Rajasthan	: Shahabuddin's Suggestions to CM of Rajasthan, 30 March, 1999.	257
Urdu	: Steps Taken by Government of Rajasthan for the Welfare of Minorities.	
	: Shahabuddin's letters on Incentive to Government Staff to Learn Urdu, on progress of Urdu University and on Publication of Electoral Roll/Ballot in Urdu.	273

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Human and Muslim Goals for the Coming Century

The second or the third Christian millennium has no particular significance in Islam or Islamic history. The 15th Islamic century began in 1401 AH (1978 AD) and in 1968, if counted from the year of the first revelation. In Islamic history, the first millennium began in 1578 AD when the Ottoman, the Safavids and the Mughals were dominant in the heartland of the Islamic World, stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

The Caliphate never recovered from the Mongol invasion and the sack of Baghdad in early 13th century. The Fatimid caliphate degenerated into a mockery and the Caliphate was transferred to the Ottomans in dubious circumstances, to be abolished by Kemalist Turkey in 1924.

During the last 400 years, the Islamic World has been in decay – politically, economically, technologically, culturally and even socially. Muslim land far to the West; Spain, had already been gradually lost to Islam. Economically, the West took over the trade routes. Militarily, the West surged past Islam, using new technologies. The Ottoman reeled under the counter-attacks by Russia and the European powers. Iran, never occupied, became a shadow of its old self. In 1757, the Battle of Palassy sealed the fate of the Mughal Empire, already in shambles and under attack by the Marathas, the Sikhs and the Jats.

Islamic seats of learning which had remained prisoners of the past, failed to change with the times and decayed.

The quest of knowledge and the scientific spirit was lost and the Muslim world was enveloped by the darkness of ignorance and illiteracy.

But numerically Islam continued to expand in Black Africa, in Central Asia, in S.E. Asia.

In the meantime, the world had entered the era of territorial nationalism and nation-states. Today, there are over 60 States with Muslim majority, though not one can be said to be an Islamic state. During the last 50 years, nearly 40 new Muslim majority states have joined the international community. The number of Muslims is at an all time high, over 1000 millions in a world population of roughly 6000. Indonesia, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh among them have about 500 million Muslims. The Arab states, almost 90% Muslim, have just over 100 million. Large concentrations exist in Central Asia, China and West Africa. There are large pockets of Muslims, largely immigrant, in Western Europe, the USA and Australia.

And yet, the World of Islam is politically unstable, militarily spineless, economically stagnant, educationally backward and technologically primitive and socially obscurantist and decadent. In the field of academic scholarship, Muslims are hardly visible. In the field of science, Muslims are nowhere in the picture. In the field of technology, Muslims are rarely to be seen.

But with the world ringing with competitive 'claims' about the coming millennium and with 'prophecies' about the twenty-first century, in particular, how can the Muslims take a back seat and remain silent?

The world Muslim community, the Ummah, is thus

claiming the next century as the Century of Islam. The spokesmen are not quite explicit on the nature and content of the claim. But it does reflect the universal aspiration – and expectation – that in the coming century, the Muslim world shall be better off than it has been in the twentieth century.

But behind this aspiration and expectation, there are some palpable desires and hopes. Perhaps some people think that the Muslims who constitute today roughly 20% of the world's population shall form a majority of the global population before the 21st century closes. Some think that 60 odd Muslim majority states shall be unified under a neo-Khilafat, recreate an Islamic empire which shall be powerful enough to protect the rights of Muslims living in the rest of the world as minority groups. Some think that this mighty force of resurgent Islam shall write new chapters of Islamic glory and establish its dominance over the non-Muslim states and shape the world order in accordance with Islamic principles. Some aspire that the next century will see an Islamic renaissance, not only in theology and philosophy, literature and arts but in science and technology which, with Muslim scientists and technologists working at the frontiers of knowledge, expand Man's intellectual horizons and his capacity to exploit the renewable and non-renewable natural resources at his command as Allah's Vice-Regent on Earth.

To live is to aspire but aspiration can also be, like dreams, divorced from reality – a phantasy beyond the realm of the possible. Indeed to pursue such dreams and phantasies would be like chasing a mirage in a desert or ploughing in the ocean.

Today, the Muslim mind tends to ignore the sordid reality of political dependence, economic backwardness and social decay. Most of the Muslim States are at the bottom of the development scale. Most Muslim communities, with a minority status in non-Muslim countries, replicate the international situation at the national level.

On the other hand, the Muslim mind continues to revel in the recall of past glories and identifies itself with the Umayyads and the Abbasids, the Fatimids and the Ottomans, the Moghul India, the Safavi Iran and the Arab Andalus. It constantly recalls its contribution to science and technology, to arts and literature, to the manifold facets of what came to be known as the Islamic Civilization, in a pitiful effort to forget the sordid present.

Yet a question persists in my mind:

If human beings are indivisible, if they are all members of one family, if Allah, in His mercy, has made them all Khalifatullah-fil-Arz, if all knowledge and information, all science and technology, all discoveries and inventions know no frontiers, if the natural resources, wherever they lie, are the common heritage of all mankind, shouldn't we sing of the glories of Man, Allah's finest creation – rather than of a religious community or a geographical region or a particular culture. No doubt faces have changed is man's march towards the conquest of his physical environment.

Different peoples, call them nations and states if you like, have held the banner of progress in their hand in their turn and led the march for a few steps, till they were replaced by others. The rise and fall of peoples – history – cannot be explained except as an unfolding or manifestation of the Divine Will which we may not be able to discern. How people emerge into history, lead humanity for a while and disappear into oblivion is a mystery. No people have a monopoly of divine pleasure for all times. At one time, the Muslim people were in the forefront of knowledge and technology. Today, the world is in the hands of the West.

So the right approach for a member of the human race is to aspire for a glorious future for Man, not as nations or States or peoples or religious or linguistic or racial or ethnic groups but as a collectivity which has been favoured with intelligence and will and promised knowledge and assured mastery over Nature.

But then another question gnaws my mind. But humans are not equal and the disparities, measured by any political, economic, educational, social parameter, are so wide that together they make sheer nonsense of our loud and persistent invocation of 'equality of man' or of 'human dignity' or of 'human rights'!

Indeed, those very disparities provide the answer to the question what should be the common objective of mankind in the coming century.

The disparities have largely arisen because when human labour and technology, capital and enterprise are applied to transform the resources into material goods for trade and consumption, the terms of exchange – the rules of the game – determine who shall be rich and who shall be poor. These terms of exchange are in turn determined by the world order dominated by the rich and the rich and the powerful in poor states.

Whatever the resistance, the objective must be the reduction of disparity and equitable distribution of income, goods and services, so that every member of the human race, can live a life (and die a death) of dignity which is his due as a human being, so that every child who is born, white, yellow, brown or black, enjoys equal opportunity to realize his potential like the equal number of brain cells and of limbs that he has been born with, so that everyone has equal access to education and health, to clothing and shelter, to job and environment. The world is slowly but inexorably moving in this direction. At the turn of the century, we can all take a vow to accelerate this movement towards Equality and Justice.

And this leads us to the role that all humanity cutting across the national frontiers and all communities within the national frontiers can play. Each strand of communication, sympathy and action, horizontal or vertical, will reinforce the other and can set in motion a 'competition' among communities and among States and among regions and among civilizations to reduce the disparity. Convergent action within each group will, in effect, reduce disparities between the communities, the States and the Civilizations.

Islam as I understand it, is a call for piety, not power. Piety (Taqwa) entails austerity to a point, but it also entails 'Ihsan' towards others, including the neighbour. Islam

stands on the principle of ultimate accountability for one's actions on earth. Except for the few who may have to account also for the use of power they held over other human beings, everyone shall have to account for his individual acts. Thus, since the measure of 'Kara'ma' (greatness) is 'Taqwa', the Muslims of the world should focus on their own backwardness and internal disparities. In Muslim States they should use state power to establish a regime of Equality and Justice in keeping with the essential message of Islam. Even in States in which they form a minority, the Muslims should gird up their loins, as well as strive for empowerment and participation, through the exercise of their democratic rights, to obtain a fair and equitable share of the national resources, the fruits of development schemes and the benefits of welfare programmes for themselves and other deprived groups. They can thus reduce the disproportionate burden of illiteracy and disease, of squalor and deprivation, of frustration and despondency that they bear.

But the objective must be clearly defined so as not to pour oil over the raging fires of Islamophobia. Muslims, internationally and nationally, should shout, as often as they can, from the rooftops that they do not aspire to convert the world to Islam or to achieve world supremacy and national dominance, that they aspire, to nothing more nothing less, than a fair share of the international and the national cake and to live in freedom and dignity like any other human group. To achieve not just tolerance but acceptance, whatever their position in life or their profession or vocation, the Muslims have to live their life in accordance with the Islamic model and achieve excellence and command esteem.

On their part, therefore, the Muslims have to come to terms with multi-religious, multi-lingual, multi-ethnic world, with States in which they do not command power, with a world in which they are not dominant. They have to remove the psychological block, the mental reserve, the false dichotomy between Deen and Duniya, between Religion and Knowledge and between Islam and 'modernization'. Through Ijtihad, through reinterpretation, through accommodation, through adopting the middle path, through avoidance of extremes, they have to imbibe the best elements of all civilizations and cultures, which are not repugnant to Islam, through integration (not assimilation) with other social groups in their states. They have to accept and absorb the principle of Democracy, Social Justice, Secularism, Gender Equality, Human Rights and Minorities Rights

And thus enrich their own lives, upgrade their communities, elevate their countries and change the human condition.

This should be the common quest of the people of all religions, races, languages and regions and of all communities and nations.

New Delhi,
1st June, 1999


(SYED SHAHABUDDIN)

National Convention on Empowerment of Muslim Indians Declaration, New Delhi, 9 May, 1999

The National Convention for Movement for Empowerment of Muslims in India was held on May 9th, 1999 at New Delhi. A galaxy of eminent Muslims from all over the country representing all walks of life and all regions of the country, who had scaled great heights in their respective professions, participated.

The Convention

- Noted with deepest concern and anxiety that the present share and status of the Muslim community in every major area of national well-being is significantly lower today than at the time of independence and well below its share in the country's population.
- Pointed out for the attention of all decision making bodies that this decline has heightened its sense of frustration and in consequence, alienation. Unless this trend is reversed visibly, effectively, and quickly, it could lead to despair with its inevitable and unfortunate fall out on the very socio-political fabric of the national body politic.

This will seriously impair the nation's unity, its strength and its ability to face the serious challenge of internal dissension and external threats to its smooth and unfettered management of the task of good governance. It will also compromise the nation's will and ability to look to the largest good of the largest number of its members with complete socio-economic justice as its major goal.

The task of remedying this situation of the Muslims in India is of the highest urgency, not just of the community and its leaders, but also of the nation as a whole.

The Convention, therefore, resolved

- that the Movement for Empowerment of Muslims has to be launched on a sustained and enduring basis, always remaining truly and positively secular and apolitical and prioritize for immediate attention on the four issues of
 - * Educational empowerment
 - * Economic empowerment including employment and self-employment
 - Political and administrative empowerment and
 - Social and cultural empowerment including community development, health and housing

And in furtherance thereof

Education

- Urges the government to take all necessary steps to empower Muslims in the field of basic and primary education, women's education and professional education and to establish institutions required to serve these objectives with efficiency and autonomy, safeguarding the legitimate interests of the community.
- Urges the government to secure through adequate

reservation, for the Muslim students, their due share in institutions of higher education especially technical and professional. While doing so, it should be ensured that a major portion of this share is earmarked for those backward Muslim communities who have been so notified in various states.

- Urges the community to strengthen the Madarsa system of education with all requisite financial support, especially providing for the teaching of modern subjects therein.
- Further urges the community that each and every one of its educational institutions pursues the goal of excellence.

Economic Upliftment

- Calls upon the government to recognize that all steps hitherto undertaken by the state have failed to ensure adequate representation to Muslims in public employment.

It, therefore, urges the government to take positive and affirmative actions, through appropriate reservation to provide employment to Muslims in various state services, including para-military and police, public enterprises, autonomous bodies, judiciary, banks and other financial institutions.

- Urges the government to ensure through a system of reporting and proper monitoring an adequate and continuous flow of credit to support the Muslim enterprises especially in the small and tiny sector.
- Urges the government to provide for the drawing up of a special component plan for Muslims and to ensure that they receive their proportionate share of various socio-economic development schemes and welfare programmes, both in terms of finances and numbers. This should be supported by a rigorous programme of reporting and monitoring its implementation.

Political and Administrative Empowerment

- Urges the government and various political parties to take serious note of the sharp and continuous decline of Muslim representation in Parliament and State legislatures in the last fifty years, which makes a mockery of the assurances extended to the community in the Constituent Assembly.
- Urges them to take all necessary steps to secure for Muslims a proportionate share of seats in Parliament, State legislatures, Panchayats and other local bodies.
- Urges the community to ensure enrollment of all eligible Muslim voters; resist by all peaceful and legitimate means any attempt to disenfranchise them; and ensure that they exercise their right to vote.

Contd. on Page 245)

Text of Inaugural Address (Extracts) at the Convention by Mr. Justice A.M. Ahmadi, Former Chief Justice of India

We have just completed 50 years of our Independence... The general impression so far as the Muslim minority is concerned is that there has been a gradual decline after the first 20 or 25 years and a sharp decline in the last decade. Is this perception justified? ...

Muslims constitute about 12.5% of the total population of India. In 1980 there were 46 Muslim members in the Lok Sabha (.8.5%), which number shrunk to as low as 28 (5.9%) in the just dissolved Lok Sabha. If we take the average from the first Lok Sabha to the last Lok Sabha, it works out to just 5.5% i.e. less than half of the percentage of Muslim population...

In the field of education ... Muslims ... are far behind their compatriots, with the drop out ratio both among male and female students being substantially high. It causes anxiety to know that the enrolment rate is fast declining, it stands at 62%, 16% lower than that of the majority community. Apart from the main reason being poverty and lack of public funding, the other reason is the lack of job opportunities. The percentage of representation of Muslims in government service is just about 2% or thereabouts which has given rise to a sort of apathy for education... The position is no better in private as well as public sector undertakings. This has been the main cause for frustration. Even in the case of availing of self-employment schemes... Muslims received less than 4% of the fund distributed in the 1970s and 80s.

Unfortunately the atmosphere created immediately before and after the demolition of the Babari Masjid has permeated the minds of a large section of the non-Muslim population, particularly in the urban areas, which has further aggravated the employment scenario for the Muslims...

... To what extent the minorities themselves are responsible for their plight and to what extent external forces are responsible has to be determined and to the extent minorities are responsible they must take corrective action. Education is one area which deserves immediate attention by the community itself. Of course having regard to the fact that the community is not affluent, assistance of the State would be necessary... This would help in narrowing the literacy gap between the Muslims and non-Muslims... This will help Muslims come into the mainstream to enable them to make contributions in different fields. ...

The flow of funds from government schemes do not reach the Muslim community in the proportion to which they are entitled... It is the duty of the government in power to ensure that the material resources of the state are

equitably distributed. This will also help reduce the inequalities in income which is one of the objectives of Article 38(2) of the Constitution.

It is high time that the Central Government and the State Governments take effective positive steps to increase the job opportunities for Muslims through affirmative action. The inadequate representation of minorities in government and public sector services has given rise for demands for reservation from certain quarters... It is time that assurance of fair treatment to minorities is fulfilled to remove the frustration that has crept into the psyche of the minorities and to restore the confidence in the fairness of the majority community.

(Contd. from Page 244)

- Urges the government to use its discretionary powers to nominate adequate number of Muslims to various Commissions, Committees, Panels, Boards, Tribunals and other collective administrative and regulatory bodies.
- Urges the political parties and the government to constitute without delay a Parliamentary Committee for Minorities, on the lines of the Parliamentary Committee on SC/ST, with the mandate to safeguard all the legitimate interests of the minorities, examine and supervise measures to protect their life and property, safeguard their civil rights, monitor the representation of the minorities in the public services and its adequacy and ensure that the benefits of government expenditure flows to them equitably in all sectors.

Social and Cultural Empowerment including health and housing

- Urges the community to introspect and remedy, without delay, the various social infirmities they are afflicted with.
- Urges the community to develop and maintain friendly social relations with all communities at all times and take initiative to open and maintain a constant dialogue with them to build up mutual understanding and tolerance.
- Urges the government to provide for proportionate representation to Muslim women in the proposed women's reservation bill.

The Movement resolves to constitute a Steering Committee which will take all necessary steps to follow up the resolutions passed by this Convention and to set up a secretariat at its headquarters in Delhi and extend its activities to various states in a phased manner.

Neera Chandhoke on the Limits of Tolerance

... For long, we have been told that the great virtue of Hinduism lies in its tolerance. Its tolerant character is the best guarantor of secularism, argues the Congress(I) in the CWC resolution of January 16. The party now plans to reappropriate Hinduism from the Sangh Parivar, in order to tell the people what it really means. Apart from the fact that Hinduism has not precisely been known for toleration of its own people, particularly the so-called lower castes and women, the strategy of the Congress(I) is deeply flawed. The instrumental use of Hinduism to reassure the minorities ... cannot but be highly paternalistic and patronising. Notwithstanding the fact that the religious minorities are as much a part of the body politic as the majority and that they are the equal inheritors of and participants in the nation, they are being told that the majority group tolerates them because that is the nature of the majority religion. What could be more condescending? What could be more alienating? What could testify more to the victory of the agenda set by the Sangh Parivar? And it would be laughable if it were not so tragic that the BJP has actually hailed the acceptance of Hinduism by the Congress(I).

In this connection, it may be fruitful to examine the various dimensions of toleration. For instance, why should we tolerate opinions and practices that we otherwise feel negatively about? One answer can be couched in terms of political pragmatism, that is, in terms of consequences. We can argue that it is less expensive to be tolerant than be intolerant. For, intolerance will necessarily require financial investment in a host of coercive strategies. And this may prove counterproductive...

Alternatively, we may fear that intolerance will lead to an increase or concentration of power in one institution such as a state based on the majority religion, and we naturally fear the consequences. Or we conclude that toleration will produce a happy, contented people. In any case, if their ways of life and beliefs are not injurious to us, why should we not opt for toleration? Therefore, we can employ a host of arguments to conclude that intolerance entails exorbitant costs, it is futile and it is unfeasible. On the other hand, toleration is cheaper, effectual, prudential and feasible. Toleration, in this case, is justified because it produces desirable ends.

However, assume that ... a targeted group may be too weak to resist or the people may be too passive to ward off intolerance, should we, in this case, practise intolerance because the costs are not so high? If, in other words, the consequences prove favourable, we practise toleration, but if they prove to be unfavourable, we abdicate toleration. Nevertheless, we cannot hinge toleration onto contingent facts, for it is a distinct good. It is just a preferable option for societies, because it is rooted in a moral principle that

all ways of life should be respected.

If we ground toleration in morality, then through moral reasoning we conclude that we should be tolerant because all people have a right to their belief systems. Alternatively, we can believe firmly that we should not interfere in another's faith, both on moral grounds and on the grounds of propriety. Or we can believe that people have good reasons for doing what they want to do and therefore their actions should be respected. People are reflective, intentional and purposive beings, and this gives us enough cause to respect their beliefs and actions. Correspondingly, we should restrain our impulses and inclinations on these very grounds. Toleration, therefore, is of great value because a tolerant society, morally speaking, will be much better than an intolerant one. It will respect its members, their beliefs and their actions.

However, several troublesome questions will crop up the moment we put forth the idea that toleration is a preferable foundational concept for a polity. For one, if toleration involves the acceptance of belief systems that we may not otherwise approve of, does it necessarily and logically follow that these belief systems should be protected against intolerance? ...

... Our society may be tolerant of the extant ways of life; but it need not necessarily see any value in propping up cultures and communities threatened by right-wing forces. Or the state may not feel any obligation to support ways of life that drastically conflict with the dominant religion...

... Howsoever tolerant, a state can easily argue that it is not its business to protect practices and opinions that it does not consider worthy - tolerate them yes, but not protect them. It is not its business to see that the practices themselves do not disintegrate. But this is precisely the issue on hand in our society that has for long silently witnessed attacks on the minority groups.

Now there is every reason to believe and hope that people in their personal dealings with one another will be tolerant, and that the state will not discriminate either against groups or against individuals because of religion. But we cannot stop at that for the entire discourse of Hindutva hinges on the claim that the country has tolerated the minorities for far too long. Whereas we can reasonably hope that individuals and groups are not persecuted for their beliefs, this by itself is not enough. **Toleration, therefore, may not be an adequate political norm for multi-religious societies; it may need to be supplemented by more definitive norms such as the rights of the minority groups to their religion.**

It may be worthwhile to remember what Ambedkar said in the Constituent Assembly... "Rights of minorities should be absolute rights. They should not be subject to

National Commission for Minorities On Representation of Minorities in Legislatures

The NCM has emphatically denied having taken any stand so far on the issue of the representation of minorities in decision-making bodies. It is a figment of imagination (of those) whose favourite pastime is fictionalization of the work being done by the NCM, said NCM Chairman Prof. Tahir Mahmood.

Reaction to a write-up titled "Minority Panel's Bias" published on 26 April, Prof. Mahmood told Hindustan Times that while the Commission has been receiving a large number of representations in this regard... At its meeting on 31st March, it decided to refer the issue to an Experts' Committee to be constituted by the Chairman. The Commission will take a stand after having it duly examined in the light of the national and international laws, the NCM Chairman added.

(Source: NCM's Press Release, 28 April, 1999)

any consideration as to what another party may like to do to minorities within its jurisdiction... I think that the rights which are indicated in clause 18 are rights which every minority irrespective of any other consideration is entitled to claim." This statement led to the enshrining of the minority rights in the Constitution. The Congress had been committed to the minority rights since 1928, and the post-Independence Constitution grants these groups the right to their religion and culture vide Articles 25-30. Therefore, if someone breaches this right is he not culpable of violating the Constitution? And should not the state penalise him for this exactly as it would penalise someone who encroaches upon someone else's property? Should not these criminal deeds be seen for what they are - a breach of someone's fundamental rights? ...

(Source: The Hindu, 22 February, 1999)

(The writer is Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Delhi.)

Shahabuddin's Letter to Neera Chandhoke, 23 February, 1999

In your article "The Limits of Tolerance", you have assumed that the democratic state in a multi-religious society is majoritarian or majority-dominated. To make it supportive and protective of religious minorities, the State has to move beyond declarations of toleration and promulgation of minority rights in the Constitution. It has to keep a constant vigil and continuously strive towards coopting the minorities in the structure and instrumentalities of State power, so that the State is not identified with the majority group. In other words, the State cannot remain a formal democracy but must evolve into one which guarantees life, liberty and pursuit of happiness to every citizen and every social group.

