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THOUGHTS ON EDUCATING THE MUSLIM INDIANS

Educationally, the Muslim Indians are not only backward but deprived. The literacy level is low as compared to the national average; that of women, appallingly low; at the primary level the enrollment level is low and at the secondary level the output level is very low due to high drop-out level. The proportion at the higher secondary and university level, particularly in professional and post-graduation courses is very poor. Overall literacy is below the national level.

Undoubtedly the social, economic and political status of the community depends on its educational level which determines its representation both at the policy and decision-making level and in the executive and implementation machinery. In a hostile environment, the effectiveness of their endeavour for equality and justice will depend to a large extent on their quality of representation, on the logic of articulation, on the effectiveness of communication, on the accuracy of observation. All this, above all, calls for high educational level in the community as a whole and men and women of high attainments in every walk of life.

Muslim Indians constitute 12% of the national population and they can neither contribute to the commonweal nor secure their own legitimate interests without educational advancement.

The education of the Muslims must be distinguished from Muslim or Islamic Education. There is no such thing as Muslim Education and Islamic Education implies knowledge of the basics of Islam for the individual Muslims and the availability of men of knowledge and expertise to guide the community in religious matters. As a religious group, the Muslim Indians are concerned with maintaining their religious identity and, therefore, with transmission of basic knowledge about religion to the younger generation and with the production of experts in Hadith, Fiqh, Qirat, Hifz ('Ulema) in appropriate numbers, not only to lead congregational prayers in the mosques but to act as religious counsellors and even perform judicial and quasi-judicial functions. But the question of educating the community is largely a question of imparting modern education, on par with the other communities.

Secondly, the education of the Muslim community (apart from religious instruction) is as usual the responsibility of the States as for the other communities. In any case the Muslim Indians do not have the material resources to educate themselves. Therefore, in a democratic-secular set-up, the State cannot ignore their educational needs, nor should they themselves feel any hesitation in seeking State attention and State aid and assistance for their own educational priorities, activities and endeavours as a religious minority.

Thirdly, the education of the Muslim community should be clearly distinguished from the promotion of Urdu. For one

thing, Urdu is not the mother-tongue of all the Muslim Indians. Secondly, every State has a principal language which is the language of the administration, of the economy, increasingly of the polity, including the judiciary. Many Muslim Indians in every linguistic region, almost 100% in States like Kerala, Tamilnadu and Bengal have the principal language as their Mother Tongue. On one hand, this facilitates education and, on the other makes it necessary for them to learn Arabic (and to some extent Urdu) for access to minimum religious knowledge required by a Muslim to be a Muslim. Increasingly Urdu will be overtaken by the other national languages as a storehouses of information about Islam though their need to learn Arabic and thus read (and understand) the Quran will always be there.

Fourthly, secular education must pave the way for economically productive occupation in marketable trades. Hence beyond high school, vocational training must become available as a Second Track, particularly for those who are not intelligent or keen enough to benefit from higher secondary or university education or to compete their way into professional courses.

Throughout the country, Muslim communities are experimenting with education. Some experiments like medical and engineering colleges, an expression of latent gigantomania and consequent ego-satisfaction at the end of it all, fail to find Muslim entrants in sufficient numbers. Some have experimented public schools whose capacity and, therefore, impact is definitely limited. There experiments show nothing more than religious zeal. Some experiments cater to self-interest such as, opening Maktabas and Madarsas everywhere and calling them Jamias primarily for providing self-employment for a graduate of a religious seminary or for supplementing the income of a poorly paid Imam of a Masjid.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES OF THE COMMUNITY

The objective must be clearly defined: to universalise religious instruction for every Muslim child upto the age of 10, when he/she is expected to complete primary education (Class V); to universalise secondary education upto Class X; to provide for the best possible education of quality, for at least 10% of those who pass the secondary examination, at Plus 2/Intermediate level in order to prepare them for admission to University/Professional Education; and, provide vocational training to the others who have dropped out, after primary school or during secondary school, and have not done well in the high school examination. Finally, the objective must include production of Ulema, Muftis, Qaris, Huffaz as well as universalisation of functional literacy among the adults who have never entered the educational stream.

FUNDING OF EDUCATION

It is my considered view that the primary, the

secondary and the vocational education must be funded by the State while the religious instruction at the primary level (and higher religious education) must be funded by the community itself. In addition, forsaking the option of medical and engineering colleges and public schools of its own, the Muslim community must establish higher secondary schools/intermediate colleges for Plus-Two (what is called A-level) as Centres of Excellence to which admission should be on the basis of merit and which should have the best educational environment, the best available teachers and congenial residential facilities. One hopes that Muslim States and organisations like the Islamic Development Bank shall and foundations like Abdus Salam Foundation shall come forward to invest in the employment and income orientated education of the Muslim Indians who form 12% of the world Muslim population.

PROGRAMME OF ACTION

The solution lies in ensuring government facilities for primary and secondary education and vocational training centres/technical training institutes on the basis of national norms, in areas of Muslim concentration, in Panchayats, Blocks and Towns/Wards of cities because, in the existing environment, the Muslim habitants tend to be neglected by the State authorities. The only way out is to exert political pressure on the system by calling the authorities to account, by confronting them with demands, by mobilising support among local legislators/cadres of political parties and by raising a corps of social workers from within the community. The action lies at the grass-roots levels and cannot be undertaken in a centralised manner though the progress can and should be monitored at the district, State or Central level.

As for the higher secondary institutions and technical training institutes, the identified key areas of self-help, the resources of the community have to be mobilised such as Zakat, Sadqat and Income from Wakfs. For this the Educational Movement has to be revived and restructured, with the vertical and horizontal integration of educational groups, societies, associations and conferences at every level. Unity and solidarity are the sine quo nor for the success of this Educational Jihad.

As for the religious instruction, the Masjids must serve as Maktabas to be attended by Muslim children of the locality - for 2 hours every morning, for 5 years. An appropriate course can be evolved which would impart essential knowledge about Islam - its basic tenets and practices, its social and cultural code and about the Holy Prophet, proficiency in reading the Quran (if possible, with literal meaning in the mother-tongue) and elementary Arabic, apart from information on the history of the Islamic peoples and of the contemporary Muslim World, in particular Muslim India.

PARALLEL TRACKS FOR SECULAR AND THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

It is assured that some children who show great

inclination towards religion can switch over to Higher Madarsas/Jamias such as Darul-Uloom, Deoband, or Darul-Uloom Nadwatul Ulema, Lucknow or the Darul-Uloom, Jamias of various Islamic Sects at Varanasi, Lucknow, Bareilly, Hyderabad, Vellore, Bangalore, Calicut etc. as whole-time students and go on to qualify as Qari or Hafiz or acquire proficiency in Tafsir, Hadith and Fiqh and Arabic language and Literature. The Madarsa System has, however, grown and is growing in a haphazard manner. Muslim Ulema must sit down and work out a plan for its reorganisation, so that Maktabas, Madarsas/Jamias etc. equivalent to Primary, Secondary, Higher Secondary, Degree and Postgraduate Colleges and Post-graduate Departments (upto Doctorate) are identified and equitably spaced throughout the country in accordance with the concentration of Muslim population.

What is also needed is a system of standardization and affiliation with well-known institutions whose degrees will be recognised by at least some Universities. This would enable students in the Secular and Religious tracks to change tracks at several junctions such as the secondary and higher secondary certificate, BA or MA degrees.

Modernization of the curriculum to include languages, arithmetic, general science and social studies is also needed, without disturbing its essentially theological character so that the products do not turn into "neither fish nor fowl". It is doubtful, however, that the Ulema, divided as they are among various sects and anxious to hold on to "their own" institutions, later turned into patrimonies, will agree to shift the location, to accept standardization to change the contents and syllabus, to agree to affiliation and to accept any academic discipline without which no systematic rationalization or reorganisation is possible. The mushroom growth can be controlled either by law or by rising consciousness in the Muslim community on whose generosity they thrive.

MUSLIM ALIENATION

Assuming that the State, under political pressure, treats Muslim Indians equally and justly in establishing and locating schools and vocational training centres will the Muslim community come forth to derive full benefits? This is doubtful. Not because the Muslim Indians are averse to secular education but because they find the school culture, as well as the content of education objectionable from a religious angle and they find little point in their children investing valuable time and energy in the pursuing of a course which has little prospect of economic or social return. Secular education provided by the State must be truly secular which it is not. It is becoming increasingly a means of propagating Hindu values and cosmology and inculcating a Hindu ethos in non-Hindu children at an impressionable age. The school culture comprising prayers and songs, with or without drills, observance of festivals and welcome ceremonies is

largely based on Hindu practices. Text books of Languages and Social Studies ignore or misrepresent other religions and focus on Hinduism, Hindu scriptures, Hindu epics and mythologies. History textbooks give a perverted and Hindu-centred perspective and present the rule of kings who had Muslim names as period of darkness and persecution, thus igniting communal sentiments.

What is worse, Urdu-speaking children are forced to receive even primary instruction through the medium of Hindi or the principal language of the State and deprived of facilities to learn their Mother Tongue at the high school or higher secondary level, never as First Language, as it should be under the 3-Language Formula and sometimes totally when they are forced to choose the Principal Language of the State, Hindi and English.

Muslim community thus tends to look at the State educational system as a deliberate and well-planned exercise in deculturalization and de-Islamisation leading towards loss of religious and cultural identity and assimilation in the Hindu culture, which is being presented as the national mainstream. Historically, it was their legitimate fear of religious and cultural submergence which led to their support of Pakistan and continues to alienate the Muslims, particularly in North India, and prevents them from taking full advantages of educational facilities.

Also unless there is reservation in public employment which would open avenues for gainful employment and social status, many Muslim parents will continue to look at secular education as a waste of resources, time and energy.

To sum up, to promote secular education in the Muslim community to the same level as the rest of the nation, not only due facilities need to be provided in Muslim concentration areas but a sincere effort needs to be made to make the school culture and content of education truly non-communal, to introduce mother-tongue as the medium of primary education and give it the pride of place in secondary education, to provide employment opportunities and to mobilise the community itself to invest its own sparse resources for specially identified purposes, and to strive for the government establishing due number of educational institutions in Muslim concentration areas.

Thus alone 1/8 of our population can play its due role and make its due contribution to the progress of our nation.



New Delhi,

1 January, 1997

(SYED SHAHABUDDIN)

Letter to the Editor

... I have been fascinated by your Editorial in the December, 1996 issue "Towards the Third Liberation". I should confess that I do not often see eye to eye with you on many matters you write about but this particular piece is something out of the ordinary. You seem to have gone away from the rut of day to day events and taken a long term view of the way Indian politics is developing... I wish someone would do a soio-political study of the way things have been going from the nineties onwards. I feel you are being a little carried away by your own rhetoric towards the end of the article when you look forward to the Utopia of the Third Liberation to come. I agree it will come, perhaps later than sooner.

- V. Abdullah, Chennai

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Competitive Spirit for
Education amongst Youth.**

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(Andhra Pradesh)**

Vice-President of India's Address at Shiraz University, Iran, 26 October, 1996

In the early nineteen forties, a few years before India became independent, an Iranian Cultural Delegation visited India. The leader of the Delegation in a speech he made in the city of Allahabad said, and I quote: "The Iranians and Indians are like two brothers who, according to a Persian legend, had got separated from each other. One going to the East and the other to the West. Their families had forgotten all about each other and the only thing that remained in common between them were the snatches of a few old tunes which they still played on their flutes. It was through these tunes that, after a lapse of centuries, the two families recognized each other and were reunited". And when they met and recognized each other, they discovered that, apart from certain tunes, there were many other things common between them. Indeed "Few people have been more closely related in origin and throughout history than the people of India and the people of Iran". ...

India is multi-religious, multi-lingual, multi-racial and multi-cultural society which has the impress of an over-informing oneness about it and a many-splendoured variety which is bound together by silken cords of a common unity. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has likened India to "some ancient palimpsest on which layer after layer of thought and reverie had been inscribed, and yet no succeeding layer had completely hidden or erased what had been written previously". In this palimpsest the Persian layer remains one of the clearest and the most beautiful. The Iranian impact on India has been profound in civilizational, cultural and political terms. The highways between India and Iran have been traversed by scholars and statesmen, traders and artists, by men of piety and learning, and by some conquering heroes too. They were the carriers of ideas which influenced the culture and ways of life of both countries. No branch of knowledge, no art form, no area of human endeavour has remained unaffected by this impact. Music, poetry, language, philosophy and architecture bear witness to a relationship which stretches back into history.

For nearly eight hundred years Persian has been the court language of India, and also the language of the intellectual elite. It had filtered even to some sections of the ordinary folk. ...

It is a fact of history that outside Iran the greatest and the most significant role has been played by Indians in promoting Persian literature. Compilations of Persian grammar and Persian lexicons were some of the gifts of India to Iran. The Indian style in Persian literature -Sabak-e-Hindi is well known. In the 14th century Amir Khusrô wrote poetry in Persian and introduced innovations in Indian music based on Persian music. Sanskrit texts and poetry were translated into Persian. "Panchtantra", the great Indian story book, was translated into Persian and it was through Persian that these stories were transmitted to

Europe. Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of Emperor Shahjahan, translated many of the Upanishads into Persian, and it is said that the Upanishads first went to Europe in the Persian translation. Thus, it was through Persian and Arabic that much of Indian philosophy and Sanskrit literature was made known to the Western world.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the Indian social reformer and renaissance personality, had mastered Persian among other languages. He wrote a treatise in Persian on the unity of God under the title Tuhfatal-Muwahhidin in the year 1790. He also published a newspaper in Persian called "Mir'a tul-Akhbar" in 1822-23, the first Persian newspaper in India which was circulated not only in India, but in Kabul, Tehran, Samarkand and Bukhara.

Even today Persian language is taught in India. More than 300 teachers are engaged in teaching Persian language and literature in 180 Departments of Universities and Colleges ... in India. India is also an important publishing centre for Persian books. Thus the influence of Persian language, art and literature on India has been significant. No wonder a French savant has described the Taj Mahal as "the soul of Iran incarnate in the body of India"

Ever since Persia became Islamic the Iranian impact on India became identified with Islamic influence on India. Today in addition to the age-old impact of Persian civilization, India is linked to Iran and to the Islamic world through the massive Islamic presence in its composite society. For over a thousand years Islam was one of the major forces that shaped the cultural, social, economic and political history of India. While Islam in India has maintained all its distinctive religious and cultural characteristics, it has at the same time been woven into the fabric of Indian life and culture through a prolonged process of mutual accommodation and adjustment. There are today 120 million Muslims in India and India has the second largest Muslim population in the world ranking second only to Indonesia... After the partition of India, as a distinguished Indian Muslim politician and scholar, Mr. Syed Shahabuddin, has written, "it was India which was the repository of all that was of a permanent nature in the Islamic heritage of the sub-continent". Every Indian, irrespective of his religious faith, is proud of the Islamic heritage, and whatever be the differences that exist between India and Pakistan, we believe that it is the destiny of the people of the South Asian sub-continent to live in friendship, cooperation and fraternal amity. For we believe that in the long run the forces that make for co-existence and cooperation would be more powerful in South Asia, in the region and indeed in the whole world, than the negative and disruptive forces that work in the opposite direction.

From ancient times India, as a civilization, had looked

upon the entire humanity as a single family. The Indian concept of the unity of mankind was not one that was imposed from outside, a standardization and unification of externals, but one of inner harmony and essential unity. Within this wide framework of approach to life - what we called unity in diversity - tolerance of every belief and custom was practised, and every sort of variety was tolerated, even encouraged in Indian society. This is the matrix in which democracy has taken root, grown and flowered in India of today. Though some of the modern parliamentary institutions were introduced during the British period, they were absorbed and developed by the Indians because of our familiarity with democratic institutions at the grass-roots level in our village panchayats and our traditional heritage of tolerance and respect for different beliefs and points of view. That is what has enabled us to grow into one of the most vibrant democracies in the world, and the largest.

Next year India, will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of its independence. It will be for us a celebration of our democracy and of our social and economic achievements under a democratic system. And it will be the celebration of the remarkable phenomenon of a vast country of 960 millions belonging to different faiths, different languages and every imaginable variety of social customs and practices, living together in peace and amity, finding opportunities to strive for the fulfillment of their needs and aspirations.

It will also be the celebration of the launching of a new idea in international politics, viz., the non-aligned movement which has played an important role in the lessening of tensions and conflicts during the dangerous years of the Cold War, and which has an equally important or an even more important role to play today when efforts are being made to impose a unipolar order on a world that is pluralistic and crying out for greater democracy and equality in international affairs. ...

Bilaterally India and Iran are involved in economic cooperation of major significance. There is a complementarity between the rich resources of Iran and Indian energy needs, scientific-technological capabilities, and for our strength in the areas of management and consultancy. It is possible to match these strengths of our two countries in a cooperation process that will be based on mutual benefit and equality.

In the region it is imperative for us to work together for bringing peace in our neighbourhood and for preventing all manner of external interferences to destabilise nations and to establish strategic strongholds for outside powers. Towards this end we will have to strive consciously to put more vitality and strength into the non-aligned movement.

... The civilization and culture of India and Iran are akin to each other and they have preserved over the centuries in the twists and turns of history, values which are of eternal validity for mankind and which are suffused with spirituality and humanity. These values are threatened today by enormously excessive, materialistic and

consumerist values that modern media and instruments of propaganda are bombarding the world with. We have to resist this cultural bombardment from outside by revitalising and strengthening our own culture and values. At the same time, we cannot, and we should not, turn our back on modern developments. The great Indian poet and sage Rabindranath Tagore visited Iran in 1932. He spent some days in this beautiful city of Shiraz and sitting by the tomb of the immortal poet Hafiz composed a poem in praise of him. Later in a message to Iranian friends he wrote: "If we cannot absorb what is modern we shall have to bear its assault. But that does not mean that we have to lose our inner wealth and accept what is coming from outside". The inner wealth that countries like Iran and India have acquired over the millennia is immense and impregnable. That is our great strength and cultural shield. We must consciously and tenaciously hold on to it, while imbibing the best from the outside world. The great poet Hafiz had sung:

"In this dusty world, to hand cometh not a man,
It is necessary to make another world, and anew - a man".

