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Towards Universal, Proportional Reservation In Employment, Education, Legislatures, Development and Welfare

The recent decisions of the Supreme Court on various aspects of the policy on reservation in public employment and preferential access of the members of the SC and the ST to higher education have brought the long-simmering debate to the boil once again.

While it has been politically obligatory for the Parliament to extend reservation in legislatures and public services for the SC and the ST every 10 years for another 10 years and while routinely the Central Government and various State Governments have added to their OBC lists, in the latest instance by adding the Jats of Rajasthan, there has been increasing resistance, political, bureaucratic and judicial to any demand for reservation for Muslims, a religious minority, to extension of reservation for the OBC's to higher education and legislatures and for giving the SC's and ST's their due share even in higher echelons of the Government.

Reservation as it obtains, is applied unevenly. The power structure gives way under pressure but very reluctantly and always finding a way to nullify or at least minimise the benefits at every turn.

Apart from the cult of merit, the stock arguments used to defeat the natural and legitimate aspiration of the emergent groups for equitable participation and sharing power are the arbitrary and unreasonable 50% rule, the constitutionally untenable argument against classification by religion, the alleged social divisiveness of the policy of reservation based on group identity, the social turmoil caused in the bureaucratic and academic hierarchy by reservation in promotion, the sacrosanct character of the academic cloister and the judicial chamber and the inequity in not extending reservation to backward sections of the higher social groups.

Slowly the lower social groups begin to realise that they have been fobbed off with far less than their due, sometimes with nothing, that 50 years after independence the high castes continue to dominate politics, administration, commerce and industry, professions, law, journalism, education. Indeed the Backward Classes have been outright cheated.

In their natural reaction, they make extreme demands on the system which are sometimes laughed out of court.

The ground reality is that by a convergence of economic and political factors, a section of the Shudras stand coopted in the ruling classes, and in a sense and upto a point, the higher castes are prepared to divide the share of the deprived with them. Thus over 50 years, while the high castes have been forced out of a part of what they considered to be their patrimony, the beneficiaries have neither been the SC, certainly not the Scheduled Tribes, nor the lower Shudras. Land holding Shudras – the

Yadavas, the Kurmis and the Koeris and their counterparts in all other States - have prospered.

Another ground reality is that untouchability has more or less disappeared and economic mobility, horizontal and vertical, has reduced social disabilities. Indeed given political equality, economic and educational status determine the social status of any Backward Class. Social status comes out of education, property and proximity to the power structure.

A third ground reality is the continued educational backwardness of the Backward Classes, particularly the SC and the ST. This is primarily due to the non-fulfilment of the only time-bound Directive of State Policy in the Constitution – universalisation of elementary education within 10 years. Had education been universalised, it would have thrown up millions of educated youngmen and women, qualified to enter in all fields of life.

A fourth ground reality is the fact that every social group, whatever its identity in terms of religion, caste or race or language, has its backward section. So there are Brahmins, Rajputs and Vaishyas, Yadavas, Kurmis and Kayasthas living below the poverty line, who own next to nothing, who are undereducated and powerless. The difference among them lies in that the proportion of the deprived goes down as one goes up the social ladder.

Another ground reality which has cost heartburning on both sides and a loss to the nation is the rising level of the backlog – the reserved posts which remain unfilled for lack of qualified candidates. The only rational approach would be not to pile up the backlog but to maximise educational facilities, specially at the university level. In the long run, only through universal school education can the backward classes acquire a wide enough base to throw up adequate number of candidates who have the minimum prescribed qualifications to occupy the reserved quota.

Under a democratic system, a plural society with historic cleavage lines and fissures, long-suppressed identities begin to surface and demand their share of the national resources, their place in the power structure, their access to the goods and services that the society offers. This self-conscious assertion is not divisive because every section realises the interdependence of the social groups to make the system move and produce results for each to share. **Social justice can never be divisive, it integrates all the people for a common purpose. Only social injustice divides because those who are deprived or feel cheated or remain handicapped are alienated and cannot offer their best.**

Reservation is, therefore, an essential and reliable tool of social engineering to ensure that educational, economic, social and political disparities among various classes or

sections of the people diminish over a period of time and the average of any parameter for any section, more or less, approximates to the average of the whole.

50 years after independence, with the experience gained in various states, **time has come to universalise Reservation, not only in public employment including Judiciary, Armed Forces and Public Sector but in representation in legislature, in higher education, in distribution of development outlay and welfare benefits and in flow of development resources, particularly bank credit.**

A basic course correction is called for in many aspects of the theory and practice of Reservation.

The first is the concept of **Social Group**. Any self-conscious identifiable collectivity, whatever the basis of its identity – religion, caste, sub-castes, language, race, geographical origin – occupying measurable space in the area of operation of the reservation policy – the national territory, the state, the district, the block or the panchayat should qualify. For purely administrative reasons, only social groups which form at least 1% or so of the population within the operational area may be considered. Mini- and micro-groups may either aggregate with each other or associate themselves with a larger group of their choice.

The second is the concept of **Backwardness**. Measurement of backwardness should be based on nationally accepted parameters – rate of literacy, number of graduates per unit of population, per capita income, land holding, housing, representation in public employment, membership of rural cooperative societies, representation in panchayats, Zila Parishad, state and union legislatures, life expectancy at birth, infant mortality, telephone and car, radio and TV sets. The list can be endless but a representative set of parameters can be formulated by experts, keeping in view that the relevant information should be easily available for the people in the area of operation as a whole and easily collectable for each social group in the area. A group's average may be higher or lower than the area average in each parameter. **A group which returns more higher averages than lower is Forward; the opposite is Backward.**

Depending on the weightage given to various parameters, it should be possible to work out the backwardness of each social group relative to the most backward. The relative backwardness of each group may then be expressed in terms of an **Index of Backwardness** with that of the SC/ST as 100. It will be found that even the most Forward Group has a Backward Section; its index may be as low as 10. It should then be possible to work out the legitimate 'quota' of that group by multiplying its population percentage with its index of backwardness. Thus if a group forms 20% of the population and its Index of Backwardness is 50, the quota

would $20 \times 50 / 100 = 10\%$.

The fourth question is: **who should benefit from the quota.** Here comes in the **Creamy Layer**. Even in the most Backward group, there is a Forward Section which has influence, access and affluence. The social impact of reservation is nullified, if this forward section usurps or absorbs all the benefits. Hence it is essential to lay down that the quota available to a social group is meant **only for those individuals who come from the families which are themselves backward.** Some simple tests can be visualised – land ownership, actual occupation, per capita income. The quota must help those who deserve the preferential treatment. There is no reason why the children of a gazetted government servant or prosperous businessman or influential legislator should be permitted to benefit from the reservation quota. This is what the Supreme Court called the Creamy Layer. What is needed is a uniform, nationally acceptable criteria.

The argument in any case is that the benefit should travel as widely and as deeply through the backward mass as possible. In this connection, it has also been suggested that no individual or family should benefit from reservation more than once.

Should there be a **maximum limit** to reservation? Once we adopt a scientific approach for determining the quota for various social groups, there has to be a flexible limit; it cannot be arbitrarily prescribed. **The limit has to be the sum total of all the quotas at that level, in the given panchayat, block, district or state or the country.** If the judiciary insists, the Constitution should be amended, so that all social groups enjoy a fair and equal opportunity. There is no earthly reason why the OBCs should have a quota equivalent to half their population. There is also no point in playing an endless political game of adding on more and more groups to the lists without increasing the quota.

Now we come to the question of **minimum qualification** for admission to professional courses or higher education or for public employment. It is my considered view that universalisation of education is the key to the problem and that the prescribed qualification should apply uniformly. Until then the State should provide for special facilities to prepare the youth from the backward sections of all groups and thus ensure equality of opportunity.

Theoretically a Government servant or a student who has been admitted to the service or course under a quota should not be entitled to successive upward pushes; he has to compete his way through the ladder. The problem, however, arises that those who control the promotion in service or selection for higher courses either not have any objective standards or nurse bias. My suggestion is that if there is no **reservation in promotion**, the promotion must be based on the principle of fitness-cum-seniority, so that the relative seniority is maintained by and large.

As for **admission to higher courses**, no easy answer is possible. One approach can be to reduce the scarcity value by increasing the number of seats. In any case, once a person has the basic qualification such as MBBS, he should compete on equal terms for higher courses.

For any rational application of the Reservation policy, it is imperative to have a Caste Census – not only to determine the population and the relevant socio-economic parameters and therefore, the quota at a given point in time, but to evaluate the impact of Reservation every 10 years. It is obvious that **as development goes up, the quotas will go down and hopefully the General Pool shall increase.**

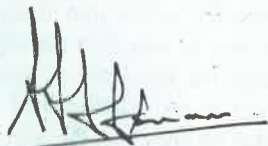
Another hot issue arises out of the proposal to have 33% reservation for women in the legislature. This is seen by the OBCs and the Muslims as a political manoeuvre by the higher castes to regain the over-representation they have steadily lost to the B.C.'s. **Women's quota must be shared equitably with the OBCs and the minorities in proportion to their population.** It should not be imposed suddenly but incrementally, raised by 5% every 5 years from about 15% to 50%. In the meantime, the political parties must be obliged by law to include women in their organisational structure and election lists and thus actively promote their participation in politics.

50 years after the initiative for reservation, we are forced to the conclusion that the policy of positive affirmation through written into the Constitution, was only fitfully and half-heartedly applied and every opportunity was seized to erode it, to dilute it and to give it a bad name.

Today, the deprived groups are apprehensive that under the garb of review, the Constitutional provisions themselves may be repealed. This would be a national tragedy because not only will social harmony receive a fatal blow but social conflict may stalk the land.

Times has come for those who believe in social justice and consider reservation a valuable tool for social engineering, to formulate appropriate amendments to the Constitution and a view to introduce Universal Proportional Reservation and to eliminate the lacunae as well as the excesses and the deception that have been committed in its name.

Let us begin with an open heart, an open mind and above all, open arms, to embrace everyone and revive the spirit of EQUALITY, JUSTICE and FRATERNITY which permeates our Constitution.



(SYED SHAHABUDDIN)

New Delhi,
1st December, 1999

PM A.B. Vajpayee's Address to Nation, 15 October, 1999 (Extracts)

... The NDA represents the aspirations of every region of our great nation and **every section** of our vibrant society. The NDA, in fact, reflects the spirit of India in all its diversity. It also mirrors the fundamental unity in this diversity...

We are all guided by the lofty principles of Secularism, Social Justice, Social Harmony and Women's Empowerment. Ours is a Government wedded to a common ideal: To create a kinder, gentler and more tolerant society, free from all discrimination, fear and insecurity...Rearrange priorities of development by re-deploying resources and strengthening institutions for providing to all:

- Safe drinking water
- Primary health services
- Primary education
- Rural roads
- Housing to rural homeless

... India's greatest asset is here unity, and my Government is determined to maintain this unity at all cost. One of our immediate tasks will be to firmly put down terrorism... In our fight against terrorism, we will be guided by the principle of 'Zero Tolerance'...

The Government of free India had set itself the noble task of wiping **every tear from every eye**, of ending centuries-old discriminations and social inequities. Somewhere along the journey from freedom to the eve of this century, Government lost track of that task...

India needs a Government that will reach out to the last person in the last row...

(Source: The BJP Today, 1-31 October, 1999)

On Reconstitution of NCM Shahabuddin's Letter to PM, 15 Nov., 99

The term of the National Commission for Minorities expires towards the end of November, 1999.

Normally its reconstitution should have been on routine matter but, keeping in view the Manifesto of the BJP in 1998, there is widespread speculation that it may not be reconstituted and thus allowed to fade away without being formally abolished.

There is no justification whatsoever for abolishing it formally or informally. It was first established by the Janata Party Government in 1978 and now it has been constituted under an Act of Parliament.

Only recently the Government of Maharashtra has revived the State Minorities Commission which had been virtually abolished by the Shiv Sena-BJP Government.

I request you that **it may please be reconstituted without any gap with such members who are not only qualified but enjoy the confidence and trust of the communities concerned.**

President Narayanan's Address to Parliament, 25 October, 1999 (Extracts)

... I am happy to note that the "agenda for a proud, prosperous India", which is the Government's common policy document, reaffirms its faith in the principles of secularism, social justice, federal harmony, probity, and socio-economic equity... The Government will fully implement the promises made in its common agenda.

... The armed aggression in Kargil by Pakistan to occupy strategic territory on the Indian side of the Line of Control was decisively foiled by our brave jawans, airmen, and officers. Pakistan suffered a double defeat - both on the battlefield and on the diplomatic front...

We remain firmly committed to global nuclear disarmament on a universal and non-discriminatory basis. At the same time, the Government will ensure that India's strategic autonomy is preserved. This will be done in a way that India's legitimate security concerns are suitably addressed, in keeping with our own assessment of the evolving international security environment...

During the current year, the Indian economy is expected to grow over six per cent. Inflation as measured by the wholesale price index is around two per cent, which is the lowest in the last two decades...

Despite these achievements, the challenge to overcome the scourge of poverty remains a daunting one. Crores of our people, particularly in villages, are still to be provided with basic services such as clear drinking water, reasonable shelter, primary education, health services and roads. Illiteracy is still a curse for large masses of our people - especially among scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, OBCs, minorities, and rural women. Millions of young men and women continue to be victims of unemployment.

... The Government has decided to give topmost priority to social sector development. In the field of education, a separate department of primary education and literacy has been created. An action plan to give greater thrust to female literacy and primary education will be shortly announced. Further, a programme for provision of primary school buildings for all unserved habitations will be formulated... A national health policy will soon be presented, whose twin aims will be the provision of adequate primary health services to all citizens and a stabilisation of population.

... The newly created department of drinking water supply in the Ministry of Rural Development will implement a programme to provide clean drinking water to all villages in the next five years... A massive "shelter for all" programme will be taken up to facilitate construction of 20 lakh additional housing units each year. Of these, 13 lakhs will be built in rural areas.

Prosperity and employment generation in rural areas depend crucially on a fast-growing agricultural sector, complemented by a nationwide network of agro-based industries...

The past two years have seen a marked improvement in the situation in J&K. Education, tourism, and other economic activities are fast returning to normal in this state. More than 110,000 pilgrims participated in the Amarnath Yatra this year. Nevertheless, terrorism continues to pose a challenge in J&K. We will meet this challenge firmly and provide all assistance to the state Government to neutralise terrorists.

After its crushing defeat in Kargil, Pakistan has stepped up its proxy war against India. The immediate objective of the Pakistan-sponsored terrorists was to disrupt the election process in J&K and also in the north-eastern states. The people in these states, however, have once again opted for the ballot in the face of the terrorist's bullet. This is a ringing endorsement of their faith in India's unity, secular democracy, and a rejection of theocratic separatism.

... The Government will continue to focus international attention on the deadly impact of trans-border terrorism that has claimed countless lives all over the world... My Government believes that the States should have greater financial and administrative powers and that there should be decentralisation right up to the grassroots through the Panchayati Raj system. Necessary action will soon be initiated to give full Statehood to Delhi and for the creation of Uttaranchal, Jharkhand, and Chhattisgarh as new States.

A commission comprising noted constitutional experts and public figures shall be appointed to study a half century's experience of the Constitution and make suitable recommendations to meet the challenges of the next century. The Government will also examine replacing the present system of no-confidence motion by a system of "constructive vote of non-confidence", and a fixed term to the Lok Sabha and the Vidhan Sabhas...

We are committed to safeguard the interests of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, backward classes, and minorities through appropriate legal executive and societal efforts. Our focus will be on large scale education and socio-economic empowerment... Reservations for SCs and STs will be extended for another 10 years and reservation percentages above 50 per cent followed by some States will be sanctified through legislative measures... The Government will soon bring forward a comprehensive electoral reform bill to further strengthen our democracy...

The recent military takeover in Pakistan is a matter of grave concern... We are watching the situation in Pakistan with careful attention. We had initiated the composite dialogue process and had sought to reinforce it through the Lahore Declaration. Pakistan must stop cross-border terrorism in J&K and other regions of India, and also put an end to hostile propaganda against India.

The situation in Afghanistan demands a careful

(Contd. on Page 535)

Muslim MLA's: Assembly Elections, 1999

1. Karnataka

Constituency	Name	Party
Gulbarga	Qamarul Islam	Cong
Raichur	Syed Yaseen	Cong
Kashtagi	Hasan Saheb	Cong
Kodalgi	Siraj Shaikh	Cong
Jai Mahal	Roshan Baig	Cong
Narsimharaja	Aziz Sait	Cong
Vithal	K.M. Imbrahim	Cong
Allal	U.T. Farid	Cong
Chikmangalore	Saghir Ahmad	Cong
Habli	Jabbar Khan	Cong
Athani	Shah Jahan Ismail	Cong

2. Andhra Pradesh

Total : 265 Muslims : 9 Percentage: 3.40

Vijayawada West	Jalil Khan	Cong
Khammam	Yasin Sultan	Cong
Kamareddy	S. Yusuf Ali	TDP
Guntur 1	S.M. Ziauddin	TDP
Cuddapah	Khaleel Basha	TDP
Karwan	Syed Sajjad	MIM
Yakutpura	Mumtaz Khan	MIM
Chandrayanagutta	Akbaruddin Owaisi	MIM
Charminar	Asaduddin Owaisi	MIM

3. Maharashtra

Umerkhaddi	Bashir Moosa Patel	SP
Nagpara	Syed Ahmed	INC
Bandra	Baba Ziauddin Siddiqui	INC
Nehru Nagar	Nawab Malik	SP
Kurla	Arif Nasim Khan	INC
Trumbay	Syed Suhail Ashraf	INC
Bhiwandi	Rasheed Tahir Momin	INC
Ambarnath	Sabir Shaikh	SS
Malegaon	Shaikh Rasheed	INC
Bhir	Syed Salim	INC
Miraj	Hafiz Husain Dhature	INC
Kagal	Hasan Miyan Mushrif	NCP
Nagpur	Anis Ahmed	INC

Party-wise Comparative Statement (1998 - 1999) General Election

Party	No. of Candidates		No. of Winners		% of Votes	
	1998	1999	1998	1999	1998	1999
Congress(I)	477	453	145		25.72	28.42
RJD		61	17	10	2.68	2.75
BJP	388	339	178	182	25.38	23.07
CPI		54	9	4	1.74	1.45
BSP		225	5	14	4.67	4.23

General Election, 1999:

Analysis of Lok Sabha Results

Nature of Constituency	Total	Won	%
Muslim Majority	11	11	100
Muslim-Concentration	59	21	36
Others	473	1	0.21

The list of 32 includes A. Hamid (INC) who won from Dhubri (Assam)

Muslims in Second Position Muslim-Concentration Seats

Bihar	1.	1.	Madhubani*
	2.	2.	Darbhangha
	3.	3.	Bettiah*
Haryana	1.	4.	Faridabad
Kerala	1.	5.	Calicut
	2.	6.	Kasargod
Maharashtra	1.	7.	Bombay SC
	2.	7.	Aurangabad
West Bengal	1.	8.	Basirhat
	2.	9.	Diamond Harbour
	3.	10.	Calcutta NE
UP	1.	11.	Moradabad*
	2.	12.	Domariaganj
	3.	13.	Bahraich*
	4.	14.	Pilibhit
	5.	15.	Bulandshahr

Other non-Concentration Seats

A.P.	1.	1.	Adilabad
	2.	2.	Hanamkonda
	3.	3.	Narasaraopet
Karnataka	1.	4.	Riachur
Kerala	1.	5.	Chirayinkil
	2.	6.	Moovattapuzha
M.P.	1.	7.	Betul
Rajasthan	1.	8.	Jhalawar
Tamil Nadu	1.	9.	Vellore
	2.	10.	Chennai Central
U.P.	1.	11.	Unnao
	2.	12.	Azamgarh*

* Sitting Muslim MP

UP: Segment-wise Break-up

Party	Contested	Won
BJP	395	124
Loktantrik Congress	20	11
Samata	10	16
Samajwadi	420	129
INC	390	44
RLD	35	14
BSP	425	87
Total		425

Kuldip Nayar on the Colour of the NDA Agenda

The BJP ... on its own has secured only 182 ... is only one more than ... in the last Lok Sabha. Had there been no Pakistani aggression at Kargil, ... the BJP would not have probably crossed 150. Or still, if Sonia Gandhi, whose foreign origin rankled the people, had not been the only alternative, Vajpayee would have been handicapped.

The Telugu Desam, which has won 29 seats, has given the maximum strength to the BJP's elbow. The Congress, which believed that Sonia Gandhi was like Indira Amma in the Andhra Pradesh countryside, has got one of its worst electoral drubbings. The DMK in Tamil Nadu has not only got 12 seats but helped the BJP to get a foothold in a state where the Hindi protagonists have been treated as the most unwelcome people.

Sharad Pawar has campaigned so feverishly against the Congress that the BJP-Shiv Sena combine secured more seats than expected in Maharashtra. But for his poaching and making most contests a three-corner affair, the combine would have been roundly defeated because of its ugly governance.

I am not blaming Pawar. He was literally pushed out of the Congress. But the number of votes his Nationalist Congress Party has got is generally the margin with which the combine has won. I am not mentioning the gain by the BJD in Orissa, winning 10. The party was part of the Vajpayee government. Its acts of omission and commission visited the BJD. But in spite of that it won. In some way, the BJP may have spurred it to victory. In the same way, I have not counted the improved tally of Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress in West Bengal. She too had aligned herself completely with the BJP-led government, although she did not join it.

The case of the Telugu Desam is different because Chandrababu Naidu only made seat adjustments with the BJP. The vision of the future he has given to his people has really worked. Similarly, the DMK has not been part of the Vajpayee government. In fact, the BJP bended rules and changed portfolios to cover up the misdeeds of AIADMK chief Jayalalitha, the DMK's rival. The party felt helpless at this because the Centre was all for her. Therefore, the DMK is one of the BJP's luckiest acquisitions. The Janata Dal (United), with which the Samata Party and the Lok Shakti have merged, is a new ally. Its tally is 20.