Asok Mitra on How the Caste System Deprives Lower Castes

... According to Asok Mitra, "the abiding contribution of British rule, however, was the establishment of parallel, layered, partly exclusive institutional channels of access to government from the grassroots to the top. These channels were structured into government departments or bureaux, to be manned at all levels by bureaucrats, avowedly to ensure that the equal laws did not degenerate in their dispensing into a hundred unequal laws between the topdog and the underdog. The upper castes all over India were quick to realize the significance of this source of power. There were three means of getting at the levers of power: one education, which qualified a person for jobs; two, jobs at all levels of a bureau and across bureau; and three, which flows from two, authority that man with a job wield over those who depend on his favours. These three layers, in the new context, gave the man at the bureau the means of diversifying and expanding not only his personal and family portfolio, but kinship or caste portfolios as well. The central of the three levers again is the job to which education is the feeder and of which authority is the product. A caste group or individual has power only to the extent it has access or links with jobs at each level of a bureau, which really decides which way the government gravy is going to flow... A network of jobs consisting of a network of upper and allied castes can ensure the power of life and death over a whole host of lesser castes and hold the latter down on their knees for all times. In rural India, this can be easily accomplished by controlling the issue of capital and working loans, inputs of production and raw materials, irrigation and water, on to storage and marketing of agricultural products. This tightens the stranglehold that the upper and middle castes already largely enjoy through the concentration of land, land rights and share of products - the most important means of production in rural India. It is access to and control of the relevant government institution and jobs that gives effective power over all rural activity, production and distribution and along with the political power. The government job was the thing... Monopoly of access by the upper castes to education and government jobs can be secured only by denial of access to them by the lower castes." The most formidable weapon that immeasurably added to this controlling power of the upper castes was the conversion of land into a marketable commodity under the new laws. This at one stroke placed all the lower classes defencelessly at the mercy of the upper castes. This applied with particular force in the 'permanently settled' areas of Bihar, Orissa and Bengal. Overnight the upper castes became doubly free and the lower castes doubly slaves." (Source: Mitra A, Census 1951: The Tribes and Castes of W. Bengal, Calcutta, 1953)

I Followed my Conscience Saifuddin Soz's Statement, 17 April, 1999

I have voted against the BJP-led coalition government today. I have voted according to my conscience.

When in March 1998, the President of the Party, Dr. Farooq Abdullah insisted that I should support the Confidence Motion moved by the Prime Minister Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee, I had to issue a strong statement against this direction and reminded the party that it had no mandate to support a party whose basic inspiration and strength came from a rapidly communal and religious organisation like the RSS. I had also argued with the party that the National Conference had opposed the BJP's manifesto at the hustings and it had no justification, whatsoever, to support the BJP-led coalition. Thereupon, the party working committee had met and decided to abstain from the voting and had also requested me to be in the party. I had accepted the proposition.

Similarly on the Government's resolution, seeking ratification of the Lok Sabha for dismissal of Rabri Devi Government... On the Motion of Confidence ... Dr. Abdullah **adopted a dangerous course of not consulting the Working Committee** and did not appreciate my earnest plea that the party could have at best abstained to avoid public resentment...

I had no option left. I decided to vote as I did. My vote represents the will of the people of Kashmir who have always stood for Secularism.

Shubha Singh On BJP's Loss of USP

... After the collapse of its Government, the BJP has been quick to wrap itself in a martyr's mantle. Cashing in on the public dismay at the prospect of a third general election in as many years, the BJP has turned the inability of the opposition parties to form an alternative Government into a means to accuse them of being irresponsible in voting out the Government. It is charging them of foisting another election on the country as though it is the responsibility of the opposition parties to maintain the Government in power. But logic is not a factor when it comes to political finger-pointing and name-calling.

The BJP's managers say that the manner in which the Government was defeated by a single vote has generated a great deal of sympathy for Mr. Vajpayee which should stand them in good stead at the polls. But does sympathy really translate into votes and seats? Unfortunately, sympathy is transient and once the actual process of a general election gets underway, it may begin to fade and what would gain importance would be the party's track record in office.

In these 13 months, the BJP has lost its USP, its special appeal of "Give us a chance, we are a party with a difference". The BJP finally got its chance in government and it has shown itself to be no different from any other political party. If the United Front Government had evoked general derision at the frequent public squabbles its partners indulged in, the BJP has been openly blackmailed and pressurised by its allies and coalition

On Fall of Vajpayee Government CPI(M): Statement, 25 April, 1999

... In the past one year, the BJP government signified penetration of the Hindutva ideology into state institutions and education, attacks on minorities, and reactionary economic policies. The end of the one-year rule of the BJP-led government, which has proved disastrous for the country, is a welcome development...

However, the efforts to form an alternative government have failed. The CPI(M) had been maintaining for the past one year that in the event of a breakdown of the BJP-led coalition, it is for the Congress party, being the largest opposition party, to form a government and the CPI(M) would support it from the outside. Such a stand was adopted by the CPI(M) despite basic differences with the Congress... In the past one week the CPI(M) consistently made efforts to see that the secular parties adopt a similar position. Unfortunately, the unity of all these forces for this purpose could not be achieved. **The Samajwadi Party, which has been playing a major role in the struggle against communalism, refused to extend support to a Congress government, contrary to its earlier repeated assertions in this regard.** This along with the stand taken by two of the Left parties, RSP and Forward Bloc, ensured that no alternative government led by the biggest party in the opposition could be formed. The BJP and the communal forces have benefited from this sectarian stance.

The Polit Bureau in its meeting on April 25, after taking stock of the situation ... decided that if the Congress party, after making all efforts, fails to muster a majority, then an alternative from the third force should be considered. Such a proposal would have some basis only if the Congress extended support... However, the Congress refused to do so... A party which expected other secular and Left parties to extend support to it to form the government, in its turn, refused to cooperate, stating that no one else would have the opportunity to form the government. The Congress party will have to answer to the people for this shortsighted stand.

Now the only way out of the political impasse is fresh elections. The Left, democratic and secular forces (have to) wage an effective fight to isolate and defeat the BJP...

(Source: The New Age, 2 May, 1999)

partners throughout its term in office. At the same time, the image of the BJP as a cohesive force has taken a beating, with the internal bickering and jostling for influence that has afflicted it while in power... It was not so long ago that it got an electoral battering during the Assembly elections in four states. ...

The BJP's main strength lies in Uttar Pradesh where it won 60 seats last time. But the dissension-ridden Kalyan Singh Government has lost the BJP a great deal of support in the State. On the other hand, after its dismal showing last time, the Congress can only gain some seats in that State. Can Vajpayee's personal charisma sweep the BJP into power? Not unless the voters are electing a Prime Minister and he is the BJP candidate in each constituency.

(Source: The Pioneer, 2 May, 1999)

Ajaz Ashraf on Congress Strategy in Bihar and UP

... The question Mandal raised nine years back still haunts Congressmen: Should they protect the interests of upper castes or promote the concerns of subaltern classes (lower castes, tribals and Muslims) alienated from the party for over a decade now?

This dilemma has become more acute in the year the Bharatiya Janata Party has been in power at the Centre. The Vajpayee Government's misrule .. belied the hopes upper castes had bestowed in the saffron brigade... This disenchantment was manifested in upper castes voting Congress in the November Assembly elections. Elsewhere in the Hindi heartland, they have demonstrated their restlessness with the BJP.

... Bihar's upper castes ... are bitterly opposed to Laloo Prasad Yadav. In the nine years of his governance, their stranglehold over local resources has been broken, control over the bureaucracy weakened, and the threat of neo-elites among Yadavs and Muslims completely replacing them is imminent.

More significantly, the BJP-Samata Party alliance has plateaued electorally, repeatedly demonstrating its inability to vanquish Laloo's Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD). For upper castes, a Congress revival – with its potentially larger appeal among diverse social groups – could have been their only hope of unseating Laloo and checking their slide.

Upper caste disenchantment with the BJP has been a prime catalyst in the revival of the Congress. For, the other two constituents of its erstwhile social base – Dalits and Muslims – because of reasons of security, rarely vote a mainstream party unless it has the unstinted support of one of the dominant castes. The converse is equally true: upper castes are reluctant to vote a party unless it stands a fair chance of emerging victorious. OBCs don't enter Congress calculations because they have never voted for it in the Hindi heartland since the Sixties.

Indeed, the Congress might have supported President's rule in Bihar had there been ... an impartial administration in the state. But the rethink in the Congress began once S.S. Bhandari was 'reimposed' as governor. Here, after all, was a man who flaunted his RSS affiliations...

... So the point is: why did the Congress choose Muslims over upper castes?

For one, Bhandari's – by implication the BJP and RSS – stint could have provoked Laloo and Mulayam Singh Yadav to harp on the Congress' anti-minority orientation. In Bihar, the Muslims are unlikely to ditch Laloo – and this Congress knows too well. But a concerted campaign by the two Yadav leaders of the Rashtriya Loktantrik Manch (RLM) about a tacit understanding could have marred its chances of revival in Uttar Pradesh as well.

The Congress strategy is to first recover ground in Uttar Pradesh ... because Muslims there are more amenable to it than they are in Bihar. They have voted Mulayam in several elections, but have failed to keep the BJP away from power. And, worse, the possibility of a Samajwadi party-Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) alliance has receded. These two aspects – and the fact that the BJP has managed to wrest power in Delhi – could just persuade UP Muslims to rethink their voting strategy and return to the Congress. The Congress feels an upper caste-Muslim combination could neutralise the BSP's role in returning fractured verdicts in the state.

It was UP rather than Bihar that the Congress wanted to save. Upper castes in UP have been restless with the BJP... A combination of Muslims and upper castes, Congress leaders believe, could give the party a toehold in the country's electorally most crucial state. Indeed, a revival of the Congress there will undermine the RLM, isolate Laloo and leave him no option but to support Sonia against the BJP after the next general election.

... The Congress ... thinks it stands a better chance to win back Muslims than Dalits... Indeed, Sonia Gandhi has merely postponed her battle to establish the supremacy of the Congress. But her success will really depend on how she eventually resolves the contradiction of the polarised polity.

(Source: The Pioneer, 7 March, 1999)

Amit Sengupta on Sangh Parivar's Socio-Psychological Campaign

... The "Videshi Sonia versus Swadeshi Atal" electoral discourse is decisively moving towards a typical Sangh Parivar socio-psychological campaign which stimulates hypersensitive terrains of the divided national consciousness. This is the politics of vicious symbolism which is the trade mark of the Sangh Parivar-Shiv Sena combine: The Muslim as invader/outsider including the Bangladeshi refugee; Ayodhya and Ram Mandir; the Kashi-Mathura hyperbole; the Uniform Civil Code and Abolition of Article 370; the Pakistan Phobia, digging of cricket pitches, attack on films ... the dumping of the Srikrishna Report and the organised attacks on Christians under a benevolent State Government in Gujarat with Sonia-bashing in the backdrop. And now, the anti-foreigner tirade, using Ms. Gandhi as a videshi symbol.

This is a racist, sectarian strategy, supported by Cabinet ministers and rabble-rousers in the media. This also goes well with Atal Behari Vajpayee's time-tested "moderate mukhota" politics; while he himself will not soil his hands; he will let his followers play with fire. And pretend to be an eternal Bheeshma Pitamah trapped in the wrong party.

(Source: The Pioneer, 11 May, 1999)

Harish Khare

On Congress(I) Miscalculation and the Image of Sonia Gandhi

The Congress(I) president, Mrs. Sonia Gandhi's first outing as a political leader has not exactly been a roaring success. Her own reflexes and acumen have proved inadequate to meet the exigencies of a fast-changing political scenario. Nor has she been well served by her advisers. Indeed, the first veritable crisis has exposed the distortions in the decision-making system she has put together; inevitably a number of serious miscalculations have been made, complicating the task of forming an alternative government at the Centre. The prospects for a Sonia Gandhi coronation look rather doubtful.

The first strategic miscalculation the Congress(I) and Mrs. Gandhi made was to proceed on the assumption that as soon as the Vajpayee Government was voted out, its smaller allies would be deserting the BJP combine. The Congress(I)'s expectation was that the "Kalpnath Rai syndrome" would gather its own momentum and that the likes of Om Prakash Chautala would be only too happy to switch sides, one more time. There was the additional expectation that there would be splits in parties such as the Samata, the Biju Janata Dal and the Lok Shakti.

The argument was simple, if somewhat tautological: because these parties and their MPs were extremely averse to facing the electorate they could provide the proposed Sonia Gandhi government the needed support. Nothing of the kind happened because the Congress(I) managers made the silliest of tactical mistakes: they revealed their hand prematurely. By parading the first "convert", S. Vijayarama Raju, a Telugu Desam Party MP ... alerted the rivals as well as exposed itself to the charge of horse-trading...

The second strategic miscalculation made by the Congress(I) was to assume that all those political parties and individuals who voted against the Vajpayee Government would be only too happy to line up behind Mrs. Gandhi and would feel blessed if they were to be ordered around by her office boys... It turned out to be a season for rebellion by the minuscule and unnoticed "small fries".

Moreover, there was an unbecoming presumptuousness on the part of Mrs. Gandhi's advisers; no attempt was made to humour leaders such as Chandra Shekhar, Jayalalitha and Mulayam Singh Yadav... Consequently, those felt slighted were only too happy to go along with any anti-Sonia Gandhi stratagem...

The Congress(I) unilaterally announced its preference for a Congress-led minority government, with other "secular parties" extending support from outside. And Arjun Singh announced: "Mrs. Sonia Gandhi would be

Prime Minister". This hamhanded approach was revealing of a preference for the old-style dynastic haughtiness; consequently, the smaller parties and individuals were not amused. And they do count in this age of coalition and fragmentation.

The resentment at the Congress(I) hamhandedness acquired a cutting edge as the various interlocutors realised that Mrs. Gandhi was relying on a small coterie, christened "Gang of Four", consisting of Arjun Singh, M. L. Fotedar, Vincent George, and R. D. Pradhan...

... Senior Congress(I) leaders felt involved, and were only too eager to tap their personal contacts in the rival camp to chip away at the Vajpayee Government's supporting numbers. But now senior leaders such as Sharad Pawar, Pranab Mukherjee, Jitendra Prasad, Manmohan Singh, P. A. Sangma and A. K. Antony found themselves left out of any serious business... Old animosities and suspicions resurfaced. This resentment apart, their exclusion deprived them of opportunity to display any political initiative as well as denied Mrs. Gandhi the benefit of wider consultation and involvement.

By contrast, the Vajpayee establishment managed to tap collective anger and contacts among the BJP and its allies to checkmate Mrs. Gandhi's political moves... The BJP was relying on a much larger pool of political talent and skills, whereas Mrs. Gandhi was manoeuvred into becoming a hostage to her own cabal.

That is why Mrs. Gandhi made the silliest of mistakes in announcing, on April 21 in the forecourt of the Rashtrapati Bhavan that within "two days" she would produce letters of support from 272 members... Instead of making a case that as the second largest party the Congress(I) ought to be invited to form the next government, Mrs. Gandhi was advised to bluff that she had the support of 272 MPs. This prompted Jayalalitha and Yadav to stage a drama of public repudiation of Mrs. Gandhi.

... There is no getting away from the fact that the myth of sagacity that was built around Mrs. Gandhi stands considerably weakened; rather her cronies has shown her as a woman a bit too eager to become the Prime Minister.

(Source: The Hindu, 25 April, 1999)

RSS on Sonia Gandhi

Sonia became Congress President when Christianity was on the wane. With her emergence, Christianity has received a shot in the arm in India.

- K.C. Sudershan, RSS Joint Secretary

CPI and CPI(M): Joint Statements On President's Rule in Bihar, 13 Feb., 99

The CPI and the CPI(M) strongly condemn the resort to Article 356 to dismiss the Rabri Devi government in Bihar...

The non-resolution of the land question is the basic cause of the tension in Bihar. Both the Congress party and the BJP have always sided with the landed interests... Bihar is a state where neither land reforms have been enacted nor land records have been allowed to be corrected. The internal problems of the Samata Party and the BJP have also influenced the central government...

The CPI and CPI(M) have consistently opposed the misuse of article 356 to serve the interests of the ruling party at the centre... Severely deplore this partisan and authoritarian act of the BJP-led central government...

On Revocation of President's Rule 8 March, 1999

The revocation of president's rule in Bihar is an important victory for the democratic forces in the country... Till the very end, the BJP tried to win the support of the Congress party and, having failed to do so, faced with certain defeat in the Rajya Sabha, it has retreated... This should be a warning to all political parties in the BJP alliance that undemocratic methods and subversion of federalism will not pay.

The Rashtriya Janata Dal government ... in Bihar has to immediately take steps to ensure the protection of the Dalits and the oppressed sections of the rural poor; ... provide relief to the common people (and take up) land reform ... in right earnest.

CPI: On Police Circulars in Gujarat

The circulars issued by the Gujarat Government (Police Intelligence Department), specifically targeting the Muslim and the Christian population of the state ... not only display bias and prejudice against the two minority communities, but are also a direct affront to our Constitution. The state-wide marking out of individuals belonging to the two communities by the repressive machinery of the State, is a grim reminder of the fascist method ... in Germany. ...

We demand that these offending circulars must be forthwith withdrawn, and the exercise of collecting information and preparing 'dossiers' be stopped.

(Source: The New Age)

CPI(M): Statement on Shiv Sena's Intimidation, 19 January, 1999

The ransacking of the office of the Board of Control for Cricket in India at Mumbai by Shiv Sena men is a reprehensible act. By this action, the Shiv Sena has declared war on cricket and the sporting community.

CPI(M): Central Committee On Attacks on Minorities, 13 March, 1999

The Central Committee noted with concern the increase in the attacks on the Christian community since ... December, 1998... These are not stray incidents but a planned campaign by the RSS and its allied outfits. Both the RSS and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad seek to cover up their hate campaign by citing the so-called threat of religious conversions. The central government has failed to discharge its duty of upholding the constitution.... The recent experience has shown that, with the BJP in power at the centre, the rights of the minorities under the constitution cannot be ensured.

The Central Committee strongly condemned the threats issued by the VHP and the Bajrang Dal about slaughter of animals during the Id festival...

PUCL: On the Situation in Gujarat

Gujarat has earned the disrepute of being a hotbed of communal tensions, this time the target being the small minority of Christians... The events (in) the Dangs district of South Gujarat are not ... stray incidents or accidental happenings. They have been preplanned as a part of a well-organised strategy that is likely to be repeated all over the country...

Perhaps the most distressing part of the developments in the Dangs is the attitude of the state government. They have either treated these events as trivial hearsay exaggerated by the opposition parties and the Christians or have viewed them with studied indifference that smacks of collusive involvement. The police have shown little interest or concern for the victims and often remained inactive. ...

The recent incidents in Dangs pose a grave threat to the very foundation of the Indian state and the agreed consensus underlying it as well as the Indian Constitution... What Dangs has witnessed is politicisation of religion, with state ... intervention that is unconstitutional and violative of secularism...

Reason for raking up the issue of conversion by the VHP BD can be traced back to the recent political developments, especially the BJP's defeat in the states of Delhi, Rajasthan and MP. Taking over of the leadership of the Congress party by Sonia Gandhi - a Catholic Christian - and her ascendancy has caused considerable anxiety in the BJP... Their waning popularity had somehow to be saved. The Dangs Christians provided an easy, soft target for them.

(Source: The PUCL Bulletin, March, 1999)

If the Vajpayee Government is to retain any measure of credibility, it must immediately take steps to see that all the culprits are arrested and put on trial...

The people of this country vehemently reject the Shiv Sena's intimidatory tactics and want quick action.

Rumblings in Muslims of UP against Mulayam Singh

Rumblings of dissatisfaction with the decision of the Samajwadi Party president, Mulayam Singh Yadav, not to support the Congress party can be heard in his ancestral village Safai in Etawah district.

The political upheaval in Delhi has left the Samajwadi Party vote-bank – the Muslims – disgruntled. A large number of Muslim population of Etawah – the city from where Mr. Yadav started his political career – now prefer their old guard, the Congress. "Twenty-five years after being like a wall behind him, we now feel we have been exploited," said an elderly Muslim in Etawah. The same sentiment echoes in Safai.

Mulayam Singh had become the Etawah College president in 1963 with the help of Muslim students, who are now drifting away from them. "Whatever has been done in Etawah is for the Yadavs. Muslims vote for him but no development work is done for them. We committed a mistake by leaving the Congress," said a Muslim resident of Emergency Hospital area in Etawah.

He had reasons to believe this. "After coming to power Mulayam had built a separate locality for Yadavs on the northern side of the railway station. We still live in the same conditions", he claimed.

What has been a result of this, in the eyes of the Muslims, is a clear distinction between them and the Yadavs. "He cannot win elections without our help in UP; we would show him this in the elections", said a 60-year-Muslim PCO booth operator.

In Etawah city, Muslims constitute about 40 per cent of the total population. And here, like in the rest of UP, most of the votes are polled in favour of a particular party which they decide earlier...

(Source: The Statesman, 3 May, 1999)

Muslim Votes on Sale!

... Recently, Amar Singh and another close associate of Mulayam Singh in Mumbai, an industrialist Naqvi, have sent feelers to the Deputy Chief Minister Gopinath Munde for striking a deal. As per the deal, the BJP would be suggesting the names of the Muslims in Maharashtra to Samajwadi who would give them tickets in the next Assembly elections. The BJP, of course, would be required to fund their elections. While this would ensure that Mulayam Singh cuts into Congress votes to help the BJP in Maharashtra, he would also be ensuring that the Muslim leaders in UP are also not fed by their counterparts in Mumbai, through what is known there as 'money order syndrome'...

(Source: The Pioneer)

Thackeray: A Facade for Sangh Parivar

A closer look at the outcome of the latest fracas caused by the Sena's aggressive opposition to the Pakistani players' presence on the Indian soil reveals an ingenious strategy used by the hardliners in the Sangh Parivar to halt, what they believe to be, Vajpayee's growing tendency to play a pseudo Nehru to project himself as a great liberal vis a vis the minorities.

According to reliable sources, the Sena chief Bal Thackeray's insistence on having Advani in Mumbai for a powwow before calling off his opposition to the Indo-Pak matches wasn't just a personal whim. Both Thackeray and Advani share, not only a warm personal equation, but also the deep-seated aversion for things Pakistani.

It was Advani, backed by the hawks in the Sangh Parivar, who had used the Sena supremo to articulate the saffron hardliners' opposition to the Prime Minister Vajpayee being "extravagantly secular" to the "enemy" from across the border. "Balasaheb (the Sena chief) willingly played the role of the spoilsport despite his avid interest in cricket and took the brunt of the nation-wide condemnation for spawning violence on the cricket grounds. But he has succeeded in articulating the hardliners' cause.