We may not be able, out of the dusty and troubled world today, to make another world and a new man, but we can, India and Iran, together make our part of the world a little safer and better to live in.

(Contd. from Page 47)

Obituary: *Nobel Laureate Physicist Abdus Salam, 70, passes away in Oxford (21 Nov). *Mufti Jalil Ahmad, ex MLA (UP), 54, passes away (30 Nov). *Eminent Urdu poet and academician Waheed Akhtar, 63, passes away in New Delhi (13 Dec).

Other Religious Minorities: *Sikhs observe 321st anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom and recall Aurangzeb's responsibility (15 Dec).

Muslim World - OIC: *Mr. Izzeddin Laraki, ex P.M. of Morocco elected as S.G. of OIC vice Mr. Hamid el Ghabid in Jakarta (13 Dec). *India supports Rabbani regime (17 Nov). OIC decides to keep Taliban Government out and keep Afghanistan's seat vacant (12 Dec). *Algeria votes for new constitution banning religion-based parties. *Shia-Sunni clashes, Ihtisab Commission and electoral campaigns in Pakistan attract attention. *Iran's Speaker Ayatullah Noori pays official visit to India (27-29 Nov). Pleads for Shia-Sunni unity. Iran's Majlis approves indexation of 'Mehr'. *Turkey's ruling Refat Party supports India's membership of OIC (16 Dec). *SAARC Foreign Ministers Council meets in New Delhi (19-20 Dec). *India and Bangladesh sign Treaty on sharing Ganga water during P.M. Hasina Wajid's visit (11 Dec).

Growth Profile of Major Political Parties (1986-1996)

State CPI(M)	Congress		BJP		Janata		Dal*		CPI	
	86	96	86	96	86	96	86	96	86	96
A.P.	50	27	8	3	-	-	11	19	11	15
Arunachal	21	43	1	-	-	3	-	-	-	-
Assam	25	36	-	4	-	-	-	3	2	2
Bihar	196	28	16	43	13	168	12	26	1	6
Goa	18	18	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gujarat	149	45	11	76	14	-	-	-	-	-
Haryana	36	9	6	11	1	-	-	-	-	-
Himachal	58	52	7	7	-	-	-	-	-	-
J&K	26	7	-	8	-	5	-	-	-	-
Karnataka	66	36	2	40	137	113	4	-	2	1
Kerala	20	37	-	-	-	4	13	18	26	40
M.P.	250	177	58	112	5	4	-	2	-	1
Maharashtra	162	80	16	85	20	11	-	-	2	3
Manipur	29	21	-	1	4	7	1	2	-	-
Meghalaya	25	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mizoram	20	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nagaland	20	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Orissa	117	80	1	10	21	46	1	1	-	-
Punjab	63	87	1	6	-	1	9	4	5	1
Rajasthan	113	73	39	100	10	4	1	-	-	1
Sikkim	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tamilnadu	26	-	-	1	4	-	3	8	15	-
Tripura	12	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	37	44
U.P.	269	35	16	174	20	7	6	1	2	4
W. Bengal	49	82	-	-	-	-	-	2	174	150
Delhi	34	14	19	49	1	4	-	-	-	-
Pondicherry	15	9	-	-	2	1	-	2	-	-
Total MLAs	1674	1083	201	714	252	378	61	88	277	268
Growth	-42.2%		+255.2%		+50%		+44.2%		3.2%	

* Janata Party figures in 1986

New Trends in National Problems

D.L. Sheth in the India Today, 31 August, 1996

... With the idea of political representation undergoing change, political parties are assuming the character of unidimensional interest groups. They are increasingly shedding their ideological and programmatic form which could reconcile different interests and identities in society. The Congress, which until recently enjoyed broad-based support, continues to maintain its form but has lost the substance.

Every other party is chasing its respective limits of caste-communal and regional support, which even when fully realised cannot amount to a majority support in the electorate. Thus, the prospect of any one party, or even a coalition, commanding a political majority at the national level is getting dimmer with every parliamentary election since 1989. The parties, instead of being the interface among the state and the society, are increasingly becoming political fronts of caste, communal and regional forces. Along with representation, the idea of accountability is also changing. Parties are becoming directly accountable to the regions/castes/communities they are supposed to represent than to any system of norms, democratic or otherwise....

The challenge crystallised by the change of 1996 is, thus, to rearrange the national political space in a synergic

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SC on Electoral Misuse of Religion

Kalamata Mohan Rao, Appellant vs Narayana Rao Dharma and others, Respondents.

J.S. VERMA AND K.S. PARIPOORNAN, JJ.

Corrupt Practice - Representation of the People Act, 1951, Section 123(3) - Appeal on ground of religion - Posters pasted (with) top a sloka from Bhagwad Gita and below depicting the appellant-candidate's party chief in the role of Lord Krishna ... - Posters got pasted by the appellant himself - Held, the posters constituted an appeal by the appellant for votes on ground of his religion - Corrupt practice ... proved.

Held:

The contents of the poster (pleaded in the election petition) amount to an appeal by the candidate (appellant) for votes on the ground of his religion. The clear meaning of its contents is that the party chief is an incarnation of God worshipped by the Hindus who is seeking votes for his candidates, the appellant, who is a Hindu, at the election to conquer the evil in the form of the rival political party; and for the sake of Hindu religion to which the appellant belongs, the voters should vote for the appellant, a candidate of the party which is led by an incarnation of God worshipped by the Hindus. This is how it was understood by the voters. The act of canvassing through the medium of these posters pasted on the walls at different places in the constituency has been attributed directly to the appellant himself by the PWs whose testimony has been rightly accepted by the High Court. The un rebutted evidence led in support of the election petition is sufficient to prove that the act of putting up these posters at different places in the constituency as alleged has been duly proved. Thus the corrupt practice under Section 123(1) of the R.P. Act alleged against the appellant stands proved.

(Source: 1995 Supreme Court 728)

Nehru on Secular India

The freedom we had envisaged and for which we had laboured through generations of trial and suffering was for all the people of India, and not for one group or class or the followers of one religion. We aimed at a cooperative commonwealth in which all would be equal sharers in opportunity and in all the things that give meaning and value to life. Why then this strife, this fear and suspicion of each other? (Speech on 8 September, 1946)

but rooted way.... Failure to create national politics in which all roots have a common stake can lead to a vacuous 'cultural nationalism' of the Hindutva variety. That can create a false political majority sooner than we think; the system will not allow the void that has been created at its apex for too long.

BJP: National Executive Political Resolution,

Jaipur, 17 November, 1996

... The BJP considers the United Front's subversion of the Constitution and abuse of power in Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh as nothing short of Machiavellian politics at its worst...

The BJP holds that the reimposition of President's rule through a fresh Presidential Ordinance on the strength of the fiction that the Governor has "explored" all avenues of Government formation but failed in his endeavour is a glaring example of an unscrupulous Government committing a fraud on the Constitution...

The collaborative role of two political organisations in the anti-people and anti-democratic actions of the United Front Government cannot be overemphasised. The Congress, which entered into a compact with the United Front as a strategy to stop the law from catching up with the misdeeds of its leaders, has lived up to its reputation of exhibiting depthless cowardice before power and limitless insolence before justice...

... Going by the overzealousness of the CBI and the Government to protect the former Congress president, it is more than likely that all attempts will be made to suppress the truth.

The BJP regrets this debasement of polity by the inaction and worse of the United Front. The Deve Gowda Government, of course, has its reasons for not including fighting corruption on its agenda. Had it done so, it would have had to prosecute the Janata Dal president and Bihar Chief Minister, Shri Laloo Prasad Yadav, for his leading role in the fodder scam which has left the scamsters richer by more than Rs. 2,000 crores. That, in turn, would have jeopardised Shri Deve Gowda's prime ministership as a substantial number of Janata Dal MPs owe their allegiance to Shri Yadav...

The collaborative role of the Left in propping up the morally bankrupt United Front has been no less despicable than that of the Congress... Over the past six months the Left has shown its true colours and the BJP shall expose it further.

The BJP shares the nation's relief over the installation of an elected Government in Jammu and Kashmir after six years and congratulates the people and the security forces for enabling elections to the State Assembly despite attempts by the terrorists organisations and their mentors in Pakistan to stall the electoral process... We demand that the security forces should continue to be deployed and allowed a free hand to deal with terrorism without any interference either by the Centre or the State Government. We also demand that the defence committees should not be disbanded. The BJP is concerned over Dr. Abdullah's recent utterances about restoring Jammu & Kashmir's pre-1952 status and the scrapping of Article 249, as well as the

United Front Government's eagerness to give in to these demands. There can be no bilateral deal between the United Front and the National Conference, which is a constituent of the former, on the issue of autonomy and the BJP pledges to protect the nation's interests from being sacrificed at the altar of political expediency. The BJP cautions Dr. Abdullah from indulging in political irredentism... The Chief Minister must also ensure regional autonomy for Jammu and Ladakh...

The BJP also demands the immediate scrapping of the Illegal Migrants Determination Act which has proved to be a hindrance in identifying illegal immigrants in Assam... This Act needs to be replaced with a law that is more effective and puts the onus on the state to detect and deport aliens...

The purpose that cements together these practitioners of opportunist politics is to somehow keep the BJP away from power and thus ensure their survival... It is the survival instinct which has brought them together on a common platform. To hide this truth, they have raised the bogey of "communalism" and how they stand for "secularism" - a stand reflected in the recent Government submission before the Supreme Court that it has no intention of fulfilling the constitutional mandate and legal responsibility of introducing a Uniform Civil Code, and the shameless attempt to secure minority votes during the Uttar Pradesh elections by recruiting the services of Imams.

The BJP's unwavering commitment to uncompromising nationalism, be it Hindutva or Swadeshi, and its relentless crusade against minorityism have contributed in no small measure to bringing the debate on secularism into sharp focus, thus exposing the pseudo-secularists and their fake ideology. The increasing acceptance of our ideology from Kanyakumari to Kashmir is directly proportionate to the marginalisation of the pseudo-secularists who, faced with the reality of more and more people rejecting the politics of appeasement, are compelled to make a last stand against the powerful and overwhelming forces of nationalism which the BJP has unleashed. Indeed, in many ways the United Front represents the last obstacle in the path of the BJP which has to be overcome to fulfil the party's destined task of leading the nation into the 21st century. The BJP resolves to overcome this obstacle. For, the tide of history is working for the BJP in the long run... The BJP considers the United Front's subversion of the Constitution and abuse of power in Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh as nothing short of Machiavellian politics at its worst...

The BJP holds that the reimposition of President's rule through a fresh Presidential Ordinance on the strength of the fiction that the Governor has "explored" all avenues of

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(Contd. from page 32)

and retain its spiritual essence. As a result, one would no longer be ashamed of calling oneself religious. There would be no reason to fear religion, to deny religion. There would be no reason to speak of religion in a strategy/diplomatic fashion. Because in the new world religion would unfold its potential. It would spiritualise the world, bring authentic harmony, universality and tolerance. Religion would be able to save itself from its self-proclaimed "protectors".

(Source: The Mainstream, Annual 1995)

M.D. Nalapat On Impact on BJP of Development in Gujarat and UP

... Both by conceding the opposition space entirely to it and by the overkill witnessed in Gujarat and UP, the UF-Congress alliance may be building up a popular backlash of support for the saffron party. UF policies are clearly being driven by the ideologies of the Left - the same individuals who attacked the President of India for first calling upon A.B. Vajpayee to form the government. According to the Left, the BJP is today an untouchable that has to be driven away from power by any means...

If the BJP is prevented from coming to office - or is sought to be toppled by undemocratic means - the influence of the fanatics within that party will grow. As a result, the party may focus not on the legislatures but on the streets, whipping up agitations and provoking confrontations. With the BJP on the streets and the Left parties calling for fiscal anarchy, the Deve Gowda government is likely to lose public support. Given the Congress policy of tailing the UF, most of the benefit from loss of public support to the Gowda government is likely to go to the BJP and putative allies such as Lakshmi Parvathy in A.P. and R.K. Hegde in Karnataka.

While the conventional wisdom is that a BSP-BJP alliance in UP will suit the UF in that it will prise the Congress loose from the Dalits party, the fact is that a BSP-BJP government may open up enquiries into the Mulayam Singh regime's decisions and provide sufficient dirt for prosecution. This may result in a shrinkage of the Samajwadi Party base, in the same way as Rao's travails have hit the Congress or Laloo Prasad Yadav's links to the fodder mafia have hit the Janata Dal.

Of course, a BSP-BJP government in UP can follow the policy of the Manohar Joshi government in Maharashtra and let sleeping scandals lie. While Mr. Gopinath Munde used to emote about the links of the Congress with gangsters while in opposition as home minister, he has shown little inclination to follow up. However, Mr. Kanshi Ram may not be as accommodating as Mr. Joshi and Mr. Munde.

Thus far Mr. Kalyan Singh has succeeded in preventing a BSP-BJP alliance. However, the knowledge that the MLAs of the two parties are vulnerable to the siren call of Mr. Yadav and the desire to pay back the UF-Congress for Gujarat, may in the coming weeks result in BJP backing the BSP in UP. ...

Time is running out for all the principals. Mr. Kanshi Ram's support base is vulnerable to intimidation and Mr. Yadav may be calculating that in a fresh poll, governor Bhandari, Mr. Tikait and assorted musclemen will be able to prevent enough Dalits voting to give SP the upper hand. Thus, the BSP supremo may have to either agree to a coalition government (instead of one with outside support)

or be ready to face a fresh poll under adverse conditions. The BJP needs Mr. Kanshi Ram's support base in order to edge past the 220-mark in Parliament; so it may have to decide on holding on to the Kalyan Singh thesis or coming to terms with the BSP.

As predicted, UP is emerging as a decisive factor in national politics. In the next few weeks, two questions may come up for an answer: will the Congress swallow its hurt and support the proclamation of Central government rule in UP? If so, a formal alliance with the UF appears near. Second, will the BSP and the BJP stake a claim in UP, and if so, will the governor dissolve the assembly rather than allow the majority group to come to power? If the answer to the first question is "no" and that to the second "yes", the country appears headed for a return to 1990. The constitutional contortions designed to keep away the BJP may then build up enough popular support for that party to have a fair chance at power.

(Source: The Times of India, 29 October, 1996)

Triumph of the Forked Tongue Editorial, The Pioneer, 25 October, 1996

... No tears are being shed by the self-professed champions of secularism now the Congress has climbed from its much-touted pedestal of anti-RSSism to facilitate the elevation of Shantersinh Vaghela as the Chief Minister of Gujarat despite his categorical assertion that he will keep alive his association with the Sangh. Sooner or later, given its perfection in the art of doublespeak, Congress may take delight in having killed two birds with one stone - having used an RSS man to prevent the return of the BJP to power, much to the peril of Vaghela himself.

Politics is fast becoming a dirty word and all politicians morally suspect... largely on account of the mounting mismatch between their rhetoric and actions. Gujarat is the latest manifestation of this alarming trend...

... Following BJP's inability to hold its flock together, the UF and Congress may have scored a tactical victory, never mind the methods. But in the long run history will judge them in the same light for having subverted the role of the legislature as past Congress Governments.

I was always a somewhat hypocritical Christian... So I wanted no hypocrisy when I accepted Islam. If I was going to become a Muslim, I wanted to be a good Muslim.

- Masooma, (nee McGan) Ali, wife of pop singer Lucky Ali, on why she decided to adopt the purdah after converting to Islam.

Ajay K. Mehra on Jharkhand Politics

... Since the demand for Jharkhand, a separate State comprising thirteen districts of the Chhotanagpur plateau of Bihar, three districts of south-west West Bengal, three districts of east Orissa and two districts of west Madhya Pradesh, has been in existence for some decades now, it cannot be wished away. Apart from the JMM, it now has the support of the local Congress unit and also the BJP. Little wonder, a better organised BJP has attempted to fill the vacuum left by the JMM. It is also putting forth the argument that it has better credentials than any other political formation or leader to take over the mantle as apart from the JMM it alone has campaigned for the Jharkhand State, albeit with a different name - Vananchal.

It is not surprising that a leaderless, splintered and discredited JMM could not take advantage of Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda's independence day promise of statehood to Uttarakhand, a relatively nascent claim... The JMM did make a few statements regarding launching an armed struggle, but it was left to the BJP to launch a blockade of the mineral resources transported from the Ruhr of India.

Even though Chhotanagpur plateau was marked by sporadic uprising by different tribes against the dikus (outsiders) and the British since the late 18th century, the Jharkhandis trace their autonomist demands to the Santhal rebellion of 1855 and Birsa Munda's ulugulan (revolution, in Mundari dialect) in 1895...

Birsa's ulugulan had targetted the Christian missionaries as well, but the renaissance amongst the tribals in the region 1910 onwards was led by Christian tribals. Still lacking a dynamic and charismatic leader, they made representations to the Simon Commission and the Cripps Mission for a separate State for the Adivasis. The formation of the Jharkhand Party, a party of the Chhotanagpur tribals, in 1949 under the leadership of Jaipal Singh, an Oxford educated tribal Christian was a turning point in the history of the Jharkhand Movement.

The party which won 33 seats in the Bihar Legislative Assembly and three Lok Sabha seats in 1952, submitted a memorandum to the States Reorganisation Commission for a separate Jharkhand State. The party emerged as a force to reckon within Bihar under the leadership of Jaipal Singh. He was, however, wooed and finally persuaded ... to join the Congress along with his party's legislators in 1963. This was the beginning of betrayals and splintering of the Jharkhand movement.

... In recent years, the Jharkhand leaders had shown plenty of foresight in dropping their demand for the ouster of the dikus and widening the scope of their claim. But the wranglings within the movement about the Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council and its splintering since the creation of the JAAC by the Bihar Govt. considerably weakened the leadership... The Jharkhand leaders like Shibu Soren ... were reduced to a laughing stock ... since he took over as a head of the JAAC. The bribery case, by all accounts the darkest chapter in the history of the tribal urge for autonomy in

Chhotanagpur, has come as a bolt from the blue.