... The Telugu Desam, the DMK and the JDU have put it back in power. These parties have secular credentials and believe in the ethos of pluralism... Announcing the suspension of the contentious issues is no reward for their help. The party has to announce that the issues have been suspended for good and that there is no question of reviving them. But how can the party do it when it has to keep the wishes of the RSS in mind while framing policies or implementing programmes?

This is disturbing because the RSS has a different

agenda. Only recently did RSS chief Rajendra Singh say that the construction of the Ram Mandir at the site where the Babari Masjid stood before its demolition was very much the Sangh's commitment. Over the years, this controversy has polarised the country between the ultras and the liberals. It is not only the question of hurting the sentiments of Muslims. It is a case of challenging the composite culture of India.

In truth ... when it comes to Hindu fundamentalists, there is no way to curb them. The case regarding the destruction of the Masjid is pending in court. Charges are yet to be framed against L.K. Advani, M.M. Joshi and Uma Bharati, who are among the 49 who have been named in the FIR filed nearly seven years ago after the Masjid's demolition.

... The Prime Minister of India can be subservient to Parliament, which is elected by the people, or to the President, who is the custodian of the Constitution but (not to) the BJP or its mentor.

... The parties, which have aligned themselves with the BJP, should consider how far they would compromise on the respect that the office of Prime Minister demands. They have in the past spoken against the interference by the RSS in the affairs of the state. Political convenience may have shut their eyes. Still, they have to face the fact that India's pluralism provides the country with the sinews of unity. The RSS has the Hindu Rashtra as its goal. This is the anti-thesis of secularism, the basic structure of our Constitution. In fact, the allies of the BJP should take into account the reiteration of the commitment by the RSS to build the temple. Advani said during the polling that such issues had been deferred, not dropped. The party would take up the issue when it got a majority on its own.

In other words, the allies are only the means, not the end. The BJP is deferential to their stand on certain issues at present because it needs their support. How tragic that these elements who once swore by the name of secularism - probably they still do - have sold their commitment for the pottage of office.... The BJP or, for that matter, Vajpayee should say without further loss of time that the building of mandir or whittling down the autonomy of J&K ... is no more on the national agenda.

(Source: The Hindu, 12 October, 1999)

(Contd. from Page 533)

reassessment and a fresh approach...

We shall work together with like-minded countries for an early return to stability in Afghanistan. An essential requirement for this is the cessation of outside interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

... India highly values her cordial and steadily growing relations with the countries of central Asia, west Asia, east and south-east Asia and the Pacific...

(Source: The Hindu, 26 October, 1999)

Praful Bidwai on BJP's Three Track Strategy

... A crucial factor is also that the pivot of the coalition is a now-politically weakened party, which has had to accommodate a number of leaders responsible for toppling its government less than six months ago...

In some ways, the BJP is a victim of its own success. That success, it bears stressing, is modest. The party called the elections to secure a firm, resounding mandate. But it failed to exceed its tally of seats. More vitally, it suffered a 2.5 per cent *decrease* in its national vote. This happened despite all the presumed advantages it enjoyed... The trick in these elections lay in tactful alliance-building. The Congress was a non-starter here, and the BJP a master of shrewdness and resilience. But that meant that the BJP won only a hundred seats on its own steam; the rest came from intelligent alliances.

A second root of the BJP's success lies in its near-total consolidation of upper caste support, perhaps unprecedented for any party, especially in the Hindi belt and western India... But as the party's upper caste vote has burgeoned, its support from other castes, especially OBCs, has shrunk. The further skewing of the BJP's social base means it can now aspire even less to command the strength the Congress once did, and hence come to power on its own. Even at its pre-1977 non-peak performance, the Congress commanded 35 per cent-plus of the national vote. The BJP's percentage now is just 23...

The BJP has succeeded in creating a system apparently dominated by two coalitions. But this is far cry from a bipolar or two-party system. India's two biggest parties command a falling vote-share, now a little over one-half. At least one of them (the BJP) is not ideologically dominant within its own parliamentary terrain. And their volatile allies cannot promote systemic durability. The BJP ... hardly set the real political agenda. The BJP's successes ... are circumscribed by countervailing factors. They do not add up to a strong forward thrust, especially given the party's considerably reduced weight within the NDA.

Where the BJP has handsomely succeeded is in two areas. First, in equating the "trident" (mandir-Article 370-uniform civil code) agenda with Hindutva, and then distancing itself from it. This is a sleight of hand. In reality, the party has in no way altered its central programmatic perspective of Hindu primacy or "cultural nationalism", of which the "trident" is only one expression, some others being an equation of Indianness with the dominant majority's culture and nationalism. The BJP is thus consciously following a three-track policy: a central majoritarian perspective, ambiguity over the "trident" and the limited agenda of the NDA manifesto. Its greatest success lies in getting its allies to hold it

answerable for only the last.

Second, the BJP has seized on economic neo-liberalism as its hallmark – to win support from privileged classes here and abroad...

The BJP's allies could not be happy with ... being passive spectators to its three-track approach. But within NDA power equations, they will find it hard to "moderate" the BJP without threatening to quit the NDA altogether. For, unlike six months ago, the core of a viable alternative does not exist today. The Congress, with 112 seats, cannot furnish it. A new pole of attraction can only emerge once the Centre-Left space expands with social churning and secular realignment, or after the NDA's regional components start centrifuging away, like the TDP. Till then, the NDA will work not because it is structurally, inherently, more stable than its predecessor or the United Front, but by default...

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

Minority-Friendly?

Editorial, The Asian Age, 21 September, 1999

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee is trying very hard to tell religious minorities that his party, and the alliance he leads, loves them. He is currently in a hectic election mode and is coming up with soothing words for the minorities virtually on a daily basis. His latest one, while on campaign in Patna, states that if the BJP is voted to power again, it will "suitably amend" the Constitution to make it more responsive to minority needs... Vajpayee's reassurances indicate that at some level, he is quite aware that the BJP needs to project a spruced up profile so that the minorities give up their perceived reservations about the BJP-dominated combine. At the other level, the Prime Minister has been rather happily ambiguous:

Does the Constitution, as it exists now, actually needs amendments to become more minority-friendly?... It is, therefore, a moot point whether it is the Constitution that needs to be amended or it is the attitude of political parties towards the more disadvantaged sections of the have-nots which needs a change... The Constitution need not be amended at all, unless of course there are specific lacunae which Vajpayee has in mind but forgot to mention in the course of ... electioneering... In fact, if Vajpayee and his alliance is at all so concerned about bringing the minorities on the same footing as the other sections of Indian society, all that he has to do is to tell Advani, his second-in-command, not to needlessly reopen a now-off-now-on controversy about the Ram Mandir... The Sangh Parivar speaks in several voices on contentious issues like Ayodhya...

Ajaz Ashraf on Rising Potential of BSP in UP

... Caught between the challenge of OBCs at the grassroots, and the demand of Dalits for a share in power, the dilemma upper castes face is: What political decisions should they take to retain their tenuous control over institutions and resources of the state?

... The struggle for power in the UP BJP is essentially a struggle for ascendancy among upper castes and OBCs, articulated through Kalraj Mishra and Rajnath Singh on the one hand, and Kalyan Singh on the other.

This aspect is not unique to UP. Throughout the Hindi heartland, upper castes and OBCs are locked in a fierce tussle to establish control over block, bank and thana — the development, credit and security tripod on which rural India exists — and avenues of employment and patronage in government...

... A combination of Hindutva and what has been called BJP's social engineering — characterised through the appointment of a backward as chief minister under rigid organisational control — enabled upper castes to thwart, if not completely overcome, the challenge from below...

BJP's social engineering could have worked had it not been for Kalyan's refusal to become a rubber stamp: a leader who could pull in OBC votes and yet refrain from disturbing the delicate socio-political arrangement at the grassroots favouring upper castes. Not only did he refuse to become a puppet, but also demonstrated his relevance to the party through his tacit support for backward caste consolidation behind Mulayam Singh in this election...

This apart, three other trends from this general election ought to seriously concern the BJP. For one, both the SP and BSP retained their respective bases — and yet the BJP declined because of depletion in its votes. Second, Muslims are more obsessed about protection at the grassroots than ushering in a secular, single-party government at the Centre. That they voted for the SP and BSP despite the absence of a Third Front testifies to this. Third, the media projection of a Congress revival and its eventual accretion of votes was largely at the BJP's expense instead of the SP and BSP's.

Faced with threats of desertion from both its upper and backward caste supporters, the BJP finds itself in a cleft stick — persistence with or removal of Kalyan will alienate one of the two social groups, and accentuate the grassroots conflict between them. So, what options do upper castes now have in UP? ...

Many political analysts advocate a social alliance of upper castes and Dalits as the contradiction between these two groups is less sharp than what it is between OBCs and upper castes. For one, the relationship between Dalits and upper castes, they argue, has been fashioned over the centuries through traditional mechanisms such as the jajmani system. Second, OBCs as an emerging landowning class have a proportionately smaller resource

base than upper castes and are, therefore, more ruthless in exploiting Dalits for better profit margins.

It was for precisely these reasons that the BJP had pushed for an alliance with the BSP two years ago. The BSP-BJP experiment proved to be an abject failure then — and is unlikely to succeed now. Such an alliance will drive away Muslims from the BSP, diminish its independent clout, and render it susceptible to manipulations.

Many believe the Congress' improved performance opens the possibility of resurrecting its formidable alliance of upper caste, Dalits and Muslims... Upper castes can scarcely be expected to back a party that lacks the potential to muster a majority on its own. Second, Dalits are too enamoured of Mayawati and Kanshi Ram to think of ditching the BSP...

In the fluid political situation in UP, and with options running out fast, upper castes might have to veer around to the view that the only way of forging a stable and winning alliance is to come together with Muslims and Dalits **under the aegis of the BSP**. Surprising? It sure is, but the cost benefit analysis of such an arrangement is more favourable for upper castes than an overwhelming OBC victory. Already, during the recent election, Kanshi Ram and Mayawati changed tack, harping on sarvsamaj (entire society) instead of their trademark bahujan samaj. The BSP now plans to launch a jati jodo abhiyan (unite castes campaign)...

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 17 October, 1999)

SP and BSP have Nowhere to Go Editorial, The Statesman, 15 Oct., 1999

Perhaps the biggest surprise of the 13th Lok Sabha elections is the success of the Samajwadi Party ... with an increased tally — 20 to 26... Mulayam Singh's candidates have come a close second in 23 other seats. The SP's one time ally, the BSP have also carved an impressive record increasing (its) tally from four to 14, and coming second in 14 other constituencies. **Both parties have benefited from tactical voting by Muslims** — they were supposed to be coming back in droves to Congress. UP proves that no political party gets the Muslim vote en bloc as is often supposed. And in this election in particular, **the strongest candidate against the BJP was chosen, no matter to which party or community he or she belonged, the call was to defeat the BJP. In the prime ministerial constituency of Lucknow, the minorities voted en masse for the Congress, narrowing Vajpayee's margin by about one lakh.**

However with all their gains, thanks to the new poll equations both Mulayam and Mayawati are all dressed up with nowhere to go... The third front which Mulayam was most vocal about is not a viable option leaving him very little room for manoeuvre...

K.K. Katyal On Prospects of the NDA

Will the new Union government complete a full five-year term? ... The answer to the question, however, is not easy because of the difficulties of fitting the projections, based on political variables, in the five-year time-frame... At this stage, one could only list the factors, suggesting a stable tenure and those with a potential for instability.

The NDA has the definite advantage of numbers. With the support of 300-plus in the 545-strong Lok Sabha, the present dispensation **is better placed than its immediate predecessor, with a precarious lead.** The margin ... would provide a cushion against possible desertion by any one of the alliance partners. The TDP, which chose to extend support from outside, is a separate category by itself. Its 29 members constitute a vital prop. Having returned to power in the State, and having sent a big contingent to the Lok Sabha with an electoral arrangement with the BJP, the TDP chose to avoid too close a hug with the saffron party, for fear of sending a wrong message to the minorities. There is, however, no equivocation about its support to the NDA...

The strength of the non-BJP constituents in the NDA ranges between four and 20 and, as such, **no single group is in a position to cause an upset.** This may well act as a deterrent against any refractory tendency. Only a joint move by two or more groups could create a problem for the big brother - but that seems unlikely, as of now. The present alliance is free from some of the contradictions that was the undoing of the previous combine... The main ally from Tamil Nadu, DMK, is in power in the State and as such, does not need to make demands, considered impossible by New Delhi.

From W. Bengal, the Trinamul Congress ... has now joined the Government. Mamata Banerjee ... has now been contained.

With his enhanced stature, the Prime Minister, A.B. Vajpayee, is a bigger asset to the ruling alliance than was the case in the past. The BJP as also its partners invoked his name, to the exclusion of others, in the election campaign... As against these favourable factors, there are a good number of negative features which could not but be a source of worry. The most obvious are the size and the unwieldy **character of the NDA, comprising over a score of parties and groups, big and small. There is, thus, a potential for trouble, arising from the clash of personalities and of ambitions (but, certainly, not of ideologies),** ego conflicts and temperamental incongruities.

Had that not been the case, Vajpayee would not have felt compelled to ... form a jumbo-sized council of ministers. He may have to add to the 70-strong team to accommodate the disgruntled and the frustrated. All this at a time when the government swore by its resolve to
(Contd. on Page 539)

Harish Khare Interpreting the Mandate of NDA

... Even if the NDA were to secure more than 300 seats, the verdict would not be an expression of support for the attacks on the institutions that was undertaken by the BJP and its allies. The Prime Minister lent his voice and name to these attacks. In the process, the offices of President, Election Commission and Director of Intelligence Bureau were sought to be controversialised. Several Cabinet Ministers openly criticised the President, without inviting any public reprimand from the Prime Minister for the Constitutional solecism. Again, Vajpayee publicly criticised the Election Commission, all in the partisan cause of the BJP-JD(U) combine in Bihar; and, the Defence Minister dragged the DIB in an entirely avoidable controversy. Collectively, these utterances constituted an assault on the Constitutional arrangement, and it would not do for anyone to interpret a pro-NDA verdict as a vindication of those ill-conceived, illiberal and unconstitutional impulses. The NDA would have no mandate whatsoever to monkey around with the Constitution. Whatever the numbers the verdict would not be an reaffirmation of the Kargil "victory" and its inherent promise of gleeful militarisation...

By the end of the campaign, the Kargil theme faded away from the Prime Minister's own rhetoric. "Kargil" was a non-issue for the masses. It would, therefore, be a gross distortion of the popular mood if a majority for the NDA were to be interpreted as a mandate for reckless spending on the military and an equally reckless pursuit of a militarised foreign policy...

Nor will a pro-NDA verdict, however decisive, be a popular approval of the descent into political indecency of the kind practised by Pramod Mahajan, George Fernandes and others... And, lastly, irrespective of the kind of majority, if at all any, the NDA cobbles together it would be a comprehensive rejection of the majoritarian intolerance of the Sangh Parivar. The very fact that the NDA agenda had to eschew all those divisive issues - the Ram Mandir, Article 370, a uniform civil code - is an acknowledgement that the country has moved beyond the religious divide that Mr. Advani and others sought to impose on the polity... NDA's ... success can in no way be appropriated by the Sangh Parivar as an acceptance of its agenda, hidden or otherwise.

... The verdict can only reflect the fractiousness and fragmentation dormant in the Indian society... Any attempt to hijack the mandate would produce instant dysfunctionality and disorder.

(Source: The Hindu, 6 October, 1999)

CORRECTION

October 1999, Issue No.202, Page 470
Please read "1998" in place of "1999" in Title

S.S. Gill on BJP's Game Plan to Promote Hindutva

... When questioned as to how he reconciled his secular credentials and his alliance with a communal party, Ramakrishna Hegde claimed that it was a great achievement of the alliance partners to have pulled the BJP away from its Hindutva moorings. And this view is shared by a large section of the informed opinion.

But is that really so? Or, are the alliance partners labouring under a self-serving delusion?... But how are the building of the temple at Ayodhya, scrapping of Article 370, or introducing the common civil code central to Hindutva? They will definitely serve the purpose of humiliating the Muslim community and give a sense of triumph to the Sangh Parivar, but how do these achievements serve the real ideological goals of Hindutva?

... (They) serve the Sangh Parivar very well, as it helps to camouflage its basic and far more insidious programme. And secondly, the three easily identifiable, high-profile elements of the agenda help to define the communal profile of the BJP in the popular imagination.

... Hindutva is not a programme of action but a state of mind. It is a specific view of one's Indianness or Bharatiyata, of one's cultural heritage and civilisational springs of the content of one's national ethos. The defining characteristic of this view is that it is exclusivist in nature: it admits of no diversity or dissent. And this is where the problems arise. Hinduism itself being a highly pluralist religion and Indian society being the most diverse, the exclusivist approach of the Sangh Parivar sharply clashes with the country's all-inclusive ethos and encourages divisive forces.

The votaries of Hindutva ... go about their business with the zeal of an evangelist. And in doing so they operate at two levels. One, of aggressive and belligerent proselytizers, and two, of the subtle mind-conditioners.

The first technique has obviously greater appeal for the hot-heads and the hard-liners. The three items of the BJP agenda which have been temporarily moved to the back burner belong to his category. But even if this is the official line, the Sangh Parivar cadres do not subscribe to it. Off and on the mask slips down and the true face of the Sangh is exposed...

But far more menacing is the systematic campaign of intimidation and violence unleashed against the Christians. The destruction of their churches, incineration of popular social workers like Staines along with his children, molestation of nuns - all these are aimed at coercing the missionaries into stopping their conversion activities... The vigorous campaign launched by the Parivar to "reconvert" the tribals to Hinduism ... results in direct confrontation between the two proselytizing groups. But as the stance of the Parivar sevaks is belligerent, and there is the arrogance of numbers on their side, the shuddhi

practices often result in violence...

... The school-level operations designed at conditioning and controlling the minds of the people ... pose a real threat to the polity. Education and information are the two most vital mind-conditioners, and the BJP has always given the highest importance to these two subjects. In the Janata Party ministry set up in 1977, the Jana Sangh ... opted for the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Sangh cadres were placed in strategic position in the information sector and the premier news agency of the country was specially targetted.

Then, in the BJP ministries formed in 1996, 1998, and now in 1999, the party has taken good care to keep the ministries of Information and Education to itself...

The Ministry of Education is much more important of the two, and that is why it is headed by a committed ideologue. And how are the minds of the people being conditioned? Well calculated moves have been made to ensure that educational institutions and research centres are headed by persons with firm commitment to the Sangh ideals. The outcome of these appointments will have a lasting impact on the educational system and academic climate of the country. The holders of these key positions would have a decisive say in the appointments at the operational level, and this will have a cascading effect in infiltrating the educational system with the Parivar cadres. History books will be rewritten and the students would imbibe a saffronised view of their cultural heritage. Also, by excessive and slanted glorification of the past, revivalist and reactionary values will be promoted. The RSS slogan that "Hinduism is nationalism" will be stamped on impressionable minds through this process.

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 6 November, 1999)

(Contd. from Page 538)

downsize the Central administration and cut down the spending, as part of the strategy to contain the budgetary deficit. With a single stroke, the **credibility of the political bosses** has been destroyed ... at the very start of their fresh term.

As expected, the JD(U), last to "join" the NDA in the midst of ugly controversies, looks like posing a major problem. Generous accommodation ... in the Central team has only served to whet its appetite...

The biggest threat to the new dispensation may come from within the BJP. **The hardcore in the Sangh Parivar is not happy with the compromises that had to be made by the BJP for the sake of power.** They are particularly sore over the manner three "contentious issues" were put on the back burner. Among these is the Hindutva, used by the Parivar in the past to raise the subject of ... Ayodhya, Mathura and Kashi... But then which party in the Opposition could claim the required degree of cohesion.

(Source: The Hindu, 18 October, 1999)

CPI(M): GS H.S. Surjeet on Testing NDA's Secularism

... The 13th Lok Sabha will have two major issues before it. First of them is the issue of communalism and the threat it poses to national unity. Despite the repeated pronouncements of good intentions by BJP leaders, the fact is that they are believed by nobody, least of all by the minorities. Even during the elections, at Lucknow, Vajpayee's own constituency, Professor Rajendra Singh had said that the RSS had not given up its goal of temple construction at the Babari site, and also "advised" the Muslims to willingly give up their claims on the mosques at Mathura and Varanasi. At that time Vajpayee or any other BJP leader did not show the guts to oppose the RSS chief's contention of even distance himself from it.

And now the VHP and Bajrang Dal have unleashed an intense campaign against the Christians. Their immediate target is the scheduled visit to India by Pope John Paul II, religious head of the Catholic Christians. The latest issue of the *Organiser* has also carried as many as three, highly vituperative articles against the Pope's visit. The VHP and Bajrang Dal have even started a yatra from Goa in order to incite anti-Christian sentiments; the yatra will reach Delhi on November 4, one day before the Pope's visit commences. Initially, these communal organisations were opposed to the visit itself.

But seeing no favourable response, they changed their tune; now they are making all sorts of preposterous demands, like the Pope should apologise for the atrocities committed by the Portuguese in Goa three or four centuries ago, he should pronounce against "forcible" conversions, or the Vatican should "stop aiding the ultra groups in the North East", and so on. All this has sent a wave of panic among the Christian and other minorities.

It should be noted here that India has a very big population of the minority communities, something like 180 millions, and that if these minorities get isolated from the national mainstream, this is bound to have severe repercussions for the nation's unity and stability.