What Advani and his friends in the Sangh Parivar wanted to say and do, but could not, for obvious reasons, Balasaheb has done for them," a senior Sena leader confided to the Hindustan Times.

However, if any one had any doubt about the Sangh Parivar gameplan, the Sena supremo cleared it up himself.

Delivering his thanks-giving speech for the birthday bash organised by the Shiv Sainiks on the occasion of his 73rd birthday ... in Mumbai. Thackeray disclosed that his friend Advani was constrained by the office he holds and, as such, was not in a position to hit out at the red-carpet being laid out to the citizens of the very country that though nothing of sending terrorists into India to kill innocent people. "I had to step in, and say and do things that Advaniji could not possibly have because of the office he holds," he said bluntly. ...

Contrary to the general impression in the media and political circles about the Sena chief having suffered a setback when he gave up his opposition to the Indo-Pak issue, the Sena seems to have actually grown its tentacles far outside its home turf of Maharashtra. "Hordes of Shiv Sainiks spring up overnight as far as Delhi, Chennai, Calcutta and even a remote UP town like Muzaffarnagar and risk being crushed by police, without Balasaheb even stirring out of his Mumbai residence. Do you still think the Sena chief has lost out in the latest battle?" asks another Sena leader.

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 28 January, 1999)

Insaf Morcha: Shahabuddin's Statements

On Formation of National Secular Alliance, 19 April, 1999

"The defeat of the Vajpayee Government has been hailed as a victory of the forces of secularism and as a deliverance of the people from the clutches of communal chauvinism which, under a hidden agenda, was fast acquiring fascist overtones.

In the circumstances it will be highly frustrating and disappointing for the people if the secular parties failed to provide a stable alternative government.

Since many options are possible, unless the secular parties rise above partisan interests, and local considerations, no party, not even the Congress, which is the biggest of them all, may be in a position to satisfy the President that it commands a prima facie majority in the Lok Sabha and should be invited to form the government.

It is obvious that no government in which the Congress does not form the core will be stable or durable. It is, therefore, the duty and responsibility of the Congress to come forward and seek the support of all others to form the Government.

It is equally obvious that if one supporting party wishes to enter the government, some others may also want to. It may not be possible or desirable to satisfy all the aspirants as every addition will multiply the instability factor. Thus, there is no option but that the Congress have a free hand to form a government on its own, and the other parties extend support from outside. The CPM, the CPI, the TMC have already set the tone.

The BJP is down but not out. The real objective of the secular parties should be to defeat it in the next general election. Since the division of secular votes has always helped the BJP, the Congress and the supporting parties must come to a long-term understanding. As a quid pro quo for their support, the Congress must give a commitment to the supporting parties that it shall not contest the seats won by them, or in which they had the second position after the BJP, in 1998. A rational basis for a National Secular Alliance lies in applying the same criteria for the Congress and dividing the remaining seats on the basis of the profile of the candidates sponsored by interested parties and the social demography of the Constituency."

The only option left for the Muslims is to emerge as a strong political entity for forming a national political party.

- G.M. Banatwalla, IUML Chief

On Mulayam Singh Yadav's Stand on Formation of Congress-led Government 28 April, 1999

"By torpedoing the formation of a minority government by the Congress, Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav, President of the Samajwadi Party, has not only betrayed the cause of Secular Unity but given a fresh lease of life to the BJP and guaranteed its heading the caretaker government till the next general election. This is no service to the cause of secularism.

Mr. Yadav has tried to reopen old wounds and equated the Congress with the BJP. This is a false and untenable equation. With all its failings, the Congress has been ideologically secular. Indeed the secular state is a gift of the Congress leadership on the eve of independence.

All secular forces and parties and a vast majority of the Indian people have an interest in the continuance of the Indian State as secular, not only the Muslim Indians. **The common cause of secularism should not be communalised by projecting it as a concern of Muslim Indians only** as if secularism is meant only to protect the Muslim Indians and to defend their rights, as a religious minority. Such projection weakens rather than strengthens the cause of secularism.

Mr. Yadav has opposed the Congress proposition — though he was the first to call upon the Congress to take the lead and the initiative — only out of his fear and apprehension that with Congress in power, the Muslim vote, at least in UP, would slide away to the Congress.

Mr. Yadav should know that the Muslim votes of UP are not his monopoly nor are the Muslims his bonded labour, they will no longer serve as palki-bearers to take him, or anyone for that matter, to the doors of power and then be dismissed without due wages. Whether it is the SP or the BSP or the Congress or the RJD or the CPM or any other secular party, anywhere, the Muslim masses today aspire to partnership, a fair and equitable share in power, nothing more, nothing less.

Equal Compensation for all Life Lost Shahabuddin's Letter to CM of Delhi,

1 May, 1999

I am glad to know that your Government has decided to pay enhanced compensation for the victims of the anti-Sikh disturbances, 1984 in accordance with the Orders of the Supreme Court.

Since all human life is equally precious, may I request you to consider the payment of compensation to the next-of-kin of **all** victims of communal violence in Delhi since 1984. This would be a just and unique gesture and will be appreciated by all communities.

R. Krishnakumar on the 50th Anniversary of I.U. Muslim League

The Indian Union Muslim League (IUML), which celebrated its golden jubilee on March 9 and 10 ... in Chennai, the venue of its foundation, resolved to try and bring Muslims all over India under its banner and replicate at the national level its largely successful Kerala-model minority politics.

It unveiled a two-pronged strategy to encourage the formation and become part of a broad alliance of parties representing secular, minority and backward class interests (as an antidote to the fascist Hindutva) and to use that alliance to bring the Muslim community under the IUML umbrella (in order to further the party's own political ambitions).

In a way, the new strategy is a negation of its pretence until now of being the sole representative of all Muslims of India, not just Kerala. It is also an admission that despite the impressive gains that it claims to have helped Kerala's Muslims make, the IUML has learnt that communal pressure politics has its limitations.

Significantly, in the traumatic days of Partition, Muslims in the northern and eastern states, such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal decided against supporting a re-launched Muslim League although they constituted a sizeable percentage of the populations of their respective States. For them ... the sufferings that they were witness to were a reminder of the dangers of supporting a Muslim party in post-Partition India. Moreover, most of the Muslim League leaders of North India had migrated to Pakistan or preferred joining nationalist parties, mainly the Congress under Jawaharlal Nehru.

In contrast, Muslims in South India ... did not go through the trauma of Partition. Issues that affected that counterparts of the North ... did not often materially influence life or events in Kerala. What Kerala's Muslims shared with North Indian Muslims was several economic and social disabilities.

... The formation of Kerala gave a boost to the political potential of the Muslim community as Muslims constituted a significant proportion of the total population of the State in the Malabar region... Candidates of the IUML stood a good chance of getting elected from the northern districts (and perhaps only from there). The party soon learnt to use this solid support base decisively and cleverly to play with the fortunes of the two evenly matched coalitions, the Left Democratic Front (LDF) and the United Democratic Front (UDF) which often alternated in government. It also managed to win up to 19 seats in the State legislature, sometimes becoming the second or third largest group in the ruling coalitions and securing key ministerial berths. For a brief period, IUML leader C.H. Mohammed Koya was Chief Minister.

The policies of successive governments, of which the League was an influential constituent, hastened the economic development of the Malabar region, which had remained by and large backward. Even demands that had much emotional value for Muslims were conceded. For instance, a Muslim-majority district, Malappuram ... was formed in 1969...

The IUML now claims that the credit for the positive changes in the lot of Muslims in Kerala must go solely to it... The triumphs that the IUML marked through manipulation (at one point of time no government could be formed in Kerala without the support of the League or a group that broke away from it) encouraged it to think of a revival at the national level. But it remained a dream... Now, with the Congress (I) being in disarray and the Hindutva agenda alarming the minorities ... the IUML feels that the time is ripe to gather all Muslims in its fold.

However, it is highly unlikely that the idea will succeed. For one, despite the League's claims to having helped improved the lot of Muslims in Kerala, its record as a party "devoting attention principally to the religious, cultural, educational and economic interests" of ... the community has come under a cloud. If there has been any improvement in the lot of Muslims, it has come about because of the progressive policies, particularly the radical land and labour reforms, literacy campaigns and measures against social inequities, initiated by governments of the Left. The visible signs of affluence in north Kerala can be traced to the steady inflow of remittances from... A large section of its supporters continue to be poor and without education. The political victories would seem to have benefited the community only in terms of general morale.

Critics argue that IUML leaders work on the principle that political power flows from backwardness and ignorance. Apparently this political philosophy led to the formation of organisations such as the Muslim Educational Society (MES) whose social action programmes at one time overshadowed the League's agenda...

What appeared more important for the party was to stay in power using minority sentiment and claiming to be the sole representative of Muslims. This became evident when the IUML showed its reluctance to break away from the Congress (I)-led UDF when Muslims turned against the party in the wake of the demolition of the Babari Masjid. League leaders have tried to explain it away as a reflection of the party's political maturity, but ... the party was more interested in continuing in government than articulating the deep resentment within its constituency.

However, resentment among Muslims led to the sudden rise to prominence of two nascent parties - the People's Democratic Party (PDP) of Abdul Nasser Madani (who is now in jail for alleged involvement in the

Coimbatore blasts) and the Indian National League (INL) of Ebrahim Sulaiman Sait, long-time IUML president who once believed that dividing Muslims by floating several organisations was against Islam. Both these parties claimed support among a large section of Muslims in Kerala.

Interestingly, the INL and the PDP ... began to ... behave like the League's clones. All along, the IUML denied exploiting communal sentiment but always found it necessary to link its politics with religion...

The League points to the fizzling out of the INL and the PDP as effective Muslim political organisations as an indication of the continuing allegiance of Kerala's Muslims to the party. But the fact is that the downfall of the INL and the PDP began when these parties ... like the IUML, displayed an eagerness to ally themselves with one of the two coalitions in order to be close to power. These organisations suffered a loss of credibility and as a result, extremist groups such as Al-Umma or the National Democratic Front (NDF) ... entered Muslim politics.

With its plan to bring the entire Muslim community under its political umbrella, the IUML faces another political exigency in the only State where it has proved its clout. The Congress(I) in Kerala, with which the League has an alliance, is in no position to resurrect itself. Group rivalry affected the Congress(I)'s prospects in the 1996 and 1997 elections. The Communist Party of India (Marxist)-led LDF has refused to have any truck with (IUML) as it considers both majority and minority communalism dangerous.

The influence in Kerala's coalition politics of political parties that claim to represent religious minorities and caste groups is, however, not to be underestimated... Fortunately, the influence of such caste and community-based parties is on the wane. For instance, the Socialist Republican Party (SRP) and the National Democratic Party (NDP), organisations claiming to represent Ezhavas and Nairs respectively ... have practically ceased to exist. The Kerala Congress groups, which have their support base mostly among the Christian population, too have weakened considerably. A proposal to form a third front of communal groups proved to be a non-starter. And the League, whose tally of Assembly seats went down from 19 in 1991 to 13 in 1996, faces the prospect of being kept out of power for much longer than it bargained for...

In a way ... the League is learning the limits of coercive minority politics. The party, therefore, finds in the new national situation an opportunity to practise what it has learnt in Kerala's coalition laboratory and to seek to build power elsewhere. But it also finds itself constrained because it has limited support among Muslims outside the State. In September, 1998 it sought an alliance with the Rashtriya Loktantrik Morcha (RLM) and invited its leader, Mulayam Singh Yadav to Kozhikode as a prelude to a

path-breaking alliance... Nothing has come out of the proposal as no party would be willing to sacrifice its Muslim support base, especially in North India, by promoting a dangerous rival in its own strongholds.

An alternative the IUML has is to launch its own units in other States... One factor working in its favour is the threat of majority communalism... The idea is to feed on Muslims' sense of fear and discontent and also their feeling that the secular parties have not been sufficiently sympathetic to their needs and aspirations. In short, what the IUML now attempts to do is to redirect in its favour the Muslim minority's sentiments, self-consciousness and fear against majority communalism.

Indeed, the IUML has always denied that it is communal... But, significantly, in the 50 years of its contented confinement in Kerala - where the BJP is yet to win an Assembly seat - the League has not faced any threat from other religious communities or their political organisations. It is certainly not the League's own achievement ... but a tribute perhaps to the progressive strains in Kerala polity and (its) religious tolerance...

... Pursuance of communalism, however, could invoke dangerous response, if the party ... widens its base into the north and finds itself pitted against the Hindutva brand of fundamentalism.

(Source: The Frontline, 23 April, 1999)

Statement on Kosovo Situation IUML: National Secretary E. Ahamed, 25 March, 1999

... Under Jawaharlal Nehru India deplored human right violations in the Congo. Under Indira Gandhi India had even intervene in Bangladesh when massacre and human right violations occurred. Now, India cannot close its eyes on such grave and horrible human right violations against the Albanian ethnic minority by the Serbian forces in Kosovo. I would, therefore, urge upon the Prime Minister to condemn massacre and human right violation ... by Yugoslav forces affirming its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

A Letter in The Statesman On Communalism

...In order to qualify for being called communal, one must not be simply speaking on behalf of one community but speaking against other communities as well. Similarly, the term casteist can only be applied to somebody who is spreading hatred against other castes. You cannot call somebody communal or casteist if he or she is simply trying to serve a specific group of people. It is only when he or she is seeking to hurt, damage or destroy other groups of people that he would become communal or casteist.

[Juhi Shahin in The Statesman, 5 May, 1999]

MHA: Annual Report, 1998-99 (Extracts)

Internal Security

The internal security situation in India continues to be influenced by 'proxy war' unleashed by Pakistan in Jammu & Kashmir, 'insurgency-related' problems in some States in the North-East, sporadic violence indulged in by divisive forces and traditional crimes and social tensions. During the last year, several initiatives taken by the Government – both in anticipating the problems with a view to preventing them and for containing terrorism – have yielded positive results. ...

Law and Order Situation

The overall law and order situation in the country remained, by and large, satisfactory during the year under report, except for insurgent and militant activities in the North-East and Jammu & Kashmir, Left-wing extremist violence in parts of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Orissa and caste and ethnic conflicts and communal tensions in certain States...

Kabir Puraskar

... Kabir Puraskar Grade-III was conferred on Smt. Santana Deb Barma on November 3, 1998 by the Home Minister.

The National Foundation for Communal Harmony

... The Foundation is providing assistance to children whose families have suffered loss of an earning parent in communal riots. So far, the Foundation has assisted 1198 children.

On Policy Initiatives

Several other policy initiatives were taken to help serve the cause of peace and order, harmony and social progress in the country, some of the important ones being:

- Circulation of guidelines to all States for promotion of communal harmony and protection of the interests of the minority communities;
- Introduction of PIO (Persons of Indian Origin) Card scheme exempting the Cardholders from the requirement of visa and extending to them other benefits in the economic, education, financial and cultural fields...
- Emphasis on protection of human rights of all people in the country; and
- Impetus to the scheme of wire fencing and flood-lighting of borders to prevent cross border terrorism and smuggling of arms and drugs.

Communal Harmony Awards

... The awards for 1997 were conferred on November 3, 1998 on Shri Asghar Ali Engineer, Chairman of Centre for Study of Society and Secularism, Mumbai in the individual category and Qaumi Ekta Trust, New Delhi in the organisation category. For the year 1998, the well-

known Delhi based Islamic Scholar Maulana Wahiduddin Khan has been nominated.

Minority Cell

A Minority Cell has been created in the National Integration Division of the Ministry of Home Affairs with effect from 21st November, 1996 to look after the problems and grievances relating to law and order and security aspects of minority communities in the country.

Communal Violence

Fundamentalist mercenaries targeted Hindu families in the Kashmir valley and in Doda. Some incidents targetted against Christians also did take place in Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Orissa. Caste wars in Bihar took a considerable toll of lives. At the same time, there was a decline in communal violence and there was no large-scale sectarian flare-up in the country.

... On the communal front, there has been a marked decline in communal violence during the year 1998 as compared to the previous year. The year witnessed 626 incidents claiming 207 lives and 2065 injuries as compared to 725 incidents resulting in the death of 264 and injuries to 2503 as in the previous year.

About 90% of the communal incidents were reported from the States of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Delhi, West Bengal, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Except for Karnataka, Maharashtra and Rajasthan, which registered slight upswing in communal incidents, all other States reported a declining trend. However, Andhra Pradesh witnessed more deaths in 1998 as compared to previous year due to a major riot in Hyderabad.

Although the communal violence has been on the decline since 1993, the communal divide has widened due to aggressive postures adopted by both Hindus and Muslim fundamentalist organisations... The Southern States are showing greater tendency to communal disturbances, particularly on account of manifold increase in activities of organisations like Al-Umma, TMMK, MIM, NDF etc.

In the year 1998, there were 84 incidents of anti-Christian violence as against 30 incidents during the corresponding period of 1997. Some of these cases were crime oriented and it was a coincidence that the victims were Christians. In a few cases the attacks were deliberate and dastardly, as the burning alive in Graham Stewart Staines and his two sons in Orissa would go to show. Certain religious organizations accused Christian missionaries of proselytisation activities... The Government has shown its determination to put down such incidents with a firm hand. □

Shahabuddin's Suggestions to CM of Rajasthan, 30 March, 1999

According to the newspaper reports there is a growing crisis of confidence between some Muslim groups and the State Government. This needs to be avoided through patient dialogue and understanding.

I personally feel that your government should immediately take the following steps:

Institutional:

1. Establish a Department of Minority Affairs and place it directly under yourself, to act as a catalyst, coordinator and monitor all official institutions relating to the minorities and their share in all development/welfare schemes of the State Govt.
2. Establish the State Minorities Welfare Committee to monitor the implementation of the revised Programme for the Welfare of the Minorities and activate district level committees in every district.

Wakf:

- 1) Establish the State Wakf Board in accordance with the Act of 1995 and sanction a suitable grant-in-aid to meet expenditure on establishment.
- 2) Form the Rajasthan Wakf Development Corporation with a capital of at least 10 crores to provide financial assistance for the commercial development of urban wakf properties.
- 3) Undertake the delimitation and construction of boundary walls of graveyards in urban areas.

Economic Development:

- 1) Establish a separate Minorities Finance Development Corporation. **The idea of having an Economic Cell in the Minorities Commission is misconceived and will not do much good.**
- 2) Instruct the development authorities (in every Deptt.) that in the flow of development resources, bank loan, training facilities and welfare benefits under every centrally-sponsored and state schemes, Muslim community and Muslim concentration areas should have due share, generally in proportion to its population at the operational level in the area.
- 3) Advise the banks operating in the state to ensure adequate credit flow to Muslim community through all their branches and monitor it.

Education and Urdu:

- 1) As in MP, government primary schools should be set up in every locality – urban or rural – of Muslim concentration, **on demand**, in accordance with national norms with adequate infrastructure and staff.
- 2) All private madarsas (as distinct from Maktabas) which wish to modernise their syllabus including Hindi, English, Arithmetic, Elementary Science and Social Studies should be financially assisted to pay for the

(Contd. on Page 258)

Steps taken by Government of Rajasthan for the Welfare of Minorities (as on 30.4.99)

For the first time in 50 years State Government have set apart Rs.3 crores in the annual budget for the year 1999-2000 for economic development of minorities, a separate corporation is being set up for this purpose, so that artisans and handicraft workers of minorities could be given financial assistance (loans and subsidies) for employment generation and their economic upliftment. For getting maximum financial assistance and loan from National Minorities Financial Development Corporation the required government guarantee would be made available by the State government.

For attaining the goal of universalization of elementary education the State government have launched an ambitious programme of opening 10,000 elementary education centres, each centre would be given a one time grant of Rs.8,000 for logistic support and Rs.1200/- per month would be provided as honorarium to those social workers who would be teaching the students at these centres.

The coverage of the above scheme has been extended to recognised 619 Madarsas in the state, so that basic facilities could be made available to the students of minority communities studying at these madarsas. This would benefit 93,824 students studying in these madarsas registered with Rajasthan Waqf Board.

In the current financial year books worth Rs.19.34 lacs have been distributed free of cost to the students studying in these madarsas referred above.

... 200 new posts of Urdu school teachers would be created and filled up during the next financial year 1999-2000.

For the first time in last 50 years the state government have provided full insurance coverage (of Rs.2 lakhs) to all the 1100 Haj pilgrims from the State...

The State Minorities Commission which has been lying defunct for last three years is going to be revived...

The defunct State Urdu Academy (is being) revived with financial grant...

... The State government have ensured that officers belonging to minority communities are given important assignment befitting their seniority and merit.

There are only three IAS officers in the State from minorities, one has been posted as Forest Secretary and the remaining two have been posted as Collector and District Magistrate. From the IPS the important charge of S.P., Alwar has also been given to an officer from the minority community. An officer from the minority community has been made Director of Agriculture Marketing.

(Source: CM of Rajasthan's Letter No.CM.59(1)Edu/116/99/1221 dated 28 April, 1999 to S. Shahabuddin)

Report on HAJ, 1999

Number of Pilgrims

According to the data obtained from Saudi Arabia authorities, a total of 91,190 pilgrims from India performed Haj this year. 62,170 pilgrims came under the aegis of the Haj Committee, Mumbai and 29,083 came either on their own or through tour operators. This does not include members from the local Indian community nor Indians from the GCC countries and other parts of the world.

India	:	91,190
Pakistan	:	91,000
Iran	:	79,000
Indonesia	:	70,000
Egypt	:	67,000
Turkey	:	60,000

Haj Charter Operations: Haj Charter operations started on 18th February, 1999. A total of 160 flights were scheduled. However ... there were only 156 flights. The first phase of operations ended on 19th March, 1999. The break up of incoming and return flights is as follows:

S.No.	Embarkation/ Destination	No. of Flights (Outgoing)	Pilgrims Carried	No. of Flights (Incoming)	Pilgrims Carried
1.	Delhi	55*	25,352	55	25,228
2.	Mumbai	62*	19,590	61	19,549
3.	Chennai	16	7,162	16	7,187
4.	Calcutta	9	3,956	9	3,946
5.	Bangalore	14	6,047	14	5,981
	Total	156	52,107	155	61,891

* One flight No.AI-7115 from Bangalore was clubbed together with AI-4115 from Mumbai on 14th March. 15 pilgrims came on a commercial Air India flight from Delhi and these numbers have been included in the Delhi flights.

The return phase of the Haj charter flight operations (Phase II) started on 1st April, 1999 and continued upto 30th April, 1999.