A quest for an identity and development were the two core issues that guided the movement ever since the early days when the Jharkhand movement was born. The leaders of the movement realised lately the fragility of the demand as they constituted only 30 per cent of the population. Looking at the widening support for statehood to the region, they wisely transformed it into a regional demand...

It is too early to say whether the BJP with its different orientation would be able to take the movement for "Vananchal" to the emotional level and pitch to which the JMM could. Even if it does and succeeds in having a State carved out for the tribals of Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh, the question of tribal identity is likely to remain a live and volatile issue in the region.

(Source: The Pioneer)

Insaf Morcha Proposes Sseparation of Gorkhaland from West Bengal And Union of Sikkim and Gorkhaland into a Nepali-Speaing State

Shahabuddin's Statement, 3 October, 1996

"The CPM's stand on the formation of a separate State of Gorkhaland is not surprising because the CPM, as the political party in power in West Bengal, must cater to the interests of the Bengali-speaking people.

Secondly, the question of employment and other opportunities all over West Bengal is totally irrelevant for under the Constitution, the whole country is a common field of opportunity for all citizens.

Thirdly, West Bengal's record in treatment of linguistic and ethnic minorities and even the backward classes is far from glorious.

On the other hand, the creation of yet another mini State in the region will be a factor of destabilisation. Objectively speaking, States must have an optimum size for installation of the political and administrative infrastructure and for planned economic and social development.

Nepali is now one of our national languages and the Nepalis constitute the majority of the people of the neighbouring state of Sikkim. At the time of the reorganisation of states in 1956-57, both Nepal and Sikkim had a different status. Now there is every reason to constitute a state which brings together all the Nepali-speaking people in adjacent area of Sikkim and West Bengal.

This is the only way to protect the interest of the Nepali-speaking people and to fulfill the aspirations of the ethnic Nepalis who form a majority of the population in this area. The Darjeeling Gorkha Hill area should, therefore, be separated from West Bengal and joined with Sikkim and the boundary between West Bengal and the new State should be delimited on the basis of contiguity and with Nepali majority revenue village as the unit."

G.V.L. Narasimha Rao on UP Elections

The wheel has turned full circle for all political parties in UP. The final tally of the seats won by the main contenders in the present assembly elections looks practically the same as in the 1993 elections.

The BJP which was projected to improve its vote share by all pre-poll surveys including that of CMS, has failed to register any increase. An increase in the BJP vote appeared likely in view of the consolidation of upper caste vote as a result of the Congress alliance with the BSP and the inclusion in the UF of the Congress(T). ...

What seems to have decisively turned the scales against the BJP this time, and more so in Eastern UP, is the turnout factor - both the level of turnout and the differential turnout of various castes. Since 1991, the BJP's performance has varied in different elections according to the level of turnout the party won a majority when the turnout was below 50 per cent but fell well short of a majority when turnout exceeded 50 per cent.

The BJP won a majority in assembly elections only once, that is in 1991, when the turnout was 49%. Even in the 1991 and 1996 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP fared well. In a low turnout situation, when the turnout was 49 and 48%, respectively. On the contrary the party failed in securing a majority in the present assembly elections and the 1993 assembly elections when the turnout increased to 54 and 53% respectively. The impact of high or low turnout affects different parties differently. Generally, a high turnout is considered to be an indication of the anti-establishment mood and thus expected to favour a party out of power, while a low turnout is expected to favour a party with a committed base of voters. However, in the present scenario in UP where caste polarisation is sharp, issues cease to be important and caste becomes the overriding factor. What determines the outcome then is the participation of different castes in the voting process.

A high polarisation of voters of different castes along party lines was evident from the poll surveys. In this situation, the party which could mobilise their core support base the most tended to benefit. ...

In Eastern UP where the Yadavs and Dalits account for a substantial chunk of the electorate, they have apparently turned out in much larger numbers to vote for the SP and the BSP, respectively. The high-pitched and acrimonious campaign approach of the SP and the BSP was enough provocation for these groups to turn out in larger numbers to vote. Also the SP and the BSP are generally perceived as regional parties and their voters, therefore, participate more enthusiastically in assembly elections than in Lok Sabha elections, while the BJP is perceived as a national party and the turnout of its supporters goes down in assembly elections.

Upper caste voters have a sizeable presence in Eastern UP and have been the mainstay of the BJP in the region. The BJP has apparently failed to mobilise upper caste voters especially in urban areas, and as a result only

committed BJP voters turned out to vote. While, that may have helped in a low-turnout situation as in the Lok Sabha elections, in the present assembly elections, it has clearly not worked.

As the party occupying the distinct second position in Eastern UP, the SP has benefitted the most from the BJP's inability to improve its turnout.... While the BSP has not succeeded much in attracting upper caste votes even where they fielded such candidates the SP does seem to have succeeded in undercutting the BJP support especially in constituencies where they fielded Rajput/Bhumihar candidates. In conclusion, what seems to have hurt the BJP most and affected the poll forecasts is the inability of the party to mobilise its support base, the upper caste voters, to the polling booths, while its rival the SP and the BSP have fared much better on this score. ...

(Source: The Times of India, 17 October, 1996)

P.K. Roy

On JD's Poor Tally in UP

The JD's dismal performance in the UP Assembly elections in spite of the hectic campaigning by PM Deve Gowda and Central Ministers and the fact that unlike in 1993, it was part of a broad-based UF alliance, is chiefly responsible for keeping the tally of the UF low, compared with the BJP. The Janata Dal which contested 54 seats had managed to win only 7, against 27 secured in 1993.

... From 208 seats secured by it in 1989, the tally came down to 92 in 1991 elections, 27 in 1993 and now only 7 in 1996. ... The discomfiture of the JD ... has not saddened the SP leaders, who insisted that in UP Mulayam Singh Yadav's writ ran... The other ... leader to face marginalisation in his home State is Mr. N.D. Tiwari. The Congress(T) managed to win only 4 seats ... contesting most seats in the Uttarakhand it has been wiped out there. On the other hand, the Samajwadi Party has further consolidated its position, in terms of poll percentage, although it recorded an increase of only a single seat in 1996 over its 1993 tally. Significantly, while the BJP's poll percentage has gone down by one and a half per cent in comparison of 1996 Lok Sabha poll gains, the SP increased its poll percentage by 8 per cent...

... All those who were induced out of the BSP by Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav to his party have lost the poll. ...

(Source: The Hindu, 13 October, 1996)

On SP-JD Relations in UP

... The State JD ... charges that the Samajwadi Party not only did not extend its might to help it to bag a good number of seats, but on the other hand ensured its defeat in several seats. Its leaders point out that while the Congress has benefited from the alliance with the BSP, to increase its tally from 28 in 1993 to 33 in 1996, the JD's figure has come down to a mere 7 against 27 in 1996, notwithstanding extensive tours of UP by Prime Minister Deve Gowda...

(Source: The Hindu, 24 October, 1996)

Aijaz Ahmed on Abul Kalam Azad-Pan-Islamism to Nationalism

... The Pan-Islamist anti-colonialism of the Al-Hilal decade was in any case inconsistent on many counts. The characterisation of all Muslims of the world as a single qawm (nation) with a political centre (siyasi markaz) located in Istanbul (Constantinople), with a Caliph of Islam who was also the Sultan, specifically, of Turkey, left the Indian Muslims in a highly ambiguous situation, which was resolved only rhetorically, in the language of metaphor, but never in terms of rational, analytic discourse. How many nations could one belong to simultaneously, with how many political centres? If the sharia enjoined that one always be the subject of the Caliph/Sultan of Turkey, what status would one have if India were independent and there were to be a war between the two countries or, in the less dire case, if the Sultan simply forbade one to obey Indian laws? What happens, in that case, to the concentric circles which appeared on the Khilafat stationery, to dissolve in a metaphor the difficulty of belonging to two nations simultaneously, one territorial and Indian, the other religious and transcontinental?

It is also indicative that Azad always spoke emphatically of the exclusive rights of Muslims in Jazirat-al-Arab - in which he specifically included Palestine, Syria and Lebanon in addition to Peninsular Arabia - while routinely ignoring the indigenous non-Muslim populations of those regions. Did they have no rights? What rights could they have, considering that Azad had explicitly said that theocratic government was the only just form of government? How does one reconcile minority rights - or even majority rights, for that matter - with theocracy? It is doubtless the case, furthermore, that his articles in Al-Hilal and Al-Balagh focused on mobilising Indian Muslims against colonial authority. It is also the case, however, that these same articles have little to say to - or even about - the non-Muslim population inside India. There was doubtless some vague sense that there should be anti-British cooperation; but there are also statements to the effect that Muslims need to learn nothing, and certainly accept no leadership, from Hindu. So, what happens to this Muslim-Hindu cooperation if the British do actually leave, considering that one stands already for theocratic form of government?

Even the idea of Umma Wahida started surfacing in his writings only in 1920 and only as an oppositional unity against the British. What was to be the positive form of this unity if the British did actually leave, and how were the Muslims - with their belief in theocratic government and their loyalty to the Turkish Caliph - to live in an independent polity where non-Muslims were in the majority? Even the basis of this idea of Umma Wahida was problematic. The theological justification which was found in the precedent of the Treaty of AD 628, whereby the Prophet of Islam had made his peace with Jews, was certainly useful in inducting the pietistic, Pan-Islamicist cadres into a country-wide agitation which spread more or less seamlessly from the mosques to the kisan sabhas and

from Gandhian Non-Cooperation to medial aid for Turkey. With the help of this precedent from early Islamic history Azad "asserted", as Mushirul Hasan puts it, "that uniting with one category of non-Muslims, the Hindus, against another category of non-Muslims, the British, was obligatory." So, a provisional "unity" was forged, so long as the "treaty" was in effect. But what happens to this "treaty" if the common enemy, the British, disappears, considering that Muslims were a minority in India and could not possibly have an Islamic theocracy? Azad was to resolve these political problems only much later, around 1940, when he abandoned the search for a pietistic justification for Hindu-Muslim unity and accepted the secular premise. ...

(Source: Azad's Career: Roads Taken And Not Taken)

(Courtesy: The News from India)

H.A. Hafiz on Muslim Religious Politics

Come elections in UP and various Muslim outfits, Maulanas and Imams and even priests of dargahs (mausoleums) occupy vantage points in the electoral arena to advocate the "cause and welfare" of the minority community. These outfits, their leaders and even Imams disappear from the scene till the next elections...

The Muslim voters account for roughly 18% of the total electorate even though in some of the constituencies their percentage ranges between 35 to 50. They hold a decisive sway in over 110 of the 425 Assembly constituencies. But they are not a well-knit community and are as divided on political issues as any other community. The only point of agreement among the minority voters is their antipathy for the BJP which, they feel, is bounding their community even on trivial issues. The demolition of the Babari Masjid on December 6, 1992 cemented their unity only against the Sangh Parivar and its political arm the BJP.

In pursuit of their vote-bank politics, all the parties believing in the myth of en bloc voting by Muslims in UP chase them for their votes. In this no-holds-barred exercise, they enlist support of Imams, priests and Maulanas to swing the minority votes in their favour.

The latest craze for minority vote has overwhelmed the Dalit-based BSP which has enlisted support of Imam Abdullah Bukhari, his deputy and even the priest of the Ala Hazrat Dargah of Bareilly. Some fake Muslim outfits thriving only on publicity by vernacular press have also known their hat in the ring to boost Muslim for the BSP.

In his endeavour to cut into the vote-bank of the SP so as to swell his own vote-bank, Kanshi Ram and Mayawati to secure at least 5% of the minority votes and another 5% of the most backward among the OBCs to secure at least 40% votes. The BSP polled 20.60% votes in the recent Lok Sabha elections and its electoral partner, the Congress, secured 8.14% votes (together 29%) vote.

(Source: The Assan Age, 24 September, 1996)

AIMPLB-BMC, BMMCC AND AIBMAC's Joint Memorandum On the Babari Masjid Question

Submitted to the President and the Prime Minister of India, 6 December, 1996

On behalf of the Babari Masjid Movement, the Muslim community and the secular forces we beg to draw your attention to the following facts on the 4th anniversary of the demolition of the Babari Masjid.

Four years after the Demolition of the Babari Masjid by the chauvinist forces, your Government is yet to fulfill the commitment of the then Prime Minister, with the world as his witness, to rebuild the Masjid.

Four years after the Demolition, the site of the Babari Masjid stands occupied by an unlawful structure, constructed in defiance of the law and converted in violation of the status quo, into a make-shift temple, after you had taken over the governance of the State.

Four years after the Demolition, the Commission of Inquiry set up by the Government is yet to complete its task and has not even submitted its Preliminary Report which would serve to reveal the face of the conspirators.

Four years after the Demolition, the criminal proceedings before the Special Bench has made little progress and although some individuals have been charge-sheeted and committed to trial, not a single person has been punished for this crime against the Nation.

Four years after the Demolition, the title suit is plodding its slow passage before the Special Bench of the Allahabad High Court.

Four years after the Demolition, the Supreme Court is yet to punish those who have committed blatant contempt of court and order the demolition of the concrete structure constructed by them, or, the construction of the ancient Masjid they demolished.

Four years after the Demolition, some persons directly responsible for the demolition, including those who pride themselves on their role, sit in legislatures and occupy high places in the public life of the country.

Four years after the Demolition, the next-of-kin of those killed in the mass frenzy and police action that followed have not all received any compensation and many innocent persons continue to be detained under TADA.

Four years after the Demolition, Sangh Parivar particularly the RSS and the VHP are once again beating the war drums and threatening to take the law into their hands once again and inciting the people to forcibly occupy and demolish the Shahi Idgah at Mathura and the Gyanvapi Masjid in Varanasi and its political front, the BJP is maintaining a diplomatic silence, only out of fear of derecognition.

In the circumstances, we beg to place humbly the following demands before you for transmission to your Government for due consideration.

1. The title suit pending before the Special Bench, the inquiry in the hands of the Liberhan Commission of Inquiry and the Criminal Case before the Special Judge, Lucknow, be expedited by instituting day-to-day hearing and extending full cooperation of the Government.
2. The Supreme Court be moved by your Government to take up the contempt proceedings and bring them to their logical and legal conclusion and order the demolition of the concrete platform and of the illegal make-shift temple on the site of the Babari Masjid.
3. The Government publicly reiterate its commitment to rebuild the Masjid on its original site, if the title suit is decided in favour of the Muslim community although you will appreciate that in law and equity, the Muslim community is entitled to claim immediate reconstruction of the Babari Masjid, whatever be the final judicial verdict in the question of title.
4. The Government fulfill its commitment to pay Rs.2 lakhs for each life lost in post-Ayodhya disturbances.
5. The Government advise the State Governments concerned to review the cases of all detainees, under TADA or otherwise, and advise them to release those who have not yet been charge-sheeted and those against whom there are no serious allegations.
6. The Government should take due notice of the rising tempo of agitation by the RSS/VHP on the questions of the Shahi Idgah, Mathura, and the Gyanvapi Masjid, Varanasi, which are protected by the Places of Worship (Special Provision) Act, 1991, and take preemptive steps in accordance with law to nip the mischief in the bud.

While the wounds of Demolition have not yet healed, the Forces of Chauvinism continue to besiege the Citadel of Secularism. The very survival of Secular State continues to be at stake. On the other hand, the people in general, and the Muslim community in particular, who are committed to the secular order are losing their faith in the State. We have come to beg you to restore their faith and give heart to the forces of secularism by asking your Government to act sympathetically on our submission.

**AIMPLB - BMC, BMMCC and AIBMAC
Joint Statement on Observance of 4th
Anniversary of the Demolition of the
Babari Masjid, 27 November, 1996**

On behalf of the Babari Masjid Movement, the AIMPLB BMC, the BMMCC and the AIBMAC jointly appeal to the secular forces, in general, and to the Muslim community in particular, suitably to observe the 4th anniversary of the demolition of the Babari Masjid by the chauvinist forces.

The Babari Masjid Movement requests all the people, as a mark of remembrance, to observe a bandh all over the country and keep their shops and establishments closed upto 2 P.M.

- * Calls upon the Imam and Khatibs of all mosques to make or allow brief speeches on the question of Babari Masjid before the Khutba and to offer "Doa" for the restoration of the Babari Masjid site.
- * Decides to submit a joint Memorandum to the President and the Prime Minister seeking, inter-alia, effective steps to:
 - (a) Expedite the on-going hearing of the title suit by the Special Bench of the Allahabad High Court, the inquiry by the Liberhan Commission and the criminal proceedings before the Special Court, as well as,
 - (b) A formal assurance of restoration of the Babari Masjid site, free of all encumbrances, to the Muslim community, if the title suit is decided in its favour.
 - (c) Prosecution of the leaders and activists of the VHP and the Bajrang Dal for inciting the Hindu community to occupy and demolish the Shahi Idgah in Mathura and the Gyanvapi Masjid in Varanasi in defiance of the law of the land.
 - (d) Release of all those detained in connection with post-demolition disturbances who have not yet been charge-sheeted and against whom there are no heinous charges and settlement of all claims for ex-gratia payment, as promised to the next-of-kin of those killed in mob violence or police firing.

The Babari Masjid Movement requests all the secular political parties to endorse and support these just and reasonable demands and to commemorate the anniversary of the demolition to reaffirm their commitment to rule of law and secularism.

**Government Statement on Referring of
Babari Masjid Dispute to Supreme Court**

The proposal to refer the Babari Masjid-Ram Janma Bhoomi dispute to the Supreme Court under Article 138(2) of the Constitution is already on the "Common Minimum Programme" of the Government.

The proposal involves intricate legal aspects which are being analysed in detail in consultation with the Ministry of Law.

(Source: LSUQ No. 2717 dated 10 Dec. 1996 by G.M. Banatwalla)

**Rakesh Bhatnagar on Babari Masjid-Related
Contempt Cases in Supreme Court**

It is primarily because of a procedural hitch that an application seeking action against then UP chief minister Kalyan Singh, responsible officials, BJP leaders and activists of VHP, Bajrang Dal and Shiv Sena, has not been taken up for hearing. Mr. Kalyan Singh had, however, undergone a day's "symbolic" jail term for willfully defying the court's earlier directive, based on his undertaking, that no new construction would be allowed around the structure.... The chief minister as also the Union home ministry had assured the bench headed by then Chief Justice M.N. Venkatachaliah, which was seized of the disputed, that no harm would be caused to the structure.... Since the head of the executive had already undergone a day's imprisonment for allowing permanent construction there in July 1992, providing little protection to the structure was undoubtedly a much stronger charge, for which the perpetrators of the demolition should have been jailed for a longer term. Criminal prosecution apart, the demolition of the structure meant contempt of the court.