It is here that the BJP's allies will be facing a tough test. Most of these allies, barring the Shiv Sena, have been professing secularism, and in the days to come the people will be watching to see how far these allies are prepared to go to ward off the impending dangers to the nation's unity and stability. Some of them did try to rebuke the VHP's campaign against the Pope's campaign against the Pope's visit, but in a very muted voice which was almost unnoticeable.

Apart from secularism, many of the BJP's allies have been ardent champions of federalism also, the second pillar of India's unity. They have been correct in thinking that secularism and federalism are essential ingredients of any polity, particularly in a multi-religious, multi-lingual and multi-ethnic country like India. But, if one goes by

their record during the earlier tenure of the BJP-led government, one only gets disappointed by their performance. Even when blatant anti-federal authoritarian steps were being taken by the centre, like the two attempts to dislodge the elected Bihar government through the misuse of Article 356, the BJP's allies chose to remain tight-lipped. But their role will assume extra significance in the days to come. For, if they wish, by their sheer numbers they can prevent the government from taking any anti-democratic and anti-secular step. It is because of this fact that the people of the country will be keenly observing their performance...

(Source: *The People's Democracy*, 24 October, 1999)

CPI(M): Central Committee Statement, 12 October, 1999

... The BJP-led government assuming office is based on a heterogeneous alliance. Unlike the BJP, its major supporters the TDP and its ally the DMK do not share the Hindutva ideology, even though they collaborated with the BJP. They have their own regional identities and aspirations. The disparate and conflicting aims of the alliance partners will bring to the fore contradictions.

Despite what is professed by the National Democratic Alliance and stated by the Prime Minister, the RSS and its organisations are determined to push forward the Hindutva agenda. They will make covert and systematic efforts to advance their aims... In such a situation, the Central Committee decided that it will resolutely oppose any attempt to push through the Hindutva agenda and the penetration of the State apparatus by the communal forces...

The Central Committee reiterated the need to reforge the unity of the Left, democratic and secular forces so as to present an effective third alternative...

(Source: *The People's Democracy*, 17 October, 1999)

Rajeev Dhavan On Parivar's Perverse Hypocrisy

... In a calculated campaign, the Parivar and its real allies have enlarged their electoral dividends in Orissa and Gujarat. They feel they have found a winner. The Muslims have been let off, at least for the moment. The Christians are targeted. The Pope is seen as a living Christian monument - quite like the Babari Masjid was portrayed as a Muslim symbol. The object is not to protest against his visit but to gain rank and file support by doing something sacrilegiously insulting, as they did to the Babari Masjid. The tactic is the same. The victims become villains. The transgressors claim the moral high ground. Such hypocrisy is perverse and dangerous...

(Source: *The Hindu*, 5 November, 1999)

Vidya Subrahmaniam on Kalyan Singh, the BJP and UP

... For the BJP, (Kalyan Singh) was many things rolled into one — the hero of Ayodhya, who watched a Masjid crumble so that the promised temple could emerge from its ruins; the social engineer who put together a winning caste coalition by welding his own popular backward caste base with his party's traditional upper caste support; the Machiavellian mastermind that produced many astonishing feats, including a legislative majority that came from nowhere, and a government that was born almost entirely of defections.

Kalyan derives his significance from being able to combine Mandir and Mandal, two concepts thought to be diametrically opposite. He was linked to Mandir, which catapulted the BJP to political centrestage, and to Mandal, which carried the party's appeal, confined for decades only to the upper castes, to sections previously opposed to the BJP.

Formidable Force: Ironically, the alienation of Kalyan Singh appears to have happened because the BJP could never reconcile the two. When the BJP started the Mandir movement, it was as a counter to Mandal: If mandalisation divided the Hindus and pushed them permanently into upper and backward slots, Mandir achieved the opposite by cementing the differences and placing a single objective before the community. The strategy suited Kalyan, though he didn't see a conflict between the two; in fact, both were equally his passions. If Mandir was his goal, Mandal was his belief, which explains why even as he spoke of building a grand Ram temple at Ayodhya, he also gradually mandalised the party by recruiting more and more OBCs to important positions and establishing himself at the head of an OBC coalition, the core of which constituted his own community, the Lodh Rajputs.

It is this coming together of various castes — the BJP's original constituency of Brahmins and Banias combining with substantial sections of other backward castes — which gave the BJP a base vote in excess of 30 per cent and made it a formidable force in any election. By itself, no party could match the BJP. The Congress was reduced to bankruptcy following the desertion of the Dalits and Muslims. Mulayam Singh Yadav and Mayawati remained fiercely committed to their own communities which meant that their parties couldn't grow beyond a point. And in a situation where no two parties would unite against the BJP — barring two exceptions — the latter went virtually unchallenged.

Upper Caste Target: Kalyan was a key ingredient in this success formula, for only he could hold the backward castes together... As long as Hindutva was the focus, (BJP) papered over the upper caste-backward caste divide in the party... But without Hindutva, he became the OBC chief minister in a party controlled by the entrenched classes.

It was inevitable in this caste war that Kalyan should become a target of the upper caste leadership. He, in turn, became the spurned Lodh Rajput, conscious as much of the backwardness of his community as of his own inferior station in the party. Kalyan was never a great administrator, but in his second term he deliberately allowed the state administration to collapse. And in the 1999 elections, he deliberately brought losses to the BJP by allowing the backwards to consolidate in favour of the rival Samajwadi Party.

Had the BJP genuinely accepted the backward castes, instead of seeing their co-option merely as a strategy to win elections, Kalyan might have not become the problem he has today... (Source: The Times of India, 12 November, 1999)

Sunita Aron

On Mulayam Singh's Electoral Strategy

How can Muslims desert me when Yadavs are with me?" — Mulayam Singh Yadav

Mulayam Singh Yadav has proved several things in this election: never write him off; he is the undisputed leader of the backwards in UP; Muslims, by and large, remain faithful to him; and the tenuous Congress recovery has been not so much at his expense as at the BJP's. ...

In the first phase of polling, it was the consolidation of backwards that helped Mulayam most in his strongholds as it compensated the partial loss of Muslims. The media hype about BJP dissident Sakshi Maharaj's role in the 30-odd constituencies of the Kalyan-Mulayam belt changed the vacillating mood of his followers in the subsequent phases. The message went down that Mulayam had performed best.

Mulayam also took great pains to shed his party's Yadav image. He made it a point to mention the caste configuration of his candidates such as 14 Rajputs against seven Yadavs. And, a section of Thakurs cut up with the BJP also came to his rescue.

Then, Muslims did not buy the whispers about an "understanding" between Mulayam and disgruntled BJP Chief Minister Kalyan Singh, who played a prominent role in the Ayodhya movement... But even as the media was speculating about a change in the Muslim mood, a lonely Mulayam was doggedly holding conventions in the state capital and canvassing the community. ...

Mulayam's strategy for success was:

- Careful selection of candidates with caste configuration of the constituency in mind.
- Well-oiled machinery backed by hard labour.
- Consolidation of backwards to compensate Muslim loss. With Kalyan Singh getting sidelined in the BJP, he emerged as the undisputed backward leader.

It is said that Mulayam is at his best when driven to the wall. The wrestler from Etawah has proved that again.

(Source: The Times of India, 11 October, 1999)

Laloo Down, not Out Mammen Mathew in The Hindustan Times

... Propelled into power in 1990 by chance, Laloo Yadav had consolidated his hold in Bihar through the Mandal magic and by stopping L.K. Advani's Rath Yatra. The formidable combination of OBCs and Muslims enabled his Janata Dal to bag most of Bihar's 54 seats in the 1991 general election.

Yet Laloo frittered away this base... The Laloo magic started to fade in 1996 itself. Samata and BJP aligned to win 30 seats in that year's election, and 32 in 1998. But till then, it was more a battle of attrition. However, the Samata-BJP combine received a fillip once Paswan joined the NDA and blunted Laloo's MY edge... Yet, despite the BJP's tremendous performance, its own vote share has declined by four per cent – and the Congress' has increased by five per cent. This is exactly where Paswan managed to damage Laloo. His Dalit support provided the winning edge. That the RJD and Congress could manage just eight out of 40 seats in north and central Bihar is proof. Muslim alienation was also crucial, especially at Madhepura where Laloo failed to woo the Muslim-dominated segment...

Again, Kishanganj constituency, 70 per cent Muslim, elected BJP candidate... Laloo Yadav has reasons to worry – with the Assembly election only three months away, the BJP-Samata-JD(U) combine, on the basis of this performance, could win 160 Assembly seats... Detractors, however, admit that though Laloo is down, it would be foolish to declare him out...

Laloo's Comeuppance Editorial, The Times of India

If the NDA finds itself so comfortably placed in the 13th Lok Sabha, it has largely Laloo Prasad Yadav of Bihar to thank. By capturing 40 out of the state's 54 seats, the BJP-Janata Dal(U) combine has delivered a stunning blow to the RRJD. The electoral verdict has punctured the hubris of Mr. Yadav and demonstrated that no leader, however populist his image, can take the people for a ride in perpetuity. Mr. Yadav has (mis)ruled the roost in Bihar for 10 years. At one time, his slogan of social justice had a certain popular resonance; he gave voice to hitherto silent sections and helped broaden the political terrain not just in Bihar but also across India. Unfortunately, he failed to understand that 'empowerment' is not just a matter of having MLAs and MPs who are one's caste brothers. If representatives are unable to improve the lives of their constituents – provide them with schools and health facilities, jobs security and dignity – it is small consolation that they happen to belong to OBC or SC...

... The BJP and the JD(U) are eagerly awaiting next year's assembly elections... The NDA would do well to not subvert the democratic process; instead, nature should be allowed to take its own course.

Harish Gupta On Bihar's Result

... A scrutiny of Lok Sabha poll results would show that the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD)-Congress combine could have won 26 Lok Sabha seats instead of ending up with 10 had they joined hands with other secular parties.

If the CPI(ML) candidate had not contested ... in **Barh**, Nitish Kumar would not have been Surface Transport Minister in the Vajpayee government. Nitish's victory margin was just 1,900 votes. In **Ballia**, the CPI candidate ... paved the way for a JD(U) victory... It was the same story in **Madhubani** where Hukumdev Narayan Yadav (BJP) won ... over his Congress rival as the CPI candidate walked away with 14 per cent of the votes...

The BJP won the **Katihar** seat ... due to a vote-split among parties other than the BJP, principally the Congress and the Bahujan Samaj Party.

In **Kishanganj**, the Nationalist Congress Party candidate polled ... enough votes to defeat the RJD by a margin of 5 per cent. Whether it was **Samastipur** or **Bagaha**, **Buxar** or **Banka**, **Jehanabad** or **Sasaram**, division of votes among the non-BJP-JD(U) parties caused defeats. At least five Lok Sabha seats were lost in South Bihar (Dumka, Godda, Giridih, Khunti and Lohardaga) to the BJP when the Congress declined to enter into a tactical understanding with the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha factions. Even the Singhbhum seat was lost due to a feud between the Congress and the JMM. ...

Results show an increase of more than 3 per cent of the popular vote for the RJD and 1.6 per cent for the Congress. Together, they polled 38.46 per cent while the BJP-JD(U) got 44.36 per cent.

The poll percentage of the CPI, CPI(ML) and JMM fell by 3% in 1999, ensuring that the BJP-JD(U) gained 16 extra seats... In at least 15 Lok Sabha seats which the NDA candidates retained, the victory margin came down sharply in four... If the RJD lost 15 of the 17 seats it bagged in the 12th Lok Sabha, it succeeded in snatching five from the NDA. This was the first time that the Bahujan Samaj Party fielded 30 candidates. It polled only 1.4 per cent votes, but ensured that the Saharsa seat went to the BJP.

The net gain of votes to the NDA in Bihar was just 4.56 per cent while the gain for the RJD-Congress was 5.34 per cent. Though the NDA is ahead in 191 of the 300 Assembly segments in 50 Lok Sabha seats, it is felt that Laloo's political obituary cannot be written easily. If he decides to enter into a tie-up with the CPI and the Congress joins hands with the JMM, the NDA will have a tough time.

Of the 191 Assembly segments, the NDA's victory margin was narrow in nearly 50 segments. They could go either way in the next four months. The RJD and the Congress led in only 89 segments and their victory margin was narrow in 20 Assembly seats too...

(Source: The Indian Express, 30 October, 1999)

Dalit-Muslim Unity Presupposes Equality and Reciprocity Shahabuddin's Letter to the Dalit Voice, 10 November, 1999

I am pained by the tone and content of two articles published prominently in your journal's issue of 16-30 November, 1999, written by Dr. (Mrs.) K.K. Sidhu and Shri P.S. Sridhara Murthy.

Apart from attacking the intent of eminent Muslim personalities like Saiyid Hamid, the entire Muslim community has been tarred as 'intellectually bankrupt, mentally confused and emotionally demoralised'. The articles in a sense, call for a cessation of dialogue between the Dalits and the Muslims, which would be a retrograde step in the political development of the country.

Had you published my letter to you prominently and considered it coolly and responded to it sympathetically, these articles, which apparently enjoy your endorsement, would have lost their sting.

I feel that such fulminations do not serve any purpose. Let me put it in proper perspective:

1. Dalit (SC's and ST's) – Muslim Alliance is in the interest of all the three. I would like to add the MBC's also.
2. You have made a very valuable contribution to promoting such an alliance but since you are not in politics, you cannot speak for the parties which represent the SC's, the ST's and the MBC's.
3. Muslims have no political party; they do not even control a political party. Though they extend support to various political parties of the country including Dalit parties. Thus Dalit-Muslim Dialogue is asymmetrical
4. Every political party desires to have the support of the Muslims for nothing. Indeed this has been the Muslim experience since 1947. Muslims are now taking to tactical voting, **constituency-wise**, without any across the board commitment to any party, in a state or in the country as a whole.
5. Muslims will only play a secondary and unequal role, if they join any existing party including a Dalit party.
6. Hence two things are essential to bring out the strategic and tactical unity of Dalit and Muslims:
 - a) There should be an equal and reciprocal relationship.
 - b) There should be a Muslim or Muslim-driven party to negotiate on equal terms with the Dalit party or parties;
 - c) Until then, let the national parties, including Dalit parties, try to win over Muslim support by treating their Muslim leaders and workers with respect and fielding equitable proportion of Muslim candidates from winnable constituencies and ensuring Dalit support for such candidates in

exchange for Muslim support to their Dalit candidates.

The issue is not, as I have repeatedly told you whether the Dalit consider themselves or are counted as Hindus. Nor is it that a majority of Muslim Indians are descendants of the Shudras and the Achhuts. What is important is that they both form deprived sections of our society and together they form the majority of the people and that, if they unite or even coordinate, they can capture power.

It is no use sniping or growling at each other. It is wrong questioning each others' bonafides. It is counter-productive trying to exploit or divide each other.

Dalits and Muslim and MBC's must work together to usher in a Just Society in which no social group shall remain deprived and all social groups shall receive their due.

Ideology a Permanent Barrier Between BJP and Muslim Indians Shahabuddin's Response to Sareen

Apropos Shri Sushant Sareen's article "Paradigm Shift" (October, 1999), I must say that he has built a whole castle on the foundation of sand. He has evolved a wholly imaginary structure on the exist poll report by one company that 20 per cent of the Muslim votes in the last General Election voted for the BJP-NDA.

The number of voters interviewed in a given constituency and the number of Muslims among them is so small that no statistically valid generalisation is possible, particularly in relating voting to religious and caste.

The very fact that the BJP put up only 3 candidates in the whole country (not counting the symbolic 2 in J&K) and only one was successful give the lie to such a projection. I have no doubt that relatively more Muslims voted for parties like TDP, JD(U), TC and DMK because of old association, but all of them lost a major part of their Muslim support.

Whatever the RSS/BJP may do or say, so long as they stick to their ideology of assimilation and dominance, they are not likely to attract any sizeable support from the Muslims. Indeed in the next round, even their partners in the NDA will lose whatever Muslim support they enjoyed in 1999.

(Letter to The Pioneer, 2 November, 1999)

One of the main characteristics of a democracy was the 'extreme' care it took for its minority communities. "Otherwise, it would cease to be a democracy."

- Jacqueline Navarro Valls, Papal Spokesman

On Multi-culturalism & Cultural Synthesis Shahabuddin's Letter to BJP Leader H.S. Bhabhra, 27 Oct., 1999

I sincerely thank you for your letter of 19 October, 1999 which I received only yesterday.

I am glad that you have, like a good friend, frankly asked some questions and made some observations.

The name Muslim India has no separatist connotation. I am a Muslim Indian, i.e. basically an Indian who happens to be a Muslim by faith. Collectively Muslim Indians form a conscious and identifiable social group and interact with the other segments of the larger Indian society and polity. This Journal restricts itself to recording and compiling these interactions. In fact, secular ideology, in the multi-religious context of our country, has an essential element - the protection of the constitutional and legal rights of the religious minorities and the promotion of their legitimate interests and aspirations.

I admire and yet oppose the RSS and all the organisations like the VHP associated with it, for only one reason their object and purpose is to Hinduise India - its culture, society and polity. India to me is larger than Hinduism. Though Hinduism is the foundation on which Indian culture stands, it is not the same as Hindu culture. Nor is Indian culture static. It is as dynamic as Gangaji. It is not today what it was in the Gupta Age; nor will it be tomorrow what it is today.

All-religions contribute to the making of culture. So there is a Hindu culture and a Muslim culture and many other cultures, but all come together in harmony to make up what is Indian Culture. Religion cannot be restricted to mode of worship only, as you say, it affects our whole being and we live it.

I do not think the religious minorities wish to 'break religious boundaries'. Hinduism has a history of religious assimilation. Today no religious group is prepared to be absorbed, to be assimilated, to be submerged. What we should aim at is not to erase the boundaries but make them friendly and interactive, so that each group maintains its identity, respects, and learns from, the others, avoids conflicts and clashes and contributes to the pattern of peaceful, harmonious co-existence, as the co-citizens of a common state and as co-participants in the making and running of the Indian polity, society and economy.

The world is moving towards multi-ethnicity. The 'melting pot' is out; the 'mosaic' is in. I firmly believe in India's destiny as a model for the future - a multi-ethnic society at peace with itself, tolerant, progressive and dynamic.

This is my dream. I pray I live to see it realised.

Reservation is not Another Partition Shahabuddin's Response to S. Shahin The Indian Express, 18 October, 1999

Mr. Sultan Shahin after quoting rather selectively from my article in his article "Don't Repeat Jinnah's Follows", has deliberately twisted it to serve his motivated and partisan purposes.

My article focusses on the disinclination of the parties which swear by secularism and social justice to give due representation to Muslims in the party structure and in the candidates list. But I believe that if they did, their social base would understand the demands of justice. The first experiment has been carried out by the BSP in the last election and with success!

The two biggest parties should have set an example, if they had the will. The BJP put up only 3 Muslim candidates (not counting the symbolic 2 in the Valley) i.e. 0.8 per cent representation for a community of 12.5 per cent. And it calls itself a national party. Perhaps its definition of 'nation' excludes Muslim Indians. The Congress was ten times better at about 7.5 per cent. But it did not field a single Muslim in States like MP, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Delhi and only one in Rajasthan and packed its list in UP with unknown persons in unwinnable places nothing short of a fraud on the Muslim community. No wonder it feels cheated.

So, it is wrong of Mr. Shahin to impute the idea to me that all Hindus of all castes, of all parties are hostile to Muslims. What is needed is moral courage on the part of parties in keeping with their profession of secularism treating all religious communities alike.

It is historically incorrect to compare the current Muslim demand for reservation in legislatures to the pre-Partition situation. The focus then was on separate electorate. The Congress was not opposed to Muslim quotas in principle but to separate electorate. Today no Muslim organisation is asking for separate electorate. Secondly, while Muslim masses are demanding a Muslim party out of frustration with secular parties, they realise that no Muslim party can get them due representation **on its own**, but only in alliances with one secular party or another whose non-Muslim social base plus Muslim votes can reciprocally add up to winnable situations on a common, non-communal platform.

Muslim Indians are indeed the worst victims of the Partition; they are still nursing the wounds of '47. They would like the Sub-continent to be reunited rather than be partitioned again and till then live in peace and amity with their Hindu brethren on terms of equality and justice.

Saiyid Hamid

On Opening Dialogue with Sangh Parivar

As if three elections within a span of four years were not enough, we have laid the foundations of a forth general election...

... The UP Muslims in spite of whatever was being said about a change in their attitude and their policy of tactical voting appear to have demonstrated that in respect of gratitude public memory is not so short. They refused to waver in their loyalty to Mulayam Singh...

... Whatever may have been the impact of Muslim voting in UP and Bihar, the fact remains that Muslims have faded, albeit temporarily, out of political reckoning. They have failed to count and no one from among their leaders was privy to the strategy formulated by different political parties... Nor can the Muslims claim that they stand for values and morality in politics. They too have not kept their political ranks clear of muscle men or mafia dons. It is a pity that the kind of moral influence they could have exercised has been conspicuous by its absence. The dissension and demoralisation in their ranks is evident from the fact that they could not muster courage to press for redressal of their long-standing grievances and to put forward demands for their essential progress...

... The election results emphatically suggest that (Muslim community) should set its sights afresh. AT this moment a massive attitudinal re-orientation is called for. It has to choose wisely between the two major national parties. Parleys with the BJP, which seems to be in the ascendant, should not be ruled out. The party that declares coalition as its dharma has evidently, under stress of circumstances, mellowed and seems to have forsaken its extremist stance. One wouldn't be surprised if it agrees, for the sake of a political compromise, to preserve (or not to meddle with) the aspects which Muslims have come to consider as crucial to their identity. What we are making bold to suggest ... may be dubbed either as defeatism born of panic, or day-dreaming optimism. Let us explain that there is no occasion for panic. Twelve per cent of India's population - perhaps more - can neither be obliterated nor ignored; irrespective of whether, it is organised or disorganised. We are not suggesting that we jump from the Congress frying pan into the BJP fire. Let us open the communication channels with the Sangh Parivar; let us explore.