The second phase was dogged by delays and a lot of other problems. **A high level enquiry is necessary into these operations – the role of Tower Air, Air Atlanta, Air India, Attar Travels and Haj Committee.**

Accommodation Arrangements: (Against the) final pilgrims data in respect of 62,698 pilgrims received from the Haj Committee, only 62,107 pilgrims actually came to Saudi Arabia for performance of Haj... Accommodation for them at Makkah was arranged as under:

Category – I	:	26,059 units (69 buildings)
Category – II	:	32,032 units (382 buildings)
Total	:	58,091 units (451 buildings)

Remaining pilgrims stayed in Rubats or with friends/relatives (exempted category).

In Makkah, the Indian pilgrims were proportionately

divided by the South Asian Moassassa authorities amongst 17 Moallims (as compared to 20 Moallims last year). By and large, accommodation was satisfactory. Pilgrims found it difficult to use European style commodes, lifts and air conditioners.

Housing at Madinah: The contract for accommodation for pilgrims in Madinah, where pilgrims spent eight days, was awarded to four contractors ... at the rate of SR 200 per pilgrim. 30% pilgrims were to be accommodated within the first ring road, 25% on the ring road and 45% upto a distance of 750 mtrs. From the Masjid-e-Nabwi. By and large, accommodation was satisfactory.

Housing at Mina: This year, all the Indian pilgrims were housed by the Moallims in fire-proof tents at Mina. There were a few complaints of over-crowding in some of the Moallim camps.

Transportation: ... While transportation from Jeddah to Makkah, Makkah to Madinah and back to Jeddah was satisfactory with minor aberrations, the transportation during Haj to Mina, Arafat, Muzdalifah, Mina and Makkah was not upto the mark. Many pilgrims either had to walk or arrange private transportation to Mina and Makkah after Haj.

Facilities for Pilgrims: ...The CGI had opened 9 Branch Haj Offices in Makkah... 9 Branch Dispensaries were also opened in addition to the main dispensary and a 10-bedded hospital. Two Pilgrims Information Centres were opened... Branch Haj Offices as well as Branch Dispensaries were manned by administrative and medical staff deputed by the Government of India on duty round the clock... Locally recruited building supervisors as well as messengers were deployed in Branch Haj Offices to attend to the complaints of the pilgrims, if any, about the services in buildings, and to get them redressed on the spot... Additionally, at the main Indian Haj Office in Makkah, different cells ... were opened to facilitate the ... pilgrims... A fully manned Control Room was functional at Makkah even during the core Haj period.

Eleven mobile medical teams, each comprising of a medical doctor and a pharmacist, were pressed into service ... to treat the ailing on their door steps. Similarly in Madinah ... two Branch Haj Offices as well as two Branch Dispensaries were opened besides the Main Haj Office and the Main Indian Dispensary.

A total of 2,46,642 services were offered by the Medical Mission at Makkah, Madinah, Mina, Arafat and Jeddah Haj Terminal. A total of 545 patients were treated at the 10-bedded hospital at IHO, Makkah.

Medicines worth more than Rs.45 lakhs were supplied by the Government of India. Most of the medicines were supplied late and some are believed to be of sub-standard

quality... Even those hospitalised were taken to Arafat to perform Haj in ambulances of the CGI...

161 Indian pilgrims died due to natural causes. Another 4 died in accidents. Out of these, 121 are Haj Committee pilgrims... A total of 7 babies were born to Indian pilgrims during the Haj period this year.

The Embassy and the Consulate General of India offices functioned in the Embassy of India camps at Mina and Arafat during the core Haj period from 25-29 March, 1999 and extended medical help as well as help in guiding the pilgrims to their tents. Also, seventeen teams comprising of doctors and pharmacists/nurses were deployed in the 17 Indian Maktabas in Mina to provide medical assistance to the pilgrims...

A Task Force, comprising of 20 deputationists and 10 locally recruited supervisors, was formed to supervise the Madinah Movement of pilgrims from Makkah each day (and) during the core Haj period at various strategic points near Jamarat to guide Indian pilgrims at the time of stoning.... The white cap with India written in various languages and with the Indian colours worn by deputationists and staff and translators positioned in the major hospitals at Makkah were (great help to the) pilgrims...

... Arrangements for reception of pilgrims at the Haj Terminal on their arrival and departure were also made... The large percentage of out of turn arrivals of pilgrims from India (45 per cent) posed a lot of problems but the situation was managed by the staff. Five pilgrims came without passports and many lost theirs on arrival. Encashment of bank drafts also posed lot of problems and delayed departure of pilgrims to Makkah by 3-4 hours... Left over luggage retrieved by us from Makkah and Madinah were sent to the last two Haj charter flights to Mumbai and the last charter flight to Delhi.

Support staff from India:

The GOI sent a total of 362 deputationists to help the CGI... The category-wise break is as under:

Deputationists	Nos.
Assistant Haj Officers	39
Haj Assistants	105
Doctors	99
Paramedical staff	119
Total	362

... Post Haj services suffered due to the fact that deputationists were tired/sick after Haj. It would be advisable to have 50 per cent deputationists stationed at Makkah and Mina during the core Haj period rather than allowing them to go to Arafat for Haj.

Seasoned Staff: Additionally, the Government of India also sanctioned employment of local staff on Haj Man-Months basis as under:

HMM Staff	Nos.
Building Supervisors/Clerks	187

Data Entry Operators	15
Drivers	25
Messengers	86
Total	313

Khadimul Hujjaj: For Haj 1999, a total of 98 Khadimul Hujjaj were sent by 13 State Haj Committees. Out of these, 64 were first timers as far as Haj is concerned. ...

The first timers could not help nor render service to pilgrims in the desired manner...

Training and Orientation of Pilgrims: Unfortunately, this was not done in India and pilgrims faced problems because most of them were unaware of the rituals of Umrah, Haj and the living conditions in Saudi Arabia. Most of them who came from rural areas and were semi-literate were not used to using European style living. As a private initiative 60,000 copies of do's and don'ts in five languages (English, Hindi, Urdu, Tamil and Malayalam) were distributed to pilgrims at the airport and 10,000 copies of a booklet in Urdu about the 5 days of Haj were distributed to pilgrims in Makkah. The Saudi Haj Minister had stressed this point in the meeting with the Government of India Delegation ... (and) was assured that each pilgrim would be trained in India before coming for Haj. This promise was not kept!

Haj Goodwill Delegation: ... A 30-member delegation headed by Prof. A.M. Khusro, Chairman, Finance Commission was sent this year. Most of them were accompanied by dependents taking the total number to 60... The CGI deployed five liaison officers and two messengers with them, and placed three air-conditioned buses with full time drivers at their disposal in addition to one car with driver and a mobile telephone for the leader of the delegation... Usefulness of the delegation is questionable considering that Government spends around Rs.10,00,000 on each delegate.

Voluntary Effort: As in the previous two years, the voluntary organisation - Indian Pilgrims Welfare Forum (IPWF) - provided very good services for the welfare of pilgrims. It gave two computers with printers for the Pilgrims Information Centres deputed Arabic knowing people at hospitals and near the Haram Sharif to help pilgrims, provided some manpower for the Pilgrims Information Centres also, published 60,000 pamphlets and 10,000 booklets given to pilgrims about Haj written ... at a cost of Saudi Riyals 31,800/-.

Apart from this, needy Indian pilgrims were given financial assistance to the tune of Saudi Riyals 25,000/-, those who had lost all their money due to pickpocket or theft.

92 Haj Committee pilgrims have not travelled back on chartered flights.

On the whole, the conduct of Haj this year was smooth and successful.

(Source: Consulate General of India, Jeddah)

Khuddamul Hujjaj, 1999

S.No.	State	No. of Pilgrims	No. of Khuddam	1 st Timers	Break-up by Back-ground
1.	Uttar Pradesh		24	24	Govt. Serv. 9 Teacher 2 Sc.Managers 2 Soc.Workers 2 Others 9.
2.	Tamil Nadu		10	9	Imams 3, Govt. Serv. 2 Professor 1 Soc. Worker 1 Others: 3
3.	Maharashtra		10	3	Govt. Serv. 6 Soc.Worker 1 Med.Pract. 1 Others: 3.
4.	Andhra Pradesh		10	1	Govt. Serv. 5 Teacher 1 Imam 1 Others: 3
5.	Kerala		9	6	Govt. Serv. 4 Soc. Worker 1 Others: 4.
6.	J&K		8	8	Teachers 3 Soc.Workers 2 Govt. Serv. 2 Others: 1.
7.	Gujarat		7	4	Govt. Serv. 7
8.	Karnataka		7	4	Govt. Serv. 1 Soc. Worker 2 Imam 1 Others:2.
9.	MP		7	-	Govt. Serv. 6 Doctor 1.
10.	Rajasthan		3	3	Govt. Serv. 3
11.	Assam		1	-	Teacher 1
12.	Punjab		1	1	Soc. Worker 1
13.	H.P.		1	1	Govt. Serv. 1
Total		98	64		Institution of Khadimul Hujjaj needs to be reviewed.

Members of Government
Haj Goodwill Delegation, 1999

1. A.M. Khusro, Chairman, Finance Commission - Leader
2. Arif Mohd. Khan, MP (UP)
3. Shariq Shariefuddin, MP (J&K)
4. K.M. Shaifullah, MP (AP)
5. Abdul Rashid Kabuli, ex-MP
6. Roshan Baig, Minister, Karnataka
7. Smt. Zakiya, Minister, Rajasthan
8. S.A. Shakeel Basha, Minister, AP
9. Ghulam Ahmed Shah Peerzada, Minister, J&K
10. Abdul Rashid Dar, Dy. Chairman, J&K Leg. Council
11. K. Mohammed Ali, MLA, Kerala

Shahabuddin's Letter to Ministry of
External Affairs, 5 May, 1999

I am glad to know that you propose to review the institution for Haj 2000. But I request you **not** to abolish it but relate it to the Batching System, which I have proposing for years. For each plane load of pilgrims, say 400, there should be one Khadim, chosen from **among themselves** who should be paid a small honorarium to act as the liaison between the CGI and the pilgrims in the batch during the stay in Saudi Arabia.

This model requires composition of batches on the basis of proximity i.e. on the basis of one district or more than one contiguous districts immediately after receipt of application. I think since the data is computerised, there should be no difficulty.

This model also requires that each batch (say No. AB of State C) should be accommodated in one building or nearby buildings by the CGI.

The utility of the model would be enhanced if for each batch there is a para-medical team of 2, consisting of one male and one female nurse-cum-compounder. They should be from the same linguistic group as the pilgrims and be accommodated with the Batch. This team would maintain liaison with our nearest Haj Dispensary and through the Haj Dispensary with the Indian Medical Mission. This team should travel to and back from Saudi Arabia with the Batch.

The Khadim of the Batch should have the particulars of all the pilgrims in his charge. Each pilgrim of the Batch should know who the Khadim is and what he is supposed to do for them. The selection of the Khadim should be done by the State Haj Committee only after the Batches are formed and the selection should be approved by the Central Haj Committee and the Ministry of External Affairs and intimated to the CGI, Jeddah.

I may add that 400 pilgrims will on an average mean 80-100 families and therefore, **it would not be difficult for the Khadim to maintain constant contact with 80-100 persons only.**

12. Chiraghuddin Qureshi, Chairman, Delhi Wakf Board
 13. Syed Yousuf Ali, Chairman, AP State Wakf Board
 14. Ahmed Shareef, Chairman, AP Minority Finance Corporation
 15. Prof. S.M.S. Al-Kadri, Chairman, W. Bengal Minority Commission
 16. Mir Hyder Ali Khan, Chairman, Sports Authority, AP
 17. Mir Ahmed Ali, National President, BJP Minority Morcha
 18. Qaisar Shamim, Commissioner of Income Tax, New Delhi (Member Secretary)
 19. Dr. M. Wali, Former Physician to President.
 20. Dr. C.M. Habibullah, Director, Deccan College of Medical Sciences, AP
- Plus 10 others.

On Performance of Hindu Rite Shahabuddin's letter to Wahiduddin Khan, 15 January, 1999

I have read your rejoinder in the Akhbar-e-Nau regarding the photographs originally published in the RSS Weekly Panchjanya showing you a) lighting a lamp before an image of the Hindu goddess Saraswati, and b) accepting a 'Tika' on your forehead from Ashok Singhal.

Your rejoinder throws much light on the technology of fake photography but you have not categorically stated that these photographs are fake and not real and if so, whether you have asked the Panchjanya to publish a regret and an apology and failing their doing so, taken the matter to the Press Council or initiated any legal action.

Unless you do, the people have a right to believe that these are real photographs and represent real events which took place and to draw the necessary conclusion about you.

[No reply has been received from Mr. Khan so far. So this letter is being published – Editor].

On Indian Unity and Religious Synthesis Shahabuddin Replies to Asghar Ali Engineer The Hindu, 26 March, 1999

Shri Asghar Ali Engineer's article on Indian Unity in the Hindu, 19 March, 1999, exemplifies both the glories and the pitfalls of unity through religious synthesis.

No one can object to social fraternisation, acquisition of academic excellence, linguistic experimentation and cultural (as distinct from religious) synthesis. But one has to keep in mind the theological divide between one religion and the other. In this respect, as compared to Islam and Christianity, Hinduism has an inbuilt flexibility since it is not a religion defined by dogmas. But a Muslim, who regards Krishna or Rama as incarnation or worships or adores Ganesh or Hanuman or conducts Puja or Archana in temples, violates the essential monotheism of Islam and is, by common consensus, no longer a Muslim. He is however, free to call himself a Hindu or establish a new religion. The essential point is that theologically a Muslim cannot be a pantheist or polytheist. But religious orthodoxy is neither per se communal nor anti-secular nor does it militate against broad cultural synthesis so long as religion, which is an important element in cultural evolution, is not ignored.

The VHP's campaign to take over Sufi shrines on one pretext or the other, because they are also visited by non-Muslims is politically motivated to browbeat and demoralise the Muslim community. Traditionally, the Sufis Order and their shrines have been open to people of

A Muslim Devotee of Hindu Goddess

... Pt. Ravi Shankar's ... Muslim guru ... was no ordinary person. He was not only a great artist but also a great human being. Padma Bhushan Ustad Alauddin Khan (1889-1972), **though born as a Muslim, was more of a Hindu in thought and deed.** In his childhood, he even adopted a Hindu name, Manmohan Dey. He was an ardent devotee of Goddess Sharda and in Maihar (Madhya Pradesh), where he was a court musician, never missed his daily visit to the temple for the deity's blessings.

Except for his son, Ustad Ali Akbar, all his children and grandchildren more Hindu names... Ustad Alauddin Khan was a legend who could command respect and recognition even from (persons of) divergent ideologies, be it Hindutva or secularism.

Another 'Muslim' Devotee of Hindu God

Every morning and evening a 60-year-old priest arrives at a little Ganesh temple housed in the M.S. University Faculty of Technology and Engineering building (and) performs puja before the presiding deity... The priest is named Abdul Rashid Ismail Shaikh.

A Muslim by birth, Abdul is a Ganesh devotee by choice. A peon by profession, he is the unofficial priest of the temple... Members of his own community ostracised him earlier; but eventually they came to understand him... Almost everybody on the campus echoes the view. "He is a learned man and as far as the *shlokas* are concerned, he can leave behind even the best of pandits", says Arvind Bhavsar, tool operator in the faculty.

Asked about the happiest moment in life, Abdul, who has preferred to remain a bachelor, just smiles. At a recent function vice-chancellor Anil Kane spoke to him about the Koran's teachings. Abdul, in turn, talked about the message in the Gita. "When I bowed before him, he embraced me. For a little man like me, this is the greatest honour", says the man who is communal harmony personified.

(Source: The Times of India, 23 February, 1999)

all religions but that does not take away their essentially Islamic character.

It is good to compile instances of mutual interest and accommodation, past and contemporary. But it is necessary to analyse the situation from the point of view of Hinduism and Islam, lest the glorification of synthesis revive the fears of religious assimilation and cultural submergence and prove counter-productive to the cause of national unity.

Kashmir: Report of the State Autonomy Committee, April, 1999

Summary of Recommendations

1. Temporary, Transitional and Special Provisions (Part XXI)

- (i) The word 'Temporary' be deleted from the title of part XXI of the Constitution of India and the word 'temporary' occurring in the heading of Article 370 be substituted by the word 'special'

2. Legislative Relations (Part XI)

- (a) Matters in the Union List not connected with the three subjects of Defence, External Affairs and Communications and/or Ancillary thereto but made applicable should be excluded from their application to the State.
- (b) All modifications made in Article 246 in its application to the State subsequent to the 1950 Order should be rescinded.
- (c) Articles 248, 249, 250 and 251 whether applied in original or substituted/modified form should be omitted from the application to the State.
- (d) As in 1950 and 1954, List II (State) and List III (Concurrent) of the Seventh Schedule should not be applicable to the State.
- (e) Article 254 should be restored to the position it had in its application to the State in 1954.
- (f) Articles 262 and 263 which were not applicable under 1950 Order but were subsequently extended to the State should cease to apply.

3. Elections (Part XV)

Changes brought about in this Part be reversed and consequential changes in other Articles in this Part be effected.

4. Emergency Provisions (Part XVIII)

- (a) The following should be added to Clause 6 of Article 352 in its application to the State:-
"Provided that this request for concurrence of the Government of the State shall be subject to whatever decision the State Assembly may take within two months of declaration of emergency and failing any such decision, the proclamation of emergency shall be deemed to have been revoked."
- (b) Sub-clause (b) of the Clause 6 of this Article should be deleted.
- (c) Articles 355, 356, 357, 358, 359 and 360 should be made non-applicable to the State as was the position in 1954.

5. Fundamental Rights (Part III)

This part should be deleted. A separate chapter on Fundamental Rights be included in the State Constitution.

6. The Union (Part V)

- (a) Articles 72(1)(C), 72(3), 133, 134, 135, 136, 138, 145 (1)(C) and 151(2) should be made non-applicable to the State as was the position in 1950 Order.

- (b) Article 149, 150 and 151 should apply to the State in the form in which they were in 1954.

7. The States (Part VI)

- (i) Article 218 be omitted in its application to the State and the position as it existed before the J&K Constitution (First Amendment Act) of 1959 restored.
- (ii) Articles 220, 222 and 226 should also be omitted in their application to Jammu and Kashmir State.

8. Finance, Property, Contracts and Suits (Part XII)

The matter be discussed between the State representatives and the Union Government as agreed to during the talks in 1952 (Delhi Agreement).

9. Services under the Union and the States (Part XIV)

In Article 312 the brackets and words "including the State of J&K" inserted by the Constitution (Application to J&K) Order 1958 be omitted.

10. Special Provisions relating to Certain Classes (Part XVI)

Application of Articles 338, 339, 340, 341 and 342 to the State should be omitted and corresponding provisions made in the State Constitution.

11. Amendment of the Constitution of India (Part XX)

- i) Clause (4) of the Article 368 added vide C.O. 101 be deleted.
- ii) Clause (2) of the Article should apply with the proviso already introduced by 1954 order and clause (1) thereof which was not in existence in 1954 and was introduced in 1971 should remain omitted in its application to the State.

12. Schedules

In the Seventh Schedule entries in the Union List not applied to the State by the Constitution (Application to J&K) Order, 1950 should be omitted. Concurrent List which was not applicable to the State in 1950 but was applied by subsequent orders should cease to apply to the State.

13. Changes in the State Constitution

All amendments in the Constitution of J&K made vide:-

- i) Constitution of J&K (First Amendment) Act, 1959 insofar as they relate to superintendence, direction and control of elections to the State Legislature and to the State High Court; and
- ii) Constitution of J&K (Sixth Amendment) Act, 1955 relating to change of nomenclature of the Head of the State and State Executive, mode of appointment of the Head of the State and other consequential amendments

Should be repealed and the original provisions of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir restored.

On Jammu and Kashmir

MHA: Annual Report, 1998-99 (Extracts)

... The Valley, which was the militants' main base and target, is comparatively quiet... However, there has been considerable, if not corresponding, upsurge in militancy in Jammu region of the State which threatens to spill over to neighbouring States. There has been a significant change in the nature of militancy in the State; foreign mercenaries from across the border now dominate the scene, thereby giving Pakistan a stranglehold over prominent secessionist militant groups which are being used by ISI for bringing in a communal divide, for ethnic cleansing and for extending the arc of militancy to Jammu and beyond. The key, therefore, is to curb and, if possible, stop infiltration from across the border...

The four principles of Government's policy vis-à-vis Jammu and Kashmir, being executed by the Union and the State Governments, are:-

- Pro-active role within Jammu and Kashmir to neutralise the hostile designs of militants and foreign mercenaries.
- Galvanising the Development Programmes.

... Trade and economic activities, especially tourism which has traditionally been the back-bone of the Valley's economy, have shown sure-signs of revival, with greater number of tourists visiting the State. An unprecedented record of nearly 1.5 lakh pilgrims participating in the Amarnath Yatra was established in 1998.

To sum up, the provisions of the Constitution of India specified in the Second Schedule and the matters specified in the first Schedule to the Constitution (Application to J&K) Order 1950 and the matters agreed to by the representatives of the State and the Union vide Delhi Agreement of 1952 should continue to apply to the State subject to the same exceptions and modifications as are specified in the said Order and the Delhi Agreement. All Orders issued thereafter under clause (1) of Article 370 of the Constitution of India by the President, applying various provisions and matters of the Constitution of India to the State whether in full or in modified form or making any change in the provisions or matters already applied by 1950 Order or agreed to under Delhi Agreement, should be rescinded and the provisions or matters so applied to the State should cease to apply.

Also the changes made in the State Constitution vide Constitution of J&K (First Amendment) Act, 1959 and Constitution of J&K (Sixth Amendment) Act, 1965 be repealed and the original provisions of the Constitution of J&K as adopted by the State Constituent Assembly on November 17, 1956 be restored.

G.M. Shah, Chairman

A.R. Rather, Member

B.R. Bali, Member

K. Thiksay, Member

S. Teja Singh, Member-Convenor

A.A. Vakil, Member

P.L. Handoo, Member

I.H. Ansari, Member

M.A. Rashid, Member

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Former Chief Minister Syed Mir Qasim's Proposal 'Autonomy on Both Sides of LOC and Soft Border'

Politics India approached Mir Qasim, a respected leader of Kashmir for an assessment of the present situation. Mir Qasim has been in the thick of the struggle of the people of Kashmir for freeing themselves from the feudal bondage of the Maharaja and his British overloads. A close associate of Sheikh Abdullah, Mir Qasim, during his tenure as Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir had the distinction to negotiate with Sheikh Saheb and was largely instrumental in bringing him back to power in his desire to bring normalcy to the state, to restore the "autonomy" envisaged by the Delhi Agreement and to realize the people's dream of a "Naya Kashmir" with its commitment to secularism and democracy and emotional integration with India.