... The court did not take suo moto cognizance of this willful disobeying of its order. Instead, a petitioner who was in the forefront of the Ayodhya dispute filed an application, which the alleged contemnors said was moved **after a year of the incident**, and therefore the court could not entertain it due to the expiry of limitation envisaged in the Contempt of Court Act.

Show cause notices for committing contempt had been issued to eight leaders belonging to the five frontline Hindu politico-religious organisations - L.K. Advani, Uma Bharati, M.M. Joshi (all BJP), Ashok Singhal, Acharya Giriraj Kishore, Sadhvi Rithambhara (all VHP), Vinay Katiyar (Bajrang Dal) and Moreswar Save (Shiv Sena). Besides, certain bureaucrats also faced contempt notices.

Even after two years of the notices, it was said that these could not be served on Sadhvi Rithambhara. Until this procedural formality was completed, the court could not proceed against her for abetting the demolition....

When the issue came up again for hearing before Justice G.N. Ray's bench on December 6, 1995, it was vehemently argued that the court could not take action as the contempt application had been filed after a year of the alleged contempt.... The petitioner contended that he had moved the application well in time but the court's registry took over a year to register it for hearing...

The court asked the Attorney-general to inform it in November, 1996 whether it could hear the matter and also whether a notice should also be issued to the Prime Minister, who was the chief executive of the country. The deadline fixed for the Attorney-general to make a statement also expired in November, but no hearing took place.

With these procedural wrangles ... and the apparent waning of interest among the petitioners to pursue contempt action, the entire judicial action has been reduced to a mere academic exercise; ... in such a crucial case.

(Source: The Times of India, 10 December, 1996)

Sudheendra Kulkarni on Babari or "Barabari"

... H.D. Deve Gowda, in an interview given to a major Hindi daily, has stated that "the socio-economic conditions of Muslims in some parts of the country are worse than those of Dalits". Earlier ... addressing a meeting of the Minorities Morcha of the BJP ... Atal Behari Vajpayee observed that the real issue before Indian Muslims was "not Babari but Barabari (equality)". Implicit in this remark is the admission that a majority of Muslims in India are, indeed, victims of inequality.

It is not that what Deve Gowda and Vajpayee have said is not already known to the rest of us. ...

... The leaders and intellectuals of Indian Muslims should self-critically analyse why their community's plight has an added layer of inequity and ask themselves the question: "Is it largely because of our own, or our past leaders', strategic mistakes and missteps? If so, shouldn't we take corrective steps at least now, when the problem of the present is so stark that it cannot be wished away either by harking back to the past glory of Muslim rule or dreaming about the future promise of Dar-ul-Islam.

A compelling occasion for Muslim introspection is provided by the 50th year of India's independence, if for no other reason than the fact that the costliest Muslim misstep is anchored in the epochal event - partition of India - which took place in 1947. The two-nation theory has brought ... to Muslims India ... a lingering distrust in the minds of Hindus which transcends their party or caste affiliations. This distrust has not disappeared in the past five decades, but assumed darker shades on account of further missteps by the dominant Muslim leadership. And, let us face it, it is this distrust which manifests itself in many ugly and unjustifiable ways to produce that added layer of inequity...

One of the major Muslim missteps in post-independence India has been the stand of the community's vocal leaders on the Ayodhya issue. This issue, as also the folly Muslim leaders have committed and are continuing to commit in this matter, is intrinsically linked to the earlier strategic blunder: the two-nation theory. This linkage has been deliberately overlooked by our ultra-secularists in their voluminous and vituperative condemnation of the demand for reconstructing the Ram temple at the disputed site in Ayodhya. The basis of the two-nation theory, as elucidated in the Lahore resolution of the Muslim League in 1940 and as tirelessly articulated by Mohammed Ali Jinnah in his later years, was this: "Notwithstanding thousand years of close contact, there is nothing common between Muslims and Hindus spiritually, culturally, socially, linguistically or in their perception of their separate national destinies." Such a formulation of Muslim self-identity did not leave any room for Indian Muslims to identify themselves with, and to take pride in, the pre-Islamic and non-Islamic culture and heritage of the land. Indeed, advocates of the two-nation theory could derive legitimacy for their demand for India's partition only by totally disowning this heritage.

Now, isn't the Muslim leaders' vociferous opposition to the Ram Janmabhoomi movement also premised on their

refusal to identify themselves with, and to take pride in, India's pre-Islamic and non-Islamic heritage? Even lesser considerations of forging good-neighbourly relations with Hindus would mandate that Muslims respect the sentiments of the majority community and pave the way for the temple by agreeing to relocate the Babari Mosque. The refusal to take this sensible course, coupled with the false hope that non-BJP governments at the Centre and in Lucknow would implement the Muslim demand in the matter, complicated the issue to the extent of precipitating a major confrontation. The unfortunate and undesirable outcome of this confrontation is too well-known to bear description here.

But there has been yet another dimension of this outcome which is relevant to our present analysis. The stalemate over Ayodhya has deepened the Hindu distrust ... This, in turn, has further complicated ordinary Muslims' legitimate search for socio-economic equity and advancement. Muslim leaders and their ultra-secularist non-Muslim supporters would be deceiving themselves if they thought this to be true only in the states ruled by the "communal-fascist" BJP. The fact is, this is more or less the sad case in almost all the states, including those where the BJP is weak and which have long been under Congress or Janata rule.

Equally futile and self-deluding would be the Muslim leaders' hope that one or the other non-BJP governing combination at the Centre would some day rebuild the Babari Mosque at the same spot. **Short of converting India into a Muslim majority land, no power or ploy on earth can make it happen.** This much should be obvious even from the fact that, not a single non-BJP party has pledged in its manifesto to rebuild the demolished structure. Look how P.V. Narasimha Rao has stopped reiterating the famous line - "What has been destroyed will be rebuilt" - ever since he uttered it, only once, in his 1993 Independence Day speech....

Do Muslim leaders really believe that all this unprincipled hide-and-seek in legalism would bring back the Babari Mosque at the spot where it stood? They must realise at least now that, at its heart, the Ayodhya issue is neither legal nor even political. Its solution will, hence, defy both legalism and electoral politicking. Ayodhya has to do with India's conception of its own nationhood... Muslim leaders have an opportunity to learn from their past mistakes and make themselves and their community equal partners in nation-building. Let them come forward to remove all hurdles in the way of building the Ram Temple. This decisive gesture of goodwill-generation will certainly meet with even more decisive reciprocity gestures from Hindu community. Together, the two gestures ... will herald a new phase of harmonious Hindu-Muslim relations in India...

For this well-deserved fate to befall us, however, Muslim leaders must first make their choice: Babri or Barabari?

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 19 August, 1996)

NC: Views of Farooq Abdullah

... We have lived in isolation for too long. We have maintained our identity and within that identity we have to be part of the nation. We have to be part of the federal structure that is coming. Even if there is a BJP Government in New Delhi, we will join hands with it.

... Joining the UF does not mean that we are giving up what we stand for, that is, autonomy. We are not going to give up our fight for autonomy. And the Gowda Government's own Common Minimum Programme (CMP) has unilaterally promised autonomy to the state.

... Granting autonomy is the only sensible way to wean the Kashmiris without further bloodshed.

... I know full well (UF's) commitment to a federal India... We are going to start right from the time of accession up till the 1975 Indira-Sheikh accord. We will examine the entire gamut and formulate our case within one year to take it up with the Centre.

... The Karan Singh Committee will identify the features that we want back. And I have to restore the honour of my people. Even before the Centre acts, my government would provide internal autonomy to all three regions of the state within a year. Unless we do it, we cannot back our claims on federalism. ... (I have) a mandate for autonomy. (Source: The India Today, 31 Oct, 1996)

**MEA: S.G. G.S. Bajpai's Letter to
Chairman of UNICEP on Plebiscite,
23 December, 1948**

... On the basis of the explanation given by you of the Commission's Plebiscite proposals and the understanding arrived at in the course of the conversations between you and the Prime Minister, the Government of India, animated by a sincere desire for a peaceful settlement of the Kashmir dispute and by their willingness to assist the United Nations Commission in achieving this objective, **have decided to accept the proposals.**

As you yourself said, the appointment of a Plebiscite Administrator will take some time. The Government of India have no objection to the preliminaries of choosing a person of high international standing and commanding general confidence being started, but they would prefer the proceedings to be kept confidential for the time being. No public announcement of the name of the person selected should be made without prior consultation with them.

My Government would be glad to be informed, if necessary confidentially ... of the reply of the Government of Pakistan to the Commission's proposals. That Government should not be informed of the Government of India's acceptance until after it has communicated its reply to Your Excellency.

How Much Autonomy?**Editorial, The Hindustan Times, 28 Nov., 96**

... The demand for more autonomy ... not only figures high on the National Conference manifesto in the recent elections, but also has been the focus of a growing consensus among most political parties. What was at issue, however, was the quantum of autonomy... and its constitutional fall-out. On this, there exists a fair amount of differences of perception and interpretation. The challenge ... is in coming up with an autonomy package that satisfies the local aspirations without harming the complex texture of the relationship between the State and the Indian Union... Dr. Karan Singh ... should be able to steer the course of the committee through the various anomalies and pitfalls that mark the uneven landscape of the autonomy debate.

... The terms of reference ... require it to go through the whole gamut of Kashmir's evolving relationship with the Centre beginning with the Instrument of Accession... The Chief Minister has already appointed another panel ... to suggest the framework for ... greater autonomy to the three regions.. The recommendations of the two panels will have to be seen in their complementarities... In that sense, the two panels might eventually have to work in tandem...

Fragile, Handle With Care**Editorial, The Pioneer, 28 November, 1996**

... What is at stake is not just the relations between one state and the rest of the country, but also the future of our federal polity with States increasingly clamouring for political and financial autonomy. Unfortunately, despite their wide acceptability, the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission continue to gather dust further fuelling the distrust between the Centre and states. The Karan Singh panel thus has an onerous responsibility... It has the paradoxical potential of finding a lasting peace and opening a Pandora's Box. Hopefully it will ... take a comprehensive view. ...

The Karan Singh panel will do a great service to the nation if it buries once and for all the ghost of the past...

Gandhiji on Kashmir Situation, 1947**2 November, 1947**

"I could not escape the conclusion that the Pakistan Government was directly or indirectly encouraging the raid. The Prime Minister was reported openly to have encouraged the raid and even appealed to the Islamic world for help. Then he had seen in the press that Pandit Nehru's Government was accused of fraud in that assistance was being sent to Kashmir and that accession was being plotted for some time. He was amazed at such reckless charges made by a Pakistan Minister against the Government of a sister dominion ..."

Supreme Court

On Harmonisation of Central and State Law

T.K.V.T.S.S. Medical Educational and Charitable Trust,
Appellant v. State of Tamil Nadu and others, Respondents.

S.C. AGRAWAL AND G.T. NANAVALI, JJ.

Constitution of India, Article 254 - Repugnancy between Central Act and State Act - Determination - Containing of contradictory provisions - Not the only criterion - Competent legislature with superior efficacy expressly or impliedly evincing, by its legislation, intention to cover whole field - Repugnancy can arise.

Constitution of India, Article 254 (1)(2), Proviso - Medical Council Act (102 of 1956), Section 10A - M.G.R. Medical University Act (37 of 1987) Section 5(5), Proviso - Establishment of new medical College - Section 10A of Central Act occupies entire field - Requirement of prior permission in proviso to Section 5(5) of State Act - It is repugnant to Section 10 of Central Act - Permission for establishment of college granted by Central Government - Further permission from State Government - Not necessary.

(Source: AIR 1996 Supreme Court 2384)

A.P. High Court on Writ against Private Body's Decision Approved by State

N. Sivarama Chandrasekhara Rao, Petitioner v. State of Andhra Pradesh and others, Respondents.

MOTILAL B. NAIK, J.

Constitution of India, Article 226 - Writ against private body - Educational society - Resolution by governing body replacing previous secretary with new one - Not in accordance with articles of association of society - Notice of meeting in which resolution was passed not given to all members of governing body - Writ petition, against approval of such resolution ... by Commissioner of Collegiate education... - Maintainable though society was not 'State' as approval of resolution by Commissioner was in discharge of public duty.

Where a resolution ... passed by governing body of educational society... was approved by the Commissioner of Collegiate Education, State Government ... though resolution was not in accordance with articles of association of society... such action of Commissioner would be amenable to jurisdiction under Article 226 though the society itself was not the 'State' within the meaning of Article 12. The action of the Commissioner in approving the resolution of the Governing Body is in discharge of a public duty... Failing to perform a public duty in accordance with the Articles of Association/Bye-law, such an action could be brought within the ambit of writ

→

J.P. Narayan's Letter to P.M. Indira Gandhi, 11 December, 1966

On Total Ban on Cow Slaughter

... You know of the longstanding agitation for banning cow-slaughter. In the last session of Parliament also this issue had figured. I understand that Hindu religious leaders of top status, such as some of the Jagadguru Shankaracharyas, have decided to go on fasts unto death from November 20 this year...

I am enclosing for your information certain leaflets which have been supplied to me by the local leaders of this movement. I particularly draw your attention to one paragraph in one of the Hindi leaflets entitled Poojya mahatmaon ka amaran anshan. ...

I would, therefore, very strongly advise you to ask the Home Ministry to investigate this matter thoroughly, if necessary to meet the Sankaracharyas and other religious leaders involved, and make an objective assessment so that an intelligent decision could be taken by you....

For myself, I cannot understand why in a Hindu majority country like India, where rightly or wrongly there is such strong feeling about cow-slaughter, there cannot be a legal ban. In all the Muslim countries even those who are considered to be most modern I doubt if pork would be allowed to be sold or served in public places. I think the same would be true for Israel. Likewise, in some Christian countries on certain days of the year for meat is eaten or sold.

From a purely rational point of view, all this may be considered to be irrational, but human life, as you know is far more irrational than rational.

(Source: The Organiser, 15 December, 1966)

RSS Chief on Muslim's 'Right'

The Koran did not encourage beef-eating. The Calcutta High Court has also mentioned in its verdict, delivered against the West Bengal Government that slaughtering the cow on festival or religious occasion was no religious right of the Muslim community.

(Source: The Organiser)

jurisdiction under Article 226 of the Constitution... It cannot be said that private actions, though they are to be approved by the State or a public authority, are only to be called in question in other forums constituted. Such a narrow interpretation cannot be given to Article 226 of the Constitution...

(Source: AIR 1996 Andhra Pradesh 394)

Supreme Court On Muslim Divorcee's Right

Secretary, Tamil Nadu Wakf Board and another, Appellants v. Syed Fatima Nachi, Respondent.

M.M. PUNCHHI AND Mrs. SUJATA V. MANOHAR, JJ.

Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act (25 of 1986), Section 4(1)(2) - Grant of maintenance to divorced Muslim woman - Proceeding for - She is entitled to plead and prove relevant facts in one proceeding as to inability of her relations mentioned in sub-section (1) to maintain her by directing her claim against State Wakf Board in first instance - She is not required to proceed against her relatives mentioned in sub-section (1) first in the order they are mentioned and then finally to initiate proceeding against Wakf Board - Provision is on integrated whole.

(Source: AIR 1996 Supreme Court 2423)

Shobha De on Mixed Marriage

... There seems to be something terribly odd about the Azhar-Ayesha marriage... Mr. Bijlani had hotly denied that his daughter was planning to convert to Islam in Hyderabad the very next day after a ... registration ceremony in Mumbai....

Azhar pushed off with "Bijli" keeping the father of the bride completely in the dark... But his own Daddy-O was obviously taken into confidence since he was around to shower his blessings on the deliriously happy twosome. Mrs. Azharuddin's conversion was facilitated by an official of the Andhra Pradesh Waqf Board....

It was really Mr. Bijlani's emphatic statements to the press that have drawn attention to the (Nikaah). Had he kept his trap shut and not binged on about "no conversion", "mutual respect for each other's religious beliefs", "registration is best under the circumstances", "... we have deliberately chosen the Special Marriages Act." Who was he kidding ... or worse ... misleading? Unless the whole thing came up later. Hindsight and all that...

... When the people concerned happen to be high-profilers who have chosen to conduct their romance, divorce and marriage in a far-from-private manner, the element of accountability cannot be shrugged away. They do owe everybody some form of an explanation considering the various complicated issues at stake. The Azhar-Sangeeta nikaah is likely to hot up into a national debate about the ethics of quickie conversions for reasons that exclude a deep and abiding commitment to the new faith. Sharmila Tagore did it over two decades ago, but her decision was a clearly stated one without a cloud of controversy. Nobody from her family rushed into print with a contradictory version. And she herself ... went about her life quietly and with dignity. It remains to be seen how Sangeeta deals with her new role and adopted religion...

BJP Survey among Muslim Women On Uniform Civil Code

The BJP conducted a survey of 1000 Muslim women through a questionnaire ... to have their points of view on various aspects concerning the introduction of the Uniform Civil Code in India ... in Delhi, Jaipur, Jalandhar, Muzaffarpur and Mumbai (they) included housewives, students, working women and labourers.

The survey indicates that 87% of the women favour one law for women of different religions in the country. Only 13% women want separate laws.

In response to the question, whether women should have equal rights like men in matters of taking decision concerning their way of living, 66% answered 'yes' and 34% said 'no'. Should in a civilized society, there be more than one marriage? 97.5% replied it is undesirable, but 2.5% felt it was all right. On the same grounds of divorce for both men and women, 85.5% opined in the affirmative, and 14.5% were against it, who wanted the reasons to be different.

99% women affirmed that divorce should not be left at the will of men only. 97% women favoured liberalization of law concerning subsistence allowance and increase in the amount. 99% expressed that payment of subsistence allowance is only the responsibility of the husband. 98% women favoured the law for adoption of children by childless couple/widow/single and unmarried women. The survey ... reaffirms the view of the BJP Mahila Morcha that Muslim women are in favour of Uniform Civil Code. ...