Let us remove the taboos and complexes that have outlived their utility. Let us have a dialogue with the BJP. Let us sound them. If we find them intransigent or elusive we can get back to our original position. Try, however we must. The process of ungrooving, re-learning and re-aligning should start.

(Source: The Nation and the World, 1 November, 1999)

Janak Singh

On Limits of Religion-based Politics

One redeeming feature of the election scene is that the communal virus, which used to taint the reputation of

On Reaching out to Non-Muslims Editorial, The Islamic Voice, Bangalore

For a minority to succeed it is necessary that it wins as many friends as possible, does not antagonise anyone around and open the channels of communication with those who have turned hostile for some reason. Winning goodwill should be the key word in our lexicon of success. For the past 50 years, we have been so out of pace with times and the society we live in that isolation is leading to ghettoism...

Consequently, it is getting alienated from developments around it. We Muslims in India must adopt a course whereby we build bridges with everyone... The community should reach out to non-Muslims and explain its position on certain demands such as preservation of Muslim Personal Law, Urdu, reservation in jobs and education. Similarly, compromises would be necessary on things like slaughter of cow. These are not within articles of faith for Muslims and if Hindu sentiments are genuinely hurt, it can be done away with...

On Waking up to New Challenges M.A. Siraj in The Meantime, 11 Nov., 1999

... The Muslim attitude is one of ridiculing and repulsing changes at the inception. But once changes overwhelm the society, they are accepted willy nilly without even so much as necessary modifications in tune with religious and cultural ethos.

Development and progress have their own dynamics and pace. In a country such as India changes have to fight their way through a thousand mutinies. But ultimately they prevail. Those who embrace them at the first knock become its standard bearers...

Those who fought with changes, succumbed to its assault at the end only to rue their ruinous myopia... Changes are never dictated by a people's whims and fancies. When they occur, they engulf one and all. Preserving your identity would need taking a progressive outlook. It's time Muslims woke up to the challenges of changing times.

The will have to do a balancing act: Educating their women without necessarily abandoning purdha, stick to Halals but ensure clean, hygienic abattoirs; keep the great call of faith from minarets alive but go easy on its decibel level and adopt modern technology in every possible sphere of their life and activity. Did not the Jews progress with their kosher and Sabbaths? It's ridiculous to believe that everyone in this big world is after your identity!

several parties besides giving rise to tensions in states, is fast disappearing. The parties have come to realise that they can never share the spoils of office unless they stop identifying themselves with any particular religion... they must adopt a pan-Indian approach... The BJP leaders now realise that (without) the support of the minority community ... it is not possible to form a stable Government at the Centre.

NCM: Bi-Annual Report, 1999-2000 (Extracts)

I - Educational and Economic Development of Minorities

Finding that necessary action to implement the requirements of Article 30 of the Constitution in respect of the educational rights of the minorities was being often withheld by the Government offices believing that "a Special Bench of the Supreme Court is reconsidering the law on this subject", the Chairman prepared and released an Explanatory Note, on 7th April 1999, pointing out the following points:

- (i) The Special Bench of the Court constituted in January 1997 had only part-heard the matter till 31st March 1997 and had not passed any interim order. Then, in July 1997 the Bench stood dissolved and has not since been re-constituted.
- (ii) Later, on 7th September 1998, in the case of N. Ammad v. Emjay School, reported at JT 1998 (6) SC 211, the Supreme Court has emphatically held that the established law on the minorities' educational rights, as settled long before 1997, remains fully in force.

Recommendation

It is recommended that these facts be given due recognition and no action in respect of any Minority educational institutions be withheld.

II - Working of NMDFC: NCM Suggestions

Under the directions of the Commission, its Secretary Mrs. Lina Chakrabarti held a meeting with the Managing Director of the National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) on 11th May. The purpose was to sort out the problems faced by the minorities in all parts of the country, brought to the notice of the Commission, in taking benefits of the NMDFC-Schemes and in dealing with its State Channelizing Agencies. After the action was reported to and approved by the full Commission at its meeting held on 26th June, a number of suggestions made by the Commission to improve the working of the NMDFC were conveyed to its Managing Director.

Recommendation

The Commission recommends an early comprehensive review of the working of NMDFC and its SCAs by an Experts Committee.

III - Proposals for Christian Law Reform

During 1997-98 the Commission had taken another important exercise - that of evolving necessary consensus among the various groups and sects of the Christians on the issue of the reform of their personal law now long overdue. Full details of this exercise will be found in the Commission's Annual Report for 1997-98.

In July 1999 the Law Ministry prepared a fresh Christian Family Laws (Amendment) Bill and the Government proposed to enforce it by an Ordinance (as the Lok Sabha then stood dissolved). The proposal was referred to the Commission and, on a cursory glance, it was found that the four draft-bills approved by the Commission in 1997 with the consent of various groups of

the community had been largely deviated from in the Law Ministry's proposals. The extent of these deviations in the Government's proposals from the Draft-Bills of 1997 approved by the Commission and their justification is being examined by the Commission.

In the Commission's opinion, however, it was quite unnecessary to enforce the official proposals by means of an Ordinance, as the new Lok Sabha was expected to be in position shortly. This view of the Commission was immediately conveyed to the Government through letters written by the Commission's Secretariat to the SJE Ministry and by the Chairman himself to the Union Law Minister Ram Jethmalani.

Recommendation

The Commission urges the Government to have the Law Ministry's proposals revised in the light of the Draft-Bills sent by the Commission.

IV - Origin and Causes of Anti-Christian Violence

A well-known political leader made a press-statement on 25th September saying that the country was witnessing anti-Christian violence for the first time and that it was due to recent rise to particular political parties and leaders. As the statement was widely reported in the National media, the NCM Chairman examined it in depth and issued a clarification pointing out that:

"The atrocities against the Christians are neither an entirely novel phenomenon nor can they be attributed to the rise of particular political parties or leaders. The Minorities Commission, set up 21 years ago, had to deal with complaints of anti-Christian violence from the very beginning.

The Annual Report of the Commission for 1997 refers to complaints of 'Atrocities on Christians in Arunachal Pradesh and Bihar'. About a decade later the Commission had received similar complaints from Bhopal, Bhubaneswar and Bombay, details of which are found in its Annual Report for 1988-89. In 1997 the present Commission had inquired into a barbaric incident of anti-Christian violence in the Dumka township of Bihar.

The root-causes of all such communal tensions lie in the failure of the Indian society to fully absorb the Constitutional ideas of equality of citizens and their right to religious freedom, and not in the rise of any party or leader on the political horizon.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Central and State Governments should take some concrete steps to educate the masses and make them fully conscious of the citizen's equality and equal civil and legal rights irrespective of their religion and creed.

V - Appeal for Enhanced Minority Presence in Legislatures

As its meeting held on 29th June 1999 the Commission ... decided to recommend to all the major political parties that they should try to enhance the representation of

Minorities in Parliament and State Legislatures so as to ensure about a hundred seats in it for persons belonging to various Minorities communities... The Chairman later conveyed this recommendation to the heads of all the major political parties... Text of the Chairman's letter is reproduced below:

"The UN Declaration on the Rights of Minorities 1992 speaks of the right of the Minorities in every country to effectively participate in the national decision-making processes. And the Constitution of India guarantees equality of status and opportunity to all the citizens of the country. Both the national and international laws, thus, clearly provide for a fair share of the minorities in the governance of the countries. We in the Commission have a convinced opinion that the first and foremost condition of an effective empowerment of the minorities in India, the need for which is often talked about by all and sundry, is to ensure them adequate participation in the affairs of the nation.

Unfortunately, the presence of the minorities in Parliament has ever since 1950 been quite disproportionate to their actual population in the country. The demand for reservation for minorities, raised from certain quarters, is confused with the so-called 'communal representation' and is opposed generally on the presumption that a minority-community candidate will represent only the concerned minority, which itself is prima facie wrong. We are, however, not talking of either 'communal representation' or even a formal reservation.

We only want that the minorities should be given a fair share, more or less proportionate to their population, in terms of seats in the legislatures – where they will, of course, represent the entire constituencies and not particular communities. And, in our opinion, this is to be achieved by an informal political – and not by a formal legal – process.

We, therefore, recommend that all political parties should, at the time of allotment of tickets for election to Parliament and State Assemblies, ensure the minorities of the country a reasonable presence in both the national and the State-level legislative bodies, proportionate to their population as far as possible. The minority population in the country according to the latest Census Reports is 18.59%. Going by this percentage, the minority should have over a hundred seats in Parliament. We do, therefore, especially recommend that all political parties should try to ensure about a 100 seats for the Minorities in the next Lok Sabha.

VI - Corporation Status for Gujarat Minorities Board

The Gujarat Minorities Board functioning since 1981 had been elevated to the status of a Corporation by the previous State Government, but the implementation of the decision was withheld by the present Government. On the recommendation of the NCM the State Government has now finally given it the status of a Corporation.

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**On Uniform Compensation for
Losses in Riots**

NHRC's Proceedings, 27 October, 1999

By the proceedings dated March 15, 1999, the Commission had taken the position holding that "it would not be appropriate for this Commission to make any further direction or recommendation or express its views in the matter. With these observations, these cases stand closed". Subsequently, Shri Syed Shahabuddin, former M.P. in his letter dated September 29, 1999 requested the Commission to consider (i) whether the question of a cut-off date i.e. whether the ratio of the Delhi High Court should apply only prospectively or retrospectively to all such cases of violence before or after 30 October, 1984 or only after that date. (ii) whether judgement should be applicable to 'communal riots' only or to all cases of social or inter-group violence". Since the Commission had already deliberated on these issues in the proceedings referred to above, the Commission is not inclined to re-open these issues and reconsider them. However, it may be open to Shri Syed Shahabuddin to intervene himself in the pending matter in the Supreme Court and seek such direction as may be appropriate from the Court. With these observations, the proceedings are closed.

Sd/- K. Ramaswamy Member	Sd/- S. Agarwal Member	Sd/- Virendra Dayal Member
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ECONOMIC RIGHTS

Partha Ghosh

On the Bogy of Pampered Muslims

The National Sample Survey of 1988 provides the following figures: (1) A total of 52.3 per cent Muslims are below the poverty line (BPL); (2) the monthly income of Muslims is only Rs.150; (3) 50.5 per cent Muslims are illiterate; (4) Muslims educated up to High School are 4 per cent; (5) in Government services their share is 4.4 per cent; (6) for starting any business enterprise 3.7 per cent Muslims got financial loan; (7) 5 per cent of Muslims got bank loans from the Scheduled banks; (8) among Indian entrepreneurs who get industrial loans, only 2 per cent are Muslims. Male Illiteracy among the Muslims is 42.4 per cent compared to 25.3 per cent among the Hindus. The corresponding figures of female illiteracy are 59.5 and 45.2, respectively. Less than 1 per cent (0.8) Muslims are graduates while 4.5 per cent Hindus are.

(Source: Partha Ghosh: "BJP and the Evolution of Hindu Nationalism: From Periphery to Centre")

Kerala High Court

On Limits to Freedom of Speech

New Road Brothers, Petitioner v. Commissioner of Police, Ernakulam and others, Respondents.

A.S. VENKATACHALA MOORTHY, J.

Constitution of India, Article 19(1)(a) – Right to freedom of speech – Extent of – Authorities allowing meetings to be held in small junction of roads – Loudspeakers put up – Same causing great inconvenience to public – People can resist – Authorities are bound not to permit holding of meetings at place in question especially when there were two grounds nearby.

(Source: AIR 1999 Kerala 262)

Allahabad High Court

On Right to Water

S.K. Garg, Petitioner v. State of UP and others, Respondents.

M. KATJU AND I.M. QUDDUSI, JJ.

Constitution of India, Articles 21, 226 – Right to Life – Includes right to get water – Large section of citizens of Allahabad city deprived of said right – Petition against – High Court directed formation of water committee consisting of Magistrate, senior advocates and bureaucrats etc., as members to look into the matter seriously and immediately – Directions regarding working and functions of committee issued – Committee also directed for regular testing of potability of drinking water issued – Recommendations regarding setting up of similar water committees in other cities in State, running water shortage, given – State Government directed to provide assistance to committee.

(Source: AIR 1999 Allahabad 41)

Rajasthan High Court

On Atrocities by Caste Panchayats

Smt. Laxmi Kachhawaha, Petitioner v. The State and others, Respondents.

V.S. KOKJE AND A.S. GODARA, JJ.

Constitution of India, Article 226 – Public Interest Litigation – Malpractices and atrocities allegedly being committed by so-called proclaimed caste panchayats and its Panchas on weaker sections and especially on women – Courts cannot provide cover to every wrong against all wrongs done to him by other members of society – Issuing writ or giving general declaration that such community panchayats should stop working or perpetrating atrocities, would be futile and unexecutable order – Specific complaint has to be lodged before appropriate forum seeking redressals – Petition not maintainable.

(Source: AIR 1999 Rajasthan 254)

K.P. Srivastava**On Ambivalence of Sangh Parivar**

The BJP and some of its sister organisations in the Sangh Parivar are deeply divided on some of the contentious issues ... excluded from the national agenda of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance. Even the ... RSS is taking an ambivalent attitude.

... They all would very much like the BJP and its allies to win the election and form the government.

The Sangh Parivar ... has come round to accept that without a BJP poll victory, it would be impossible to consolidate 'Hindutva' forces, not to speak of implementing its 'hidden agenda'.

To ensure the party's poll triumph, it was necessary to pertain a moderate and liberal face, or a 'mukhota' as Govindacharya described it, so as to make the alliance a comfortable place for the non-BJP allies, and thereby enlist a larger support base... Front organisations like the Bajrang Dal and Vishwa Hindu Parishad have not taken kindly to it and have been venting their resentment from time to time... In terms of realpolitik the BJP and others of the Parivar know it well if they stuck to these issues it will be difficult for them to keep the allies together and get the number of seats necessary to form a government. They may even not be able to retain the present number...

They are also conscious of the fact that Vajpayee is the only leader in their ranks who has a liberal image and does not like to be projected as an obscurantist...

In a nutshell, it means the issue is still open within the party and the Parivar and the RSS will not like the debate to end, though it would not articulate the issues at least for the time being.

In the meanwhile, the VHP president Vishnu Hari Dalmia ... has queered the pitch by stating that "the BJP cashed in on these issues as long as it served its purpose but the VHP will go ahead with the construction work in 2001 irrespective of who heads the government at the Centre". He also warned the BJP that it would have to pay the price for "flip-flop signals" on the temple issue...

It is also quite likely that the non-BJP constituents of the NDA, may play a significant role in strengthening the hands of Vajpayee. Compulsions of power may also play a decisive role in this.

(Source: The New Age, 12-18 September, 1999)

BJP: U.P. CM O.P. Gupta's Views

The Ram Mandir has been the BJP's issue, and party workers are bound to raise it from time to time. Only, there is no action today as it is not part of the agenda of the NDA government. When the BJP leadership decides, there will be action on it...

(Source: The Hindustan Times)

On Kalyan Singh's Desperate Move to Revive Mandir Issue**BMMCC's Statement, 10 November, 1999**

"The BMMCC has noted with apprehension the public statements made by Kalyan Singh, Chief Minister of UP, in Ayodhya on 9 November, 1999 reiterating his resolve to construct the proposed Ram Janambhoomi Mandir on the site of the Babari Masjid 'soon', which implies that he is not prepared to wait for the final judicial verdict. He has served notice that this will be on the top of his agenda.

Shri Kalyan Singh may be trying to keep himself politically alive but his volatile statements have an incitement potential which cannot be ignored. Out of pique at being eased out of the Chief Ministership, he is attacking the agreed Agenda on which the National Democratic Alliance stands.

While many leaders and cadres of the BJP may be in secret and silent sympathy with him, the BMMCC calls upon the other political parties which had denounced the demolition of the Babari Masjid and some of whom now form part of the NDA, to take note of the fulminations of a disappointed but desperate member of the Sangh Parivar.

All these parties owe it to themselves to ensure that the Central and UP Governments act in accordance with their constitutional obligation to nip the mischief in the bud and to implement the existing Order of the Supreme Court.

The BMMCC also demands that the Vajpayee Government to expedite the judicial process through day-to-day hearing of the title suit by the Special Bench of the Allahabad High Court and commit itself to maintain the status quo in the meantime and abide by the final judicial verdict.

The excavations that took place from 1978 to 1985 have helped show that the City of David, and not biblical Jerusalem as we had believed, forms the core of ancient Jerusalem. The city faced successive invasions from the Greeks, Romans, the Crusaders and then the Muslims who destroyed our temples. In the past many a mosque was built over our temples but a Babari Masjid ... a place of worship, actually demolished, would be unheard of in Israel...

- Gideon Forester, Head of
Institute of Archaeology, Jerusalem

*How far back in history are they going to go?
Will they demand an apology from Greece and
Macedonia for the entry of Alexander the Great?*

- Archbishop Alan de Lastic

All India Muslim Personal Law Board: 13th Session Mumbai, 28-30 October, 1999 – Resolutions

On Review of the Constitution

The Board expresses its concern at the President's announcement ... to review and amend the Constitution.

Demands that under the garb of the proposed review no change be made in the rights of the religious minorities ... under the present Constitution...

Calls upon the Muslims and other religious minorities ... to remain vigilant and ... protect and defend their rights and to (inform) the Union Government in unambiguous terms that they would not accept any curtailment of their rights.

On Uniform Civil Code

The Board feels that inspite of ... non-inclusion of Uniform Civil Code in the agenda of the government, direct or indirect efforts would be made in this direction because the BJP, which ... is the biggest component of the ruling Alliance has not dropped this subject from its agenda and (calls upon) the Muslims to be watchful and be ready to resist any effort to affect changes in the Muslim Personal Law, by indirect or parallel legislation.

(Reiterates its view) to the Government, the political parties and the countrymen in general that the Muslim Personal Law i.e. the Islamic Family Laws are an integral part of the religion of Islam, further as except for the family laws (that as) the Muslims and other communities have deep attachment to their religion-based family laws, it is in the interest of the country to create confidence in them that there is no threat to ... their distinct identity and therefore;

Demands that any uncertainty about the continuance of the personal laws be set to rest by the Government...

On Religious Conversion

The Board has noted that the ruling party and particularly Prime Minister Vajpayee has many times called for nationwide debate on the issue of conversion;

The Board is of the considered opinion that as this issue was already debated in the Constituent Assembly ... the only object of raking up this issue obviously seems to obstruct propagation of religion and to subject the Freedom of Conscience and Religion guaranteed in the Constitution to the religious interest of the majority community;

Demands that instead of involving the country in a debate, the Freedom of Conscience and Religion ... be freed from all restriction and penal action be taken against those mischievous elements who obstruct the enjoyment of this right.

On Social Reform

The Board directs that basic issues of social reform be specified, Muslim organisations be contacted, committees

be set up in every state and the cooperation of religious and educational institutions and Imams and Khateeb of mosques be sought for this task...

On Formulation of a Comprehensive Nikahnama

The Board constitutes a Committee comprising of Maulana Qazi Mujahidul Islam Qasmi (Convener), Maulana Mufti Zafeeruddin, Maulana Burhanuddin Sambhali, Maulana Fuzailur Rehman Hilal Usmani and Mr. Syed Shahabuddin to finalise the draft of a comprehensive Nikahnama ... by the end of November, 1999.

On Establishment of Darul-Qadha (Qaza)

The Board decides to establish Darul-Qadhas, in the first phase, in metropolitan cities and in Muslim-concentration Districts and to appointed trained Qadhies thereon.

... Appeals the local Ulema to inform the community of the importance and necessity (of Darul Qadha), arrange for accommodation and other necessary paraphernalia.

Takes note of training programmes in Ifta and Qadha by the Imarat-e-Shariah (Bihar and Orissa) and calls upon other institutions of religious education to arrange for training in Ifta and Qadha.

Requests Maulana Mujahidul Islam Qasmi to pay full attention to this programme.

Every religion in Israel has been allowed its own personal laws and so, even though we are a secular state, even non-orthodox Jews must compulsorily be married off by a rabbi. There is no such thing as a civil marriage in Israel though it does not stop many Jews from opting to go outside the country to get married. Then we have the Yemenite Jews who are allowed more than one wife.

- Gideon Forester, Head of
Institute of Archaeology, Jerusalem

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Hurriyat Leader Abdul Gani Lone: A View from Inside

I - Address to Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C.

Kashmir bleeds to satisfy India's arrogance of power. The APHC has invariably championed peace and opposed violence to resolve the 52-year-old Kashmir conflict. Negotiations, not bullets, are the keys to ending Kashmir's tragedy.

The APHC applauds free and fair elections like the one in East Timor as an instrument of democracy, but India has never allowed the same in Kashmir. Every election there has been polluted by fraud, intimidation, or vote rigging. Even Indian officials have conceded that indictment in moments of candor.

The three parties ineluctably implicated in the Kashmir conflict are Kashmiris, India and Pakistan, but the former is the principal player. The only negotiating formula that promises success is not the failed bilateral approach, but a tripartite arrangement with Kashmiris, India and Pakistan as equal partners in the enterprise assisted by an outside mediator. No Kashmir solution that fails to command the consensus of the Kashmiri people can succeed. Moreover, since the Kashmir issue is about its future destiny, it affronts even a primitive sense of fairness to exclude Kashmiris from participating in charting their own fate... The international community should demand that the genuine Kashmiri leadership be included in all Kashmir negotiations.

Both India and Pakistan are equally accountable in excluding Kashmiris from 50 years of futile negotiations and manipulating Kashmir like a pawn on a chessboard. The self-determination right of Kashmiris under international law cannot be bargained away by any third party.