Excerpts from Mir Qasim's Conversation with Politics India.

In 1947 Kashmiri Muslims, inspite of the preachings of the Muslim League leaders, were all for remaining with India inspite of the communal bloodbath which attended the birth of the two independent states of India and Pakistan. They were conscious of the fact that the Congress as an organisation leading the freedom struggle and its leaders Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru had all along supported the struggle of the National Conference led by Sheikh Abdullah to emancipate the Kashmiri people from the tyranny of the Dogra raj.

Even today ... the Kashmiri Muslims are not at all keen to accede to Pakistan, notwithstanding the sustained Pakistani propaganda that Kashmiris could never be safe in Hindu India. People have seen the ugly face of Pakistan which, starting from the raid of the tribals in 1947 down to modern day mercenaries, had never had any qualms in killing, looting, kidnapping, raping the same people whom they loudly proclaim to their brothers in faith.

But, unfortunately, today the people are equally disillusioned on account of the cynical attitude of the Central Government which never tires of giving an impression that we would integrate you. People in Kashmir have a deep rooted fear that India would eventually deprive them of their personal laws and obliterate their customs and tradition that people from the plains would buy out their lands, their forests, their crafts, their means of livelihood, that they will be overwhelmed, economically overpowered and nothing will survive of their identity, their "Kashmiriat".

It is a fear not different from what they are afraid of in respect of Pakistan which, in the perception of the people of Kashmir, wants to annex Kashmir for the purpose of their security. Pakistan, the people know, will never agree

to an independent Kashmir. They want an occupied territory, a subjugated people. It is towards that end they have been rushing in guns, training hoodlums and foreign mercenaries...

However ... the march of the militants has been blocked to a very large extent by the Indian security forces. In terms of numbers, today the militants are fewer and not as rampant. But ... in terms of quality they ... are far better trained, mostly foreigners, battle hardened mercenaries who are spilling over from Afghanistan.

The people of Kashmir are fed up with militants, with their own misguided elements and more so with foreigners who are no respecters of life or property, but it of a Hindu or a Muslim. People want peace. They have suffered militancy enough. Their economy is ruined. They are worried about their daily bread. It is wrong to say ... that flushing-out-the militants operations of the Indian security forces have alienated the people... In the beginning the situation was mishandled, no doubt. Whole villages and entire townships were treated as hostile. But then the people realized, and now say so, that after all the security forces had been here all along and were never oppressive or violative of human rights before. They took to guns and heavy handedness because militants used guns and threatened civil life and liberties.

The people of Kashmir ... can be won over provided they are taken into confidence and a meaningful dialogue is started with Pakistan with the sole purpose of restoring peace. The situation as obtains today, has to be explained to the people of Kashmir and thereafter to the Pakistan Government.

Recent developments, particularly nuclear explosions, have made it impossible to solve the question through war... India and Pakistan both must realise ... that neither India can regain Pakistan-occupied Kashmir through a war nor Pakistan will ever be able to gain a foothold in the valley by force of weapons. Once they honestly accept this, dialogue remains the only answer. The big question remains on what basis and towards what end?

Talking of a solution, again some hard facts have to be asserted. Kashmir cannot be conceded to Pakistan on the ground that Muslims constitute a majority of its population... To talk of the UN resolutions and plebiscite is irrelevant because plebiscite was to be held subject to a total withdrawal of Pakistan armed forces from the territory of the erstwhile state of Jammu & Kashmir which Pakistan never did and will never do because it does not and cannot trust the Kashmiri people.

Sheikh Abdullah understood it well and that is why he

rejected plebiscite. Sheikh Saheb was very clear about it even when he returned to head the Jammu & Kashmir Government a second time. He won the 1977 elections against the party ruling at the Centre. He wanted that the autonomy that was eroded should be restored and the Delhi Agreement renegotiated in order to retain what was useful for the people and drop what was not. That solution was never tried. It was a mistake not to accept Sheikh Abdullah as the people's voice. As a result, Sheikh Saheb was disillusioned... The communal forces in India demanded total surrender and Sheikh Abdullah retorted with a demand for total autonomy.

It shall be erroneous ... to overlook Sheikh Abdullah's entire life and struggle and to accuse him of projecting the idea of an independent Kashmir. He started in 1931 with Muslim Conference but transformed it to National Conference in 1939 in order to forge a united front of the entire people of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh in the struggle against the feudal order... It was Sheikh Abdullah who acceded to India and led the people's resistance to Pakistan invaders in 1947. His insistence on a flag, Constituent Assembly and Sadr-e-Riyasat was not a demand for separation but only for an identity.

Even now, the Central Government must first settle with the people of Kashmir by restoring ... autonomy. Tangible steps have to be taken... It is for the Centre to initiate steps towards autonomy and impress on Pakistan to grant an equal degree of autonomy to their part of the Kashmir, with similar concomitants of an elected Constituent Assembly, a Constitution, elected legislature etc. Let there be an agreement between both the governments on "soft border", people and goods moving freely. Let there be trade and cultural exchanges...

The Governments of India and Pakistan (should) undertake genuine, sincere and serious confidence-building measures, without any third party intervention. The final solution (should) be worked out by the people of Jammu and Kashmir. He is certain that the people will opt for a secular, democratic India.

(Source: The Politics India, March, 1999)

Kashmiris have the moral, diplomatic and political support of Pakistan. There is no possibility of our agreeing to any other solution except one that is acceptable to the people of Kashmir.

- Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister of Pakistan

... On autonomy ... we want consensus ... among the people of the State as well as the country. We don't want autonomy to weaken our relationship with the Centre but (to secure) the rights and dignity for which the J&K people acceded to India.

- Farooq Abdullah, Chief Minister of J&K

Facilities for Migrants from Valley

Due to outbreak of militancy in Kashmir, large scale migration took place during 1990 and thereafter. In Jammu 29,074 families stand registered with Relief Organization till date. The Community wise break up of these families is as under:-

Hindus	-	25,703	Muslims	-	1,478
Sikhs	-	1,818	Others	-	75
Total			- 29,074		

The relief benefits and other facilities being provided to the migrants registered at Jammu are as under:

1. Cash Assistance: The rate of cash assistance as on date is Rs.450/- per member per month subject to the maximum of Rs.1800/- per family per month.

2. Rations: Free ration is provided by the Government to each migrant family falling under relief category. Each family is provided with 9 kgs. of rice, 2 kgs. of atta per head per month and 1 kg. sugar per family.

3. Shelter: Initially the migrants were accommodated in tents and in Government/Semi-Government buildings... The tents were completely replaced by One Room Tenements (ORT) in phases. Till date 4588 ORTs have been constructed....

4. Leave Salary: Such migrant employees working in Government/Semi-Government/Public Undertakings who could not be adjusted outside the Valley ... are being provided with facility of drawal of monthly salary...

5. Education Facilities: Camp schools/camp colleges have been established in Jammu Division.

Degree Colleges	:	3
Higher Sec. Schools	:	8
High Schools	:	2

6. Medical Facilities: As many as 12 dispensaries with 28 qualified Doctors and 111 para-medical staff have been provided in various camps to cater to the medical needs of the migrants. Besides, ambulance facilities are also available.

7. Other Civil Amenities and Social Facilities: Camps have been provided with one community hall with kitchen and storeroom facility.

In addition to traditional toilet in various camps 32 Nos. of Sulabh Toilet Blocks (each block consisting of 8 bath rooms and 10 toilets) have been constructed in various camps... Apart from above, the drainage works, flood protection work, water electricity and sanitation facilities in these migrants camps are being executed through UEED, flood control, PHE, PDD and Jammu Municipality.

An Apex level Committee under the Chairmanship of Revenue/Relief and Rehabilitation has been constituted by the Government to review the problems of migrants...

(Source: Minister for Revenue, Relief and Rehabilitation, Govt. of J&K's letter No. PS/RM/99/318 dated 8.4.1999 to S. Shahabuddin)

Amnesty International: Report on Disappearances in J&K February, 1999

... Amnesty International acknowledges that over the last year, less people have "disappeared" in Jammu and Kashmir than in earlier years; however, the fate of some 700-800 people "disappeared" earlier remains unknown. The vast majority of cases documented in Amnesty International's report on "disappearances" published in 1993 remain unresolved, their families live in continued uncertainty and the factors which facilitated "disappearances" then are still in place. ...

Human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, which document human rights violations in J&K have frequently been told that their expressions of concern disrupt the "fight against militancy" and "protect the rights of killers and saboteurs". Amnesty International appreciates the gravity of the security situation the Government of India is dealing with in J&K and for that reason has sought a constructive dialogue with the government on how human rights can be effectively protected in such a difficult context.

Since the early 1990s, Amnesty International has in all its reports on J&K expressed its opposition to human rights abuses perpetrated by armed opposition groups and appealed to them to abide by minimum standards of international humanitarian law which prohibit hostage-taking, torture and killing of people taking no active part in hostilities. In 1997, Amnesty International documented how such groups have over the years harassed, intimidated, tortured and killed civilians. Failing to distinguish between military and civilian targets, their targets have included civilian men, women and children, - journalists and members of the Hindu minority. More recently, for instance, Amnesty International has urged that independent inquiries be set up to investigate the targeted killings of over 50 members of the Hindu minority in Wadhama in January 1998, in Barankote in April, in Surankote and Manchar in May and in Chapnari in June, allegedly by armed opposition groups.

There is evidence that Pakistan has provided men, training and military support to some groups seeking accession of Kashmir to Pakistan, though the Government of Pakistan has consistently denied such allegations. Many observers also believe that trained Islamist fighters from a range of Muslim countries including Sudan and Afghanistan, believing themselves engaged in a "holy war" in the state, engage in some of the more brutal abuses, especially targeting the Hindu minority.

However, while the state has the responsibility to restore and to maintain order in an extreme security

situation of this kind, it also has the obligation to promote and protect human rights at all times, the most fundamental of which are not derogable in any circumstances. For this reason, Amnesty International continues to address the Union Government of India and the State Government of Jammu and Kashmir with its concerns regarding human rights violations...

Amnesty International hopes to engage in a substantive and constructive dialogue with the Government of India on the concerns in this report...

Recommendations

Amnesty International urges the Union Government of India and the State Government of Jammu and Kashmir and other relevant institutions to make an honest effort to

- End and prevent further "disappearances" in the state;
- Establish the whereabouts of those currently "disappeared";
- Bring the perpetrators to justice; and
- Compensate the victims or their families.

Each of these objectives requires that a number of measures be taken.

- End and prevent "disappearances".

The Union and the State Governments ... should publicly commit themselves to end all "disappearances" and make it known that this grave human rights violation will no longer be tolerated.

To this end, Supreme Court of India directions highlighting existing legal safeguards relating to arrest, detention and interrogation given in December 1996 and reiterated by the Jammu and Kashmir High Court in 1997 should be fully and meticulously implemented. These include the preparation of a memo of arrest; the entitlement of the arrestee to inform a friend or relative of their arrest as soon as possible; the medical examination of the arrestee on request on arrest and every 48 hours of their detention; and the setting up of a control room holding information on arrest and place of custody of all detainees. The court envisaged that failure to comply with these measures would invite departmental action and contempt of court proceedings against police officers. Finally, the court directed that states should pay compensation for human rights violations committed by its officers. The government should ensure that such directions are fully implemented and made part of the training of security forces. ...

* Investigate "disappearances"

Amnesty International endorses the recommendation made by the UN Human Rights Committee that legislation

be passed to make judicial inquiries into all cases of "disappearance" mandatory. Meanwhile, all allegations of "disappearance" should be thoroughly investigated by an independent and impartial inquiry with a view to holding the perpetrators to account; its results should be made public.

Amnesty International urges the State Government of Jammu and Kashmir to review as a matter of urgency the mandate and practice of the Jammu and Kashmir Human Rights Commission set up under the Jammu and Kashmir Protection of Human Rights Act, 1997 ... to ensure that the state Commission becomes a more effective avenue of redress for all human rights violations, including "disappearances". The organization also urges that the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 be suitably amended to remove restrictions on powers of the NHRC under Clause 19.

*** Bring Perpetrators to Justice**

Since the filing of habeas corpus petitions is the main mechanism for seeking redress, the process should be made more efficient... The judiciary should be fully empowered and adequately resourced to fulfil this task... It should not permit undue delay in admitting and hearing habeas corpus petitions and respondents should not be allowed by the courts to delay the completion by willful non-cooperation.

Everyone who contributes to "disappearing" a person by directly effecting a "disappearance" or by ordering, aiding, abetting or concealing it should be held to account.

... All provisions contained in the Code of Criminal Procedure and in special laws in force in Jammu and Kashmir which protect public servants from arrest and prosecution by requiring state sanction for prosecution should be reviewed and amended.

While laws requiring government sanction to prosecute remain in force, the Union Government should as a matter of principle grant sanction in all cases in which there is convincing evidence that security forces have committed violations, including "disappearances". The Government should further make it publicly known that it will give sanction in all cases...

All trials of people alleged to have participated in "disappearing" people should be before a competent and ordinary court, not special tribunals, and should be fair and open... While the law permitting the prosecution of security forces for alleged human rights violations by court martial remains in force, army authorities should drop the secrecy, which now surrounds such processes...

*** Ensure that Juveniles do not "disappear"**

The special vulnerability of children and juveniles imposes particular duties on the state to promote and

protect their rights, including the obligation...(under) the Convention on the Rights of the Child). Article 24(1) of the ICCPR, lays down the right of every child, without discrimination, "to such measures of protection as are required by his status as a minor, on the part of his family, society and the State". The "disappearance" of children and juveniles also goes against the spirit of the Jammu and Kashmir Juvenile Justice Act, 1997...

The Union ... and the State Governments should take these commitments seriously, take adequate measures to ensure that no security personnel contravenes them and that no further juveniles "disappear".

*** Ensure that human rights defenders, including relatives of "disappeared" persons, can act freely and safely**

Amnesty International urges the State Government to take measures to ensure the safety of those defending the rights of others, including family members of the "disappeared", witnesses of "disappearances" and their legal counsel and human rights support groups.

This should include giving a commitment that human rights defenders will be permitted to document human rights violations and protest and campaign against such violations, in freedom and without fear and backing up such commitment by law and administrative guidelines. It should also ensure the protection from harassment, attacks and intimidation of those defending human rights and order prompt and impartial investigations into such attacks whenever they occur.

The flow of information to and from human rights defenders ... should be unimpeded and international human rights organizations and United Nations human rights mechanisms should be given free access to Jammu and Kashmir...

*** Compensate Victims and Victim's Families**

... In all cases in which it is conclusively shown that a person has been "disappeared by state agents, adequate compensation should be paid to the families of the victim through an effective mechanism to be put in place as is required by article 19 of the UN Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

*** Ratify and Fully Implement International Human Rights Standards**

Amnesty International urges the Union and the State Governments to ensure full compliance with international standards, both with treaties ratified by India and with principles adopted by the UN...

... Amnesty International believes that laws, including the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, contravene in substantive ways provisions of the Covenant... □

Ministry of Human Resource Development: Annual Report, 1998-99 Central Government Schemes for Minority Education

A gist of the implementation of the schemes having a direct bearing on the educational development of minorities is given below:

Area Intensive Programme for Educationally Backward Minorities

This scheme was launched in May 1993 with the objectives of providing basic infrastructure and facilities in areas of concentration of educationally backward minorities which do not have adequate provision for elementary and secondary education. Under the scheme cent per cent financial assistance is provided to State Governments and voluntary organisations (through State Governments) for the following programmes:

- Establishment of new primary/upper primary schools and residential higher secondary schools for girls.
- Strengthening of educational infrastructure and physical facilities in existing schools.
- Opening of multi-stream residential higher secondary schools for girls where science, commerce, humanities and vocational courses are taught.

The scheme covers 331 blocks of concentration of educationally backward minorities in 93 districts spread over 13 States and 3 UTs.

Achievement

Since the inception of the scheme, i.e. from 1993-94 full/part grants have been given for opening/construction of buildings for 1414 primary/upper primary/secondary schools, six residential higher secondary schools for girls, construction of 607 classrooms, upgradation of 26 primary schools to upper primary schools and high schools to higher secondary schools, construction of 14 hostels buildings for girls' higher secondary schools, construction of toilets/urinals in 69 schools and provision of teaching-learning material in 681 primary/upper primary schools...

Modernisation of Madarsas (Maktabs)

Under the 15-point programme of Empowered Committee on Minorities Education, the scheme of Modernisation of Madarsas on voluntary basis was launched in 1993-94... The objective of the scheme is to encourage traditional institutions like Madarsas and Maktabs by giving financial assistance to introduce science, mathematics, social studies, Hindi and English in their curriculum... It is implemented through State Governments/Union Territories.

During the Eighth Plan the Centre received an encouraging response from States and Union Territories. In the Ninth Plan the scheme envisages the coverage of Madarsas at the secondary level.

Coaching Classes for Competitive Examinations

The University Grants Commission implements the scheme of coaching classes for the weaker sections of Educationally Backward Minorities. The scheme was

introduced in 1984 to provide assistance for organising coaching classes to prepare minority students for competitive examinations. Currently the scheme is being implemented in 22 universities and 59 colleges (including 9 women coaching centres).

Five universities identified for coordinating/organising coaching classes are:

1. **Jamia Millia Islamia:** New Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh.
2. **Bombay University:** Maharashtra and Gujarat.
3. **Madras University:** Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Orissa
4. **Osmania University:** Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka
5. **Calcutta University:** West Bengal and North-Eastern States.

Jamia Millia Islamia and Calicut University have been identified as Coaching Centres for civil services examination and for processing of applications.

Recently, the University Grants Commission has constituted a Standing Committee to review and revise the existing guidelines of the scheme. The Committee will also review the working of Coaching Centres for effective implementation of the programme in the Ninth Plan.

Community Polytechnics

As part of the implementation of the 15-point programme, ten polytechnics were selected during 1984-85 in minority concentration areas for upgrading them as community polytechnics. By the end of financial year 1990-91, all the minority concentration districts except Bidar district in Karnataka have been covered by community polytechnics or their extension centres.

Other Schemes

Besides the above schemes, the following schemes also give special attention to the coverage of minority concentration identified blocks/tehsils by the Ministry of Welfare:

- Non-Formal Education
- Operation Blackboard
- Mid-Day Meal
- District Primary Education Programme
- Total Literacy Campaign

Training Programmes for Principals/Managers/Teachers in Minority Managed Schools

- The teachers of Minorities Educational Institutions have been included in the Special Orientation Programme for Teachers (SOPT) being conducted by the NCERT.
- The NIEPA conducts orientation programmes for heads of educational institutions for minorities on a regular basis... □

Government of Andhra Pradesh's Order on Minorities Educational Institutions G.O. No. 23 dated 10.3.1999

... Government for sometime have been considering the representations regarding certain anomalies and certain difficulties being faced by the Minorities educational institutions due to certain provisions in the Government Orders dealing with Minorities Educational Institutions. ...

Definition of Religious Minorities Educational Institutions

"A religious Minority Educational Institution shall mean an institution which is run by an agency of which at least 2/3rd members belonging to religious minority.

Provided that atleast 50 per cent of the students in all the classes belong to the concerned minority community excepting when the number of applicants for admissions belonging to that particular community is less than 50 per cent. However, in such a case no applicant belonging to that minority community shall be denied admission and application forms shall not be refused to any candidate.

The aforesaid definition will apply to all Educational Institutions viz. Schools, Colleges, I.T.Is, Polytechnics, Engineering Colleges, Medical Colleges etc.

(However, as far as Engineering and Medical Colleges are concerned, this definition shall be subject to final outcome of relevant cases pending in the Supreme Court).

Authority to Grant Minority Status Certificate

- (i) Principal Secretary/Secretary to Government, in Minorities Welfare Department or his nominee shall grant Minority Status Certificate to the Minority Educational Institutions, provided that;
 - (a) The institution falls within the scope of the aforesaid definition.
 - (b) To candidate is admitted on the basis of bogus Minority Certificate.
 - (ii) The certificate shall be issued within 30 days of the receipt of the application.
 - (iii) The certificate shall be issued after obtaining a report from the respective Commissioners/Directors i.e., School Education/Collegiate Education/Technical Education/Medical Education etc.
 - (iv) Status Certificate shall be given on permanent basis but if any conditions are violated, stern action shall be taken against the persons responsible and such persons can also be removed from management after due enquiry and the enquiry can be conducted in this regard either on complaint or suo moto by the concerned Department of Minorities Welfare Department.

Staff Selection Committee

The appointments to the teaching and non-teaching posts in the institutions functioning under Minority community managements shall be made with the candidates selected by the Staff Selection Committee constituted by the respective managements for the purpose. **The candidates sponsored by the Employment Exchange alone shall be entertained**

for interview for selection by the Staff Selection Committee...

Selection of Candidates for Appointment in the Institution

The Minorities Educational Institutions shall be free to appoint a candidate of their choice, in an unaided post without following the reservation roster. However, reservation roster shall be followed for appointments to the aided posts.

Review of Textbooks in Rajasthan

This refers to your letter dated 4.2.1999 wherein you had drawn attention towards the saffronisation of school textbooks in the state during the previous regime.

After examination we constituted a committee of experts on 10.3.1999 to review the textbooks approved during the last nine years and published by Rajasthan State Textbook Board and Board of Secondary Education. The Committee has been asked to complete its work within a period of six months...

(Source: CM of Rajasthan's Letter No. CM.59(1)Edu/58/99/1216 dated 28.4.99 to S. Shahabuddin)

Rajan Alexander On Hinduisation of Education

... There is no denying that culture and religion often overlap. There is little rationale for imposing compulsory recitation of Saraswati Vandana without creating an accompanying understanding what these symbols referred to in the hymn imply. The reference points for the interpretations of these symbols stem from the Vedas (the holy text of the Hindus). This exposes the specious argument by the Sangh Parivar and their apologists that "there is nothing religious in its content that makes a sectarian appeal to people"...

If at all a religious orientation is required in education to inculcate social discipline ... by all means first create awareness of the concordance of symbols and values of the different religions in order to bring better interfaith understanding and appreciation. In the absence of this, making Saraswati Vandana recitation compulsory is an infringement of the rights of non-Hindu religious minorities. A better option would have been to let Hindu schools free to recite Saraswati Vandana, just as Christian and other minority schools are given the option of reciting hymns relevant to their own cultural, religious traditions...

Since a secular state ... is expected to be neutral in matters of religion, then certainly Saraswati Vandana is inappropriate in state-run schools because of its implicit religious connotations... It is this lack of sensitivity in uniformity imposing Saraswati Vandana in all schools that provoked wide condemnation of the BJP Government on the charge of "imposing majoritarian ethos on the country" or "a violation of the constitution"...