(Source: The Nari Shakti Special, 3 November, 1996)

Ameena: A Forgotten Woman

Five years after she was pitchforked to international fame, when poverty drove her family to marry her to an old Arab Sheikh, "Hyderabad's child-bride", Ameena is now a forgotten girl. ... Well past her troubled childhood, she is all of 18 now... Despite her stubborn (refusal to marry) her parents are desperately searching for a suitable match... Ameena keeps herself busy with the painstaking zari embroidery work on sarees. "It takes about four to five days to complete a saree". Each saree fetches her Rs.50, supplementing her meagre family income....

When rescued, she was literally promised the moon, from foreign currency to education and job. But ... the family continues to live in a state of penury...

All that she got was a sewing machine from the Mahila Dakshata Samithi and a telephone connection sanctioned by Mr. Rajesh Pilot (as) the Communications Minister... We are unable to pay rent. Our repeated appeal to change this telephone to that of a public STD or a local call office has fallen on deaf ears".

... "It was sheer poverty that forced me to perform Ameena's marriage to the ... Arab. I was not in a position to pool Rs. 60,000 to Rs.70,000 required for meeting the demands of the local bridegrooms"...

(Source: The Hindu, 9 November, 1996)

Bombay Mercantile Cooperative Bank: 58th Annual Report for 1995-96 (Extracts)

... The Banking Industry had to face a very competitive environment... Despite this, the Bombay Mercantile Cooperative Bank showed fairly good progress during the year 1995-96.

The aggregate deposits as at 31st March 1996 reached the level of Rs. 1411.46 crores as against Rs. 1264.78 crores as at 31st March 1995.

The advances also showed a steep increase with aggregate advances rising to Rs. 954.71 crores as at 31st March 1996 as against Rs. 762.52 crores as at 31st March, 1995.

The credit deposit ratio also improved steeply from 60.29% as at 31st March 1995 to 67.64% as at 31st March 1996.

Profitability

The operational profits of the Bank increased from Rs. 13.93 crores during 1994-95 to Rs. 17.80 crores during 1995-96. The operational profits would have been more by Rs. 4.92 crores which was paid to employees of the Bank in view of the revision of salaries etc....

In addition, a provision of Rs. 1.82 crores towards gratuity and Rs. 0.18 crores towards statutory bonus payable to employees has been made. An additional provision of Rs. 8.85 crores has been made towards Non-Performing Assets during the year. The total provisions thus made aggregate to Rs. 10.85 crores which would leave Rs. 2.02 crores towards profit of the Bank...

The percentage of priority sector advances, as at 31st March 1996, remained almost constant and every effort is being made to increase the same to achieve the norms prescribed by RBI. ...

The Bank has introduced a scheme for financing of ex-servicemen ... and a Scheme for financing higher technical education...

Purchase went up from 365.54 to 454.02 crores (plus 24.21%) and Sales from 367.94 to 457.36 crores (plus 24.30%).

The Bank has again approached RBI for their approval for payment of dividend at the rate of 15% declared by the Annual General Body for the year 1992-93...

Overdues

The overdues of the Bank which stood at 11.02% of the total advances as at 31st March 1995 is 11.27% as at 31st March 1996. Steps are being taken to strengthen the Recovery Cells...

Membership

The number of shareholders of the Bank increased from 1,47,614 to 1,58,269 as at 31st March 1996 excluding the nominal members which stood at 50,790 as at 31st March 1996.

Capital and Reserves

The Bank had increased its authorised share capital during the year ... from Rs. 10 crores to Rs. 20 crores. As against this, the issued share capital has already increased

to Rs. 9,66,14,820 as at 31st March, 1996.

Reserves increased from Rs. 52.91 crores as at 31st March 1995 to Rs. 62.16 crores as at 31st March 1996....

Working Capital

The working capital of the Bank increased from Rs. 1537.76 crores as at 31st March 1995 to Rs. 1769.00 crores as at 31st March 1996.

Branch Expansion

RBI has already granted licences to the Bank for opening of branches at Jaipur (Rajasthan), Palanpur (Gujarat), and Malegaon (Maharashtra)... The branches will be operative shortly.

Further permission for opening of branches at Calcutta (West Bengal), Chennai (Madras) (Tamil Nadu), Sholapur (Maharashtra) and Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh) have been received...

Another extension counter has been opened at Nanded...

Human Resources Development

During the year the Institute organised 35 programmes with 743 trainees including 78 from other urban cooperative banks.

Besides our regular courses, the Institute arranged some special programmes....

Acknowledgements

The Board of Directors record their appreciation of the services rendered by Mr. S. Shamim Kazim, its Managing Director....

(Contd. from page 37)

have to behave and look like the ... Hindus. They will communicate better if they become conscious Muslims and behave as good neighbours who care. They must stop acting as antagonists, making unjust demands. Why shout slogans which create apprehension among your neighbours? (They should) not resist their legitimate or even occasionally unjustified demands. Their behaviour may hurt (their) feelings but it is better (for Muslims) to wait when (they) can talk some sense in them. Sometimes there is no harm in yielding than insisting on 'legal' rights. It creates a condition for intelligent dialogue. (They should) give more without expecting a lot in return. (They should) fully participate except where (they) have to cross the strict boundaries laid down by Islam.

(Source: The Radiance Viewswkly, 27 October - 2 November, 1996)

Allahabad High Court's

Landmark Judgement on Wakf by User

Mirru and others - Defendants, Appellants vs. Ramgopal - Plaintiff, Respondent.

SULAIMAN, C.J. AND BENNET, J.

Religious Endowment - Temple or mosque on site of private owner in existence for long time and worship performed by public - Inference is that land is dedicated property and not that temple or mosque stands there with leave and license of owner.

Where the Court finds that a mosque or a temple has stood for a long time and worship has been performed in it by the public, it is open to the Court to infer that the building does not stand there merely by the leave and license of the owner of the site, but that the land itself is a dedicated property and the site is a consecrated land, and is no longer the private property of the original owner. Such a building does not come under the Easements Act and it is one of those cases which is excepted by Section 2, Easements Act, 1934. ...

A right to perform any religious worship whether claimed by a Hindu, Mahomedan or Christian over the land of another may depend on grant, if so claimed by the grantee. It may also, if claimed by an individual, be acquired as a private easement, provided he is the owner of a dominant tenement. But in addition to such individual rights, a right of worship may also be acquired as a customary right which can be availed of by a large body of persons by virtue of such custom. Again, a right to perform worship may be claimed as a part of public right, which, of course, would be a right vested in an entire community. Under Section 2 of that Act, these last two classes of rights would be saved from the provisions of the Easements Act. But where there is merely a right to perform worship, e.g., to offer prayers, such a right would not authorise the persons entitled to it, to put up a building on the land in order to make it more convenient for them to perform the same worship.

But where a building has stood on a piece of land for a long time and the worship has been performed in that building, then it would be a matter of inference for the Court which is the Judge of facts, as to whether the right has been exercised in that building for such a sufficiently long time as to justify the presumption that the building itself had been allowed to be consecrated for the purposes of such rights being performed. Where there is a mosque or a temple, which has been in existence for a long time and the terms of the original grant of the land cannot now be ascertained, there would be a fair presumption that the sites on which mosques or temples stand are dedicated property. ... Where therefore the Court finds that a mosque or a temple has stood for a long time and worship has been performed in it by the public, it is open to the Court to infer that the building does not stand there merely by the leave and license of the owner of the site, but that the land itself is a dedicated property and the site is a consecrated land, and is no longer the private property of the original owner. There is nothing legally objectionable in non-Muslim

Government Statements

On Refixation of Imam's Salaries

In compliance of Hon'ble Supreme Court's direction dated 13th May, 1993 in Civil Writ Petition NO. 715 of 1990 that Union of India and Central Wakf Council should prepare a scheme for payment of remuneration to Imams of different types of mosques, a scheme was prepared and submitted to the Hon'ble Court by Central Wakf Council on 2.1.1996 and by the Central Govt. on 5.1.1996. The responsibility for implementation of the said scheme shall lie with the appropriate State Wakf Board and no estimates have so far been prepared by the State Governments or State Wakf Boards in this regard. The Central Government have not given any grants-in-aid to any Wakf Board for the purpose.

(Source: LSUQ NO. 2615 dated 10 December, 1996 by Mukhtar Anis)

On Wakf Act, 1995

The Wakf Act, 1995 has been enforced in the country, except in the State of J&K, with effect from 1.1.1996. According to the information received from the State Governments, State Wakf Boards have been constituted in the States of AP, Meghalaya, and West Bengal under the Wakf Act, 1995.

Neither any State Govt. nor any Wakf Board has intimated about any difficulty experienced in transferring the pending civil suits relating to the Wakf properties to the Tribunals. Survey of Wakf properties were conducted by most of the State Govts. under the Wakf Act, 1954. Information regarding such surveys under Wakf Act, 1995 is being collected from the State Govts. and will be laid on the table of the House. In 1976, the then PM had addressed the CMs of selected States and the Lt. Governor of Delhi to either vacate the Wakf properties under adverse occupation of State Govt. Depts or Local Bodies or pay fair market value of the lands to the Wakf Boards or to enter into permanent leases with the Wakf Boards.

(Source: LSSQ NO. 278/10.12.1996 by M. Anis & J.P. Agarwal)

owners making a grant of a land to Muslims and in that way to enable them to build a mosque on such land.... In the case of graveyards, it has been held in several cases that long user justifies the inference that the land itself is a dedicated or consecrated property, or that even if it is not dedicated, it has become wakf property. The presumption would be all the greater in the case of a building, which is used as a mosque or a temple.

... If the finding is that there is already a mosque or a temple on the land, though the structure is katcha, the necessary inference would be that the site has become a consecrated and dedicated property, and then there can be no objection to the building being converted into a pucca building. It is no longer the case of a mere license which cannot be exceeded beyond the terms on which it was granted....

(Source: AIR 1935 Allahabad 891)

Ban on Use of PA System for Azan Insaf Morcha Demands Review Shahabuddin's Statement, 3 December, 1996

"The extension by the Calcutta High Court of its order against noise pollution to "Azan" is misconceived.

Use of PA for congregational prayer in any place of worship, including mosque, can be controlled so as to reach the congregation and cause no disturbance outside. Similarly the use of the PA system may be denied for all public manifestation of religions, Jalsas and processions. All those like night long Kirtans or Zikrs and round-the-clock record-playing or singing are "pollutants" because they are continuous. Azan is not, it is a call to the faithful, a reminder for the congregational and even personal Namaz. It takes 2-3 minutes at most, 5 times a day. Only the Azan for the dawn prayer may cause some disturbance to sleep in mixed localities. Others at mid-day, in the afternoon, at sunset and at night fall cannot cause any substantial addition to the existing noise level.

Secondly, it may be kept in view that Namaz is prescribed as a religious duty and the authorities must make a distinction between performance of a duty and of an optional act of piety. Moreover, Azan is not an innovation.

Thirdly, there is no reason why religious worship should not avail of technological advances.

The order shows lack of appreciation and comprehension of its full implications."

Another Mosque Vacated in Punjab

A mosque situated at a distance of 6 kms from Rajpura at village Shayamadu Chamaru (in Patiala District) was recently vacated. Since 1947 the said mosque was under the unauthorised possession of some local residents and was also used as Gurdwara. For some-time it also remained in unauthorised (use for) a government dispensary.

But after negotiation and persuasion by the ... Darul Uloom Hussainia Islamia, Rajpura, the mosque was restored to its original use. President of the Madrasa Committee Rajpura, Mohammad Habib ... and some prominent local Muslims made sincere efforts for the vacation... Village Sarpanch ... also helped the local Muslims... Namaz has been started in the mosque after its restoration. Darul Uloom Hussainia has asked the Board for adhoc grant for providing water and toilet facilities and repairing the floor. The proposal is under examination.

(Source: The News from Punjab)



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- Cures anaemia during pregnancy.

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AKSHARA/HWL - 2582

Antara Dev Sen on Land Mafia in AMU

... Not just young students ... but teachers too (have lost their life)... It has left the teachers ... shaken and insecure... Musclemen rule (the AMU). ...

"The murderers are protected by senior politicians", says one teacher. Many of the students and teachers believe that at least two of the three murders were related to land-grabbing. AMU sits on property worth at least Rs. 150 crore. And thanks to the mishandling of documents, there always seems to be some property scam... involving university land. One of these was a major bid by certain property dealers to take over the land around AMU's Riding Club, which was thwarted in the early '90s...

Dr. Rajiv Sharma, president of AMU Riding Club ... was trying to free the land - worth about Rs. 4 crores - from the clutches of these property dealers (when he was shot dead). When Dr. Iqbal Hasan Khan's assailants - Iqbal, Ajay and Mushtaq - were questioned by the police, they named Hafiz Ilyas, a lecturer in psychology at AMU, as the man behind his murder. Ilyas, who ... had campaigned for Salman Khursheed during the 1991 polls, has not been arrested. Khursheed insists that Ilyas is not in any way close to him... The names linked to the murder include those of Tufail Khan, a local mafia don, Khaled Masood, then president of the AMU Student's Union who has several FIRs against him, and Hamid Hasan, a computer science teacher in the university. Even the hired killers were not arrested. But ... apparently (they) - Iqbal for sure, the other two are still the subject of speculation - were bumped off in a revenge killing by the murdered professor's relatives...

...The professor was not involved in grabbing university land. A fact-finding committee investigating AMU's land scams in 1994 named Bundoo Khan, a former Registrar in court and now head of an organisation dealing with property named Azad Grah Nirman Samiti, as "the biggest grabber of the university land". Although no action could be taken against Khan as he was not a member of AMU, three teachers said to be involved with the scam have been suspended.

Curiously, the suspended teachers - Prof. Saleem Akhtar, Ateeq Ahmad Khan and Prof. Ishrat Husain Khan - have not yet been charge-sheeted. ...

Nehru on Asian Identity

We are of Asia and the peoples of Asia are nearer and closer to us than others. India is so situated that she is the pivot of western, southern and south-east Asia. In the past, her culture flowed to all these countries and they came to her in many ways. Those contacts are being renewed and the future is bound to see a closer union between India and south-east Asia on the one side, and Afghanistan, Iran and the Arab world on the west. To the furtherance of that close association of free countries we must devote ourselves...

(Speech on 8 September, 1946)

Shahabuddin on Proposed

University of Science and Technology, Letter to Saiyid Hamid, 11 December, 1996

What is of interest to the Muslim community is that the University will take special care of the educationally backward minorities and other weaker sections of the Society.

I do not know what "Special Care" means. Assuming that it means not only weightage in preference in admission but even reservation of at least 50% of the facilities for such "minorities" and "Sections", it implies, on a pro rata basis not more than 15% for the Muslim Indians. The SC, ST and OBC's (excluding the Muslims) and religious minorities constitute 85% of the population in which Muslims account for 12%. The pro-rata share of the Muslim becomes 15% if 100% of the facilities to be divided among all the eligible groups.

The fact is that unless the proposed University is conceived as a "minority institution" under Article 30 of the Constitution and/or as an institution totally independent of State's financial assistance and unless the Supreme Court permits a minority institution to be made of its own admission policy, not much benefit is likely to accrue to the Muslim community.

And somehow the so-called students' agitations seem to have some link with the interests of the property dealers. In 1993, after two students were run over by a truck near the university, the agitation ... ended in the police firing (killing) 2 more... Incensed students went on a rampage, and set fire to two government offices nearby.

Following the arson and looting, the offices moved out. Land prices came crashing down in that "violence-prone" area and both the buildings - one of which belonged to Dr. Nurul Hasan, Governor of West Bengal - have supposedly been sold since then at rock-bottom prices. One of them now hosts the local office of the Samajwadi Party.

(Since) students' agitations in AMU are continuously used by various political parties to serve their own needs and when big money is involved, what value do the lives of students and teachers have anyway?

(Source: The Indian Express, 12 October, 1996)

Begum Hazrat Mahal

... An unknown burqa-clad Muslim woman of 50, in green - the colour of the martyrs - inspired the people to fight and die like bravemen... She mounted a horse, took a rifle in the hand and a sword in the other and killed at least half a dozen British soldiers before she was wounded and captured. She was the "Indian Joan of Arc or the Maid of Delhi"

(Source: The Nation and the World)

Man Mohan Talkh on Urdu Journalism: Creeping Narrowmindedness

Urdu newspapers too made a solid contribution to the national cause during the struggle of independence. The Britisher at all levels tried their level best to create a wedge between Hindus and Muslims and to some extent succeeded also, but not totally. Lakhs of Muslims even after the partition opted for India and did not migrate over to Pakistan.

... After partition, Urdu newspapers, owned by Hindu editors and proprietors started publishing from Delhi. Nearly after a decade of partition, when the dust started settling and scars started healing, Urdu newspapers owned by Muslims too, started making an impact on the national scene. Several Urdu magazines owned by both Hindus and Muslims also started flourishing.

Urdu language and literature no doubt (are) a cultural heritage of this country. Uptil 1960, Hindi, was still in its birth pangs and could not match the chaste and chiselled Urdu language. Renowned Urdu poet Firaq Gorakhpuri (Prof. Ragupati Sahay Firaq) was a giant among men of letters. Krishna Chandra, Rajendra Singh Bedi and satirist Fikr Taunswi were front rank writers. Scores of other Hindu writers were also gaining prominence in the realm of literature and journalism. There was no such thing as Hindu Urdu and Muslim Urdu.

But after 1970, several Urdu newspaper, from UP and Bihar, which were owned and edited by Muslims started portraying only one sided view of every happening. This gradually resulted in the bifurcation of minds of Urdu readers. Slowly and slowly, readers of Urdu newspapers and magazines started looking at the day to day situations from different angles.