During the last Indian parliamentary elections, approximately 97 per cent of Kashmiris boycotted the polls (despite threats from the Indian military) to voice resistance to India's illegal occupation... Why has the international community remained silent over Kashmir? Is India practicing nuclear blackmail? Is the life of a Kashmiri worth less than the life of an East Timorese or Kosovar Albanian? By what moral yardstick?

Kashmiris have never been plagued by internecine communal hatreds and violence like that witnessed in Kosovo, Croatia, Bosnia, East Timor and Northern Ireland. We welcome Pandits as our own, and grieve over their suffering in refugee camps. The spirit of intolerance is foreign to the Kashmiri culture. India should recognize that it will never capture the hearts and minds of the Kashmiri people and should disengage from Kashmir. Otherwise, Kashmir will remain a dangerous canker in India's body politic with incalculable consequences...

(Reported by Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai, Executive Director, Kashmiri American Council)

II - Interview to Indian Express

Indians are in a self-congratulatory mood over Kargil. We know that Indians are not going to settle the Kashmir issue themselves. The US had acted as a persuasive force on Pakistan in Kargil and tomorrow it may do it to India too.

... Pakistan's Foreign Secretary ... claimed Pakistan will take care of the Kashmiri cause. We had rejected that stand. APHC has its own agenda and the world will ultimately realise that we will not be dictated by anyone.

... The Government of India perceives us as Muslims and therefore does not want to talk to us. It has no problems in talking with rebels in the Northeast and that too in some other country. But it has categorically rejected any proposal for talks with us. Indian politicians whip up hysteria over Kashmir. And why not? Some of them have regained power through propaganda over Kargil. That is why nobody is sincere in resolving the Kashmir problem realistically.

... I am questioning Indian's sincerity in claiming Kashmir as an integral part of India. Have they ever bothered to know why Kashmiris overwhelmingly boycotted elections recently? Why did Farooq Abdullah put all the Hurriyat Conference leaders behind the bars after that embarrassing election? ... Both the central and state leadership had been claiming the situation in Kashmir has improved. Does the boycott reflect normalcy? ...

... The armed struggle in Kashmir started in 1989. India has ever since been answering Kashmiri resentment with bullets and suppression. It is but natural for Muslims all over the world to react to the plight of Kashmiris... Personally, many Kashmiris may not like the intervention of mercenaries but we have no choice. People generally believe that these mercenaries are there for liberating them from their oppressors. The security forces may tell you that the local people are against mercenaries. This is not true...

... Indian Government ... has to give up the bullet-for-bullet policy and volunteer for a dialogue with Kashmiris as it is doing in the Northeast. Only this will enable us to prevail upon outsiders to keep off Kashmir. Till then, just as we have no choice in getting out of the clutches of the Indian armed forces, we have no role in either inviting or throwing out the foreigners.

... We have to choose between an India which is suppressing and humiliating Kashmiris with its military power and a Pakistan that has been supporting our movement at every step. The Indian might is crushing our bodies, soul and egos and, at such a time, even a word of sympathy from Pakistan is soothing.

(Source: The Indian Express, 6 November, 1999)

Release Hurriyat Leadership Shahabuddin's Letter to PM, 8 Nov., 1999

The arrest and detention of the entire leadership of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, except its Acting Chairman Mirwaiz Mohammad Umar Farooq, is an ominous development. By blocking all possibilities of negotiations, this development will create a political void and add to the alienation of the Kashmiri people, specially the youth. This will have an impact on the intensity of insurgency in the Valley.

In the larger interest of the country, I request you to release the APHC leadership and extend an unconditional invitation to them for negotiations.

I also request you to advise the State Government to process the Report of the State Committee on Autonomy and begin a public debate on the issue.

Shujaat Bukhari

On Detention of Hurriyat Leadership

With the arrest of three of its members on 1 November, the entire leadership of the separatist All-Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) except its acting chairman, Mirwaiz Mohammad Umar Farooq, has been put behind bars, a situation akin to that of 1990 when no separatist leader was out leading to confusion on the political front.

Soon after Mirwaiz Umar Farooq's ... press conference at the APHC headquarters, a police contingent swooped on the office and arrested the much-wanted leaders of the Hurriyat including the prominent Shia clergyman, Agha Syed Hassan, Bashir Ahmed Tota and Shahidul Islam.

Police were on the lookout for these members for quite some time... However, Mirwaiz Farooq was not touched... Mirwaiz Farooq, who is also the head priest of Kashmir with a massive following in downtown Srinagar.

Around 19 of the Hurriyat leaders, including its chairman, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, the spokesman, Abdul Gani, Mohammad Yasin Malik, Moulvi Mohammad Ansari, Javed Ahmed Mir, are lodged in Jodhpur jail in Rajasthan and some others, including G. M. Hubbi and Qazi Ahadullah are in Udhampur jail.

Putting almost the entire leadership in jails by the Farooq Abdullah Government is seen as an unexpected development... Even during the elections the Hurriyat leaders were given absolute freedom to carry on with their anti-election campaign which ultimately "bore fruit" and resulted in very low turnout. ... By virtue of which the NC resorted to bogus-voting. When the party got all the seats the Hurriyat leaders are in jail" said one opposition leader.

(Source: The Hindu, 6 November, 1999)

Indo-Pak or Hindu-Muslim?

Editorial, The Communalism Combat, July, 1999

... The mind-set of the Hindu right is reflected most cogently in the June 20 editorial of the RSS mouthpiece, Panchjanya. Titled "Ab Sabak Sikhao" ('Now, Teach them a less'), the leader views the current "back-stabbing" by Pakistan as a continuation of the centuries' old barbarism

A.G. Noorani on 'Package Deal' On Junagadh, Hyderabad and Jammu & Kashmir in 1947

... There is overwhelming evidence to suggest that India was prepared for a package deal on all three in November-December 1947. It was Mohammed Ali Jinnah who turned it down. It was Jinnah's Hyderabad policy which ruined the chances of an agreement...

In a telegram to the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Liaquat Ali Khan, on November 8, 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru offered: "It is essential, in order to restore good relations between the two Dominions, that there should be acceptance of the principle that, where Ruler of a State does not belong to the community to which the majority of his subjects belong, and where the State has not acceded to that Dominion whose majority community is same as State's, the question whether the State has finally acceded to one or other Dominion should be ascertained by reference to the will of the people".

In his memoirs entitled *The Emergence of Pakistan*, the then Cabinet Secretary of Pakistan, Mohammed Ali, who became Prime Minister later, revealed: "In one of the discussions between the two Prime Ministers, at which Patel and I were also present, Liaquat Ali Khan dwelt at length on the inconsistency of the Indian stand with regard to Junagadh and Kashmir... When Liaquat Ali Khan made these incontrovertible points, Patel could not contain himself and burst out: "Why do you compare Junagadh with Kashmir? Talk of Hyderabad and Kashmir, and we could reach an agreement". A recent archival disclosure in Pakistan suggest that Liaquat Ali Khan was agreeable but Jinnah was not. As Governor-General he went so far to intrigue against his Prime Minister and get the Cabinet to resolve that no accord with India would be arrived at by the Prime Minister without the Governor-General's approval...

(Source: The Frontline, 21 May, 1999)

of the marauding Muslim invader. While severely castigating the infamous editorial for its exhortation to Vajpayee to deploy the nuclear arsenal to finally settle this 'clash of cultures' in Hinduism's favour, the national dailies have chosen to ignore the RSS mouthpiece's blatant churning of communal passion. For their part ... the Muslim communal mind-set in Pakistan continues to interpret the skirmish over Kashmir as (its) very own brand of "jihad".

Predictably (to them) Kashmir remains a mere question of real estate; the Valley's long tradition of tolerance, its people's democratic aspirations, or the present plight of all the people of J&K seems to be of little concern. When the mainstream media discourse blots out Kashmiri voices from the entire discourse around Kargil, questions need to be raised. But when this exercise in self-censorship extends to ignoring ground-level communal developments within and beyond the state of J&K, motives or perspectives need to be even more closely examined...

Report on Kashmir Situation

Lewis M. Simons in National Geographical Magazine

... Kashmir is no longer a magical place... Indeed the cease-fire line, which was drawn up by the United Nations in 1949 and snakes erratically for about 500 miles through some of the roughest terrain on Earth, has been breached far more often than honoured. India and Pakistan each maintain several dozen military outposts along the line of control. Almost daily, duels ... are waged between heavy weapons set no more than eight or nine miles apart from muzzle to muzzle...

The neighbourhood fight over Kashmir has been going on since 1947, when the British partitioned predominantly Hindu India to create Pakistan as a homeland for South Asia's Muslims. Jammu and Kashmir – a princely state with a primarily Muslim population ruled by a Hindu maharaja, Hari Singh – floundered. The maharaja wanted independence for the state, but he didn't know how to get it. At the 11th hour he signed an agreement of accession to India, but by that time Pakistani-backed tribal fighters had invaded Kashmir.

The leaders of India and Pakistan were desperate to acquire Kashmir to bolster their respective visions of nationhood. India's Jawaharlal Nehru, the secularist, wanted to demonstrate that an Islamic population could coexist with the Hindu majority; Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the Muslim nationalist, insisted that Pakistan would be incomplete without the Muslim enclave. Almost immediately the two countries went to war, tearing Kashmir apart. Ebbing and flowing, that war has, in essence, never ended. Today there are some 400,000 Indian troops in Kashmir and about half as many Pakistani soldiers.

Beneath the surface of this South Asian geopolitical game board are the aspirations of a people who consider themselves Kashmiris – neither Indian nor Pakistani – but who live divided by an artificial line. Hardly a day goes by without local newspapers in both countries reporting new violence – from artillery shelling across the LoC, from cross-border incursions of Muslim guerrillas backed by Pakistan, from indigenous Kashmiri Muslim militants who have been fighting Indian security forces for independence since 1989. These confrontations have blended together in a single cauldron of blood.

Casualty figures from fighting in and over Kashmir since 1947 are notoriously unreliable. In the past ten years – the period of the Kashmiri Muslim militancy – an estimated 30,000 to 40,000 Kashmiri civilians and militants and Indian and Pakistani soldiers have died. Indian police place the toll at 24,000; Kashmiri Muslims say it's more like 80,000. Both India and Pakistan now have nuclear weapons, and because Kashmir is the flint against which either could strike a nuclear spark, fatalities of this magnitude could become mere footnotes.

Why these two countries would remain at each other's throat for so long, at such cost in life and fortune, over a

remote patch of land comes down to the great truism of real estate location. Kashmir perches like a raja's jeweled turban in the Himalaya at the very top of the great sub-continental landmass. There it is a gateway – or a barrier – between the two protagonists as well as between them and China and Afghanistan. Kashmir also sits astride Pakistan's major rivers: the Indus, the Jhelum and the Chenab.

This land exerts a powerful emotional pull as well. Millions of sweltering, plains-dwelling Indians and Pakistanis dream of its green mountains, its blue rivers and lakes, its fertile farmlands and cool, dry climate. Kashmir is that Maui, Aspen and Palm Springs all rolled into one... When Kashmiris speak of Kashmir, more often than not they're thinking of "the valley", the Vale of Kashmir, which lies wholly under Indian control. Only a fraction of what India rules as J&K state, the Valley is ringed by the high peaks of the Himalaya and the ridges of the Pir Panjal... Centered on the city of Srinagar, the Valley is the prize... (One can) see Indian soldiers patrolling the streets in pairs, wearing body armor over camouflage fatigues and hefting automatic rifles chained for security to their web belts. Major intersections were dominated by sandbagged bunkers, their entrances draped in stout netting to keep grenades out. Armed militiamen halt cars and sputtering trishaw taxis, shoving the drivers around and rooting beneath seats in search of bombs. Burning glances from passersby make plain that Kashmiris regard the soldiers as a foreign army of occupation – much like the British Army in Northern Ireland – not a gendarmerie thereto protect them...

The military overlay is thick in Kashmir and inescapable in the valley... People all over the Valley told me that everyone knew at least one family with members killed, wounded, tortured, kidnapped, or arrested by soldiers, insurgents, even next-door neighbors.

The Muslim insurgency traces back to 1987, when Indian officials rigged local elections to install their choice as chief minister, inflaming widespread resentment. In 1989 dissent exploded into a full-blown separatist movement, as some young Kashmiri Muslims, traditionally docile, took up the gun and began killing Indian soldiers and members of a Kashmiri Hindu community known as Pandits. The Muslim rebels imposed harsh Islamic regulations throughout Kashmir, which included burning down government schools, banning women from going out of their homes with their faces or hair uncovered, and closing movie halls and wine shops, many owned by Pandits.

Estimates vary, but a decade ago Pandits numbered from 150,000 to 300,000 out of the eight million inhabitants of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, a small but disproportionately well-educated and successful minority. They have since been persecuted so ferociously by some

of their Muslim neighbors and by infiltrating guerrillas that as few as 5,000 remain in their homes...

While Muslim Kashmiris share condemnation of India, they have begun to distance themselves from Pakistan. They gladly accept money, arms, and guerrilla fighters from Pakistani extremist groups, but few say any longer that they want Kashmir to become a part of Pakistan.

Pakistan's leaders deny giving the rebellion material aid, but a Muslim leader I spoke with in Rawalpindi confirmed that money originating in Saudi Arabia and Iran is funneled through Pakistan to the militants in Kashmir. Their money is also used to pay Islamic fighters – among them Pakistanis, out-of-work Taliban zealots from Afghanistan, and other soldiers of fortune from as far away as Libya and Chechnya – who infiltrate the Indian-held side on the pretext of waging jihad, holy war...

Not surprisingly, given their recent history, Kashmiri Muslims yearn for independence. Even without the turmoil of recent decades their desire would be understandable, for they were once a self-contained people, evolved mainly from Central Asia and Persia, with characteristically fair skin, light eyes and hair, their own interpretation of Islam, a distinct language, architecture and style of dressing.

The few Indians who take Kashmiri separatism seriously are those who know the most about the place and its people. A senior Indian administrator in Srinagar, who spoke candidly only when I agreed not to use his name, put it this way: "The truth is that the Kashmiri does have a case. He says, 'Give me my rightful place in the sun, give me my dignity, my religious sensibilities, my cultural identity. Don't impose yourselves on me'. That's legitimate. But the militants are chasing up a blind alley when they go in search of azadi (independence). We will never grant them independence. Never. India is a hard state."

India feels obliged to show Pakistan its intention to bend Kashmir to its will. After years of street battles Indian troops had weakened the separatist militants to the extent that touches of daily life had recovered...

... It has taken India nearly a decade to limit the revolt, and in doing so soldiers raped, tortured, illegally detained, and robbed thousands of Kashmiris, according to international human rights organizations. The Indian Army has weakened the militants, but people are by no means ready to forgive, nor to forget the dream of independence. And so Kashmir remains an armed camp, in which not even the simplest farmer is free to come and go...

Although India and Pakistan seem incapable of coming to a resolution, it's not for want of talking... In much the way that Tibetans have been forcibly surrounded by the dominant Han culture of China, Kashmiris are being subsumed by India and used by Pakistan. In both places, as in other parts of the world where larger powers determine the fate of smaller ones, the land matters more than the people. With no other country willing to intervene on behalf of the Kashmiris, it is evident that they have no way out.

(Source: The National Geographic, September, 1999)

Balraj Puri On Kashmir Question

... India's nuclear power and decisive superiority in conventional weapons over Pakistan could not deter incursions into Kargil and the increase in militancy in Kashmir after India's victory...

The importance of diplomacy has been duly conceded in the contest of Kargil. But Pakistan's international isolation that forced it to withdraw its infiltrators is not entirely due to better diplomatic skill of the present government or the belated appreciation by the USA and other foreign powers... Pakistan could not justify the sending of armed intruders, mostly of its army, across the internationally recognised LoC, in support of freedom fighters who did not exist. In contrast, the restraint shown by the Indian Army won India universal acclaim.

That the international support to India was Kargil-specific and not a paradigm shift is obvious from the fact that lack of restraint by India while shooting down the Pakistan surveillance plane put it at par with Pakistan in international opinion which greeted India's draft nuclear doctrine also critically...

Nor has India adequately appreciated the way liberal opinion in Pakistan sharply criticised Nawaz Sharif's Kargil policy. No doubt its humiliating end caused a fundamentalist backlash but it does not serve India's security interests to write off the other rational opinion. Fundamentalism cannot be met with fundamentalism. One brand strengthens the other. Only a secular India can effectively meet the fundamentalist challenge from across the border and help similar forces there to meet it whereas a jingoist or communal response would weaken India's ideological defences against Pakistan. India's most vulnerable security point in relations to Pakistan is, of course, Kashmir... When a politically naive ruler of J&K State aspired for independence in 1947, Pakistan sponsored tribal raids...

In 1965, the same people were angry over a series of hasty steps to erode the autonomy of the state and Pakistan found another opportunity for an armed intervention. The seventies and eighties remained trouble free as alienation of the people had subsided mainly because of the Indira-Sheikh Abdullah accord... The Rajiv-Farooq accord which brought Farooq to power after he agreed to share power with the Congress and manipulated the elections of 1987 revived the sense of alienation to such an extent that Kashmiri youth crossed the LoC and returned after getting arms and training for a militant revolt. Pakistan was then able to engage India in a costly "proxy war".

A really secular democratic country and a satisfied state of Jammu & Kashmir should therefore be the most vital components of national security against any threat from Pakistan... "Let us remember", as President Narayanan reminded us in his Independence Day message, "that a country is defended not by arms alone but by wise policies and the strength of its economy; by the justice and cohesion of its society; by the unity of its people."

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 12 October, 1999)

Saifuddin Soz
On Post-Election Scenario in Kashmir
5 November, 1999

... It is not possible to ignore the fact that the elections in Kashmir held in September/October, 1999, have been a total farce. It was decidedly a situation of mass rigging within the space that was not affected by the boycott call and the ruling party manoeuvred to procure necessary votes to send its "representatives" to the 13th Lok Sabha.

That the Election Commission of India failed miserably to respond to the situation is common knowledge in the State. The people of Kashmir are convinced that the Election Commission of India indulged in double-standards and ignored all complaints filed with it regarding mass rigging, booth capturing and other malpractices... Knowledgeable people say that the Election Commission of India and the intelligentsia thought that a totally sham election in Kashmir, after the Kargil situation, was better than no election at all. They are absolutely wrong... An average 12-15% of the electorate would vote on its own volition, despite the Hurriyat's call for a boycott. And, that would be a fair election, indeed, acceptable all around. It appeared to the people of Kashmir that nobody in Delhi, much less the caretaker Government, was interested in normal, free and fair elections.

That the Hurriyat's call has helped the ruling party in Kashmir is true and for that consequence both the Hurriyat and the National Conference appeared in public eye to be following the same goal...

Government of India would be well-advised to initiate an effective dialogue with the Hurriyat leadership. It is in nobody's interest to lodge the Hurriyat leaders in jails and deepen the communication gap with them further.

I ... urge the Government of India to talk to the Hurriyat without any further loss of time... I think 'as a group' (they) are pre-eminently suited to talk to Government of India decisively.

**Terrorism in Kashmir –
 An Empirical Overview**

	1997	1998	Upto July 1999
Attacks on Security forces	2116	1211	592
Attacks on Civilians	616	619	340
Security Forces Killed	203	230	165
Hindus Killed	64	159	71
Muslims Killed	717	678	360
Terrorists Killed	1177	1045	529
Terrorists killed per securitymen killed	5.80	4.54	—
Terrorists killed per civilian killed	1.51	1.25	—

(Source: The Frontline, 13 August, 1999)

On Lashkar-e-Tayyeba's Call for 'Jihad'
Shahabuddin's Statement, 11 Nov., 1999

"On 4 November 1999, at its congregation near Lahore, a Pakistani militant group Lashkar-e-Tayyeba – a self-appointed 'liberator' of the Muslim Kashmiris, long engaged in cross-border terrorism on the soil of our country – has called for 'Jihad' against India.

On the occasion the leader of the Lashkar, Qazi Abdul Wahid welcomed the army coup d'état in Pakistan. General Parvez Musharraf, the Chief Executive of Pakistan, was scheduled to address the congregation but did not turn up, perhaps fearing international repercussions. But it goes without saying that the terrorist organisation could not have held a public congregation without the full support of Pakistani authorities.

From a purely Islamic angle, a pack of terrorists, some of them mercenaries, cannot be equated with Mujahideen-fi-Sabil-Allah. True Jihad has its own conditions and code of conduct.

Pakistan, as a member of the international community is bound by international law and by UN conventions and declarations against international terrorism and has no business to allow its soil to be used for planning and organising cross-border terrorism against a neighbouring country with which it is not at war. Such a call violates the international code of conduct as well as Islamic principles.

This call for 'Jihad' is not just a gesture of hostility but a declaration of war against the Republic of India and all its people **including nearly 125 million Muslim Indians.**

Muslim Indians, unreservedly denounce the exploitation of Islam – the Religion of Peace and Brotherhood – for terrorist purposes.

India is capable of defending itself and the Muslim Indians shall fight shoulder to shoulder with their co-patriots in defending their country. No one is going to be taken in by this call.

Muslim Indians also call upon the Pakistani people to realise the grave threat to their own peace and security inherent in promoting the cult of violence, which has already taken thousands of lives in Pakistan in sectarian massacres.

"Religious fundamentalism which spreads and mingles with nationalism in identifying Indian nationality with the Hindu religion is a phenomenon which is increasingly aggressive and disturbing serious threat to the Church and to Catholics, who are called at times to undergo martyrdom".

**- Osservatore Romano,
 Vatican Newspaper**

Supreme Court on Scope of Reservation in Professional Education

Preeti Srivastava and another, Petitioners v. State of Madhya Pradesh and others, Respondents and other cases.

A.S. ANAND, CJI, S.B. MAJUMDAR, SUJATA V. MANOHAR, K. VENKATASWAMI & V.N. KHARE, JJ.