(Source: The People's Report, 1-15 January, 1999)

Supreme Court

On Recognition and Management of MEI's

N. Ammad, Appellant vs. Manager, Emjay High School and Others, Respondents

S. SAGHIR AHMAD AND K.T. THOMAS, JJ.

Constitution of India – Article 30(1) – Minority educational institution (MEI) – Right to administer – Appointment of Headmaster – Right of management of minority aided school regarding – Held, management has full freedom to appoint any person either from the staff of the same school or from outside, subject to restriction as regards qualification prescribed under statute, rules or regulations...

The right guaranteed under Article 30(1) is a right that is absolute and any law or executive direction which infringes the substance of that right is void to the extent of infringement. But the absolute character of the right will not preclude making of regulations in the true interests of efficiency or instruction, discipline, health, sanitation, morality, public order and the like, as such regulations are not restrictions on the substance of the right guaranteed by the Constitution.

Selection and appointment of Headmaster in a school (or Principal) of a college) are of prime importance in administration of that educational institution. The Headmaster is the key post in the running of the school. He is the hub on which all the spokes of the school are set around whom they rotate to generate result. A school is personified through its Headmaster and he is the focal point on which outsiders look at the school. A bad Headmaster can spoil the entire institution, an efficient and honest Headmaster can improve it by leaps and bounds. The functional efficacy of a school very much depends upon the efficiency and dedication of its Headmaster. This pristine precept remains unchanged despite many changes taking place in the structure patterns of education over the years.

The management's right to choose a qualified person as the Headmaster of the school is well insulated by the protective cover of Article 30(1) of the Constitution and it cannot be chiselled out through any legislative act or executive rule except for fixing up the qualifications and conditions of service for the post. Any such statutory or executive fiat would be violative of the fundamental right enshrined in the aforesaid article and would hence be void. The management of a minority school is free to find out a qualified person either from the staff of the same school or from outside to fill up the vacancy. If management of the school is not given very wide freedom to choose the personnel for holding such a key post, subject of course to the restrictions regarding qualifications to be prescribed by the State, the right to administer the school would get much diminished. Hence it is for the management of the

Shahabuddin's Letters

On Opening of More

Primary Schools in Muslim Areas To CM of Rajasthan, 5 May, 1999

Regarding education, I would like to draw your attention to the national norm of a primary school for 200-300 population. I would request that in Muslim concentration areas, more primary schools be opened suo moto by the government and certainly on demand by the local community. I would also suggest that if any existing **Maktab** offers to convert itself into a primary school, this may be encouraged and such primary schools should be included in the list of government aided primary schools. In such primary schools to serve Urdu-speaking population, the medium of instruction should be Urdu.

On VHP Propaganda about Madarsas

To The Indian Express, 22 March, 1999

It has been reported that the VHP General Secretary P.B. Togodia, in the speech at Bangalore on 18 March, 1999 gave the number of Madarsas in the country at the time of independence as 45. This appears to be an absurd figure. I do not know, on what authority this figure is based.

Madarsas of various levels – from Maktab to Universities – existed in thousands. Also to make a comparison between 1947 and 1999, one needs to grade the Madarsas and take into account the tripling of the Muslim population during the last 5 decades.

Every religious group has its place of worship and its institutions for religious instruction and for training religious functionaries. In fact, Hindus have many more religious Pathshalas, Vidyalayas, Gurukuls and Maths all over the country. The VHP itself plans to establish many more institutions to teach about Hinduism not only to the Hindus but also to the non-Hindus. Why should he object only to Madarsas?

Incidentally Islam does not regard man as God but as the highest creation of God.

minority educational institution to choose the modality for selecting the qualified persons for appointment.

A (MEI) ... would continue to be so irrespective of whether Government declared it as such or not – Declaration by the Government is at best only a recognition of an existing fact.

A school which is otherwise a minority school would continue to be so whether the Government declared it as such or not. When the Government declared the school as a minority school it has recongised a factual position that the school was established and is being administered by a minority community. The declaration is only an open acceptance of a legal character which should necessarily have existed antecedent to such declaration.

Late K.M. Panikkar (1895-1963)**On the AMU**

Historian and Diplomat served as Professor of History in the AMU during 1919-1922. In his 'Autobiography' he records the 'insight' into Indian Islam that he gained during his stay at Aligarh – Editor.

Life at Aligarh was also important because it gave me certain insights which otherwise I would not have gain. The most important of these was the realisation that for Muslims the history of India began in reality with the arrival of Islam in this country. Ibn Kassim's (Mohammed-bin-Kasim's) invasion of Sind was the prelude; Mahmud Ghazni's raids constituted a thrilling overture, and real history began with Mohammed Ghori and Kutubuddin. This came as a shock tome at that time. No one in Aligarh had the least interest in the long pre-Islamic history of India. It struck me as strange that while a great number of Hindu scholars had written on Indo-Muslim history, and the classic biography of Aurangzeb is by a Hindu writers, not a single Muslim scholar had contributed anything on any period of pre-Islamic history. Later, when I began to study Islamic historiography I realised that the vision of history was (to Muslim scholars) a revelation of God's will, beginning with the creation, the prophets, the final revelation of the Quran through Mohammed, the Khalifs, and the expansion of Islam. So from this point of view India comes into history only when Islam reaches it. Consciously or unconsciously this was the view that the students at Aligarh held though they were then going through a period of nationalism (due to anti-British feelings over the Khilafat crisis). ...

Another lessōn, which struck me in the face at Aligarh, was the integration of Islam as a single community in India. The unifying forces of Islam even among the peoples of different ethnic compositions is well known. In India, though in early days there seems to have been some rivalry between Hindustani and foreign Muslims, the Deccani and Hindustani groups, the crisis in Islam in the 19th century (by final termination of the Mughal Raj), had brought them together and helped to cement the common Islamic feeling. Of this movement the radiating centre was Aligarh which also elevated Urdu, originally a common language of Hindus and Muslims in the Gangetic Valley, into a national gauge of Muslim unification. Aligarh represented the new united force of Islam in India. The leadership had two faces, one looking towards British authorities, obsequiously (loyalty) smiling, and the other towards Hindus, suspicious and frowning. This represented what may be called the official leadership... dominated by Nawabs, Khan Bahadurs and others of whom the best representative was Ziauddin. There was another aspect of Aligarh, pan-Islamist and anti-British which found but little support in official leadership.

(Source: The Organiser, 18 April, 1999)

*With Best
Compliments*

from

**KALEEM
KAWAJA**

**THE ASSOCIATION
OF INDIAN
MUSLIMS OF
AMERICA**

**THE ORGANIZATION
FOR UNIVERSAL
COMMUNAL
HARMONY**

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

A.I. Convention on Human Rights and the Minorities, New Delhi 10 April, 1999

V.M. Tarkunde on Attacks on Minorities

The (recent) attacks on the Christian minority ... in various parts of the country ... were obviously undertaken by followers of the RSS, the so-called Sangh Parivar. The offences have become frequent now because a Government led by the BJP, which is also a part of the Sangh Parivar is in power at the Centre... The perpetrators of these offences appear to expect that they would be protected, directly or indirectly, by those in power. These expectations must not be allowed to be fulfilled...

The violent attacks on a religious minority like the Christians furnish a further proof, if a proof was required, that the movement of the RSS ... is essentially a fascist movement. It combines religious aggressiveness with national chauvinism and is, therefore, the direct negation of the ideal of secular democratic freedom... Vajpayee is a moderate and not an extremist, but if he wants to remain in power he will have to yield completely to RSS when a general election draws near, for he cannot throw away the ladder which helped him and the BJP (achieve) power. If the prospects of India's democratic freedom are to be safeguarded, it is necessary to prevent the BJP from getting absolute majority or being the largest party in the Lok Sabha after the next general election.

This will not be a difficult task. The majority of Hindus consist of Dalits, Tribals and persons belonging to the lower castes ... are, as a general rule, not likely to be affected by appeals based on Hindu communalism. Communal appeals are not likely to influence even a section of upper caste Hindus who share the Indian cultural tradition of freedom of thought and tolerance of differences... Thus in the normal course a majority of Hindus and all religious minorities including Muslims and Christians are likely to vote against the BJP candidates... The BJP may get some advantage from the fact that those parties, which are opposed to it, are sharply divided among themselves and this may result in a division of the anti-communist vote. But our electorate is sufficiently wise to ensure that the party, which they dislike, does not come to power...

Rajni Kothari on Hindu Fascism

The fundamentally fascist orientation of Hindutva forces came through when they reached their logical end - far beyond Muslim-bashing and the destruction of the Masjid or the systematic bashing of the Dalits and the lower strata of the OBC's - in the ... brutal murder of men committed to a mission of charity (for) the poor and the downtrodden and rape of women who (were serving) the ill and the illiterate...

The crux of fascism lies in a community, race or "nation" assuming the image and elan of a "majority" that

by virtue thereof could arrogate to itself all power, sense of destiny, truth and wisdom and in consequence engage in attempts at annihilation of the minorities, unleashing ... not just ordinary onslaught of prejudice, hatred and violence but massacres and genocidal acts aimed at ethnic cleansing of an entire community. This is what ... is currently under way ... in a country, where this is hard to believe, namely India. We have lived with communalism of various types over several decades, even genocidal acts as against the Sikhs and the Muslims, but the worst manifestation of it is to be found in the latest torrent of heinous attacks, backed by a most dangerous ideological rationale, in the way the (Christian) missionaries ... are being targeted... Unless we can all together arrest this growing menace of morally reprehensible mayhem ... not just through outright condemnation or even symbolic rallies but through collective actions, there is serious danger of our entire democratic edifice with all its claims of plurality and tolerance ... going under.

Supreme Court

I-On National Human Rights Commission

Paramjit Kaur, Petitioner v. State of Punjab and others, Respondents.

S. SAGHIR AHMAD AND S. RAJENDRA BABU, JJ.

Constitution of India, Article 32 - Protection of Human Rights Act (10 or 1994), Sections 12,3 - National Human Rights Commission - Powers and jurisdiction - Commission headed by a former Chief Justice is a unique expert body in itself - In deciding matters referred by Supreme Court, Commission is not circumscribed by any conditions - Its acts sui generis.

... Violation of Human Rights - Supreme Court under Article 32 entrusting National Human Rights Commission to deal with matters - Commission empowered to investigate even though period of limitation under Section 36 has been expired.

(Source: AIR 1999 Supreme Court 340)

II - On Application of International Norms

Apparel Export Promotion Council, Appellant v. A.K. Chopra, Respondent

A.S. ANAND, CJI AND V.N. KHARE, J.

Constitution of India, Articles 21, 14 - Human rights violation - Cases involving - Courts to remain alive to international covenants.

In cases involving violation of human rights, the Courts for ever remain alive to the international instruments and conventions and apply the same to a given case when there is no inconsistency between the international norms and the domestic law occupying the field.

(Source: AIR 1999 Supreme Court 625)

Cases related to Human Rights Violation and Payment of Compensation

1. Kasturilal Ralia Jain Vs. State of UP (1965): AIR 1965 SC 1039
2. Rudal Shah Vs. State of Bihar (1983) 4 Scc 141
3. Sebastian M. Hongray Vs. Union of India (1984) 1 Scc 339 and (184) 3 Scc 82
4. Bhim Singh Vs. State of Jammu & Kashmir, 1984 Supp Scc 504 and (1985) 4 Scc 677.
5. R. Gandhi Vs. Union of India AIR 1989, Madras 205
6. Saheli, A Women's Resource Centre Vs. Commissioner of Police, (1991) 1 Scc 422
7. M/s Inder Puri General Stores Vs. Union of India & Others AIR 1992, J&K11
8. Nilabati Behera Vs. State of Orissa (1993) 2 Scc 746
9. Pratul Kumar Sinha Vs. State of Bihar 1994 Supp. (3) Scc 100
10. Harjeet Singh Vs. Union of India AIR 1995 SC 1433
11. Sawinder Singh Grover's death's case 1994 (crl.) 1464 and 1995 Supp. 4 Scc 450
12. Inder Singh Vs. State of Punjab AIR 1995 SC 1949

Rulings of the High Courts and Supreme Court On Liability of the Government to Compensate the Victims in case of Riots and Police Atrocities

1. The Madras High Court in R. Gandhi Vs. Union of India (AIR 1989 Mad 205) has laid down that under the Constitution of India, the State Government is bound to protect the life, liberty and properties of the citizens, and if it fails to protect, then it is liable to compensate. The primary duty of the State Government is to protect law and order. The High Court ordered to pay compensation to the victims. In this case, it was also held that the Government is also bound to protect and maintain secularism in the interest of the country.
2. Similarly, in the M/s Inder Puri General Stores Vs. Union of India (AIR 1992 J&K11) the Jammu and Kashmir High Court has laid down that the Government is bound to protect life, liberty and properties of the citizens and it is liable to compensate the victims, if it fails to protect the interest of the citizens.
3. Delhi High Court, in case of Mrs. Harbhajan Kaur, has laid down that State Government failed to protect the life of her husband and their properties in the riots, therefore, the State Government should pay the victim a compensation of Rs.3.5 lakhs.
4. In Inder Singh Vs. State of Punjab (AIR 1995 SC 1949) the Supreme Court has held that if police commits atrocities, in violation of human rights and people are killed then, the State Government is liable to pay compensation. The Court also ordered enquiry against the police officials. ...

On National Human Rights Commission MHA: Annual Report, 1998-99 (Extracts)

The National Human Rights Commission, constituted in October 1993, continued to pursue its mandate with vigour and purpose. During the period April-November, 1998 the National Human Rights Commission considered 23,319 complaints (including complaints received during the previous years). Out of these, 8023 complaints were dismissed and 6,722 complaints were transmitted to the concerned authorities of the Central/State Governments, etc., with appropriate directions for disposal of the complaints at their end. The Commission took cognizance of 6,724 cases for the purpose of making inquiries. The Commission has concluded 1850 cases by making appropriate recommendations on the basis of reports received from various authorities and after making enquiries through its own Investigation Division.

(Contd. from Page 280)

existence. Aryan culture believes in rebirth, which is dismissed by Buddhism. Buddhism simply believes in Nirvana after death, which means extinction of an individual, never to appear again. Aryan culture believes in the immorality of the soul, while Buddhism rejects it.

Aryan culture believes in ritualism that includes human and animal sacrifice, while Buddha not only strictly opposed it but also eliminated such practices during his lifetime 2,500 years ago. These are the main facts to prove that Buddha never advocated Aryan beliefs. Rather, he gave a new Dharma.

Here are some important questions:

- If Buddha advocated Aryan culture, why did the sons of Aryans (Brahmins) destroy thousands of Buddhist monasteries and stupas throughout the country down the centuries?
- Why did the Hindu kings kill thousands of Buddhist monks?
- Why did the Hindus several times cut down the Bodhi tree at Bodh Gaya under which Buddha had attained enlightenment?
- Why do Hindus even today occupy the Maha Bodhi Vihar ... at Bodh Gaya, where they have set up a shivalinga beside the statue of Buddha?
- If Buddha is the ninth incarnation of Vishnu, why do Hindus not set up statues of Buddha in Hindu temples, or construct new viharas and stupas?
- Why did Hindus fight Buddhism in India while it spread to the other continents of the world?

... Mahapundit Rahul Sankrityayana says that centuries ago Hinduism killed Buddhism by "embracing" it as a sister.

(Source: The Pioneer, 2 May, 1999)

[Dr. Tulsiram is Associate Professor, School of International Studies, JNU, New Delhi]

Government Report on Inflow of Foreign Contribution, 1996-97

Foreign contribution received during 1996-97 aggregated to Rs.2571.69 crores against 2168.85 during 1995-96 and 1892.43 during 1994-95...

... Tamil Nadu had the largest number of associations reporting receipt of foreign contribution. The aggregate amount of foreign contribution received by associations in Tamil Nadu was also the highest. *Table I* shows the names of States/UTs that received foreign contribution above Rs.15 crores during 1996-97.

Table I

State/UT	No. of Orgns.	Amount received (Rs. in crores)
Tamil Nadu	2016	404.98
Andhra Pradesh	1226	352.72
Maharashtra	941	274.91
Karnataka	1029	274.16
Kerala	1450	242.30
West Bengal	1153	158.28
Bihar	539	84.02
Gujarat	484	80.25
Uttar Pradesh	708	70.16
Madhya Pradesh	378	57.81
Orissa	504	56.05
Himachal Pradesh	70	40.16
Meghalaya	94	20.78
Rajasthan	154	18.02
Delhi	602	346.35

USA (Rs.582.22 crores) heads the list of leading donor countries during 1996-97 followed by Germany (Rs.548.87 crores), UK (Rs.302.35 crores), Italy (Rs.196.55 crores) and Netherlands (Rs.185.58 crores). *Table II* indicates the names of donor countries with foreign contribution exceeding 10 crores. ...

Table II

Country-wise Receipt of Contribution during 1996-97

S.No.	Country	Amount (Rs. in crores)
1.	Australia	40.20
2.	Austria	39.68
3.	Belgium	49.19
4.	Canada	66.73
5.	Denmark	24.50
6.	France	59.56
7.	Germany	54.89
8.	Hong Kong	13.18
9.	Ireland	10.55
10.	Italy	196.55
11.	Japan	20.05

12.	Netherlands	185.58
13.	Norway	20.63
14.	Saudi Arabia	12.25
15.	Singapore	10.79
16.	Spain	62.46
17.	Sweden	32.62
18.	Switzerland	132.89
19.	United Arab Emirates	17.85
20.	U.K.	302.35
21.	USA	582.22

Table III

Major Foreign Donors during 1996-97

S.No.	Country	Amount (Rs. in crores)
1.	Foster Parents Plan International, USA	70.78
2.	Missio, Germany	58.66
3.	Christian Children Fund, USA	56.52
4.	Evangelische Zentralstelle, Germany	49.36
5.	Kinder Not Heilee, Germany	40.02
6.	Miseror, Germany	38.64
7.	World Visions International, USA	35.04
8.	Maharishi Ayurvedic Trust, UK	32.09
9.	Action Aid, UK	31.42
10.	Gospel for Asia, USA	26.93
11.	Inter Church Coordination Committee, Netherlands	25.30
12.	International Planned Parenthood Fed., UK	22.13
13.	Christofeel Blinden Mission, Germany	21.62
14.	Christian Air, UK	20.33
15.	Oxfam (India) Trust, UK	20.30
16.	Ford Foundation, USA	19.77
17.	Opere Don Bosco, Italy	19.03
18.	Manos Unidas Committee, Spain	19.72
19.	Bread for the World, Germany	18.45
20.	General Conf. Of 7 th Day Adventists, USA	17.89
21.	Lutheran World Federation, Switzerland	17.46
22.	Bergitta Pir, Austria	16.86
23.	Manos Unidas Afonso Ted, Spain	16.77
24.	Save the Children Fund, UK	16.77
25.	Bilance, Netherlands	15.23

Major Recipient Associations:

... 28 associations received foreign contribution above Rs.10 crores, 31 associations Rs. 5 to 10 crores and 430 associations between Rs. 1 and 5 crores.

... Out of the total foreign contribution of Rs.2571.69 crores received during 1996-97, "Health and Family Development" for 10.66 per cent (Rs.274.24 crores) and "Care of Orphans" for 8.20 per cent (Rs.210.77 crores). ...

FOREIGN CONTRIBUTION

Table IV
Major Foreign Contribution
Recipients during 1996-97

S.No.	Association/State	Amount (Rs. in crores)
1.	Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, AP	47.74
2.	Maharishi Ved Vigyan Viswavidyapeetham, AP	40.33
3.	Foster Plan International Inc., Delhi	35.88
4.	World Vision of India, Tamil Nadu	33.90
5.	Gospel for Asia, Kerala	26.06
6.	Action Aid, Karnataka	24.77
7.	C.S.I. Council for Child Care, Karnataka	23.34
8.	Family Planning Assoc. of India, Maharashtra	22.19
9.	Christian Children Fund Inc., Karnataka	22.18
10.	Community Aid Sponsorship Programme, Maharashtra	20.07
11.	Serv. Assn. Of 7 th Day Adventists, Tamil Nadu	19.64
12.	Tibetan Children's Village, Himachal Pradesh	18.90
13.	Churches Auxiliary for Social Action, Delhi	17.35
14.	Mysore Resettlement & Development Agency, Karnataka	17.22
15.	S.O.S. Children's Villages of India, Delhi	16.88
16.	Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushotam Santha, Gujarat	16.53
17.	Oxfam (India) Trust, Delhi	15.34
18.	Missionaries of Charity, W. Bengal	14.84
19.	Indo German Social Service Society, Delhi	14.83
20.	Lilavati Kirtilal Mehta Medical Trust, Maharashtra	14.73
21.	Caritas India, Delhi	14.72
22.	A.M.G. India International, A.P.	14.29
23.	Lutheran World Service - India, W. Bengal	13.62
24.	Association for Sarva Sewa Farm, Tamil Nadu	12.86
25.	Aga Khan Foundation, Delhi	11.23

Purpose-wise Receipt of Foreign Contribution during 1996-97

S.No.	Purpose	Amount (Rs. in crores)
1.	Maintenance/Repair of places of worship	69.18
2.	Construction/Extension of places of worship	41.88
3.	Publication of Religious Literature	20.23
4.	Education of Preachers/Priests	53.65
5.	Religious Functions	74.74
6.	Care of Orphans	210.77
7.	Help for the poor, aged and destitutes	171.36
8.	Health and Family Welfare	284.57
9.	Relief for natural calamities	25.07
10.	Construction/extension of schools/colleges	97.31
11.	Repair/maintenance of schools/colleges	70.21
12.	Construction/extension of other buildings	143.03

13.	Repair/maintenance of other buildings	41.48
14.	Research	138.79
15.	Stipends and scholarships	47.09
16.	Agricultural activities	17.52
17.	Animal Husbandry	9.03
18.	Rural Development	274.24
19.	Sanitation	2.07
20.	Housing	10.78
21.	Environment	3.54
22.	Cultural programmes	4.17
23.	Theatre/films	11.72
24.	Maintenance of places of historical and cultural importance	0.14
25.	Any other purpose	749.12
Total		2571.69

Statewise Receipt of Foreign Contribution during 1996-97

S.No.	State/UT	No. of Reporting Associations	Amount (Rs. in crores)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1266	352.72
2.	Assam	158	14.88
3.	Bihar	539	84.02
4.	Goa	109	13.28
5.	Gujarat	484	80.25
6.	Haryana	64	6.71
7.	Himachal Pradesh	70	40.16
8.	J&K	24	9.93
9.	Karnataka	1029	274.16
10.	Kerala	1450	242.30
11.	Madhya Pradesh	378	57.81
12.	Maharashtra	941	274.91
13.	Manipur	202	10.18
14.	Meghalaya	94	20.78
15.	Nagaland	40	4.35
16.	Orissa	504	56.05
17.	Punjab	72	14.98
18.	Rajasthan	154	18.02
19.	Sikkim	4	1.26
20.	Tamil Nadu	2016	404.98
21.	Tripura	9	1.22
22.	Uttar Pradesh	708	70.16
23.	West Bengal	1153	158.28
24.	Andaman & Nicobar	8	1.37
25.	Chandigarh	14	1.87
26.	Dadar & Nagar Haveli	9	0.72
27.	Delhi	602	346.35
28.	Pondicherry	57	9.20
29.	Others	18	0.80
Total		12136	2571.69

Rafiq Zakaria on the Tragedy of Partition

...As the years rolled on, what was supposed to have been the cure, turned about to be worse than the disease...