The Government policy also did a lot of damage to the image and national character of Urdu, which was in a true sense the common language of the two major communities of India. Urdu language, in fact was a linking bond between Urdu knowing Hindus and Muslims. It was the short sightedness of the Government that Muslims started getting priority in Urdu sections of AIR, Door Darshan, Urdu Promotion Bureau, ... PIB, NCERT, Urdu Academies all over India and scores of Government subsidised Urdu organisations. Today, the bitter truth is, that you will hardly find any Hindu holding a high post in any of the above ... Government offices or ... organisations. Not only that, you cannot find a single Hindu in any of Urdu newspaper or magazine owned by Muslims... Have Hindu Urdu writers ceased to exist? No, they have not, but have been sent into oblivion. Today, the Muslim Urdu writers, want only the signatures of Hindu Urdu writers, when it comes to submitting a Memorandum to .. the President, or the PM of India on the plea of secularism. And through this they require to prove the national character of Urdu

language.

Urdu newspapers, by and large, upto 1960 were writing 'Hindustan' as spoken in Urdu... But today Urdu newspapers owned by Muslims have done away the letter 'O' and write 'Hindustan'. Now, which country is this? Muslim leaders usually raise the accusing finger at the majority community for communalism. But aren't the (Muslims) themselves the culprits for distorting India's name even in Urdu...

Let's face the truth. Hindus, by their bent of mind, have never been and can never be communalists... Every illiterate Hindu, living in villages is broadminded and tolerant of other sects and religions. (After) the Partition ... Hindus could have opted for a Hindu Raaj in this country. ... But Hindus, overwhelmingly opted for Jawaharlal Nehru and secularism.

... Some years ago, a seminar in Delhi was organised by Urdu Academy. The topic was 'Urdu and Modern Media of Mass Communication'... I raised the basic question: do you accept Urdu as written by Urdu newspapers owned and edited by Hindus? The answer was ... 'No'. So, today we have Hindu Urdu and Muslim Urdu... (Source: The Day After, 30 September - 14 October, 1996)

Government Statements

On Maulana Abul Kalam, Urdu University

The Bill to establish and incorporate the Maulana Azad National Urdu University at Hyderabad has since been passed by the Rajya Sabha (since passed by the Lok Sabha - Editor).

The non-recurring expenditure on the proposed University is estimated at Rs.6 crores in the next three years. Once the University becomes functional the estimated requirement of recurring expenditure shall be Rs.5 crores annually. No expenditure has been incurred so far.

(Source: LSUQ NO. 2393 dated 9 December, 1996 by Mukhtar Anis)

On Publication of Books

Publications Division published 122 books during 1995-96 as detailed given:

	Hindi	English	Urdu	Other Regional Language
Average Print Order	72	31	4	15
Copies	2000	2600	1100	

Title of Urdu Books

1. Abdul Kalam Azad (BMI)
2. Hamari Tahzeebi Veerasat
3. Hindustani Tahzeeb Ke Musalman Par Asar
4. Ainee-e-Ghalib

(Source: LSUQ NO. 2898 dated 12 December, 1996 by Mukhtar Anis)

Sanjoy Hazarika On Migration in Assam

... Assam has a total of 24 districts and a current population estimated at 22.4 million. **Of this figure, as many as 15.04 million are Hindus and 6.37 million are Muslims.** The rest belong to smaller religious denominations.

The growth rate of the Hindus between 1951-61 was 33.96% in the same period, the percentage growth of Muslims was 33.95. And this in a time when there was officially acknowledged wide immigration from East Pakistan, of both Hindus and Muslims. The respective growth rates for the two communities was 34.76% for Hindus in the 1961-71 decade and 29.96% for Muslims.

The Hindu population has grown at the rate of 155 per cent between 1951 and 1971 while the Muslim numbers have grown by 219 per cent.

There was no census in 1981 because of the student agitation...

What do the latest figures show? One, a 41.61 per cent growth rate for the Hindus which is not inconsistent if viewed over 20 years. That works out to just over 20 per cent per decade or two per cent per year. The Muslim population has soared by 2.8 million or 77.33 per cent in this time. That makes it a growth rate of about 38.6 per cent for each decade, which is about the same level as the data for 1951-61.

I spoke with Dr. Natarajan of the Population Foundation of India recently about these figures and he remarked that such a high growth rates could not just be attributed to fertility and high birth rate but to large immigration...

What is significant is that the maximum growth of the Muslim population is along the borders with Bangladesh, confirming a trend that was set well before Partition... Thus, while two districts were Muslim-dominated in the 1971 census that number has grown to four: Dhubri, Goalpara and Barpeta all in Lower Assam and Hailakandi in Cachar district to Assam's southeast.

What ... is the situation in other districts apart from the four listed above?

According to the 1991 census, Marigoan, a former subdivision of Nogaon district which is now a district in its own right, there was a bare 60,000 difference in numbers between Hindus and Muslims. In Nogaon, there is an 80,000 difference. And in Karimganj, a bare 14,025.

... My views are not anti-Muslim. I do not share the silly analysis of the Bharatiya Janata Party that makes a Hindu illegal immigrant, a "refugee" and a Muslim migrant, an "infiltrator". An illegal migrant is an illegal migrant, no matter what his or her religious label is...

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 28 November, 1996)

Shahabuddin's Reply to The Hindustan Times, 5 December, 1996

Sanjoy Hazarika's article "Migration - Assam under Deluge" (H.T., 28.11.1996) presents an alarming picture of rise of Muslim population in Assam which he attributes to incessant migration from East Pakistan/Bangladesh. Though he does not differentiate between Hindu and Muslim migrants, his thesis is likely to strengthen the communal forces which do.

The crux of his thesis is that between 1951 and 1971, the Hindu population has grown by 155%, while Muslims have increased by 219%, and that between 1971 and 1991, the corresponding figure are 41.61 and 77.33. I do not understand why he has not taken the 1951-1991 (4 decades) to establish his case. As the figures will show, he has a reason.

In 1951, the total Muslim population was recorded as 19,95,936 in a total population of 88,30,723. The Census Report (Page 257) noted that "Some Muslim of Goalpara and Kamrup Districts might not have been able to come back to their houses in Assam during the 1951 Census" and again "Some Muslims living in Char or Sand banks of the river Brahmaputra might also have been left out of the count of the 1951 Census". It is estimated that during the communal riots of 1950 in Assam, many Muslims had fled to East Pakistan and about 4-5 lakhs returned to Assam during 1951-61. Therefore, the Census figures of 1951 need to be corrected by adding at least 4 lakh absentees, to make it a total of 23,95,936 i.e. 24 lakhs in a total of 92,30,723 i.e. 92.3 lakhs. With this correction 1951-71 growth rate of Muslim and of total population comes to 49.9% and 65.6% respectively.

In 1991, Muslim population has been recorded as 63.7 lakhs in a total of 224 lakhs. The Muslim growth during the 4 decades (1951-1991) comes to 165% while the total population has increased by 154%. The difference is marginal. Even this may be attributed to the same social and economic factors which explain the generally higher rate of growth of Muslims as against Hindus in the country.

In 1951, the Muslims constituted 25.95% of the total population and the correspond figure for 1991 is 28.43. Here again the Muslim proportion has only marginally increased. One reason for the higher count of Muslims in Assam is the fear generated in them by the events of the 80's - the fear of disenfranchisement and expulsion which was transformed into mobilisation for being counted during 1991 Census. During 1951-91, the total population of the country has increased by 135% which is quite comparable to that of Assam which is 153%. The differential which not alarming may be largely due to influx of Hindu "refugees"/immigrants.

Indian National Congress: Working Committee's Resolution, 15 September, 1945

As some misapprehensions have arisen in regard to certain resolutions of the AICC and of the Working Committee passed in 1942 relating to the future Constitution of India, the Working Committee states the position as follows: "In accordance with the August 1942 resolution of the AICC it will be for democratically elected Constituent Assembly to prepare a constitution for the Government of India, acceptable to all sections of the people. The Constitution, according to the Congress view, should be a federal one with the residuary powers vesting in the units. The fundamental rights as laid down by the Karachi Congress and subsequently added to must form an integral part of this Constitution. Further, as declared by the AICC at its meeting held in Allahabad in May 1942 the Congress cannot agree to any proposal to disintegrate India by giving liberty to any component State or territorial unit to secede from the Indian Union or federation.

The Congress, as its Working Committee declared in April 1942 has been wedded to Indian freedom and unity, and any break in that unity, especially in the modern world when, people's minds inevitably think in terms of ever-larger federations, would be injurious to all concerned and exceedingly painful to contemplate. Nevertheless, the Committee declared, it cannot think in terms of compelling the people in any territorial unit to remain in an Indian Union against their declared and established will. While recognising this principle, every effort should be made to create conditions which would help the different units in developing a common and cooperative national life. The acceptance of the principle inevitably involved that no changes should be made which result in fresh problems being created and compulsion being exercised on other substantial groups within that area. Each territorial unit should have the fullest autonomy within the Union consistently with a strong national state."

Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of India's Independence: Muslim Members of National Committee

Cabinet Ministers:

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 1. C.M. Ibrahim, | Member |
| Minister of Civil Aviation with additional charge of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting | |

Leader of the Opposition in Rajya Sabha:

- | | |
|--------------------|--------|
| 2. Sikander Bakht, | Member |
|--------------------|--------|

Chief Ministers:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------|
| 3. Farooq Abdullah, J&K | Member |
|-------------------------|--------|

Ministers of State (Independent Charge):

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| 4. Saleem Iqbal Shervani | Member |
| MOS of Health and Family Welfare | |

Leaders of Political Parties in Lok Sabha

- | | |
|---------------------|--------|
| 5. G.M. Banatwalla, | Member |
|---------------------|--------|

Leaders of Political Parties in Rajya Sabha

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------|
| 6. Sikander Bakht, | Member |
| 7. B.V. Abdulla Koya, | Member |
| Leader of Muslim League | |

Writers & Artists

- | | |
|-----------------|--------|
| 8. M.F. Hussain | Member |
| 9. Habib Tanvir | Member |

Media and Cinema

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------|
| 10. Dilip Kumar | Member |
| 11. (Smt.) Shabana Azmi | Member |

Science and Technology

- | | |
|--------------------|--------|
| 12. A. Abdul Kalam | Member |
|--------------------|--------|

Traditional Scholars

- | | |
|-------------------|--------|
| 13. Rafiq Zakaria | Member |
|-------------------|--------|

Other Eminent Persons

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------|
| 14. (Air Marshal) I.H. Latif | Member |
| 15. Syed Shahabuddin | Member |

Muslim Masses, Jinnah and Ulema

Non-Muslims normally think that the Muslims are generally orthodox and follow their Mullahs and Ulema. Then how did they accept a westernised person as their leader? When eminent Ulema were there, Ulema's organisations were there, how did a majority of Muslims in united India prefer Jinnah to Azad?

The answer is not very complicated, provided the Indian Freedom Movement, the attitude of various groups and their thought-processes are examined in depth. The Ulema and their Jamaats had no idea of the rampant narrow-mindedness and its consequences. The Muslim League gathered strength when a great Muslim nationalist who, unhappy with the Congress, had gone away to London, was recalled and made the Leader. This

westernised nationalist Muslim had understood the narrow-mindedness and the shape of things to come in independent India. His voice touched the heart of many Muslims. He raised the slogan of Pakistan only to exert political pressure to strengthen the position of Muslims in independent India. But the Congress leadership proved to be more intelligent and thrust Pakistan on Jinnah, which he was obliged to accept. Thus he was checkmated by a more intelligent leadership. Pakistan Movement was never an Islamic movement.

So Jinnah became the Leader only because this barrister had seen the shape of the future events, which the traditional religious leadership had failed to see.

(Source: *The Darus Salam, Lahore, November, 1996*)

Reservation for Minorities Before Women Insaf Morcha's Appeal to Muslim MP's and Organisations, 13 December, 1996

"Following the Submission of the Report of the Joint Select Committee to the Parliament on 9 December 1996, the Constitution (81st Amendment) Bill, 1996 which provides for reservation of 1/3 of the seats of the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies for women is likely to be taken up for consideration, during the current Session.

Taking into consideration the existing 22.5% reservation for the SC and the ST this bill, if passed, will result in 56.00% of the seats being covered with reservation. Thus further reducing the unreserved space available for the religious minorities and the weaker sections.

That is why, the MP's belonging to the OBC's, so far have unsuccessfully raised the question of reservation in legislature and fixing a uniform proportion for women in each category of reservation - the OBC, the SC, the ST. This demand has, in principle, been supported by the Joint Select Committee but it is doubtful if the Constitution will be further amended soon to give effect to this demand.

The religious minorities which constitute 18% of the population, specially the Muslims who form 2/3 of the minorities, continue to be under-represented in the Lok Sabha and all the State Assemblies. If they have not been elected from the general constituencies, women belonging to the minorities are even less likely to get elected from the reserved seats.

Moreover, in the process of selection of constituencies to be reserved for women; the burden is likely to fall on the Muslim concentration constituencies as in the case of constituencies reserved for the SC and the ST. Thus effectively the Muslim representation in the Lok Sabha and the State Legislatures is certain to drop further.

The 32-member Joint Select Committee had only 2 Muslims, Mukhtar Anis (SP) and Hannan Mollah (CPM). Both have recorded their dissent. But the other Muslim MP's in both Houses have been conspicuous by their silence. It is time speak out cutting across the party line and demand reservation for the minorities, particularly the Muslims in the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies, before reservation for women is introduced, like the MP's belonging to the OBC's have done.

No Muslim organisation of national eminence has spoken against this imminent threat to Muslim representation in the Lok Sabha and the State Assembly. It is time also for them to demand that the reservation for women should be introduced uniformly only after instituting reservation for the OBC's and the Religious Minorities, specially the Muslims."

Government Statement

On National Human Rights Commission

West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Assam have established State Human Rights Commission.

The statute governing the Human Rights Commissions does not envisage any formal system of coordination between the National Human Rights Commission and the State Human Rights Commission. However, the jurisdiction of a State Commission is limited to matters relatable to any of the entries enumerated in List-II and List-III in the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution. The National Human Rights Commission is barred from inquiring into any matter which is pending before a State Commission under sub-section (1) of section 36 of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993. Similarly, a State Commission can not inquire into a matter if it is already being inquired into by the National Human Rights Commission (Proviso to sub-section (5) of Section 21 of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993). These provisions have been made with a view to ensuring complementarity between the National Human Rights Commission and the State Commission and avoiding or minimising duplication.

The National Commission Rights Commission has not opened offices in States which have not established their own Commission.

The annual budget of the National Human Rights Commission for 1996-97 is Rs. 3.00 crores.

(Source: LSUQ NO. 2527 dated 10 December, 1996 by Mukhtar Anis)

West Bengal Minorities Commission:

Composition, GOWB Notification

No. 171-PM dated 30 August, 1996

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 1. Prof. Syed Manal Shah Alquadri | Chairperson |
| Dean of Faculty, Calcutta University | |
| 2. Mrs. Anwara Jahan Mirza | Vice-Chairperson |
| 3. Dr. Motahar Hussain, MLA | Member |
| 4. Shri Ananda Pathak, ex-MP | Member |
| 5. Shri C.N. Penn Anthony, IAS (Retd.) | Member |
| 6. Shri Ziauddin Ahmed | Member |
| 7. Shri Adi Bapuji Rabadi | Member |
| 8. One Representative of the W. Bengal Minorities Development and Finance Corporation, ex-officio | Member |
| 9. Secretary, Minorities' Development and Welfare department, Government of W. Bengal, ex-officio | Member |
| 10. Member-Secretary, West Bengal Minorities' Commission | Member |

Bombay Riots: 11 Convicted in Radhabai Chawl Case under TADA

... Nearly four years after the gruesome massacres of December 1992 and January 1993 the guilty (in many cases Shiv Sainiks and even policemen) of the widespread incidents of murder, loot and arson are yet to be punished.

The only significant conviction in the riot-related cases has been of 11 Muslim youth to life imprisonment in the Radhabai Chawl incident by the designated TADA judge, S.M. Deshmukh on October 17. The judge sentenced them to life imprisonment on charges of unlawful assembly and conspiring to commit terrorist acts. 6 other accused were acquitted. As the convicted youth prepare to appeal to the SC, the merits of the judgement apart, the communal fall-out of these convictions is unavoidable... Because most of those guilty of unspeakable acts of violence roam scot free ... the Radhabai Chawl case (is cited) in the Hindutvawaadi rhetoric to justify the "retaliation" against the Muslim minority in January.

In June 1996, two cases - one of alleged rape and the other of murder in which a local Sainik was directly implicated - the accused were acquitted.

Day after day, the hearings before the Srikrishna Commission reveal blatant complicity on the part of the police - siding with local Shiv Sainiks guilty of mass murder and arson, police failure to initiate criminal proceedings against erring policemen and Shiv Sainiks.

Why were the accused in Radhabai Chawl case singled out and framed under TADA, a law that ostensibly applies only to terrorist-related offences? Why were the criminal charges of arson and murder not framed against the accused under the IPC? ... Even in some of the most gruesome incidents, the police has not initiated criminal cases against the accused though there exists clear evidence. Worse still, the police has simply closed investigations in a vast majority of cases saying these "cases were true but undetected ("A" category)".

In May this year, in response to a writ petition filed by the Committee for the Protection of Democratic Rights (CPDR) in the Supreme Court, the Maharashtra government was compelled to give details of the legal status of all the cases pertaining to the violence of December 1992 and January 1993.

A look at the details makes apparent the astounding complicity of the government and the police with criminals... 200 murder cases registered with the Bombay police are among a staggering 1358 cases that the Maharashtra government will "not investigate further" as they come in the "true but undetected" category.

The SC had ordered the Maharashtra government to give details of 2,267 cases. By the state government's own admission through the affidavit of the special secretary, home department, S.K. Iyengar, "investigations have been closed in 60 per cent of the cases", chargesheets have been filed only in 892 cases and trial is pending in another 864. ...

It is clear from the evidence as documented in police records and now on record before the Commission that even as the Babari Masjid was being demolished at Ayodhya, "ghantanad ceremonies" (victorious ringing of temple bells)

were being conducted by the RSS, VHP and BJP workers all over Bombay. This was even before angry, protesting Muslims took to the streets in protest against the demolition at Ayodhya. After brutal cases of police firing against Muslims in December (239 were killed, some inside their home fell victims to police bullets) pre-mediated arson against Muslim-dominated bastis like Mian Maqdoom Nagar in Mahim and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan estate in Kurla began on December 8 and 10, 1992 itself.