Constitution of India, Article 16(4) – Reservation in service – Is a transitory measure – Once backward class secure adequate representation in services – Reservation will not be required.

Article 15(4) – Protective discrimination in favour of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes – Policies and programmes of protective discrimination – To be designed and pursued in a manner to build an egalitarian non-discriminating society – Interests of society as a whole cannot be ignored while testing reasonableness of programmes.

Articles 226, 15 – Education – Medical College – Admission – Speciality and super speciality courses – Special provisions for SC and ST – Cannot be made for super speciality courses – provision for speciality courses should be minimum.

... Post-graduate medical course – Common entrance examination – Prescribing of minimum qualifying marks – Is necessary since it is not a mere screening test.

... Fixing of lower qualifying marks for SC, ST – Medical Council to decide – Disparity between marks fixed for reserved and general candidates should not be big.

... State cannot prescribe criteria which adversely affect standard of higher education laid down by Union of India – Regulation framed by Medical Council are ... binding – State Government cannot make rules which impinge upon these Regulations – Admission criteria has a direct impact on standard of education.

(Source: AIR 1999 Supreme Court 2894)

Gautam Roy on Reservation for Teachers' Grandchildren

... The practice of reserving seats for admissions for their ward and spouses (of university teachers) has been an old one despite having no statutory support. Now, one college has gone a step ahead and reserved seats for grandchildren.

The University's Dyal Singh College (morning) in its Staff Council meeting on 14 August, 1999, decided to introduce reservation for admissions for the grandchild of any employee, serving or retired, who had worked in the college as a regular employee for a period of 15 years or

Shahabuddin on Reservation for Muslims Letter to V.P. Singh, 25 October, 1999

I have read with dismay your statement in the Indian Express (23 October, 1999) that the Constitution stands in the way of reservation on the basis of religion.

Humbly, I beg to disagree with your view.

Article 14 of the Constitution grants equality before the law and equal protection of the law to all persons. Article 15(1) bars discrimination by the State against any citizen **on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them.** Thus it treats religion, race and caste equally. The word 'only' is the key to its understanding. That is why when any of the facts mentioned above are complimented with 'social or educational backwardness', deliberate discrimination by the State is permitted under Article 16(4) to make 'any special provision for their advancement'.

The term Class merely stands for classification and a backward Class is an identifiable social group which is objectively backward (as determined by an appropriate authority armed with appropriate criteria). It may equally mean a group identified by caste, religion, race or even place of birth (e.g. Bihari labour or Assam tea plantation). Even the S.C. in Inder Sawheny case has clearly hinted at validity of classification based on religion.

That the Muslim Indians, 50 years after independence, constitute a Backward Class is well-established. Indeed the Muslim community, as such, has been declared a Backward Class in Kerala, Karnataka, Manipur and even Tamilnadu. Obviously the Constitution cannot have different meanings in different States!

I would, therefore, request you to reconsider your view on the subject.

As far as the various occupational groups among Muslims (similar to those among the Hindu OBCs) are concerned, most of them are indeed covered by the Mandal Lists. However, you will appreciate that in a common list, they stand little chance of getting equitable benefits in competition with relatively more advanced and politically powerful groups like Yadavas, Kurmis, Koeris etc. So even under the existing dispensation, they deserve a separate quota of at least 4.2 per cent.

more. This provision makes the candidate eligible for admission to any course if he or she has obtained 40 per cent marks at the 10+2 level..:

The University's Dean Students' Welfare (DSW), Prof. A. K. Sinha, said: "This is an illegal decision and it will not stand scrutiny in the University's Academic Council. Even a resolution for introduction of reservation for ward and spouses could not be passed in the AC. The practice does not have any statutory support but is underway as a matter of convention."

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 15 August, 1999)

Reservation: A Bane or Boon

... The demand for reservation in various jobs is increasing day-by-day... There is a demand to extend reservation to Christians and Muslims. The Jats organised a big rally in Jaipur and demanded reservation for their community... The majority too is in minority in six states... If this demand is conceded ... the next demand will be of job reservation in these states... In this situation the alternative is either to have 100 per cent reservation on the basis of different criteria or discard it completely.

There should be some logical base for reservation... Parliament derives its authority to create reservations in various jobs from Articles 15 & 16 of the Constitution. It is altogether different that clause (4) of the Article 15 was added by the Constitution (First Amendment) Act, 1951. Certain exceptions to the right created by clause (1) and (2) of Article 16 flow from clauses (3), (4), (4a) and (5) of the Article. But these exceptions have become rules now...

The judiciary has ruled that reservation cannot go beyond 50%. But it is futile as many Acts are being incorporated in the Ninth Schedule making reservation to the extent of 70%. Moreover, there is a move to introduce constitutional amendment to raise the reservation ceiling beyond 50%. The Supreme Court held in Indira Sawhney's case that reservation will not be effective in promotions. But thanks to politics, the 77th Amendment was brought to bypass the apex court judgement.

... There may be other suitable and meaningful ways of uplifting the weaker sections. SCs, STs and OBCs should be given the advantage of good education or sound vocational training and not the easier option of quotas, so that they come up to compete with others...

The concept of equality enshrined in Article 14 of the Constitution and ruling of reasonable classification laid down by the Supreme Court in various cases has not been followed. The general categories thus are meted on unequal treatment in this race for reservation...

(Source: I. Husain and J. H. Siddiqui in
The Nation and the World, 1 October, 1999)

The Reservation Route is a Lazy Way to Garner Votes

Editorial, The Indian Express, 2 Sept., 1999

... What does the Samajwadi Party chief do as he finds the ground shifting beneath his feet? He releases that familiar creature – the genie of reservations. His party, he announces, will reserve jobs and seats in educational institutions and legislatures for Muslims if voted to power.

The move insults the intelligence of the supposed beneficiaries of Mulayam Singh's largesse, because the Constitution does not allow for religion-based reservations and it is very unlikely that the Samajwadi Party can alter this reality. Even more importantly, it undermines the very principles that undergird reservations. The efficacy of any move that institutionalises positive discrimination hinges

(Contd. on Page 558)

Shahabuddin's Scheme of Reservation

Letter to The Nation & the World, 18 Oct., 99

While many statements by Ishrat Husain and Jaseem H. Siddiqui in their article on Reservation (October 1, 1999) are no more than mere repetitions of the old arguments against the concept of reservation, yet some apprehensions expressed by them against the excesses of reservation policy are indeed real and need to be addressed by those who believe in reservation as a tool of social engineering to level existing social, economic and political disparities among various sections of our people.

Personally, I have been long suggesting that :-

- The quota for any backward group should be proportionate not only to its population but also to its level of backwardness as compared to the national/state average.
- Any social group – identifiable by religion, caste, race, language and self-conscious – has a backward section so that the group – however 'forward' as a whole – deserves a small quota.
- A group quota should primarily benefit the backward sections of the group in terms of families and candidates. This implies that the cut-off line of creamy layer should be realistically drawn and strictly applied to bar those above the line from the benefit of reservation.
- Reservation should apply to all services/cadres at the point of entry but not to successive promotions but the promotion should be by seniority-cum-fitness and not by merit, since comparative merit cannot be accurately determined and subjective factors come into play when CR's are written and interviews are conducted. However, objective examinations may be prescribed to determine fitness.
- There should be a review of the quota every 10 years. As backwardness recedes, the quota will decrease.

The above scheme which is but a sketch will mean that while all social groups will benefit from reservation, there shall always remain a common pool which will go on increasing in size as quotas recede with development. This scheme has no place for an arbitrary limit of 50%.

Reservation and education must go together. In fact backward groups can take advantage of reservation when they throw up candidates with minimum qualification. The S.C. has wisely barred erosion of minimum qualification for admission to medical or technical institutions. I think there should no age relaxation either except in terms of equal number of chances immediately after obtaining the minimum academic qualification.

So long as there is socio-economic inequality not only among individuals but also among identifiable and self-conscious groups, there are only two convergent approaches towards equality – universal education and universal reservation. There can be no equality among unequals. It is time to correlate the demand for inter-group justice with the need for efficient management of the state, before the state blows up and disintegrates in the struggle between the haves and the have not.

Bipan Chandra on Emergence of Hindi as Union's Official and Link Language

...The issue of national language was resolved when the Constitution-makers virtually accepted all major languages as 'languages of India' or India's national languages. But the matter could not end there, for the official work of the country could not be carried on in so many languages. There had to be one language in which the central government would carry on its work and maintain contact with the state governments. The question was what would be the language of all-India communication? In other words what would be India's official and link language? Only two candidates were available for the purpose: English and Hindi...

But in fact the choice had already been made in the pre-Independence period by the leadership of the national movement, which was convinced that English would not continue to be the all-India medium of communication in free India...

Hindi or Hindustani?

Hindi or Hindustani, the other candidate for the status of official or link language, had already played this role during the nationalist struggle, especially during its mass phase. This role of Hindi had been accepted by leaders from non-Hindi speaking part of the country because of its being the most widely spoken and understood language in the country. Lokmanya Tilak, Gandhiji, C. Rajagopalachari, Subhash Bose and Sardar Patel were some of Hindi's enthusiastic supporters. In its sessions and political work, 'the National Congress had substituted Hindi and the provincial languages in place of English. Reflecting a national consensus the Nehru Report had laid down in 1928 that Hindustani which might be written in Devanagiri or Urdu script would be the common language of India, but the use of English would be continued for some time. Ultimately the Constitution of free India was to adopt this stand except for replacing Hindustani by Hindi. Consequently because of the unanimity in the pre-Independence period, the real debate in the Constitutional Assembly occurred over two questions: would Hindi or Hindustani replace English and what would be the time frame in which the replacement would occur?

As soon as the discussion on the question of official language began, sharp differences arose and the problem proved to be extremely difficult, especially as it was highly politicised from the beginning. The question of Hindi or Hindustani was soon resolved, though with a great deal of acrimony. Gandhiji and Nehruji both supported Hindustani, written in Devanagiri or Urdu script. Though many supporters of Hindi disagreed, they had tended to accept the Gandhi-Nehru viewpoint. But once the Partition was announced the champions of Hindi were emboldened, especially as the protagonist of Pakistan had

claimed Urdu as the language of Muslims and of Pakistan. The votaries of Hindi now branded Urdu 'as a symbol of secession'. They demanded that Hindi in Devanagiri script be made the national language. Their demand split the Congress party in the middle. In the end the Congress Legislative Party decided for Hindi against Hindustani 78 to 77 votes, even though Nehru and Azad fought for Hindustani. The Hindi bloc was also forced to compromise and accept that Hindi would be the official language and not the national language...

(Source: The Nation and the World, 16 November, 1999)

I.K. Gujral's Views on Urdu

... The Gujral Committee Report has, by and large, been implemented. Despite all the mix-up and hassles, now one of the remaining proposals to be implemented and which I did during my prime ministership to push through was the proposal to set up the Maulana Azad National Urdu University which is located in Hyderabad. And I am its first Chancellor.

Similarly, Urdu academies have been set up in almost every state. The difficulty lies in some Hindi states where Urdu is not being taught in schools. Even Urdu has been given second language status in many of them. UP's is an example of this.

But, by and large ... the animosity against Urdu has melted away... India ... is a country of diversity and every language must get a chance to flourish. The discrimination against Urdu is most unfortunate. I say this with a degree of satisfaction but resistance is melting away. There are indeed people who are not pro-secularism, there are political parties opposed to secularism and these are the parties who are opposed to Urdu also.

(Source: The Nation and the World, 16 September, 1999)

(Contd. from Page 557)

on it benefitting the truly marginalised. Therefore, while it is only right that Dalits, tribals and backward castes are the recipients of ... reservations given the discrimination they have faced over the centuries, religious categories are, by their very nature, too broad to be thus privileged. While a case can be made for backward sections among minorities being given reservations, it would be a gross travesty of justice for the more prosperous to benefit in this manner just by virtue of being part of a minority...

Sadly ... every major party in these elections has attempted to woo significant sections by employing similar strategies... Such competitive patronage ... will only result in more and more groups clamouring for similar recognition. But what do the politicians care? Their sights are set on the immediate gains to be had from shotgun marriages to electorally powerful groups...

Urdu: Circulation of Newspapers

The Urdu Press had 2567 publications in 1996 as compared to 2458 in 1995. Urdu Press continued to be the third largest numerical group in the country after Hindi and English. Among all dailies Urdu with 473 newspapers was second next to Hindi. There were 20 tri/bi-weeklies. The periodicals in Urdu press contained 1198 weeklies, 340 fortnightlies, 472 monthlies, 46 quarterlies, 3 annuals and 15 other periodicals. More than one hundred Urdu newspapers were published from these states: UP (729), AP (473), Delhi (417), J&K (212), Maharashtra (191), Bihar (164), Karnataka (124) and Punjab (105). The remaining periodicals were published from other States/ Union Territories.

Circulation: The circulation of Urdu newspapers increased to 58,17,000 copies in 1996 from 41,13,000 copies in 1995. The share in circulation of dailies was 30,11,000 copies.

Circulation Pattern: Of the 428 Urdu newspapers that supplied the circulation figures, one was big, 70 were medium and 357 were small. Details are shown in Table given below.

Circulation Level: Jadeed In Dinon, a daily from Delhi was the largest circulated daily during 1996 in Urdu language with circulation of 76,600 copies. An Urdu weekly, Lubna, published from Delhi was the leading periodical in Urdu with a circulation of 73,500 copies.

Oldest Existing Newspaper: Musheer-e-Deccan a daily from Hyderabad (1894).

Circulation Pattern

(Circulation in Thousands)

Category	Range	Dailies		Periodicals		Total	
		N	C	N	C	N	C
Big	One Lakh & above	0	0	0	0	0	0
	75,001-99,999	1	77	0	0	1	77
Medium	50,001-75,000	9	547	1	70	10	617
	25,001-50,000	40	1,325	20	649	60	1,974
Small	15,001-25,000	39	792	38	703	77	1,495
	5,001-15,000	25	253	134	1,091	159	1,344
	2,001-5,000	3	10	75	231	78	241
	Upto 2,000	4	7	39	62	43	69
Total		121	3,011	307	2,806	428	5,817

'N' for Number and 'C' for circulation

Urdu in Pakistan (1981)

Language	Total No. of Speakers	Percentage
Punjabi	40584670	48.17
Pashto	11079269	13.15
Sindhi	9916578	11.77
Urdu	6403228	7.6
Others	16269254	19.31

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Recognised Muslim Secondary Teacher Education Institutions

Andhra Pradesh

1. Al-Madina College of Education, Salamnagar, Mahaboobnagar – 509 001.
2. Anwarul Uloom College of Education, New Mellepally, Hyderabad – 500 001.
3. College of Education, Osmania University, Hyderabad – 500 007.
4. Fathima College of Education R.E.C. Post, Fatimanagar, Jyotimangare, Warangal – 506 004.
5. Osmania College of Education, 40/23, Park Road, Kurnool – 518 001.
6. Shadan College of Education, 6-2-978, Khairatabad, Hyderabad – 500 004.
7. Sultan-ul-Uloom College of Education, Mount Pleasant, Road No. 3, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad – 500 001.

Bihar

8. Dr. Zakir Hussain Teachers Training College, Benta Chowk, PO: D.M.C.H. Campus, Laheria Sarai, Darbhanga Distt. – 846 003
9. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed Teachers Training College, Bengali Tola, Laheria Sarai, Darbhanga – 846 001
10. Islamia Teachers Training College, PO: Phulwari Sharif, Patna Distt. – 8014 505
11. Millat Teachers Training College, Madhubani – 847012
12. Millia Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed Teachers Training College, Rambagh, Purnea Distt. – 854 301
13. Muslim Minority Ahmadiya B.Ed. College Millath Nagar, Rampara, Katihar Distt. – 854 105
14. S. Wakil Ahmad T.T. (B.Ed. College) PO: Murgia Chak, Bandh Road, Lalliagh Darbhanga – 846 004
15. S.M. Zareef College of Education Sher Mohammad Bhigo, PO: Lal Bagh, Darbhanga – 846 004
16. S.M. Zaheer Alam Teachers' Training College, PO: Bahera, Darbhanga Distt. – 847 201

New Delhi

17. Institute of Advanced Studies in Education, Jamia Millia Islamia, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi – 110025.

Karnataka

18. Al-Ameen College of Education, Near Lalbagh Main Road, Hosur Road Bangalore – 560 027
19. Bilal Education Society's College of Education Bidar – 585 401
20. Chandbibi College of Education for Women Near Peer Bengali Dargah Ring Road, Gulbarga – 585 104

21. Mohammadi College of Education Payan Dargah Road, Roza (B), Gulbarga – 585 104
22. New Horizon College of Education, H.A.O. II Stage, 100 Ft. Road, Indira Nagar Bangalore – 560 008

Kerala

23. Farooq Training College, Calicut, Kozhikode – 673632
24. Fathima Memorial Training College Vadakkavila Post, Pallimukku, Kollam – 691 010.
25. Jamia Hadwiyya Training College Salahnagar, Edavanna, Malapuram – 676 541
26. Markazu Training College Athavanad, Karthala PO, Malappuram Distt. – 679 571

Madhya Pradesh

27. Ishaque Patel Women Teacher Training College Opp. Mahalaxmi Colony, Ring Road, Indore – 452 001
28. Safia College of Science & Education Safia College Road, Bhopal – 462 001

Maharashtra

29. Iqra Education Society's College of Education Haji Ghulam Nabi Nagar, Mehrun, Jalgaon – 425 135
30. Dr. Zakir Hussain Urdu Junior College of Education, Zakir Hussain Nagar, Parbhani – 431 401
31. K.M. Asgar Hussain College of Education Post Box No. 48, Rani Jhansi Road, Ratanlal Plot Akola – 444 001
32. Maulana Azad Education Society's Marathwada College of Education, Rouza Bagh, Post Box No. 117, Aurangabad – 431 001.
33. MCE Society's HGM Azam Education for Girls 2390, K.B. Hidaytulla Road, Camp, Pune – 411 001.
34. Government Urdu Jr. College of Education for Women, 384/A, Bhavani Peth, Next to Ajmera Complex, Pune
35. Hashmiya Urdu Jr. College of Education for Girls, 29, Ramwadi, Railway Line, Solapur – 413 001.

Uttar Pradesh

36. Aligarh Muslim University, Department of Education, Aligarh – 202 002
37. Dr. Akhtar Hassan Rizvi Shia Degree College, Sadar, Jaunpur
38. Faiz-e-Aam Modern Degree College, 72, Civil Lines, Mathura – 281 001.
39. Government Raza College Deptt. of B.Ed., Khusro Bagh, Rampur – 244 901
40. Halim Muslim Degree College Deptt. of B.Ed. Kanpur – 208 001
41. Mohd. Hassan Degree College Deptt. of B.Ed. PO: Sadar, Jaunpur 220 002
42. Shibli National College Deptt. of B.Ed., Azamgarh – 276 001

On Arbitrary Detention/Exile of Muslim Citizens of Delhi

Shahabuddin's Letter to Home Minister, 2 Nov., 99

May I draw your attention to the story in the Indian Express (28 October, 1999) by Jatin Gandhi, regarding the midnight raid by Delhi police ostensibly to apprehend and detain illegal immigrants from Bangladesh.

The report makes out that the police arbitrarily arrests many genuine Indian citizens who are then subject to much physical harassment and monetary loss.

The report also quotes a resident and eyewitness to say that "When the police come with their informers, they ask the Muslims to step on one side and the Hindus on the other. She should have lined up with the other Hindus"

May I request you to instruct the Police Commissioner, Delhi, to change his method. He should first verify whether there is a prima facie case for a person to be regarded as an illegal immigrant from Bangladesh (or elsewhere) before arresting him or his family.

May I also suggest that the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act, may please be notified for Delhi and Tribunals be set up to deal with such cases?

Mr. Home Minister, is it a crime to be a Bengali-speaker or a Muslim in the national capital?

'Illegal Claimants'

Deleted from Electoral Rolls in W. Bengal

More than 31.6 lakh claimants for inclusion in voters' lists, suspected to have recorded their names through dubious means, have been struck off in the final electoral rolls published by the State's election department today.

Announcing the publication of the revised (rolls) today, Chief Electoral Officer, Jawhar Sircar said that a thorough scrutiny of the claims had been vigorously carried out over a period of a month by ... the election department as **the draft rolls showed an abnormally high seven per cent increase in the lists since the last Lok Sabha election in 1998. The rise was mainly recorded in the districts bordering Bangladesh.** Mr. Sircar said that 14 lakh voters, representing an increase of 1.85 per cent which was normal, had been added to the previous rolls of 46.8 lakh eligible voters in the State. The revised electoral rolls had been accepted by all the political parties...

(Source: Subhamoy Chatterjee in The Hindustan Times, 29 August, 1999)

*Come, one and all, to the Mother's crowning come,
fill the sacred bowl and let all unite
and consecrate the waters
on the shores of vast humanity
that is India.*

- Rabindra Nath Tagore

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CDS: Study on Migration in Kerala: Dimensions, Determinants and Consequences (Extracts)

The Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, has undertaken the first systematic and comprehensive study of migration and emigration from Kerala. The first Working Paper, published in September, 1999 contains valuable data on their impact on Kerala's society and economy and their effect on various communities. By the courtesy of the CDS and the Project Director Prof. K.C. Zachariah, relevant extracts have been reproduced – Editor.

Migration Situation in Kerala in 1998:

At the State level, there were altogether 3.75 million migrants. With an estimated 6.35 million households in 1998, the MPR is 60 per cent. This means that corresponding to every 100 households in 1998, there were 60 migrants...

Emigrants:

According to this study, the best estimate of the number of emigrants from Kerala in the second half of 1998 was 1.36 millions.

Emigration from Kerala has accelerated in recent years, the number progressively increasing from year to year. Between 1988/92 and 1993/97 the number of emigrants increased by 120 per cent...