Fifty years have gone by since then but ... Muslims, who did not go to Pakistan, have by and large lived as if in a state of stupor. Not even five per cent of them could migrate to Pakistan; but an ocean of ill-will was created against the entire community among Hindus. They had to constantly prove their loyalty and patriotism to their own country and their attachment to their own motherland... They faced an uphill task in every human endeavour... Resentment against them had taken deep roots; it was kept alive by the communal forces which were reinforced by partition. The "Two-Nation" theory had poisoned Hindu-Muslim relations as never before. Even I, as a Muslim, despite my antecedents, felt sometimes a strange sense of alienation and frustration. Sometimes when tempers rose to fever pitch and the irrational reigned, I also found myself, as if, a square peg in a round hole... The divide that Jinnah had created would take years, perhaps decades, may be even centuries to get bridged. His own lieutenants later confessed, to quote Chaudhary Khaliquzzaman, that the "Two-Nation" theory "had positively proved injurious to Muslims everywhere. It destroyed whatever political weight Muslims in pre-partitioned India enjoyed". Shaheed Suhrawardy, who became subsequently Prime Minister of Pakistan, denounced it as a "big mistake". The harm had been done; how could it be undone and who would undo it – these were the mind-boggling questions for which no one had any answer. As an Urdu poet has said, "Blunders are committed in moments but centuries have to suffer the consequences. ...

... India and (have) been embroiled in armed hostilities on the question of the accession of Kashmir. Jinnah had sent raiders to usurp the only Muslim-majority state which had legally, under the terms of the transfer of power, joined India. This was patently an unconstitutional move. Jinnah owned the creation of Pakistan to the struggle of Muslims who had remained behind in India. Unsurprisingly he did not care to consider the implications of such an unwise adventure on his part, especially when his erstwhile followers were trying hard to adjust to the new set-up; it was, to say the least, a callous act. His advocacy of the "Two-Nation" theory had already created much animosity against the Muslim minority among Hindus; and now the Kashmir issue would strike another blow to communal harmony and peace. What was a piece of land and a few million Muslims compared to the forty million Muslims spread all over India whom partition had rendered forlorn and helpless! Could Jinnah not have shown the statesmanship to provide for those whom he had left in such a lurch, some measure of relief and safety? The Muslims in some measure of relief and safety? The Muslims in Kashmir under the charismatic leadership of

Shaikh Abdullah, had already opted to be with India; but Jinnah, who was then on his death-bed, did not think of the repercussions on his stranded faithful, who in fact had made him the Quaid-e-Azam.

Jinnah's successors carried out the same policy; they waged three wars to grab Kashmir. Despite having suffered one defeat after another, they have still not given up their aggressive stance. Where war has failed, they have resorted to terrorist insurgency. They continue to spend billions of dollars on arms build-up in the hope that they would be able to somehow snatch Kashmir from India; in the process they have ruined their economy. They claim to be the defenders of Islam, but they fail to realise that if Kashmir went to them, the position of Indian Muslims, who are as many as the Pakistanis, will become the target of Hindu chauvinism. Muslim leaders, like their League predecessors in the past, turn a blind eye to the ground realities and propagate that the loss of Kashmir would not have any adverse effect on their co-religionists in India. The fact is that such an eventuality will shake the very foundation of secularism and unleash a reign of terror against Indian Muslims. Hence more than the Hindus, it is the Muslims in India who have to guard against it. Kashmir is the arsenal for their security. They are aware of the miseries that partition has brought upon them; they have also seen that once religious fanaticism is inflamed, as happened recently in Bosnia, brute force takes over. ...

... Indian Muslims ... continue to struggle against poverty, unemployment and disease. Their so-called leaders in India instead of bridging the gulf between Hindus and Muslims, are ever ready to widen it. They turn non-issues into crises and whip up religious frenzy. They are neither bothered about the educational backwardness and economic plight of their co-religionists nor are they interested in making the biggest minority of 140 million an integral part of the nation. Pakistanis seem little concerned about the consequences of their tirade against India, which inevitably harms the vital interests of their leftover faithfuls in India. Here in India in the name of secularism, bogus or genuine, Muslims are either made pawns or scapegoats in the power struggle. How long will Indian Muslims have to pay the price of partition? ...

(Source: The Price of Partition by Rafiq Zakaria)

I refuse to accept the idea that man is mere flotsam and jetsam in the river of life... I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daylight of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality.

- Martin Luther King

Buddhist Scholar Tulsiram on Buddhism as a Distinct Religion Not an Extension of Hinduism

After 1995, the VHP has been campaigning for the unity of Buddhism and Hinduism. It organised four major Hindu-Baudh conferences in the last two years: in October 1997 at Haridwar, in November 1997 at Modipuram (Meerut), in November 1998 at Sarnath, and at the birthplace of Gautam Buddha, Lumbini, in December 1998. The most interesting aspect of all these conferences was that no real Buddhist monk or scholar was invited because those who spoke had to keep in mind the organisers' position on Buddhism; **that Buddhism does not have an independent identity but is an inseparable part of Hinduism.**

... And therefore, Buddhists should join the campaign of Hindutva under the leadership of the VHP and the Sangh Parivar. In this regard, a remarkable statement was issued by VHP leader Ashok Singhal and Giriraj Kishore on 31 August 1998 in which they said that **without Hindu-Baudh unity, it would be difficult for them to compete with the Christian and Muslim community.**

However, after the meeting of Marg Darshak Mandal and Dharm Sansad, the VHP began to send invitations to different Buddhist monks following a well-thought strategy; in terms of attracting numbers of people and wielding clout at the international level, this campaign was extremely beneficial. As a result, the VHP directed its organisational units in China, Japan, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and other countries to coordinate their activities with Buddhists...

The VHP, in one argument about the oneness of Buddhism and Hinduism, says that different Hindu texts, particularly the Puranas, over many centuries prove that Gautam Buddha is the ninth incarnation of Lord Vishnu.

The most startling statement was made in a speech by Bharatiya Janata Party leader Lal Krishna Advani on 6 November 1998 at Sarnath. In his written speech, he said, "Buddha did not announce any new religion. He was only restating, with a new emphasis, the ancient ideals of the Indo-Aryan civilisation".

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar pointed out that Hinduism never became a missionary religion because of its deep-rooted caste system (varn vyavastha) based on disparity and discrimination. But Buddhism spread everywhere and, before its destruction by the Brahminical social order in India, became the most dominant religion of the world. Worldwide, even today, the Buddhist population is larger than the Hindu population.

Let us examine whether Buddha gave a new religion or not, or whether he simply advocated Aryan culture.

Buddhism and Aryan culture move in opposite

directions. The Agni Purana which has declared Buddha as the ninth avatar of Vishnu says: "Many years ago, there was a war between the devas and asuras in which the demons managed to defeat the gods. The gods went running to Vishnu for protection, and Vishnu told them that Mayamoha would be born as Buddha, the son of Sudhodhana. Such were the illusions that Buddha created that the asuras left the path indicated by the Vedas and became Buddhists. These dastardly creatures performed ceremonies that were assure ticket to narak. Towards the end of the Kali era, all people will be dastardly. They will oppose the Vedas, become robbers and will be concerned only with wealth. The disbelievers will then become kings and these kings will also be cannibals."

Despite this distortion in the Agni Purana, it is clear that Buddha preached against the Vedas, that is Aryan culture. All the Puranas, including the Agni Purana, were written between the sixth and ninth century AD. ...

Regarding the ninth avatar of Vishnu, the Agni Purana further says that avatars come to earth to kill demons. However, who did Buddha kill?

In answer to this question, the Agni Purana logic is that Buddha did not kill them himself but got them killed by giving false education to his followers, which means that demons were the followers of Buddha. ...

If we look back at the history of the time when Buddha and his Dharma were born, we will see that there were 62 schools of thoughts in India, and among them the Aryan culture was the dominant one. However, after the advent of Buddhism, the Aryan culture took a step back...

At the time of the Aryans' migration to India, Central Asia had a patriarchal society while India had a matriarchal society. The Aryans converted India to patriarchalism. This is how the Aryans transformed the indigenous culture.

Mahatma Jyoti Rao Phule has pointed out in his famous work, *Gulami*, that Brahma was an Aryan king, assertive and dominating, that Brahma introduced a strict social order, which was the caste system based on inequality. And his followers came to be known as Brahmins. This is how the Brahmins assumed the role of their forefathers, the Aryans. This, in brief, was the Aryan culture.

Aryan or Brahminical culture is based on varn vyavastha and untouchability, while Buddha advocates universal equality and brotherhood. Aryan culture is based on war, while Buddha advocates world peace.

Aryan culture accepts mythical kings and queens as gods and goddesses, while Buddhism does not accept their

(Contd. on Page 276)

Joginder Singh on Sikh Shrines in Delhi

...Five Sikh Gurus: Guru Nanak, Hargobind Sahib, Harkishan, Tegh Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singhji visited and sojourned in Delhi...To commemorate their visits, several shrines came to be built. But in course of time, these were either pulled down to obliterate the holy association or fell into disrepair... In 1783 the Sikhs located these shrines systematically and built them as historic Gurdwaras... The Missal leaders had the foresight to preserve the sacred places.

In 1783, Sardar Baghel Singh captured Delhi and exercised complete control over it... The nominal Mughal Emperor was Shah Alam II. Sardar Baghel Singh expressed the desire that the Sikhs wished to reclaim the holy places associated with the memory of their Gurus and build Gurdwaras and promised to leave Delhi after accomplishing this job... The following terms were approved by the Emperor:

- (i) That the major part of Sikh army would return to their homes in Punjab. The force was reduced from thirty thousand to four thousand, with headquarters in Subzi Mandi.
- (ii) That Sardar Baghel Singh would remain in Delhi with 4,000 troops.
- (iii) That he shall build seven Gurdwaras on the sites sacred to Sikhs in Delhi because of their association with the Gurus, by the end of the year 1783.
- (iv) That, to meet the expenses of his troops and the construction of Gurdwaras he shall charge six annas in a rupee (37.5 per cent) of all Octroi duty.
- (v) That Sikh force would not misbehave during their stay in the Capital, ...

The Sikhs received cash payment of Rs. Three lacs for Karha Parshad... First, Baghel Singh built a Gurdwara in memory of Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devan who had stayed in Delhi for some years. The second Gurdwara was built at Jai Singh Pura where Guru Har Krishan had stayed in the bungalow of Raja Jai Singh, now a landmark of New Delhi. Four Samadhis were built on the banks of Jamuna where Guru Harkishan, Mata Sundari, Mata Sahib Dev and Ajit Singh, the adopted son of Mata Sundari had been cremated. Gurdwara Bala Saheb marks the spot today.

Two places were connected with Guru Tegh Bahadur, one at Kotwali and the other at Rakab Ganj. At both the places mosques had been built by the Mughals... Rakab Ganj restoration created some excitement among local populace. They waited on the Emperor in a large body... A Mughal ... official visited Baghel Singh who said that the Mughals had demolished the Gurdwara built in February 1778 with Mughal court's consent. Baghel Singh however agreed to meet all leaders of opposition. A delegation of leading Mullas and Moulvis called on him... He

discovered the Jagirs held by these leaders... The Sikh Sardars of Ambala and Karnal were asked to capture the Jagirs... The leaders finding their own property-in danger, called on Baghel Singh in two's and three's. Baghel Singh secured written approval for dismantling of the structures that had been illegally created over Sikh sites and forwarded the papers to the Emperor...

Thereafter Baghel Singh collected men and material for building Gurdwara Sisganj against local opposition... They prepared for resistance. Baghel Singh didn't know the exact place where Guru Tegh Bahadur had been martyred. An aged mashki (Muslim water carrier) came to his rescue. His father had washed the place after the Guru's execution. He explained that the Holy peer sat on a chowki facing East side of the compound and his head had fallen in front of him... Only a portion of wall was pulled down and in the compound a Gurdwara was ... built.

The sixth Gurdwara was built at Majnu-ka-Tilla, where Guru Nanak and Mardana, and subsequently Guru Hargobind Sahib, had stayed.

The seventh shrine was built at Motibagh...

The other historic Gurdwaras, behind Humayun tomb, and Nanak Piao, in the memory of Guru Gobind Singh and Guru Nanak were built later on. ...

(Source: The Sikh Review, June, 1998)

Karan Singh On Hinduism and Hindu 'Minorities'

Swami Agnivesh (claims) that Hinduism is not a religion but "a way of life"... All the great religions of the world claim to represent 'ways of life', whether it is Islam, Christianity, Confucianism or any other. Each one of these has a certain view of God and the human condition which involves a philosophy of life. Saying that Hinduism is not a religion, therefore, is doing it a great disservice. Around the world Hinduism has been recognised as a religion, in the interfaith movement and also in those countries where Hindus are in a minority. By denying that Hinduism is a separate religion we are, in fact, treading upon dangerous ground

Once the basic concept has been accepted, it follows that in those States where Hindus are in a minority they should receive the same protection as is available to other minorities under the Constitution and the law. I have been raising this demand in Parliament for the last two decades, and I congratulate Prof. Tahir Mahmood, Chairman of the National Commission for Minorities, for having taken a long overdue step in this direction. The broader question of social reform within Hinduism, and within other religions for that matter, is quite separate and needs to be tackled on a continuing basis.

Commemorative/Special Stamps, 1947-1998 In Honour of Muslim Personalities

1952	1 October	Ghalib
1966	11 November	Abul Kalam Azad
1969	17 February	Ghalib
	15 March	Osmania University
	1 April	Rafi Ahmad Kidwai
	11 June	Dr. Zakir Husain
1970	22 May	ZShah Suri
	29 October	Jamia Millia Islamia
1973	17 October	Syed Ahmad Khan
1974	15 July	Tipu Sultan
1975	26 August	Mir Anees
	24 October	Ameer Khusrau
	24 October	Bahadur Shah Zafar
1977	9 March	Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed
1978	10 December	Mohammad Ali Jauhar
1980	21 March	Darul Uloom Deoband
	25 June	S.M. Zamin Ali
	25 December	M.A. Ansari
1981	2 January	Mazharul Haque
1982	17 September	Raza's Painting (Bindu)
	17 September	M.F. Hussain's Painting
1984	10 May	Begum Hazrat Mahal
1987	13 February	Hakim Ajmal Khan
1988	21 April	Mohammad Iqbal
	11 November	Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
	5 December	Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah
1989	13 February	Dargah Sharif, Ajmer
	13 April	S.D. Kitchlew
	11 May	Asaf Ali
1993	9 August	Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan
	30 December	Nargis Dutt
1994	21 November	Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library
1995	18 February	Rafi Ahmed Kidwai
	31 December	Ala Hazrat Bareilvi
1996	5 June	Muhammad Ismail Sahib
	12 November	Salim Ali
1998	27 March	Sir Syed Ahmed Khan
	3 May	Zakir Husain
	15 May	Md. Abdulrahman Sahib
	25 May	Vakkom Abdul Khader
	16 July	Aruna Asaf Ali

Shahabuddin's letter to P.M.

On Hegdewar's Stamp, 19 March, 1999

The release of a commemorative stamp to mark the 110th birth anniversary of Dr. K.B. Hegdewar, the founder of the RSS, may be justified as a personal act of adoration to a Guru by his 'shish but it also shows an inclination to exploit the State for partisan and sectarian purposes.

No one doubts Dr. Hegdewar's patriotism but his role in the freedom struggle and his credentials as a nationalist are not universally accepted.

This step is bound to give rise to controversies. It may be likened to the issue of a stamp by Germany to honour

- **SHAMIM HANAFI** and **SHARIB RADAULVI** selected for Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Award by UP Urdu Akademi. Lucknow
- **SYED ABU HASAN ALI NADVI** awarded the Sultan of Brunei International Prize for Islamic Scholarship.
- **IDREES AHMAD, GHAYAS AHMAD (J&K) and MOHD. ASLAM (MP)** selected for National Bravery Award. New Delhi, 2 January, 1999.
- **ALI AKBAR KHAN** selected for 1998 Swaralaya Puraskaram. New Delhi, 31 January, 1999.
- **NADEED ISRAR, MUDASSAR HAYAT and NOOR MOHD.** Elected as President, Vice-President and Hony. Secretary respectively of Aligarh Muslim University Students Union. Aligarh, 31 January, 1999.
- **IKRAM-UL-BARI** and **NASEEMUDDIN** appointed Judges tot he Allahabad High Court. New Delhi, 2 February, 1999.
- **ANEES DURRANI** appointed as Chairman, Delhi Haj Committee. New Delhi, 20 February, 1999.
- **JAVED AKHTAR, BASHIR BADR and RAHMATH BEEGUM** nominated for Padma Shri Award. New Delhi.
- **TARIQ ANWAR and ISHRAT H. FAROOQUI** appointed as Government nominees on the Board of Trustees of India Islamic Cultural Centre for a period of 2 years. New Delhi.
- **AKHTARUL WASEY** appointed as President, Dargah Committee, Ajmer. New Delhi, 8 March, 1999.
- **HAROON YUSUF** appointed as Chairman, Delhi Wakf Board. New Delhi, 11 March, 1999.
- **T.M.R. HASSAN PILLAI** appointed as additional Judge of the Kerala High Court. Kochi, 15 March, 1999.
- **H. ANSARI** appointed as Member of the Insurance Regulatory Authority. New Delhi, 30 March, 1999.
- **AKHTAR SAEED** awarded Iqbal Samman for 1999 by M.P. Government.
- **IBRAHIM ALKAZI** awarded Heritage Award Mumbai, 3 April, 1999.
- **SIRAJUL HASAN** appointed Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami for the third time. New Delhi, 10 April, 1999.
- **KHALIQ ANJUM, SHAKILUR RAHMAN and ZAHEDA ZAIDI** (for 1997) **MUZAFFAR HANFI, MAHMOOD ILAHI, MAZHAR IMAM and ABID PESHAWARI** (for 1998) awarded Ghalib Awards.
- **HUMAYUN MURAD and MUSTAFA ZAIDI** elected as President and Secretary respectively of AMU Staff Association. Aligarh, 6 May, 1999.

the ideologues of Fascism.

The people do not understand why your government which has so much to do in so many fields gives priority to such symbolic acts which emphasize its basic ideological character.

'Core Issue of Kashmir Must Take Precedence'

Pakistan Foreign Minister's Statement in the Senate, 8 March, 1999

... The visit of Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee took place at a critical juncture in the history of Pakistan-India relations. Over the past fifty years, these relations have remained mired in wars, tensions and confrontation. The core dispute of J&K has remained unresolved. Firing between our troops still continues along the LoC and on the Siachen glacier. Since May 1998, a more dangerous and volatile security environment has emerged following the nuclear tests by India and in response by Pakistan. ...

The nuclearization of South Asia also underscored the urgent need for Pakistan and India to resolve all outstanding issues between them, in particular the central issue of J&K. At the international level, the nuclear tests served to focus attention on the need for resolving this root cause of tensions between the two countries, since it has become a nuclear flashpoint.

Accordingly, the U.N. Security Council resolution 1172 calls for a dialogue between Pakistan and India to address the Kashmir issue. Similar views have been expressed in statements and communiques of the G-8 and P-5. Additionally, prominent world leaders such as South African President and current Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, Nelson Mandela, President of the United States, Bill Clinton and United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, have echoed similar exhortations for a solution of the Kashmir dispute.

Pakistan has consistently sought a peaceful negotiated, durable settlement of the Kashmir issue in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, enabling the Kashmiri people to exercise their inalienable right of self-determination. Their struggle for obtaining this right, has been met, ironically with massive repression... Experience of the last 50 years, characterized by three wars and continuing tensions, amply demonstrates that use of force cannot provide the solution to the problems between Pakistan and India. In the prevailing nuclear environment, war is no longer an option. The only avenue available to both countries is that of dialogue and negotiations.

Guided by this conviction, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif launched his initiative for resuming the bilateral dialogue with India soon after assuming office in 1997... Both countries need economic development and social progress. However, as long as their relations continue to remain entangled in confrontation and tensions, they would be compelled to divert their resources away from developmental purposes towards continuing spirals of a wasteful arms race. In order to break out of this vicious circle, the Prime Minister repeatedly emphasized to his Indian interlocutors, that it is imperative to ensure peace and security in the region by resolving all outstanding issues, particularly the Kashmir dispute.

... In their New York meeting on 23 September 1998, the Prime Minister of Pakistan and India agreed that an environment of peace and security is in the supreme national interest of both countries and that resolution of all outstanding issues, including J&K, is essential for this

purpose. This historic agreement has become the framework and the touchstone for the bilateral dialogue process that commenced in October last year in Islamabad.

The Lahore Declaration is by far the most important outcome of the Summit meeting. It records the shared vision of the two leaders, not only about the future relationship between Pakistan and India but for the security and prosperity of the entire South Asian region.

The very first operative paragraph of the Declaration establishes the commitment of both sides to intensify their efforts to resolve the outstanding issue of Kashmir. Another paragraph calls for respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms among which is the fundamental freedom of self-determination.

The Lahore Declaration also underscores the commitment of both sides to the principles and purposes of the UN charter as well as reiterating their determination to implement the Simla Agreement in letter and spirit. As you well know, the UN Charter clearly calls for the implementation of all decisions taken by the world body, including the relevant resolutions on J&K. As regards the Simla Agreement, the only outstanding issue to be addressed is the final settlement of Jammu and Kashmir.

Moreover, it should be noted that in as many as three public pronouncements, Prime Minister Vajpayee confirmed the need to resolve the Kashmir issue through the integrated bilateral dialogue process. The Memorandum of Understanding also establishes a clear linkage between an environment of regional peace and security and resolution of the Kashmir dispute...

... There is no question of the government having compromised Pakistan's principled position on the Jammu and Kashmir issue, as has been alleged by some quarters. There is no, repeat no secret understanding or deal, nor is there any weakening of our position on the Kashmir dispute. The government remains committed as before to supporting the just cause of the Kashmiri people for self-determination and we shall continue to provide them political, moral and diplomatic support towards this end...