During the lull in violence for about three weeks in December, the SS-BJP combine made every effort to keep emotions in this palpably tense metro simmering, particularly through their programme of mahaartis that were launched in the city from December 22, 1992. This was ostensibly to protest against the practice of "namaaz on the streets on Friday".

Here again, ... evidence of police officials recorded before the Srikrishna Commission reveals how these Mahaartis were a ploy to whip up sentiments against Muslims. "Laandyan na Pakistanla pochwa (Send the Muslims to Pakistan)" was a common slogan uttered by SS Shakha Pramukhs and even MLAs who addressed these mahaartis. The SS MP from Kherwadi, Madhukar Sarpotdar (then an MLA) ... during his evidence before Justice Srikrishna ... openly justified attacks on innocent Muslims as "retaliation" for the Radhabai Chawl incident and the killing of two mathadi workers. ...

(Source: The Communalism Combat, November, 1996)

Government Statement

On Communal Incidents, Jan - Sept. '96

... Information received from the State Governments about communal incidents/riots, number of persons killed, number of persons injured and number of persons arrested during January-September, 1996 is given below. Information about payment of ex-gratia and number of cases instituted is not available.

SNo	Name of State/UT	No. of communal incidents/riots	No. of persons killed	No. of persons injured	No. of persons arrested
1.	Andhra Pradesh (Jan - Aug, 96)	2	-	20	-
2.	Bihar (Jan - July, 96)	9	3	64	273
3.	Gujarat	23	3	62	188
4.	Karnataka	8	2	44	400
5.	Kerala (Jan - June, 96)	28	-	23	171
6.	Madhya Pradesh	30	4	78	173
7.	Maharashtra	7	5	93	501
8.	Tamil Nadu	3	2	18	6
9.	West Bengal (Jan - Aug, 96)	2	3	9	53
10.	Delhi	1	-	-	7
11.	Other States/UTs	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL

(Source: LSUQNO.2723 dated 10 December, 1996 by Mukhtar Anis)

Anirudh Deshpande on the Communal Question

As we approach the end of the 20th century, it is becoming politically clear that the future of united India will increasingly depend upon the successful combination of secularism, federalism and social democracy. This assertion will remain valid even if a BJP-led coalition comes to power at the Centre some time in future. Parties which will swim against the tide of Indian history will first damage the country and then, like the Congress, sink into oblivion. If the federal principle is not respected by all parties, the Indian Republic, like the aged Mughal Empire in the 17th century, will probably collapse under the weight of its growing internal contradictions in the coming century.

... The past, present and future in the Third World with its colonial background are peculiarly important. Since these three are inter-related, forms of political praxis usually begin with a reference to specific historical interpretations of social continuity and change. Thus the secular theorist is usually not ashamed to admit that his historiography is neither pretentiously objective nor pseudo-intellectually relativist. He is also convinced that the twin props of his vocation, that is, progressive ideology and rational history, create the basis for the supremacy of reason over prejudice in any society fit to be called consciously scientific and modern.

Admittedly the communal question is not historically overdetermined, and the attractions of getting on with contemporary politics are great. After all the intellectual free market does not over-tax your mind. Some people would actually have us believe that history is irrelevant to the debate on communalism. Unfortunately these people forget the Hegelian dialectic of thesis-antithesis-synthesis, according to which the future is based on the present, which in turn is forged with the material and intellectual tools fashioned in the past. Hence only a permanent critique of any social formation can be the basis of its progress towards a higher stage in evolution. Considering this, the secular ideology, both Centrist and Leftist, must derive sustenance from unconventional, radical and rational interpretation of Indian history to reestablish the hegemony of a secular consensus in Indian civil society. The history of entrenched coalitions free of fragile crutches and brave enough to respect the verdict of the electorate will begin after the true secularists win back the space lost of communalists and other political opportunists.

... Locating Jnaneshwar, Shivaji and Aryabhata in their respect centuries is undoubtedly important, but the khaki brigade too will concede that a laboured chronological fetish is a poor substitute for socio-religious history.

... That the BJP is not a worthy heir to the legacy of the Bhakti tradition and Shivaji's swaraj. Both would not have sanctioned Ayodhya and its aftermath.

... What about the contributions made to Indian culture

by the Sufi traditions of the medieval period? Heterodox movements like Buddhism and Jainism which, departing from Hinduism, became full-fledged religions in Ancient India enriched the Indian social fabric. Similarly the message of Nanak and Kabir inveighing against orthodox Hinduism and Islam will not bolster the scheme of history prepared in the secular cause... The specificity of medieval Indian history proves that Indian talent in all fields flourished in Mughal India due to various causes. From the other side "facts" like the friendship between Sadashiv Rao 'Bhau' and Ibrahim Khan 'Gardi' and the employment of Muslim mercenaries by the Marathas weakens the description of the Marathas as a predominantly "Hindu" power.

The argument that India is secular because of liberal Hinduism implies an old, though hidden, prejudice of majority communalism. The secularist who banks upon this overlooks the reactionary caste system and provides a backdoor entry to the so-called soft Hindutva. But once secular history becomes comparative the communal myths favoured by the Western media and communal organisations fall apart... Egypt and Turkey are politically secular and socially liberal. Guided by modernist visions they conserve their pre-Islamic past. Most of Central Asia, after breaking away from the USSR, is not bigoted. Indonesia openly celebrates its historic connection with Ancient India...

... Leaders exercising power should continuously identify those elements of history which might constructively define the future. There is no point in learning the wrong things...

... Indian history is rich in expressions of popular religions and their synthesis has created the basis of the Indian civilisation. But this phenomenon cannot be reduced to the struggle between Hindu "udaarvaad" and "kattarvaad". A resurgent secularism can hardly afford the appeasement of latent Hindutva at the enormous cost of total history....

(Source: The Pioneer, 12 July, 1996)

Muslim Minorities Urdu-speaking Population in Greater Karachi, Pakistan

1970	:	68%
1981	:	54%
1996(estimated)	:	40%

(Source: The Sahil, Karachi)

Avijit Pathak on Religion and Secularism in Contemporary India

... Religion does exist in India and assumes many forms. The process of secularisation is incomplete because the larger society has not yet escaped the influence of religion. But what has really worried the secularists most is the way the larger society is getting increasingly communalised. It is in this context that the gigantic growth of Hindutva strikes one's mind. A careful look at this phenomenon reveals the following disturbing features.

- * Here the role of religion is primarily divisive. It does not have any spiritual mission that can see the unity of all religions. Instead, it alienates. It separates. It divides.
- * Here religion, far from providing a meaning of existence (enabling man to transcend ... of existence and thereby mediating between the finite and the infinite) engages itself in crudely utilitarian projects, acquiring political power and creating a modern Hindu rashtra. Religion does not transcend the phenomenal world, does not spiritualise it. Instead, it remains obsessed with electoral victory or political power. It can be said that a religion of this kind is strikingly different from what, say, Gandhi visualised. It is true that Gandhi too brought religion to the domain of politics. But while Gandhi, as we have argued, sought to spiritualise politics, the communal forces allowed the instrumental rationality of politics to rob religion of its spiritual mission. A religion of this kind, because of its totalitarian ambitions, gives no space to breathe free air, to experience unboundedness.
- * A religion of this kind does not seem to be particularly bothered about the emancipatory traditions born out of true spirituality. Instead, its affinity with a patriarchal/oppressive social order is obvious. As a result, in the name of religion the communal forces negate all egalitarian projects: equality of women, human rights and socialist vision of society. All egalitarian projects are condemned as "Western" or "pseudo-secular". What is forgotten is that even the religion they want to 'project' from the secularists, if interpreted and experienced properly, can give a new momentum to the project of equality.

It is this fascism hiding itself in a religious ideology that worries the secularists. They raise their voice against it. When religion has been so communalised, the glorification of religion or the critique of secularism, they fear, would further help the communalists to assert their voice. Moreover, as the argument goes, the stage of development India is passing through is not so high that we can accept the 'post-modern' critique of enlightenment, rationality and secular thinking. India needs more modernisation, more science, more rationality to fight all that is happening in the name of religion... In other words, our context ... does not permit even the slightest

ambivalence towards secularism. This sort of argument may not be altogether irrelevant. Nevertheless, as we have already argued, secularism is not free from its discontents. And it would be naive to equate all those who speak of these discontents with the supporters (direct or indirect) of the fascism of the Sangh Parivar...

... Religion does matter. It is, of course, true that religion has been appropriated and falsified by the communalists. But then the challenging task is to fight this appropriation and see its inherently humanitarian possibilities. This is perhaps the reason why many Indian social scientists refuse to remain contented with militant secularism. For instance, recall T.N. Madan's critique. In South Asia, argues Madan, "religion is constitutive of society" because its major religious traditions tend to claim "all of a follower's life". Secularism is, therefore, an impossible credo. It is "the dream of a minority which wants to shape the majority in its own image, which wants to impose its will upon history..." This arrogance T.N. Madan dislikes. He wants the secularists to realise that religion is not just: "superstition" or a "mask for communalism". Religion can humanise the world. In other words, to borrow Sri Aurobindo's words, true religion has to be distinguished from religionism... One can, therefore, argue that communalism is religionism, it is by no means an affirmation of spiritual religion.

Militant secularism, needless to add, does not have much appeal. It is exclusivist. It is arrogant. It refuses to look at its discontents. Not surprisingly, the secularists we see around are becoming soft, even the Marxists are trying to understand and accommodate divergent religious traditions. Soft secularism, as we have already argued, has got many positive features. But then, (it has its own) ambiguities.... At times, soft secularism is purely strategic. Its adherents speak of religion because religion matters in India and they cannot deny it. But, more often than not, they do not possess what sustains religion - the power of faith or the experience of transcendence. What characterised Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Gandhi and Kabir was their irresistible power of faith. Any attempt to appropriate them while denying their faith is bound to fail.

Soft secularism, its ambiguities notwithstanding, is still a better alternative. It is a beginning. In the process of rethinking secularism one may begin to realise the limits of reason and initiate a new journey towards the world of faith. This would perhaps lead to a more and more holistic attitude towards life. It is this integral vision that, one hopes, would succeed in retaining all the virtues of secularism, but at the same time fighting its discontents. It would rescue religion from its institutionalised pathologies

(Contd. on page 9)

Kuldeep Kumar on the Burning of Hussain's Paintings

The destruction of India's best-known contemporary painter Maqbool Fida Hussain's paintings in Ahmedabad by a bunch of Bajrang Dal fanatics cannot be viewed in isolation. It has in fact come as a sequel to the demolition of the Babari Masjid in Ayodhya nearly four years ago.

The message of these two events is loud and clear: Whatever is unpalatable to the Hindutva brigade will not be allowed to exist. In the case of the Babari Masjid, the RSS and its affiliates had arrogated to themselves the right to speak for the Hindu community. And in their capacity of being the sole spokesmen, they also usurped for themselves the right to decide religious issues.

Now, the RSS clan has expanded its domain and started to adjudicate matters concerning art and artistic intention. Those who had taken shelter behind the comfortable thought that the shameful incident of December 6, 1992 was merely an aberration are suddenly realising to their horror that it was not so.

Those who cause destruction can hardly be expected to respect creativity. Therefore, it is not at all surprising that believers of aggressive Hindutva have struck again to obliterate what they thought constituted a slur on the Hindu religion. It will be useful to recall that the Babari Masjid too was viewed by the RSS clan as a symbol of insult to the Hindus.

... Bajrang Dal was formed in the early '80s as a response to the mushrooming militant Hindu organisations which were sprouting as a reaction to Sikh terrorism in Punjab... RSS leadership ... decided to float its own organisation which would eventually subsume all others. The organisation, which came to be known as Bajrang Dal, was by its very nature militant since inception. Moreover, unlike other RSS affiliates, it had an amorphous character and a very loose, ill-defined and indeterminate, organisational structure.

... It did not have representative bodies and worked under the leadership of one convenor in a particular locality. In short, it was an army of undisciplined, untrained yet determined fighters. The Bajrang Dal emerged as ... not an affiliate of the RSS but that of the VHP.

It would be wrong to assume that it functioned independent of the Sangh clan. The very fact that its all-India chief Vinay Katiyar could become a BJP MP is sufficient proof of its organisational links with the mother organisation. The Bajrang Dal members virtually acted as the saffron shirts of the RSS-led VHP.

The BJP leaders have a remarkable capacity of washing their hands off an incident which may affect their assiduously cultivated image of being very reasonable, persuasive individuals committed to the Hindu cause. In the presence of the entire BJP top brass, a mob of fanatics, openly incited by leaders such as Uma Bharti, pulled down the Babari Masjid but the BJP leaders pleaded innocence.

Some of them, for example, Atal Bihari expressed shock and horror in the beginning. But the middle and lower rung

leaders never tried to hide their glee. Similarly BJP president L.K. Advani has condemned the burning down of Hussain's paintings while his senior colleague K.R. Malkani has been able to detect shades of Mahmood Ghaznavi in the ageing artist because of his painting of Saraswati, the goddess of creativity.

There is no way to prove that the gang (acted) on the express orders of the VHP or any other member of the RSS clan. However, there is no denying the fact that a climate of intolerance and hatred for the Muslims did act as the inspiration for this heinous act of vandalism. The RSS clan has been busy creating such a climate for many decades. ...

When politics is allowed to pronounce judgment on history, art or literature, this is what happens. Years ago, the RSS and its affiliates like the BJP had created a big furore over ... Ambedkar's book "Riddles of Ram", claiming that he book was an insult to the deity worshipped by millions of Hindus. In the recent past, Shiv Sena raised a hue and cry over certain remarks made by journalist-writer Khushwant Singh about Shivaji... The spirit of intolerance is by no means confined to the Hindutva brigade...

That an artist of Hussain's stature and accomplishments felt compelled to apologise in the face of daily demonstrations in front of his Bombay residence and destruction of his canvases is a testimony to the fact that space for a democratic discourse is shrinking very fast...

(Source: The Pioneer, 14 October, 1996)

Letter of Rajinder Kumar Gupta in Indian Express, 6 November, 1996

The editorial "Holy terrorists in Indian Express, October 12, 1996 describes the Bajrang Dal as an outcaste of civilised society. This is itself ... intellectual intolerance breeding another type of fanaticism which has no respect for other people's sentiments.

Do only those persons, who have no sentiments, scruples, faith or commitment for anything and believe only in eating, drinking and making merry, belong to a civilised society? Perhaps, in the age of rampant consumerism and scams, only such people can be called civilised because it is said that in the valley of fools it is folly to be wise.

A healthy respect for the sentiments of others, particularly in the matter of religion, is a precondition of a civilised society.... Had the autonomy of an artist been exercised with an Islamic figure, Indian Express and the so-called progressive intellectuals would have been the first to condemn the act. Your use of abusive language - like "loony fringe, silly outcaste" etc. - against an organisation is intellectual terrorism at its worst.

RSS: ABISY**Project: Rewriting History of India**

Speaking at the inaugural session of the three-day convention at Sharda Vihar Campus, Bhopal, the founder member of the ABISY, Shri Moropant Pingle emphasised that history must be based on proper facts and figures and evidence devoid of any prejudice. He said that the Indian history which the people had been reading was not authentic... ABISY is to compile true and authentic history of India. ... The concept of the foundation of India, presented by the historian, was wrong and misleading and the "Aryans" were the aboriginal people rather than invaders like Mohammed Ghauri, Mohd. bin Quasim and others, as was propagated by the western historians...

The Chief Guest ... Shri Radha Raman Das, V.C., Gwalior University said that ... the concept of Aryavata, propagated by the western authors themselves was an indication that Aryans were the indigenous people. K.D.S. Mandawa in his Presidential address said that nothing had been written regarding religious places of the Aryans as that of the Christians and the Muslims in the books of history. ... He termed it as a conspiracy against the people of India for depriving them of their rich, ancient and vast cultural heritage. National President of the ABISY, Thakur Ram Singh, Vice-President Dr. Thakur Prasad Verma, veteran historian Laxman Sridheer Vakadkar were also present....

About 125 research papers on a variety of subjects were presented during the Convention. Dr. Mohan Gupta in his research paper on "Bharatiya Kalgadana" tried to find out the exact date of the Mahabharata, which, according to him, was October 17, 1952 BC. He said that the Indian system of calculating the period was more developed and farther ahead than any of the prevailing systems of calculation elsewhere.

Shri P. V. Hole in his paper refuted the idea that there was an "ice age" in India before 12,000 BC, and added that while the northern hemisphere was covered with ice... the presence of "Ostrich" in India had proved that India was not covered with ice. He gave references of the Rig Veda to "Dhadhi Karvan"... Shri Devi Singh Mandawa in his paper touched a sensitive issue of "Failure of Khilafat Rule in India". He stressed that the powerful Khalifas were not able to conquer India because of strong resistance of Pratiharas, ... and rulers of Malwa and because of the strong and united resistance India was saved for 275 years from the Muslim rule.

Shri Babu Rao Vakandan, a veteran historian, said that the prevailing belief that Qutub Minar was built by Qutubuddin Aibek or Iltutmish was totally wrong and said that Varahmir, the courtier of Chandra Gupta-II, had constructed two minars, one Qutub Minar and another its replica in Afghanistan.

(Source: The Organiser, 24 November, 1996)

Cookie Maini on Rephrasing History, Renaming Places

Sometime ago, newspapers carried a report that Victoria Terminus, a landmark in the economic and historical evolution of Bombay (sorry Mumbai!) has been rechristened as Chhatrapati Shivaji terminus.... How incongruous and anachronistic that a Gothic building symbolising a different era in history is being named after a national hero who had no connection with it...

Why should we be so squeamish about the fact, that India was a British colony? There is hardly any nook or corner of the world which has not remained a colony at some stage or the other as a part of the political evolutionary process of world's history. ...

The process of rechristening began when our chauvinistic compatriots wanted to change the names of streets for instance, Curzon Road to Kasturba Gandhi Marg. More recently Connaught Place has become Indira Gandhi Chowk and Rajiv Gandhi Chowk amidst tremendous controversy. The next step was to pull down statues of Queen Victoria, King George and various other governors general. Not to mention the colonial buildings being razed to the ground because of sheer neglect. Recently, in Delhi there was a tremendous uproar about pulling down the canopy on Rajpath (formerly kingsway) which had covered King George's statue... The structure escaped brutal extinction. ...