Arab countries of the Middle East were the destination of 95 per cent of the emigrants with Saudi Arabia alone accounting for nearly 40 per cent of the total. Outside the Arab world, the principal destination of Kerala emigrants was the United States of America, which accounted for 2.2 per cent of the total...

The principal place of origin of emigrants from Kerala is the Malappuram-Thrissur area. A secondary centre is the Thiruvananthapuram district. The largest number of emigrants was from Malappuram – about 297 thousand or more than a fifth of the total. Thiruvananthapuram was next in the order, but with only 131 thousand or 10 per cent of the total. Thrissur, Palakkad, Kozhikode, Kollam and Ernakulam had nearly 100 thousand each...

Internal Migration

... After integration, for the first time, Kerala became a net out-migration state...

Sex composition of emigrants and out-migrants varied considerably by community. The proportion of females was very small among Muslims (4.7 per cent among emigrants and only 3.0 per cent among out-migrants). The highest proportion was among Christians, over 20 per cent among emigrants and 38 per cent among out-migrants...

There are significant community-wise differences with respect to educational differentials of the migrants. The proportion of persons with a secondary school certificate is higher among migrants in all communities; but that is not the case of the proportion of persons with degree. Among Scheduled Castes and Muslims, the proportion of degree holders was lower among out-

migrants than among the general population. There are also considerable differences in the "less than secondary" category...

Inter-Community Differences

There are inter-community differences in the degree of occupational selectivity. For example, migration rate among the unemployed varied from 68 per cent among Muslims to 34 per cent among Syrian Christians and to 1.5 per cent among the Scheduled Castes. The average for all communities together is 14.8 per cent. Similarly, among those who were working in the private sector the emigration rate varied from 51 per cent among Syrian Christians to 33 per cent among Muslims and to 4 per cent among scheduled castes (the overall average for all was 14.7 per cent).

Among the factors associated with migration, community status is one of the most powerful. If one is a Muslim one's chance of emigration is 2.2 (49 per cent) times the general average (22 per cent). On the other hand, his chance of out-migration (6.3 per cent) is only 0.55 times the general average (11.5 per cent). The chance of Syrian Christians to emigrate is just about the general average, but their chance for out-migration is 1.9 times the general average (22.1 per cent). The lowest probability for migration, emigration as well as out-migration, was among the Scheduled Castes (15 per cent of the general average for emigration and 50 per cent for out-migration).

Viewed from another angle, more than one-half the number of emigrants were Muslims and 13 per cent Ezhawas, 12 per cent Syrian Christians, 8 per cent Latin Christians and 8 per cent Nairs. The Scheduled Castes constituted only 1.4 per cent.

No such skewed distribution is seen among out-migrants. Ezhawas constituted 23 per cent; Nairs and Syrian Christians were about 20 per cent each; and Latin Christians and Muslims accounted for about 12 per cent each. Scheduled Castes came to only about 5 per cent.

Remittances and Import of Consumer Durables

An estimate of the total cash remittances received by Kerala households during a 12-month period in 1998 was Rs.35,304 millions.

The average remittance was about Rs. 25 thousand per emigrant (Rs.5,500 per household and Rs.1105 per capita). Cash remittances constituted about 9.3 per cent of

EMIGRATION

the State Domestic product. If the remittances were added to the SDP, the per capita DP would have been Rs.13,041 instead of the actual of Rs.11,936. The annual remittances received by the Kerala households were 2.55 times higher than what Kerala Government received from the Central Government, as budget support.

Besides cash, households received several items in kind – clothing, ornaments and jewellery, electric and electronic gadgets; the total value of goods received was Rs.5,413 million. Thus, total remittances (cash plus goods) came to Rs.40,717 million or 10.7 per cent of SDP.

Inter-community variations in total remittances show the same pattern as inter-community differentials in the number of emigrants. Malappuram received 17 per cent of the total remittances. Thrissur was next with 14 per cent and Ernakulam stood third with 13 per cent...

Muslims received 47 per cent of the total remittances. Ezhawas and Syrian Christians each had received about 13 per cent. Latin Christians received 11 per cent and Nairs about 9 per cent. However, it was not Muslim households which received the highest per emigrant remittances. An average Latin Christian emigrant sent back Rs.33 thousand per year and an average Syrian Christian emigrant Rs.27 thousand. In contrast, the average remittance per Muslim emigrant was Rs.24 thousand only.

Community of a person is very strongly associated with higher migration propensities: In the case of emigration, the migration propensity is 1.8 times the general average in the case of Muslims and 1.3 times for Syrian Christians. All other communities have lower than average migration propensities. In the case of out-migration, Muslims have the lowest migration propensity... Nearly 51 per cent of the emigrants were from Muslim households; and Muslim households received nearly 50 per cent of the remittances from abroad. At the same time, Muslims have the highest illiteracy rate, and the lowest proportion of persons with secondary school certificate.

End-Use of Remittances

The major end use of remittances is reported to be household consumption; 86 per cent of the households mentioned living expenses as the main expenditure item met out of remittances. The other important uses were education (36 per cent), repayment of debt (27 per cent), construction and repairs of buildings (11 per cent), and bank deposits (8 per cent).

One of the priority items of disposition of an emigrant's savings was improvement of the quality of his housing. Although a large number of emigrant households used a significant part of the remittances they received for education of their children, not much difference is observed in this respect between emigrant's and non-migrant's households...

Utilisation of Remittances

Malappuram District sent out the largest number of emigrants (270 thousand); and it received the largest amount (Rs.6,295 million) by way of remittances from abroad. Malappuram has the highest birthrate, the highest rate of population growth, the highest average family size, the highest proportion of illiterates, and the lowest proportion of persons with a secondary school certificate or a degree in Kerala.

These facts establish a very strong case for formulation and implementation of public policies, which would enhance this educationally backward population to use part of the remittances they receive for the improvement of the educational levels of its people.

One way to do this could be to allow the Muslim community or any other educationally backward community, or persons from Malappuram district or any other educationally backward district, to establish what has now come to be known as self-financing educational institutions of their own, starting with general high schools, technical schools, colleges in general education and colleges for technical education being financed and managed by themselves.

What is mentioned above about self-financing educational institutions could be said also about self-financing hospitals, health centres, etc.

Conclusion

... On balance, our conclusion is that emigration will continue to increase for some more years, but return emigration would increase at a faster rate, resulting in a period of net negative international migration. Early in the next century, there would be another turn around in the migration trend. The number of return emigrants would become larger than the number of emigrants and net emigration would turn negative.

During the past 10 years, NRI bank deposits have been increasing at a healthy 20-25 per cent per year. The chances are that, there won't be a turn around in deposit growth for some more years to come...

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Hindutva: The Politics of Paranoia

Sangh Parivar Emulates Hitler

Amulya Ganguli in the Hindustan Times, 7 November, 1999

There is nothing sudden, spontaneous or unplanned about the Sangh Parivar's anti-Christian agitation. Instead, it represents the classical fascist practice of demonising a community by creating a fear psychosis, a paranoia, about its malefic objectives among the majority population. With remarkable coordination between the different Parivar outfits and outside support from fellow travellers in the academic and journalistic world, a propaganda barrage is unleashed comprising half truths, plain lies and crude insinuations to paint a fearful picture of the horrendous deeds committed by Christians and their priests in the past, and their secret subversive plans for the future.

... And all these nefarious plans, hatched in India and abroad, are presented against the background of a helpless motherland, which has suffered for centuries because of the cowardice, lack of foresight and even sheer treachery of the Parivar's political adversaries. But no longer. Now India has stood up, under the inspiring leadership of the saffron camp, and all the heinous machinations of the alien faith will henceforth be crushed. Such is the propaganda ploy.

An associated feature of the current anti-Christian agitation is that Muslims have been given a reprieve ... although their anti-national role, in the eyes of the Parivar, is no less reprehensible. Their demonisation, too, was undertaken not long ago with equal fervour by the saffron propagandists, mixing their past crimes of invasion and partition of the country with their future plans for subversion through reckless breeding with their four wives and infiltration from neighbouring countries. But since a battle on two fronts is bothersome, Muslims — Internal Enemy No 1, according to Golwalkar — have been given a respite for the time being while the Parivar concentrates on Internal Enemy No 2, the Christians.

The chargesheet, however, against Christians and Muslims are the same — their "alien" faith automatically making them unpatriotic; their past misdemeanours, including conversion of "innocent" tribals and others through material allurements, and the denigration of Hinduism and destruction of temples, making them targets of the Parivar's righteous wrath; and finally their mala fide intention of turning the majority into a minority through conversion and population explosion making their every act, and indeed their very presence in the country, suspect.

"To make a struggle intelligible to the broad masses," wrote Hitler, "it must always be carried on against two things, against a person and against a cause... Against whom, therefore, must our movement fight? Against the Jew as a person, and against Marxism as a cause."

For success in this fight, however, the adversary has to be painted in the blackest of colours...

As Alan Bullock writes in Hitler: A Study in Tyranny:

"In all the pages which Hitler devotes to the Jews in Mein Kampf he does not bring forward a single fact to support his wild assertions...to read these pages is to enter the world of the insane, a world peopled by hideous and distorted shadows. The Jew is no longer a human being, he has become a mythical figure, a grimacing, leering devil invested with infernal powers, the incarnation of evil..."

Unlike Hitler, who had only the Jews as his hate objects, the ultra-right in India has the advantage of having three — Muslims, Christians and communists. They are Golwalkar's Internal Enemies Nos. 1, 2 and 3. The advantage is that the attacks on them can be spread out to avoid tedium. Muslims, of course, were the first target, but after the campaign against them reached its peak with the Babari Masjid demolition, the Parivar may have realised the need to step back a little, to survey the battlefield, as it were, before the next onslaught.

The respite may have been deemed necessary because the maximum political mileage had presumably been extracted from the tirades against the No.1 enemy and may have even begun to lose its effectiveness. After all, how long can one go on castigating the children of Babar for their sins of the past? So now the children of the Pope have been targeted... When the degeneration of the Congress, the Left and the others enabled the Parivar to emerge from the shadows, its first job, naturally, was to go for Muslims. And now, logically, the focus has shifted to Internal Enemy No. 2.

The hounding of "internal enemies" is in keeping with the fascist precept of preserving the "purity" of the motherland and of the majority community from the contaminating influence of "outsiders." Whether it was Nazis targeting Jews or neo-Nazis and white supremacists now venting their spleen on "coloured" immigrants, the basic "patriotic" objective is the same.

The Sangh Parivar's Hindu Rashtra is modelled, therefore, on Golwalkar's ideal of an India — or Bharat — where "non-Hindu people ... must either adopt the Hindu culture and language, must learn to respect and revere Hindu religion ... or may stay wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation claiming nothing, deserving no privileges, far less any preferential treatment, not even citizen's rights." The similarity of this prescription with Point 4 of the Nazi party programme, as mentioned in Saul Friedlander's Nazi Germany and the Jews, is obvious: "Only members of the nation may be citizens of the State. Only those of German blood, whatever their creed, may be members of the nation. Accordingly no Jew may be a member of the nation."

For all their strenuous efforts, however, it is unlikely that India will ever be Hitler's Germany... India will always remain the land of Gandhi, not of Godse.

Rajiv Malik on India's New Rulers

India's Ruling party, the BJP, is the most prominent member of the Sangh Parivar, a vast network of organizations ideologically affiliated to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). Collectively these groups encompass over four million members and include not only the ruling party, but India's largest labour union, largest student union, largest private school system (with two million students) and major Hindu organizations such as the VHP, Hindu Students Council and Vivekananda Kendra, all of which have international branches.

The present prime minister of India, Atal Behari Vajpayee, is a lifetime member of the RSS, one of the elite pracharaks who never marry but devote themselves full-time to the organization with the most minimal of monetary recompense. He was singled out back in the 1950s as one with the "right stuff" to perhaps eventually run the country, and encouraged in his pursuit of various political offices over the years. The BJP election victory and his ascension as Prime Minister represent the culmination of decades of effort by the RSS to guide India into an overtly Hindu national identity... India (has given) the BJP and the Sangh Parivar a mandate to shape the nation's future.

Sangh Parivar groups fall into traditional categories of social organizations. They are educationalists, labour organizers, youth groups, farmer's grievance committees, intellectual societies, fellowships of local elite, Hindu activists and patriots. The one that isn't easily categorized is the RSS itself. It is part Boy Scouts, part Peace Corps, part citizen militia, part sports club and part self-improvement society... While decidedly Hindu, it is not a religious organization in the sense of a sect, denomination or church, for there is no RSS clergy, Creed, temple or scripture. Their members belong to all Hindu denominations, sharing a devotion to India's complex spiritual heritages.

The RSS was founded in 1925 by K.B. Hedgewar. He drew inspiration from Swami Dayananda, founder of the Arya Samaj and Swami Vivekananda, founder of the Ramakrishna Mission (where Hedgewar briefly experienced monastic life). Hedgewar was active in India's freedom movement. He was jailed (for) one year for a "seditious speech"... The RSS was at the time of India's independence already one of the largest organizations in the country, and today with some four million members among its "family", it is decidedly the largest.

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, translated ... as "National Volunteer Corps" began in Hedgewar's birthplace, Nagpur, Maharashtra, which remains its headquarters... There are now, according to a report in

India Abroad, 40,000 shakas with 2.5 million members in India and some, in modified form, in Europe, Africa and the Americas. Gatherings are all-male (there is a separate women's branch, the Rashtra Sevika Samiti, begun in 1936), and number 50 to 100 members each. There are four sections according to age: six to ten years old, ten to 14, 14 to 28, 28 or older. Attendance is mandatory... Daily shakas are supplemented with yearly training camps.

Over the decades, the RSS has developed a disciplined and capable core group. All are expected to devote as much of their time as possible to RSS projects. The very dedicated elect to become pracharaks, like Prime Minister Vajpayee, who remain unmarried in order to devote themselves full-time to RSS work. They receive no salary, live at RSS centers and have their expenses covered as needed. Pracharaks, of which there are many thousands serve for several years, or for a lifetime.

Individual RSS members can found independent organizations, which then are part of the Sangh Parivar. If they need assistance, some of the pracharaks may be assigned to help, bringing full-time, highly skilled executive assistance to the project...

As these offshoot organizations grow, each will enlist its own members who are not part of the RSS. But always the RSS cadre within it remain highly regarded and influential. The organizations programs will be discussed from time to time with senior RSS leaders and differences of opinion settled. In this manner a uniformity of purpose is maintained throughout the Sangh Parivar

An Ideological Movement: The RSS fits into the international trend of the last two centuries termed "nationalism". That is, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica, "the state of mind in which the individual feels that everyone owes his supreme secular loyalty to the nation-state... Thus, while the RSS itself calls for a restoration of India's earlier glory, philosophically it is really more a part of the worldwide trend toward the modern concept of nationalism..."

... The RSS is not India's only group trying to forge a national identity. They face competition from two fronts. One is the communists, who have their own program for India's future... The other ... is the secular-minded Indians, epitomized by Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister. He and many others felt that India's backwardness and thousand years of subjugation was in part the result of the Hindu religion, and that the sooner Hinduism could be relegated to the past and replaced with modern ideas, the sooner India would become a thriving nation...

The basic RSS concept is simple: India consists of hundreds of millions of Hindus; therefore, its national

identity should be Hindu, just as the national identities of nations with a large majority of Christian or Muslim citizens are ... Christian or Muslim. But then, what exactly does the RSS mean by Hindu? At times they use the term as everyone else does, equivalent to the term Sanatana Dharma, the ancient religion of India. At other times they ... consider Hindus to be those whose religion originated in India, including Jains, Buddhists and Sikhs. Sometimes they add the important qualification, "and who consider themselves Hindu"... One swayamsevak explained, "Non-Hindus must be assimilated within the Hindu way of life. The words Muslim and Christian denote a religious phenomenon, while the word Hindu is synonymous with the nation". It is this confusing ... meaning of Hindu that causes concern among non-Hindus...

The RSS philosophy is to build a Hindu nation person by person and therefore it has a built-in aversion to politics ... involving too many compromises and not really making fundamental changes in the nation. Though it has always had an affiliated political party, its level of involvement has varied according to the interest and inclinations of RSS leaders. The first two, Hedgewar and M.S. Golwalker, kept the organization at a distance. The next two, Balasaheb Deoras, who became sarsanghachalak in 1973, and Prof. Rajendra Singh, who took over the leadership post in 1994, have greatly increased the level of political involvement. In party, they have done so out of self-protection, having been banned three times since Independence by hostile Congress governments.

... Criticisms of the RSS as secret or totalitarian seem misplaced, or simply malicious. They are not secretive; their basic books are published in entirety on their web site. The local shakas are held in public parks... The connections between the Sangh Parivar organizations are hardly conspiratorial. Everyone in India knows their affiliation to the RSS. The organization does not advocate dictatorship, acquisition of power by violence, supremacy of the state over the individual, conquest of "lesser nations" or any form of racial purity ... given that Hindus in India include members of four of the five major races of man.

Walter K. Andersen is co-author of *The Brotherhood in Saffron*, and the Clinton administration's advisor on the RSS. His book was the result of several years of field research...

Andersen concludes, "Hedgewar was convinced that a fundamental change in social attitudes was a necessary pre-condition of a revived India and that a properly trained edge of that change." What we see today as the Sangh Parivar is the result of seventy years of devotion to Hedgewar's vision and methods by millions of Hindus and a powerful backlash against Indians who have become alienated from their Hinduness.

(Source: The Hinduism Today, November, 1999)

Orations on Vijaya Dashimi, 1999 (Extracts)

I - Rajendra Singh, Sarsanghchalak

The country is now vigorously debating the question of secularism... We have a positive neutrality to religion in the governance since ages. We believe in equality of all faiths. The problem (is) that the word Dharma was used with respect to religion only, which denotes a sect or a following. Dharma is a wider concept which encompasses the fabric of society... In fact, Dharma sustains the society. It is a set of ideals which leads society towards truth and prevents it from corruption of any hue. It is ironical that some of our leaders are hell bent to obliterate such a concept. The nation must understand that foreign thoughts and principles cannot be applied in this country in toto...

(Source: The Organiser, 24 October, 1999)

II - H.V. Seshadri, General Secretary

... The three basic principles which have sustained the growth (of the RSS) are: devotion to the true concept of Hindu Nationalism, dedicated cadre of workers who have built up number one organisations in all fields of national re-construction, and the successful technique of creating such workers.

... The BJP which has come to the centrestage in our political arena and is able to command the confidence of such varied groups such as DMK, Akali Dal, INLD, Shiv Sena, Janata Dal (United), Trinamul Congress has been basically inspired by (the RSS). Although many of these groups do not adhere to the Hindu identity of our Nationalism, the very fact they have decided to Join the BJP-led NDA only shows that it is no longer looked down upon as politically untouchable... Also, credit goes, in a large measure, to the deft leadership of our Prime Minister who is capable of taking all of them together as a harmonious team.

... For the last many decades, especially since Independence, anti-Hindu forces prevailed in the country. Now there is evidence of change in the mindset as people are increasingly becoming aware of the national renaissance...

The surge in patriotic sentiments in the country after the Kargil should be sustained and channelised in a proper way for constructive development of the nation...

... True to her liberal traditions, on Pope's request, India granted him the permission. In reciprocation, it is expected of the Pope that he would follow the protocol of a State Guest, and would honour the Indian tradition of equal treatment to all religions and faiths.

(Source: The Organiser, 24 October, 1999)

We do not approve of the views of those agitating against the Pope but we will not issue any appeal to them.

- Venkaiah Naidu, BJP Spokesman

Shahabuddin's Letter to H.M. Advani, 26 October, 1999

The last Government had publicly announced the presentation of a White Paper on ISI operations in India. Because of political crisis that assurance could not be fulfilled. Since so much is appearing in the media about the ISI operations, raising dust and even vitiating the social environment to some extent, I request you to present the proposed White Paper as soon as possible.

In the meantime, may I request you to clarify the basis for the convergence of action between the ULFA and the ISI? The ULFA cannot possibly share the ISI objective of promoting Muslim-majority in the North-east and then setting up a Muslim State in that region? Doesn't ULFA see an eventual clash of interest with the ISI? Doesn't it see that Assami Nationalism can flower only within a federal India, not in a Muslim majority state?

M.D. Nalapat On ISI Plans for India

... The ISI will attempt during the coming months and years ... to encourage minority bashing... Home Minister L.K. Advani ... has to ensure that India's image as a secular nation and an ancient civilisation is in no way tarnished by those indulging in meaningless rhetoric against the Papal visit... Any inaction now will give subversive forces a foothold from where they could encroach farther on India's traditional pluralistic society which has always accommodated diverse points of view...

In the past, while both the Home Minister and the Prime Minister have professed concern and sympathy for those who have been targets of violence fuelled by bigotry, action against offenders has been notable by its absence. Unless at least a few of the top leaders of these extremist organisations are put in the dock, their misguided followers will continue to unwittingly further the ISI agenda of polarisation and disruption...

For the BJP, it will mean distancing itself from its more extremist constituents, and through action against them ensuring that the weaker sections and the minorities ... feel protected and equal... The BJP-led government has taken no action to ensure effective and impartial governance in Gujarat and UP. This will finally cost it these states, just as it did Maharashtra...

(Source: The Times of India, 6 November, 1999)

Kutch Incident New York Times Editorial

The latest incident shows the urgent need for the two countries to ease distrust and improve communications.

There is no guarantee that the presence of nuclear weapons on both sides will produce the kind of relatively stable balance of terror that prevailed between the US and

Swati Chaturvedi On ISI Activities in India

... Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) (has a) cosy relationship with the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA). The ... kidnapping and murder of BJP candidate Pannalal Oswal, who was contesting the Dhubri Lok Sabha seat, for refusing to raise the issue of a sovereign Assam in Parliament, is a grim pointer to the days ahead.