The most important aspect of the international reaction has been the unprecedented focus on the need to resolve the Kashmir issue... There is increasing appreciation in the world now that peace, progress and prosperity in South Asia are not possible without an environment of security and stability, for which purpose it is imperative to resolve the root cause of tensions – the Kashmir dispute... Not only Pakistan and India, by the entire SAARC region would benefit tremendously from diversion of resources towards economic development, promotion of trade and regional cooperation... The outcome of PM Vajpayee's visit has been positive. It is now time for both sides to convert their commitments into deeds, to translate words into action... The hopes and aspirations of our present and future generations depend upon the direction that Pakistan and India shall take... The choice before us is stark and simple between peace and prosperity or death and destruction. ... □

The Fall-out of the Bus Ride to Lahore

K.R. Malkani

On Psychological Shift in Pakistan

... The turning point was the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan in May 1998. They made it clear that there could never again be another Indo-Pak war – not even like the ones in 1965 and 1971.

Any conventional war could always escalate into a nuclear one. And since a nuclear war would be suicidal for both sides, even a conventional war had become inconceivable.

In this situation even an arms race had become irrelevant. If there is going to be no war, why go on wasting resources on arms?

... Pakistan had signed a military alliance with the US – in the hopes of measuring swords with India on equal terms. The US has no doubt given Pakistan much armour. But not all the aid armour can militarily put Pakistan on a par with India.

Also, while the US has been neutral in favour of Pakistan – remember the 'tilt' of the Nixon days – it could never back Pakistan against India beyond the limits of India's toleration. On the other hand, over-dependence on the US has compromised the izzat, the honour, of Pakistan...

And all these developments are taking place in the context of a massive internal disillusionment in Pakistan...

An even greater danger perceived by thinking Pakistanis is that with social services neglected, and with most of the village children going to religious schools, the country may have a Taliban type regime foisted on it before long... In this situation, more and more Pakistanis are beginning to look to India, more with understanding than with apprehension.

Even now no speech at any Indo-Pakistan forum is complete without a reference to Kashmir. They describe it as the "core issue". The fact, however, is that the hostility on this issue was fostered in the forties. Unless, therefore, the Pakistani press and history books are purged of their anti-India and anti-Hindu bias, the old animus will continue.

...Even at the worst of times, India and Pakistan have had a love-hate relationship. The course of recent events has lessened the hate component in this relationship...

Today Indian television is widely watched in Pakistan... The East is exercising a magnetic pull on the Pakistani heart and mind... Fortunately, there is a BJP-led government in power in India.

As a former Pakistani finance minister said recently, the BJP government was well placed to find a solution to the long-pending problems between the two countries. No one in this country would accuse the BJP government of being soft towards Pakistan if it manages to resolve the problems...

(Source: The Times of India, 23 March, 1999)

Shahabuddin's Comments

Letter to The Times of India, 26 March, 1999

Shri K.R. Malkani has recorded his impressions of a qualitative change in Pakistanis' attitude towards India. One wishes, taken as a whole, this indicates an opening of the door, a meeting of hearts, between neighbours in a new dawn. However, he is totally silent on any corresponding change on the Indians' attitude towards Pakistan. And if Pakistanis do consider Kashmir as the core issue in Indo-Pakistani relations, he is equally silent on what his government is prepared to offer to resolve the impasse.

Friendship is not just atmospheric but mutual accommodation; it is always a two way street.

Lastly, Malkaniji thinks that the bus ride and the Lahore Declaration constitute an act of defiance of US hegemony. Many observers think to the contrary and assume the presence of a puppeteer behind the scene.

Dileep Padgaonkar

On Psychological Impact

... As the leader of the larger country, it is for Vajpayee to demonstrate greater political imagination and sensitivity. For instance, such is the insecurity in Pakistan that even a furtive allusion to a shared history and a shared culture – let alone the talk of a confederation – immediately arouses fears of an Indian, indeed Hindu, hegemony... The Indian Prime Minister must be seen to bend over backwards to facilitate an early resolution of the Kashmir dispute and to lessen Pakistan's apprehensions about India's strategic goals, especially following the Pokhran blasts. A solution to Kashmir will perforce have to be based on two factors: pragmatism and face-saving measures. That is admittedly a tall order. But the alternative is a debilitating impasse.

... What matters most is the psychological confidence that neither country's security would ever be jeopardised. Once that is assured, there is reason to believe that India and Pakistan will behave towards each other in much the same way as Indians and Pakistanis behave when they come together: with a warmth that surprises them and makes the outside world marvel. ...

(Source: The Times of India, 20 February, 1999)

Kuldip Nayar

On the Desire for Peace and Friendship

... Many a time in the past, I saw the beginnings of a new era. It happened after the Tashkent Agreement in 1966 and after the Shimla Agreement in 1972. But, then, distrust and suspicion overtook the two countries. And they became distant neighbours. I trust that politicians and bureaucrats will this time resist the temptation of stoking the fires for their vested interests. The people on both sides are sick and tired of being enemies. They want to live in peace so that their children and grandchildren can grow up in an environment of security and confidence. Is it too much to ask for?

(Source: The Hindu, 11 March, 1999)

India's Relations with Muslim World

Ministry of External Affairs' Annual Report, 1998-99 (Excerpts)

... The tradition of high-level exchanges with countries in South Asia was maintained during the year... This was supplemented by enhanced interaction among Parliamentarians, businessmen, professionals and in the world of art, culture, science and technology and education...

India continued its efforts to build a relationship of trust and confidence with Pakistan, to put in place a stable structure of cooperation, and address outstanding issues through peaceful bilateral negotiations. We emphasized the value of reactivating a sustained and comprehensive dialogue, which would not be issue-fixated, but which would enable the relationship to move forward in a broad-based manner. The first round of the renewed composite dialogue was held in October-November 1998 to discuss the eight identified subjects i.e. Peace and Security, including CBMs; J&K; Siachen; Tulbul Navigation project; Sir Creek; Trade and Economic Cooperation; Terrorism and Drug Trafficking, and Friendly exchanges in different fields. These talks indicated common ground on some issues – such as Peace and Security including CBMs, economic/commercial cooperation, and Friendly Exchanges in various fields, but agreement could not be reached to reflect this jointly in public statements. We have reiterated our constructive approach to the composite dialogue.

Our concerns regarding Pakistan's continued and active involvement in instigating and sponsoring terrorism in J&K and other parts of India, were made clear to them on several occasions during the year – and reiterated during the composite dialogue, and conclusive evidence to this effect was also presented. It was emphasised that our resolve to defeat cross-border terrorism and to safeguard our security interests was total. We have advised them that abandonment of this activity, and full respect for their commitments under the Simla Agreement, including avoidance of provocative acts across the LOC and hostile propaganda, were essential steps.

In keeping with our overall policy, our Prime Minister took the historic initiative of travelling to Lahore, on the inaugural run of the Delhi-Lahore-Delhi Bus Service in February 1999...

The Lahore Declaration, the MOU on CBMs and the Joint statement issued during the PM's visit, represent in their totality, a vision for the development of the relationship...

India continued its active participation in the ongoing SAARC process for regional cooperation in South Asia. These efforts gained further momentum during the year, especially through the consolidation of cooperation in the

core economic area, with the conclusion of the third round of the negotiations for setting up a South Asian Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) in November, 1998 and the agreement among the leaders of SAARC countries, on establishing a South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA), and to commence negotiations for this purpose in early 1999...

During the year, we continued to develop another important dimension of our foreign policy – i.e. the strengthening of our relations with our extended neighbourhood which encompasses the countries in the ASEAN – Pacific region, Central Asia, the Gulf, West Asia and North Africa and the Indian Ocean Rim. This involves a revival, in the contemporary context, of our traditional, cultural, commercial and maritime linkages with these regions. ...

Apart from individual states in the ASEAN region, we also worked to further develop our interaction with the ASEAN collectivity – through the Full Dialogue Partnership initiated in 1996...

Another important feature of our evolving interaction with ASEAN is our continuing and active participation in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), at Ministerial and other levels...

During the year under review, we continued the systematic effort initiated in the early 1990s to build diversified and mutually advantageous relations with the newly independent countries of Central Asia, which is also a vital part of our larger neighbourhood, giving a contemporary focus to our age old ties marked by strong cultural and historical affinities as well as commercial and people to people link.

Countries of the Gulf, occupy a vitally important place in our extended neighbourhood because of their geographical proximity, cultural linkages and economic complementarities. About three-and-a-half million Indians – unskilled and semi-skilled workers as well as professionals, live and work in those countries... The countries in this region are also the main source for our energy imports and among our most important trade, investment and joint venture partners... Our Prime Minister's visit to Oman symbolised India's desire to maintain regular high level contact, and develop long term economic cooperation with the region... India closely followed developments relating to Iraq. We deplored the unilateral military action taken against Iraq ... and called for a resolution of issues through peaceful, diplomatic means... Our dialogue with Iran has reflected an identity on views on the situation in Afghanistan and its impact on the region...

(Contd. on Page 286)

Turkey Foreign Ministry's Statement on Kurdish Problem

... Turkey contains a multitude of ethnic, religious and cultural elements... Difference ethnic identities, including the Kurdish, are acknowledged and accepted in Turkey. The state does not categorize its citizens along ethnic lines... Population censuses in Turkey never count people on the basis of their ethnic origins. But ... an individual citizen may identify himself ... in terms of a specific ethnic category... **Public expressions and manifestations of ethnic identity are prohibited neither by law nor by social custom...** However, acts or statements made against the "territorial integrity" of Turkey are subject to legal prosecution under the law.

... The Turkish Constitution stipulates that the State and the Nation are indivisible, and that **all citizens irrespective of their ethnic, racial or religious origin, are equal before the law.**

For historical and cultural reasons, and under stipulations of binding international treaties, the concept of "minority" applies specifically to certain groups of non-Moslem citizens... Our citizens of Kurdish ethnic origin are not discriminated against... Many have risen to the highest positions in the Republic. They share the same opportunities and the same destiny as the rest of the population.

... The predominant majority of the Turkish citizens of Kurdish descent live in western Turkey, with the greatest concentration being in Istanbul. **Even in eastern and southeastern Turkey, the Turkish citizens of Kurdish ethnic origin do not constitute a majority.** The unitary structure of the State reflects the equality and togetherness of different geographic regions of Turkey.

... It is simply neither understandable nor acceptable for Turkey to discuss "the respect for social, economic and legitimate political aspirations of Kurds" as if the Turkish citizens of Kurdish ethnic descent constitute a different and separate community...

The population in southeast Anatolia, like our citizens in other regions of the country, participate fully in the political life of Turkey; they freely make their voices heard in local administrations, in the municipalities, the Parliament and the central government through elected representatives...

Turkey is often accused of refusing to negotiate with the terrorist-organization PKK... Negotiating with a terrorist organization, responsible for thousands of murders, would be tantamount to justifying and encouraging terrorism.

... There are many private radio-TV stations broadcasting and numerous books and journals published ... in various dialects of "Kurdish" throughout the country... There are many different local languages and dialects used in southeastern Turkey such as Zaza and Kirmanchi which are only as close to each other as French

and English... Turkish has become the sole medium of communication in the region...

The official language of the Republic of Turkey is Turkish, Armenian, Ladino, Greek, the different dialects of "Kurdish" etc. are spoken freely in daily life. There is only one official language in the country ... and is consequently the only formal language of education and instruction...

(Continued from Page 285)

India's multifaceted relations with the countries of West Asia and North Africa were further strengthened through exchanges of visits. Leading among them were the President's State visit to Turkey, and the Prime Minister's visit to Morocco... India maintained its steadfast support for the Palestine cause and for the right of all countries in the region to live within secure, peaceful borders. We shared the widespread concern with lack of progress in the Middle East Peace Process. India has welcomed the Wye River Memorandum signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation on 23 October, 1998 and supported its unconditional implementation.

India's traditionally close contact with Afghanistan formed the backdrop to our current policy. We closely monitored the continuing, tragic conflict there which impinges directly on India's national interests, and in particular, our security concerns. The events of the year strengthened our conviction, shared by most of the international community, that there can be no military solution, and further, that a peaceful outcome can be found only through establishing a broad based government in which all the ethnic groups of Afghanistan find their rightful place... We continue to support the role of the UN in restoring peace and normalcy in Afghanistan. However, in order for this to become effective, the structure and mechanism of the current UN effort needs to be broader-based... In keeping with our commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, and to strengthening the role of the UN in a multi-polar world, India participated constructively in all areas of UN activity during the year...

India participated actively in the XIIth Summit of the Movement of Non-Alignment countries in Durban in September, 1998...

Government Statement On Ban on Entry of Indians

The Government is not aware that any Gulf country has imposed a ban and regulation on the recruitment of persons of Indian origin for employment. ...

(Source: LSUQ No. 3213 dated 17 March, 1999 by R. Upadhyay and S.P. Yadav)

Chronology of the Month (16 April – 15 May, 1999)

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Government: *Vajpayee Government loses vote of confidence in Lok Sabha by one vote (17 Apr). BSP (5), NC rebel Soz and 1 Akali Dal rebel combine to bring it down.

*Congress(I)'s effort to form minority government led by Sonia Gandhi and supported by all secular parties fails, as BJP leader Mulayam Singh Yadav demands coalition and some left parties object to Sonia.

*CPM's belated move to field Jyoti Basu rejected by Congress.

Parliament: *President dissolves Lok Sabha (25 Apr). Vajpayee Government to remain in power till next election.

*After consulting political parties (3 May), Election Commission slates election for September-October, 1999 (4 May), after revision of electoral roll, now in process, is completed.

Political Parties – Congress: *CWC leaves formation of alternative government to President Sonia Gandhi (17 Apr), favours state level electoral adjustment but not alliances. Sonia repeatedly blasts BJP and SP.

*Congress makes tentative move to have understanding with BSP and Lok Dal in UP, RJD in Bihar and AIADMK in Tamilnadu.

BJP: *Coalition parties decide to have common manifesto (29 Apr). Sangh Parivar reluctantly agrees to dumping of Hindu agenda as tactical necessity (29 Apr). Poll-strategy to be Sonia-centric (30 Apr). BJP decides to project Vajpayee as PM, in new secular garb, looks for new friends (1 May).

*BJP and others launch National Democratic Alliance (15 May).

*BJP and RSS court Muslims.

*TC (Mamata) rejects alliance and common manifesto (28 Apr). *TDP shows reluctance (5 May) wants to contest all seats in AP (9 May). *Samata falls in line.

*BJP MLAs rebels against CM Kalyan Singh in UP. Rebellion contained (7 May).

*DMK switches to BJP-led alliance (1 May). Alienates Muslim support.

Left: *CPM calls for defeating BJP, opposing Congress during poll and reconstituting Third Front (3 May).

Janata Parivar - SP: *Widely criticised by Muslim leadership for blocking Congress-led government and giving 6 months life to BJP. Faces depletion of Muslim support in UP and Maharashtra (7 May).

*Mulayam repeatedly accuses Congress of being anti-Muslim. Adopts 'anti-BJP and anti-Congress' plank (30 Apr).

*Rules out tie up with Congress even if BJP gains (10 May).

RJD: *Laloo vows to banish BJP from politics (2 May) plans tie-up with Congress, Left and other secular parties in Bihar. Predicts coalition government (8 May).

JD: *Desperate JD seeks support of Samata in Bihar, BJD in Orissa and Hedge in Karnataka (30 Apr). Speaks of equidistance with BJP and Congress (4 May).

NC: *Expels Saifuddin Soz (19 Apr). Reaffirms support to Vajpayee Government but decides not to alliance with any party in coming election.

Terrorism: *Tamilnadu decides to drop controversial POTA (10 May).

*180 charge-sheeted for Coimbatore blast (5 May) A-Umma indicted.

Human Rights: *NHRC directs Rajasthan to compensate boy beaten up in police custody (18 Apr) and Bihar, in the case of women abused and manhandled by police (20 Apr).

*PUCL holds 8th national Convention in Jaipur. Re-elect Kanrabiram as President (25 Apr).

Small States: *Bodo groups revive demand for statehood (30 Apr). ABSU also rejects proposed boundary (15 May).

Corruption – Bofors Case: *Govt. dusts Bofors files give permission to prosecute senior officials (28 Apr) and former Foreign Minister Solanki (3 May).

Fodder Case: *CBI seeks Governor's nod to prosecute Laloo in another case. Gives notice to C.M. Rabri Devi for interrogation. Laloo charges Government with misusing CBI against political opponents.

Indo-Pakistan Relations: * Government silent on proposed White Paper on ISI (30 Apr).

*Eminent Pakistan journalist Najam Sethi on return from India detained by Pakistan.

*Pakistan defers bilateral talks till election.

*Delays supply of Pakistani gas and rules out Iran-India gas pipeline across Pakistan (9 May).

BABARI MASJID QUESTION

Criminal Case: *CBI Special Court asks all 49 accused to be present on 20 May for framing of charges (22 Apr).

BJP: *Resists pressure by Ayodhya Sadhus to include construction of Ram Janambhoomi Mandir in its manifesto (4 May). VHP reiterates commitment (5 May). Singhal blames political parties for delay (11 May) but agrees to place issue on back burner.

KASHMIR QUESTION

*Farooq Abdullah's mother criticises his performance and policy (9 May).

*National parties maintain total silence on Autonomy Report (16 Apr). State parties question State Government's move.

*Hurriyat leadership endorses 'independence' (28 Apr). Disclaims report on decision to participate in coming

CHRONOLOGY

election. Geelani's term extended (1 May).

*Shabbir Shah supports Indo-Pak dialogue.

*At Hague Peace Conference, Ved Bhasin and others favour independence option.

*Pandits return to Mandirs in Srinagar and Matan.

Pakistan: *F.S. Shamshad Ahmad expresses Pakistan's readiness to talk on 'options other than UN Resolutions' (2 May).

Foreign Reaction: *UNESCO D.G. appeals to India and Pakistan to settle dispute through negotiation (27 Apr).

*U.K. House of Lords rejects plea to British government to intervene in Kashmir dispute (21 Apr). British H.C. suggest say for Kashmiris (13 May).

OTHER MATTERS OF CONCERN AND INTEREST

Empowerment: * National Convention on Empowerment of Muslim Indians held in New Delhi. Justice Ahmadi inaugurates it and Prof. A.M. Khusro presides. Adopts Declaration (9 May).

Wakf: *Seminar on Wakfs in South Asia organised by IOS, New Delhi. Tahir Mahmood inaugurates it. Qazi Mujahidul Islam Qasmi presents keynote address. Resolution adopted, inter alia, calls for International Wakf Development Fund (8-9 May).

*Delhi H.C. calls for details of construction in Jama Masjid, Delhi campus (29 Apr).

Communal Violence: *Rape of Hindu girl by Muslim youth triggers riot in Bokaro and adjacent towns (18 Apr). Many Muslim shops and houses looted.

*Communal incidents in Jais (Rae Bareilly). 12 injured (8 May).

*UP abolishes Shanti Suraksha Bal (5 May).

Sectarian Violence: *Following peaceful Tazia procession (27 Apr), Shia-Sunni violence takes 4 lives in Lucknow as well as 3 lives in Moradabad and Azamgarh districts. Violence deplored by all Muslim organisations.

State Violence: *Minorities Council of India demands punishment to PAC personnel involved in Hashimpura Massacre of 1987 (9 May).

Muslim Organisations: *Milli Political Forum appeals to secular parties to include problems of minorities and backward classes in manifesto (23 Apr).

Minorities Commission: *NCM reaffirms educational right of religious minorities (10 May) pleads for minority status for Hindus in states in which they form minority (13 May).

*Rajasthan and Delhi form State Minorities Commission.

Personal Law: *Islamic Fiqh Academy holds Seminar in Patna and deals with Wakfs, marriage etc. (18 Apr).

*Kerala Muslim women demand entry in Masjids (5 May).

*Bombay H.C. rules in favour of adequate 'provision' within Iddat period for wife (7 May). AIMPLB rejects ruling.

Places of Worship: *Muslims barred by authorities for congregational prayer in renovated ancient mosque in

Khalilabad Fort [UP] (16 May). Shahabuddin protests to CM, UP.

Haj: *Defunct Haj Committee holds A.I. Haj Conference; criticises government (8 May).

*Chairman obtains stay order against reconstituted Haj Committee (12 May).

Education: Madras H.C. rejects plea of MEI's for grant-in-aid.

Urdu: *Symposium organised by Jamia Urdu, Aligarh, inaugurated by Chairman, NHRC Justice Venkatachalliah who proposes adoption of Dev Nagri script (16 Apr).

Reservation: *Rajasthan decides, to introduce 21% reservation for B.C's in medical and dental colleges. Considers reservation in employment for Jats and Bishnois. Shahabuddin asks CM to include Muslims also (15 May).

*Tamilnadu CM Karunanidhi reiterates support to separate quota for Muslims (7 May).

Objectionable Writings: *Buddhists protest against Marathi play on Buddha (19 Apr).

*Rajasthan Muslims ask for ban on book authored by Muslim youth (23 Apr).

Other Minorities: *Punjab CM Badal removes Tohra as President, SGPC installs his nominee in SGPC and Akal Takht; World Sikh Council President Justice Kuldeep Singh resigns (29 Apr).

*Christians protest against demolition of school-cum-church in Faridabad (21 Apr).

Muslim World - Kosovo: *Indian Government, establishment and mass media support Yugoslavia on Kosovo and demand end to NATO bombing.

Pakistan: *PP MP's in Pakistan resigns in protest against conviction of Benazir Bhutto (17 Apr). SC refuse to hear appeal till she returns (13 May).

Kuwait: *National Assembly dissolved on question of misprinting the Quran (8 May).

Saudi Arabia: *Seminar held in New Delhi to mark Saudi Arabia Centenary (12 May).

Turkey: *Muslim organisations expresses concern at Turkish ban on headscarves for women.

Commemoration: *94th birth anniversary of late President F.A. Ahmed observed officially (13 May).

*Observance of Tipu Sultan martyrdom bi-centenary deferred (15 May).

Obituary: *Maulana A. Ghaffar Nadvi, President, A.I. Masajid Council, passes away in Lucknow (23 May).

*Former P.M. of J&K K. Shamsuddin, 77, passes away in Srinagar (19 Apr).

*Eminent industrialist K.S.G. Haja Shareeff, 85, passes away in Chennai (20 Apr).

*Eminent theologian Maulana Abdul Halim Jaunpuri, 100, passes away (28 Apr).

*National Footballer Md. Yusuf Baba, 80, passes away in Delhi (2 May).