Advani, who sees the ISI hand in practically every law and order problem in the country, was horrified at the extent of the agency's penetration into the ULFA and its ominous consequences for the neglected Northeast...

Officials of the Intelligence Bureau and the Research and Analysis Wing ... have repeatedly been ringing the alarm bell on the ISI-ULFA nexus...

... The ISI has been training ULFA cadres at the latter's training camps in Bhutan. When Thimphu showed some reluctance about playing host, the training modules were promptly shifted to the LTTE haven in Jaffna. The ISI provides a complete package, including videos of atrocities allegedly committed by Indian authorities in the Northeast... The Army, which has been at the forefront of counter-insurgency operations in Assam, recently took the unprecedented step of making its concerns on the ISI-ULFA relationship public. On July 31, Major General B.P. Bopanna, GoC 21 Mountain Division, expressed his misgivings about some madarsas (schools) in Nalbari and Barpeta districts of Lower Assam and the southern Barak valley which were actively encouraging the ISI. On August 5 Lt. General D.B. Shekatkar, GoC 4 Corps, said that over 100 ISI agents were operating in Assam.

More startling disclosures followed with the arrest of Bilal Ahmed, a close relative of top Jamaat leader Abdul Haq, on August 4 from Karimganj. According to Home Ministry reports, Abdul Haq couriered messages from ULFA leaders Arabinda Rajkhowa and Paresh Barua to the ISI. On August 7, the Assam Police arrested four ISI agents... The plan was apparently to create ethnic disturbances, siphon off money from the state through extortion and pump in fake currency...

Officials say that a clear distinction has to be made and while hard decisions must be taken on the ISI-ULFA nexus, it is important to ensure that the problem is not communalised. A recent Home Ministry policy paper points out that despite the ISI angle, the only way to tackle the simmering insurgency problem in the Northeast is to remove the sense of alienation and provide good administration... (Source: The Indian Express, 26 September, 1999)

the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

It is essential that India and Pakistan ensure that minor military clashes do not escalate into volatile confrontations.

Rajmohan Gandhi on the Inevitability of Partition

After over 50 years of independence, it is surely time to admit openly that for all the divide and rule gleefully practised by the British, the India they left behind was a good deal more united than the India they had found in the 18th Century... Another awkward graph from history ... suggests that every step forward in the struggle for independence also turned out to be a step in the direction of Partition.

Not that those who sought independence also sought division. Far from it. Most of them went ahead firmly convinced that Indian divisions were a British import, and that Indian unity would flow from independence and from struggles for it. But our overview of the India of the 18th, 19th and 20th Centuries has indicated that there was always some Indian section or another that feared the end of British rule, and placed greater trust in the British than in a dominant Indian group.

If the British were to go, more than one Indian section desired a separate state or status for itself and was reluctant to be part of a united or centralised India. A subcontinent of mistrust had invited alien rule. A continuance of mistrust divided the independent subcontinent, politically into India and Pakistan, and emotionally into several religious, sectarian, caste, ethnic or linguistic groupings in both countries.

There were three ways in which the 1947 Partition might have been avoided. One, by Gandhiji and Congress winning the trust and allaying the fears, justified or unjustified, of the Muslim League. But we have seen that Gandhiji's attempts were unsuccessful, and also that his closest colleagues blocked his last-minute proposal of a Jinnah ministry for saving Indian unity. Two, by a British willingness to hand over power to India's largest party, Congress, regardless of the League's views, but this was lacking not only in Churchill but also in post-war Britain's Labour government. Three, by Congress coercing Muslim-majority areas to remain with India, but for this Congress had neither the desire nor the capacity.

... Some of Gandhiji's Hindu critics demanded to know why he had not fasted to prevent Pakistan, especially since he had said in 1940, "Vivisection me before you vivisection India". (*Harijan*, 22.9.40) He who had always stood for the unity of India and for the sanctity of one's word, why was he not fasting unto death for One India?

When Partition stared him in the face, Gandhiji was agonised enough to think of a fast. On June 5, 1947, he said, "I feel as if I [have been] thrown into a fire-pit and my heart is burning". Yet he felt that to die by self-immolation "in order to prove that I alone was right" would be "mad".

That a journey towards independence that did not also set Muslim anxieties at rest was bound to lead to Partition is not as yet a respected or popular explanation. Other

theories seem more in fashion. One is that Partition and the carnage that accompanied it derived from "religion" and in particular from Gandhiji's "introduction of religion into politics".

... Thus Ainslee Embree has argued that Gandhiji's "use of a religious vocabulary" - "inevitably Hindu in origin" damaged the prospects of Indian unity... Gandhiji was well aware of the hazards of religious politics, and noted his 1903 comment on the 1857 Rebellion, in which he had referred pejoratively to the "appeal ... made to the worst superstitions of the people of India" and to the fact that "religion was greatly brought into play".

But was it possible to imagine an India, even a political India, that evicted religion? Even if Gandhiji did not invite Ram, others would. If not Ram, they would invite someone else. Indeed, India's political air was thick with religion when Gandhiji returned to India in 1915. Tilak had invoked Ganapati in the late 1890s, and Aurobindo Ghose had solicited Durga just thereafter.

Religious metaphors flew like missiles in the skies of Bengal when, in 1905, the presidency was partitioned into Muslim-majority and Hindu-majority parts, and again in 1911, when Bengal was reunified. Appealing to the Raj in the name of religion, the Muslim League had secured separate electorates for Muslims in 1909.

The apparent verdict of history that India's advance towards independence was at the same time a move towards Partition does not show that the cry for independence was "wrong"...

As far back as in 1921, Rabindranath Tagore, troubled by the Non-cooperation Movement, had warned Gandhiji of nationalism's negative consequences. Admitting that he was "ply (ing his) boat where the current is against me," Tagore said he desired "a true meeting of the East and the West". He disapproved, he added, of "the intense consciousness of the separateness of one's own people from others". Claiming that nationalism was a Western rather than an Indian idea, Tagore went on:

We, the famished, ragged ragamuffins of the East, are to win freedom for all Humanity. (*Modern Review*, May 1921).

Replying to Tagore, Gandhiji said that a negative was often necessary - "weeding was as important as sowing" - and added. Nor need the Poet fear that non-cooperation is meant to create a Chinese wall between India and the West. On the contrary, non-cooperation is intended to pave the way to real, honourable and voluntary cooperation. (*Young India*, 1.6.21).

After 1947, a new spirit was needed for new times, a spirit willing to look at hurts inflicted, now and in the past, by Indians on fellow Indians, or, as Tagore might have said, by humans on fellow-humans, rather than the hurts

(Contd. on Page 573)

Jinnah's Offer to Leave Pakistan to Lead Muslims in India

A.I. Muslim League's Council Meeting, Karachi, 14-15 December, 1947

A meeting of the All-India Muslim League Council was held at Karachi in the Khalikdina Hall on December 14-15, 1947, to take a historic decision on the fate of the accredited organization of the Muslims of the Sub-continent... Three hundred members, of whom 160 were from India, out of a total strength of 450, participated in the deliberations... The Quaid-e-Azam presided...

Jinnah began by welcoming the members, and reviewed the events that led to the partition of India. Referring to the developments that had taken place since the session of the League Council of June 9, Jinnah said: "We are meeting today to discuss what is going to be the future structure of the Muslim League. As you know, the Muslim League has achieved and established Pakistan in a way and in a manner which has no parallel. The Muslims were a crowd, they were demoralized, and they had to suffer economically. We have achieved Pakistan, not for the League, not for any of our colleagues, but for the masses. Muslim India would have been finished if Pakistan had not been achieved. We have established Pakistan where there are at least 60 millions of Muslims, with a mighty territory and complete sovereignty. **Credit for this must go to the Minority Provinces...**

While condemning the disturbances in both the Dominions, the Quaid-e-Azam reminded the Muslims that it was against Islam to indulge in such crimes. **He expressed the hope that the minorities in both the Dominions would be assured adequate protection**, and as the Governor-General of Pakistan, he would do his duty.

The Quaid-e-Azam recalled the charges that were being levelled against Pakistan and its leaders about the betrayal of the Muslim masses in the Indian Union. He said, he was full of feelings for the Muslim masses in the Indian Union who were, unfortunately, facing bad days. He advised the Indian Muslims to organize themselves so as to become powerful enough to safeguard their political rights. A well-organized minority should be powerful enough to protect its own rights - political, cultural, economic and social. On his part, he assured them of his full realization that the achievement of Pakistan was the outcome of the labour and toil of the Muslims in India as well as of those who were now enjoying its fruits. **Pakistan would help them in every possible way.**

A member interrupted and asked the Quaid-e-Azam if he would once again, be prepared to take over the leadership of the Muslims of India in the present hour of trial. The Quaid-e-Azam replied that he was quite willing to do so if the Council

gave its verdict in favour of such a proposal. He recalled his statement at the time of the achievement of Pakistan that his job had been done, and with the achievement of Pakistan, the cherished goal of the Muslim nation, he wanted to lead a retired life. **But if called upon, he was quite ready to leave Pakistan and share the difficulties of the Muslims in the Indian Union and to lead them...**

Resolution Adopted by Council Meeting

I - Minorities Protection

... The Council reminds the Governments of both the Indian Union and Pakistan that they jointly gave the most categorical assurances to their respective minorities of full protection of life and property and of a full guarantee of their rights and interests, and most emphatically urges the Governments of the Indian Union and Pakistan, and the authorities concerned, that the pledges given to the minorities be fulfilled in all sincerity.

The Council hopes that both Governments will realize their responsibility in this behalf and prepare, after deliberations, a charter of minority rights which will ensure an honourable existence for the minorities in the two Dominions...

... The Council calls upon the Musalmans of Pakistan and all other loyal citizens of the State to make the greatest possible contribution towards the building up of this newborn State, so that in as short time as possible it can attain an honourable position in the comity of nations of the world as an ideal democratic state based on social justice as an upholder of human freedom and world peace, in which all its citizens will enjoy equal rights and be free from fear, want and ignorance.

II - Organisation

Now that ... India has been divided into two independent and sovereign States, certain changes are inevitable in the structure, objectives and policies of the All-India Muslim League organization. It is obvious that the Musalmans of Pakistan and India can no longer have one and the same political organizations.

The Council, therefore, resolves:

That in place of the All-India Muslim League there shall be separate Muslim League organizations for Pakistan and the Indian Union... That all members of the Council of the All India Muslim League who have become ordinarily residents of the territories comprised by the Indian Union, or have settled therein, and all Muslim members of the Indian Union Constituent Assembly who are primary members of the Muslim League do hereby constitute the Council of the Indian Union Muslim League...

(Source: The Foundations of Pakistan)

Let's Pray for the Jama Masjid Eminent Architect S.S. Shafi

... Jama Masjid is not significant for its religious value but also as an integral part of the country's composite heritage. Designed almost 350 years ago by Ustad Khaleel and built by the emperor Shah Jahan, it was also called Masjid Jahannuma. It is easily the most beautiful mosque in the sub-continent, yet its immediate surroundings are full of filth and squalor...

Those who are its self-appointed guardians ... they seem to consider the mosque and its surroundings as their personal fiefdom and never lose an opportunity to exploit it for their personal gains. A large number of structures, mainly shops, have come around with the open connivance and active encouragement of the so-called Jama Masjid Trust.

Then, a few years ago, a room was built facing the southern side of the mosque, which for some time housed PCO for STD/ITS services. Three years ago, they built yet another wazu ghar for ablutions by the Naib Imam, Ahmed Bukhari. The matter was brought to the notice of the Wakf Board, the ASI and the Delhi Urban Arts Commission. When no response was forthcoming, the Conservation Society of Delhi was compelled to file a PIL. The court ordered the demolition of the wazu ghar, which was subsequently carried out.

Now, a large room has come up, ostensibly for bathing unclaimed dead bodies before burial. Worse, a huge langar khana or community kitchen has been built ... on the western side of the mosque at its rear and facing the Chawri Bazar. While langar khana are attached to gurdwaras and dargahs of Sufi saints ... there is not even a single instance of a langar khana attached to any mosque in India... It is said that the huge structure is actually meant for a kitchen because the space is frequently given for marriage receptions at rates ranging from Rs.20,000 to Rs.50,000.

... The Delhi Government is said to be in the process of setting up an advisory panel to devise a via media to placate the Imam... The formation of a committee or panel would, in fact, amount to unabashed appeasement... Detrimental to the sanctity of the monument...

In fact, the so-called Jama Masjid Trust is an anachronism. Neither its objectives nor its source of funding are known to the public... More importantly, it has done little for the monument it is supposed to maintain. Barely a month ago, the High Court has issued instructions to all the authorities concerned - the Delhi Government, the DDA, the MCD, the ASI and the Delhi Wakf Board - to furnish the list of unauthorised structures erected in or near the monument...

Not only the langar khana deserves to be demolished but also all the other illegal structures that deface the monument.

Vacate the Red Fort Shahabuddin's Letter to Defence Minister

25 October, 1999

The Army continues to occupy nearly ¾ of the Red Fort and thus maintain the imperial tradition which began after the failure of the First War of Independence in 1857.

On my entry in public life in 1979 or so, I took up the question with the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi who agreed, in principle, that the Army would vacate the Red Fort in stages. Twenty years later, the Army is perhaps more strongly entrenched.

There is no reason, whatsoever, for this occupation of a historic monument which should be open to all Indians and even to foreign society.

Once the Army vacates the Fort, the ugly accretions, some perhaps functionally needed, can be removed from the campus and the Wall and the Fort can be restored, as far as possible, to their original glory - at least by marking out the various palaces and structures that dotted it at its heyday. But that is for the future and for the ASI.

In the meantime, may I request you to fulfill the commitments made by the Govt. and instruct the Army to work out a time-bound plan for its phased vacation within the next 2 or 3 years. For this act of courage and political will all Shahjahanabad will salute you.

Government Statement On Renovation of Qutub Minar

... The decorative Calligraphy work on the Veneer stone surface of the Qutub Minar has not been altered in the process of conservation. The expenditure incurred on the maintenance, structural conservation and environmental development of the Qutub Minar Complex during the last 3 years is as under:-

1995-96	Rs.14,10,691	1996-97	Rs.11,47,100
1997-98	Rs.15,65,908		

(Source: LSUQ No. 170 dated 23.2.1999 by S. Ahmad)

(Contd. from Page 571)

Indians received from their European masters, a spirit exploring reconciliation among Indians with different and often conflicting interests, perceptions and versions of history. Yet lingering nationalism resented any sustained focus on Indian weakness, wanting always to link those to the evil of colonialism... Though civil wars, massacres and cruel dictatorships have scarred many an independent country in the second half of the 20th Century, no nation so far has asked the United Nations or an outside power to manage its affairs.

This unwillingness we can honour, but we cannot celebrate the failure in reconciliation, which, among other things, is also a failure to acknowledge that the portion of Asia or Africa that a European colonising power conquered was not necessarily at peace with itself at the time, and has not always been at peace following the foreigner's exit.

(Source: The Hindu, 17 October, 1999)

CIHRS: International Conference of Arab Human Rights 23-25 April, 1999 - The Casablanca Declaration (Extracts)

At the invitation of the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies and hosted by the Moroccan Organization for Human Rights, the First International Conference of the Arab Human Rights Movement" prospects for the Future was held in Casablanca from 23 to 25 April, 1999, to examine the human rights conditions in the Arab world, and the responsibilities, tasks and prospects of the Arab human rights movement.

After extensive discussions, the Conference declared that the only source of reference in this respect is international human rights law and the United Nations instruments and declarations. The Conference also emphasized the universality of human rights.

The Conference ... rejected any attempt to use civilizational or religious specificity to contest the universality of human rights. Commendable specificity is that which entrenches the dignity and equality of citizens, enriches their culture and promote their participation in the administration of public affairs. ...

The Conference affirmed its commitment to the right

to self-determination and its strong condemnation of all acts of oppression, despotism and war that have been and are still being committed against minorities in the Arab world, especially genocide, displacement and enslavement. The Conference affirmed that the Arab human rights movement will treat such actions as crimes against humanity.

In this context, the Conference declares its support for the Kurdish people's right to self-determination and calls upon the United Nations to convene a special international conference with the participation of all the concerned parties to reach an integrated and comprehensive solution to the continued suffering of the Kurdish people.

The Conference also calls for an end to the war in Sudan and urges the establishment of peace within the framework of a formula that ensures the establishment of a democratic system of political plurality, participation in public life, and respect for human rights without discrimination between citizens - including securing the right of the citizens of South Sudan to self-determination.

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Chronology of the Month

(16 October – 15 November, 1999)

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

Party Politics - Congress: *Sonia Gandhi assumes Leadership of the Opposition (19 Oct). Chooses Amethi.

*Forms coalition Government in Maharashtra with NCP. Vilasrao Deshmukh sworn in as CM (19 Oct).

*Withdraws support to RJD Government in Bihar (29 Oct).

NCP: *Applies for recognition as National Party (15 Nov).

BJP: *Drops Kalyan Singh and appoints R.P. Gupta as CM of UP (12 Nov).

*Draws a blank in 6 remaining seats (4 in Bihar, 1 in Assam and 1 in Manipur) (2 Nov).

Shiv Sena: *Bal Thackeray threatens action if arrested or prosecuted for role in Bombay disturbances (19 Oct).

RSS: *Takes credit for NDA's victory; attributes it to Hindu upsurge (19 Oct).

*GS Govindacharya visits USA; holds discussion with US Congressmen and State Dept. (8 Nov).

SP: *Mulayam Singh Yadav holds INC solely responsible (19 Oct).

Pope's Visit: *Parivar particularly VHP demands apology for past atrocities, total stop to proselytisation and foreign funds, launches Dharma Jagran Yatra (21 Oct). PM appeals to VHP not to tarnish India's image (25 Oct). VHP and its front Sanskriti Raksha Manch go ahead with agitation plan. Rath Yatra enters Delhi.

*Christians blame Government for toeing RSS line.

*Government advises Vice-President not to attend All Faiths Meeting to be addressed by Pope.

*Pope's visit passes off peacefully. Pope promulgates 'Churches in Asia', expresses concern at use of religion to divide people and reiterates principle of conversion (5-7 Nov). VHP takes it as challenge (8 Nov) and decides to launch counter campaign (15 Nov).

*Some Dalits in Haryana threaten to change to Christianity. VHP intervenes (11 Nov).

Parliament: *President addresses Joint Session (24 Oct). Speaker Balayogi (TDP) and Dy. Speaker Sayeed (INC) elected unanimously.

Constitution Review: *Committee to Review Constitution to be appointed by 21 January 2000 (8 Nov).

Minorities Commission: *Chairman Tahir Mahmood criticises omission of Muslims and Sikhs from Cabinet (16 Oct).

Reservation: *A.I. Brahmin Mahasabha demands stop to reservation for SC/ST (21 Oct). *Parliament extends SC/ST reservation for another 10 years upto 2009 (28 Oct).

*UP leader ex-CM S.S. Verma calls for economic criteria (Oct).

*Government adds 54 caste groups including Jats in Rajasthan to Central List of OBC's (29 Oct).

*Rajasthan includes Jats in State list (31 Oct). Ajit Singh demands reservation for UP Jats.

*Rajasthan includes 18 more castes (13 Nov).

*SC rules out reservation in single promotion post (3 Nov).

Education: *Education Minister Joshi embarks on saffronisation programme, appoints BJP-related scholars Grover and Sondhi to chair ICHR and ICSSR. Deletes Marxism from school syllabus. CPI(M) decides to launch nationwide agitation (28 Oct).

Minorities Welfare: *Maharashtra revives State Minorities Commission (11 Nov).

Terrorism: *FM Jaswant Singh calls for UN action against international terrorism. India welcome UN Security Council resolution (18 Oct). Commonwealth Heads of States demand deterrent measures against States that harbour and train terrorists.

Human Rights: *Advisory Committee headed by Justice Ahmadi recommends extension of jurisdiction of NHRC to paramilitary personnel, more administrative facilities and authority (20 Oct).

*NHRC grants interim relief to next of kin of a person driven to suicide by police (29 Oct).

Corruption - Bofors Case: *CBI files chargesheet; names Rajiv Gandhi (22 Oct). INC protests vehemently inside and outside Parliament.

Fodder Scam: *Bihar Governor okays prosecution of Laloo Prasad in another fodder case (3 Nov).

Bitumen Scam: *CBI arrests Bihar Road Construction Minister Ilyas Husain (5 Nov).

BABARI MASJID QUESTION

*Special Bench authorizes ADJ, Faizabad to record evidence of Mahant Ramchandra Das Pramahansa in view of advanced age (5 Nov).

*Ram Janambhoomi Trust demands facilitation of Puja and Darshan and renovation of make-shift temple on Babari Masjid site. Pramahansa breaks fast after receiving assurances (31 Oct). Union Government team visits site (14 Nov).

*MOS Uma Bharti reiterates inclusion of Ayodhya, Mathura and Kashi in BJP Agenda (27 Oct).

*On eve of stepping down as UP CM, Kalyan Singh visits Ayodhya, meets Sants, revives Mandir issue and reiterates commitment to construct it (9 Nov). BMMCC cautions Government and people and asks Government to maintain status quo and expedite judicial process (10 Nov).

KASHMIR SITUATION

Militancy: *J&K Secretariat in Srinagar attacked, 3 killed (28 Oct). Badami Bagh cantonment in Srinagar penetrated; 7 killed (3 Nov). VC of Kashmir University M.Y. Qadri escapes bid on life (8 Nov).

Pakistan's Stand: *Pakistan announces unilateral de-escalation along international border (17 Oct) but rules out pull back from LOC (19 Oct).

*Benazir Bhutto asks India and Pakistan to put issue aside and contribute on economic relation (29 Oct). Gen.