Lobbyists of the anti-British stance, who advocate the replacing of Raj relics and names by their own, must bear in mind that the Archaeological Survey of India was set up by Lord Curzon. If it had not been for him, many impressive Mughal structures, Hindu temples, manuscripts, coin collections would not have survived for posterity to revel in. Grandiose like Victoria Memorial in Calcutta, repositories in museums as in Bombay, all merit preservation and maintenance. With the natural transitional situations, the process of evolution should emerge as part of the historical chain of events but not deliberate efforts at extermination.

... As far as historical events, names and monuments are concerned, they must be viewed dispassionately and not superficially white-washed by the brushes of chauvinistic zealots.

(Source: The Pioneer, 20 November, 1996)

RSS Chief on Rewriting History

Today's textbooks have only a few pages on the great past of the country while the 500-year history of Muslim invaders and the 200-year history of the British is dealt with in great detail.

(Source: The Organiser)

Changing Names

We as a nation love name-dropping. But lately, it appears to have grown into an obsession. So, after Baroda was dropped in favour of Vadodara and Trivandrum for Thiruvananthapuram, ... Bombay ... cast away for Mumbai and Madras for Chennai (and) Patna .. to turn into Pataliputra and Bihar into Vihara, can Delhi be far behind? The meta log in Delhi are apparently determined to capitalise on the name fetish and hang up a new name-board for the Capital. The change, though, will not be from the anglicised Delhi to medieval Delhi. Delhi is simply to become Dilli. The preferred version remains unexplained except for the fact that the name rhymes with billi and that the pro-changers are zealous about bringing about a supposed majoritarian view and identity.

There is nothing wrong in chopping and changing, hewing and hawing, and bringing back some of the lilt and verve of the past - as in the case of Vadodara or Thiruvananthapuram, or the proposed Pataliputra. But when the old and the familiar gives way to something totally alien, it either reeks of plain sycophancy - Rajiv Chowk for good old Connaught Place, C.P. for any Delhiwalla - or smacks of incongruity. Imagine associating Chhatrapati Shivaji with a railway terminus, as though the revered king rode astride a steam-belching loco as he went about his business of founding the Maratha empire.

In totalitarian regimes, simple rules govern naming and name-dropping: everything is named after the Supreme Leader of the day. With his passing away, much that is associated with him is also passed over and out. The new Chinese fatwa in this regard is notable. Public places are not be given names that are undignified, foreign or vulgar, or those that are in poor taste, obscure or insulting to national dignity and pride. The too-ancient, strange or inaccurate are also out. And so, "Centre of Counts" and "Imperial Mansion" must be rubbed off.

(Source: The Times of India, 3 December, 1996)

Shahabuddin's Letter to Organiser, 3 Dec., 1996

In his review of A.K. Ray's Religion and the Secular Man, Shri M.V. Kamath (The Organiser, 1 December, 1996) has built up the structure of "majorityism" on the basis of his self-serving ignorance of the meaning of "Secularism" in the Indian context. This meaning is now universally applicable to all multi-religious states: that the State recognises religion as a social institution; it also recognises all the religions practised by its people, respects them all, maintains equidistance towards them, does not give anyone a "most forward religion" treatment and maintains neutrality in resolution and adjudication of inter-religious disputes and finally, democracy being a game of numbers provides legal protection to a minority group if the majority group violates or makes any attempt to violate its rights as a group by using its numerical prepondance in the society, economy or polity including administration.

The question is not whether a Hindu theocratic state is theoretically possible or not. The question is and has been whether the religious minorities feel secure in life and property, honour and dignity and equal in enjoying the benefits of governance and development. In adopting various declarations, the international community has conceded the possibility of religious minorities being deprived of their rights, wholly or partially, by the religious majority, in a fit of passion, arising out of prejudice distrust, hatred and hostility. Ray, indeed, in his book make out a case, and Kamath endorses it, as to why the Hindu majority should nurse such feelings and sentiments towards the Muslim minority.

Mode of protection will vary from State to State but it must ensure participation and power-sharing. In the Indian context, faced with injustice for centuries, all oppressed sections of the Indian society are seeking alleviation, through reservation. Why shouldn't the religious minorities? Secularism is indeed associated with religion and not caste but secularism is nothing but Social Justice in religious context.

Annie Besant on India and Hinduism

Many are the religions and many the races which are flourishing in India, but none of them stretches back into the far dawn of her past, nor is necessary for her endurance as a nation. Every one might pass away as they came, and India would still remain. But let Hinduism vanish, and what is she? A "geographical expression" of the past, a dim memory of a perished glory.

Her history, her literature, her art, her monuments, all have Hinduism written across them. India lived before

their coming; India could live after their passing. But let Hinduism go, Hinduism that was India's cradle, and in that passing would be India's grave. Then would India with India's religion be but a memory... India would remain then as a subject for the antiquarian, the archaeologist, a corpse for dissection, but no longer an object of patriotism, no longer a Nation...

Saradindu Mukherji on Flow of Hindu Refugees from Pakistan/Bangladesh to India - A Hindu View

as a nation, we have devised a unique way to deal with problems, and that is accomplished by either ignoring it or pushing it under the carpet. At the same time, there is an obsessive involvement with non-issues.

One such burning problem is the phenomenon of mass involuntary and forced migration. No country in the world has been host to so many refugees as a "shrinking and shrunken" India has been since the Partition in 1947.... According to the estimate of the Government of India, 7.30 million people entered India between 1947-51 from the two wings of Pakistan. Except a few thousand Hindu families in Sind, almost the entire Hindu, and the Sikh population were forced to leave their homes. A total of 6.73 million acres of land were abandoned in Pakistan by the Hindus and Sikhs who left for India.

In East Pakistan, the process of ethnic cleansing of the minorities was slow and systematic. Between 1947-51, the total number of people moving into India was estimated at 2.55 million - entirely Hindus and the cream of the Bengali-Hindu Bhadrakalok society.

While West Pakistan was cleansed of its kafirs except for a microscopic minority - being reduced from 23% (in 1947) to 3% at present, the non-Muslim communities of East Pakistan/Bangladesh reduced from 29% to 12% of the population. One can easily guess the number involved in the massive ouster... It is estimated that another 2.5 million Hindus fled the eastern wing of Pakistan during 1951-61. It was during the period 1965-67 ... that the mass emigration ceased for a time...

... One finds that 90% of the total who fled to East Pakistan in course of the liberation war of Bangladesh were Hindus. Indira Gandhi's Government and the media did its best to suppress this fact... A fresh bout of exodus from Bangladesh to India occurred after the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman...

The steady exodus of the Hindus from Bangladesh is generally pushed under the carpet, by the Government in New Delhi or Calcutta and other important sections of the society. The extent of the missing Hindu population is estimated around 1.22 million during the period 1974-81 and about 1.73 million during the last inter-censal period of 1981-91. ... It is a fact of recent history, that Hindus and the Buddhists are the worst victims of ethnic cleansing and are more likely to be refugees than other group of people. In the Indian sub-continent, wherever the kafirs become a minority, they are bound to become refugees, a fate which is in store for the Hindus in West Bengal, the north-eastern states and possibly Ladakh and Jammu. ... (Source: The Hindustan Times, 13 October, 1996)

Shahabuddin's Letter to Hindustan Times, 13 July, 1996

Shri Saradindu Mukherji's article "The unwritten story of Partition" is a one-sided, partisan and biased version of the great human tragedy that preceded and followed the partition of our country.

It would only be fair to recall that migration was a two-way traffic of equal dimension and terrible atrocities were committed on both sides of the partition line. "Ethnic cleansing" did place and just as the Hindu and Sikh population was forced out of West Pakistan, the Muslim population was forced out from the then East Punjab and Delhi, parts of Rajasthan as well as western Uttar Pradesh. To any objective historian, no community comes out of the carnage with a clean hand.

Mr. Mukherji has also related the relative "efficiency" of ethnic cleansing to civilisational aspects. He not only displays his antipathy and prejudice in ascribing inhuman and brutal atrocities to religious commands or ethos but does a great disservice to the historical process of evolution of composite culture which, despite rude interruptions has gone on in our Sub-continent for thousands of years.

Shahabuddin's Letter to Press Council of India, 14 August, 1996

I beg to submit a photocopy of the above mentioned article for appropriate action by the Council. A copy of my letter to the Editor, 13 July, 1996 is enclosed. This has not been published.

The article in question violates the Code of Conduct by presenting and analysing the tragedy of Partition in a manner which not only distorts the truth but vilify Islam as a religion to generate feelings of hatred and revenge against Muslim Indians and thus to aggravate existing communal tensions in our sensational society.

I would request the Council to take due notice and appropriate action in the matter.

Press Council of India's Reply, 4 November, 1996

... It has been treated as closed for lack of sufficient grounds...

If they think they are not Indians, I will open a way for them to go to that (Pakistan) country.
- Farooq Abdullah, Chief Minister of J&K

I am also a migrant and I do not think that I can go back to my home (in Kashmir) now.

- Maqbool Dhar,
Union Minister of State for Home

Muslims should be Muslim but Behave as Good Neighbours Who Care

Omar Afzal's Prescription for Muslim Relations with the Hindus

Islam is undoubtedly the most maligned religion today... The Western media has successfully created a bad image of the 'Muslims'... To paint them as the bad guys whose religion teaches them intolerance and bloodshed. In India ignorance about Islam is ... fortified thanks to the projection of its image as an anti-national minority misusing the hospitality of an extremely tolerant Hindu majority.

The largest Muslim minority suffers from double jeopardy. The burden of the past history and their own inaction has created a mess... No more the myth of Muslim appeasement, the campaign is now against an "aggressive" minority threatening the very physical existence of the Hindu majority. ...

The mist of partition blinded the Muslims from seeking what lies ahead... Had they accepted the fact that in a secular democracy the authority to determine basic social policies at every level from a small village to the whole country resides in the representative bodies selected for limited terms by and ultimately accountable to, the electorate, they would have chosen a different course of action. There was no choice but to fully participate instead of standing on the sidelines or begging for mercy...

Vote bank politics and apathy led the Muslims to a disaster. The ruling party did little to help the Muslims. They suffered heavy losses of life, property and honour in worst communal riots, but the RSS-BJP combine portrayed them as having a death-wish by throwing the first one. They were anti-national elements who deserved to be punished. After Shah Bano the myth was created that the Muslims are getting undue share at the expense of patriotic Hindus... Nobody cares about how far the Muslims have fallen behind in education and commerce. They are more than 12 per cent of the population but their share in public and private sector jobs is not even two per cent. They are discriminated against at every level from getting admission to procuring loans and business contracts. They are in some cases legally barred from performing some of their religious rites. In any surcharged atmosphere their life and property are targets of mass frenzy...

The total impact of these factors is alienation and ignorance. A deep chasm separates the Muslims from other sections of the population. The open interaction with the non-Muslims is almost non-existent. A large part of the blame lies on the Muslims who have created a cocoon around themselves...

The two-nation ... theory, often blamed for the partition did not solve the 'identity' crisis either in India or in Pakistan...

In the last two decades Hindutva forces have slowly gained an upper hand not in the Hindi belt but have also captured the souls and minds of a major section of Indians

by stressing the supremacy of 'Hindu' ideals, and discipline to counter the 'alien'... influences...

The 'secularists' (including the Muslims who sincerely believe that only a truly secular India can hold together) were unable to present their case forcefully. ...

Present electoral process appears to have foiled the plan of the 'Hindutva' forces to capture the power at the centre on their own and impose their pseudo-nationalist brand of 'Indianism'. However, they have not given it up. They will make their next move by electoral adjustments...

Hindutva, aggressive or benign, cannot hold India together for long... Their 'Hindu India' will adopt repressive measures not only against the Muslims - their perceived arch rivals, but also against other religious, linguistic, cultural and regional minorities which do not share their vision. They will have to deal with the daunting task of 'equalising' the Hindus in both legal and 'social' terms. In a 'democratic Hindu India', 55 per cent of the population of lower caste Hindus will demand political, economic, and social dominance which is totally unacceptable to the ... dominant upper class... Anti-Muslim passion now fired by the Hindutva forces among the masses to gain votes will result in uncontrollable flare-ups of communal clashes. Mass killing of the Muslims ... will certainly create a backlash among the younger Muslims. What if they lost hope of peaceful coexistence? Obviously ... Muslims in India cannot be slaughtered or converted to Hinduism en masse. They cannot be forced to migrate to another Muslim country either. Any sane political observer will shudder to imagine the disastrous consequences of a small fraction of ... Indian Muslims taking to arms as the last resort. ...

The 'secularists' have to focus on their vision of an India which is big enough to all existing 'minorities'... By some very strange logic all those Indians who do not believe in Islam or Christianity are lumped together as 'Hindus' - a geographical and not a religious denomination. The term joins a large number of caste, social and linguistic 'minorities' into a string and declares them as the dominant 'religious' majority. ... Muslims must actively participate in creating a society of God-fearing individuals.

... As citizens of the country they are equal partners in its survival, development and well-being. This requires untiring efforts to live as good citizens and make sure that the society functions properly at all levels from their own locality, the town, the state, and the country as a whole...

The baggage of past history weighs heavily against the Muslims. But it is not very difficult to shed this burden, if the Muslims decide to exchange their role from a rival to that of a neighbour.

If the Muslims wish to change their image, they don't

(Contd. on page)

Reconverting the Malkanas Rajputs to Hinduism

Extracts from Mahatma Hansraj by Raj Sharma

During the Muslim rule in India many Hindus were forcibly converted to Islam. Very often the converts retained their sub-caste names. Naturally, these converts continued to be governed by their tribal and customary law which was Hindu in origin.

Some ... never took their conversion seriously. They were converted en masse, and their conversion had implied renunciation of the Hindu faith rather than active adoption of the life of conforming Muslims. Such seems to have been the case with what were called the Malkana Rajputs in some districts of United Provinces as well as in Bharatpur State... They considered themselves Rajputs. Of Muslim beliefs and religious practices they absorbed practically nothing, so much so that some of them had actually reverted to Hinduism at a time when Hindu orthodoxy did not usually tolerate the re-entry of such converts. Such, for example, was the case of the Bachhal Rajputs in the district of Mathura and the Ganthara Rajputs in the district of Aligarh. Similarly, some Malkanas had ... been readmitted into Hinduism in the beginning of the twentieth century in the district of Etawah.

Towards the end of 1922, the question of regularizing the status of these Rajputs was taken up. Many of the Malkana Rajputs were eager to return to their original faith... A meeting of the Rajput Upkarni Maha Sabha held in December 1922, under the Chairmanship of Sir Nahar Singh of Shahpura, decided to accept these Malkana Rajputs back into their original Rajput sub-castes. This was followed by a similar decision by the All India Kshatriya Sabha, the most representative organization of the Rajputs in India.

It was then that the Bharatiya Hindu Shuddhi Sabha was founded with its headquarters at Agra. Shraddhanand was elected President and Hansraj (1814-1938) Vice President...

... The Malkana Rajputs lay scattered in some 418 villages of the United Provinces and Rajputana. Not only had they to be formally readmitted into the Hindu fold but it was necessary to reconcile the Hindus to their return...

As usual ... the forces of opposition were waiting for their chance. First came the growl of the political parties in India. In the name of Hindu-Muslim unity appeals were made to the leaders of the Arya Samaj to stay their hands. In a meeting of the political leaders at Agra it was decided that C.R. Dass, Moti Lal Nehru, Sarojini Naidu and **Abul Kalam Azad** should join Shraddhanand in making a tour in the area ... in order to find out whether the Malkanas were

really willing to enter the Hindu fold of their own accord. They toured the countryside and conceded the right of the Hindus to welcome back the Malkanas into their fold. It was then suggested that both the Hindu and the Muslim organisations should withdraw their workers from among the Malkanas for a year.... On the refusal (of Muslims) to comply with their demand, the political leaders had to leave Agra, not however, without a declaration from **Abul Kalam Azad** which called upon the Muslims not to dispute the right of the Hindus to reconvert the Malkanas to Hinduism...

On April 3 Hansraj reached Agra to take personal charge of the work... The central office of the Shuddhi Sabha was established at Agra. In a very short time, Hansraj had collected a large number of workers.

... The local Rajputs ... had to be persuaded it to accepting the Malkanas into the Hindu fold. But another characteristic of the Hindu caste-system now created a good deal of difficulty. The Malkanas ... demanded that they be accepted on equal terms by their ... sub-castes. ...

It was ... difficult to persuade the Rajputs to accept the Malkanas within their various sub-caste groups. The problem was further complicated by the fact that there was no one organization or caste-brotherhood with which necessary negotiation... might be carried on. Every sub-caste had to be persuaded separately - sometime the same sub-caste several times over in different localities...

To facilitate this task a Conference of the Rajputs from all over the country was invited to meet at Vrindavan on May 30 and 31. ...

... It was decided to hold a great inter-dinner... On May 31, all the Rajputs assembled on this occasion, including the President, took their meals together along with the converted Malkanas. ...

... The frail body could not continue the pace much longer... He left for Lahore on July 10...

...During the three months that he was there, reclamation ... had been done in 147 villages and more than 30,000 Malkanas had been brought back to the Hindu fold. A new chapter had been added to the history of Hindu India. ...

... A splendid chapter ... of the expansion of the Aryan culture in India.

(Source: The Organiser, 10 November, 1996)

Tibetan Monk Pilgrim Dharmasvamin's Travel Account

Translated by G. Roerich, Published by K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, Patna

Extracts from Introduction by Dr. A.S. Altekar

"The Muslim Conquest in Bihar in 13th Century A.D."

Dharmasvamin's account is very valuable because it gives us first hand information of the effects produced by the Muslim conquest. The conquerors had overrun the country but had not yet succeeded in establishing any stable administration. In Bihar there were several Hindu or Buddhist kings, who were leading a precarious existence. They were too weak to oppose the Muslim forces, but strong enough to emerge from their forest retreats and reestablish their rule when the invading army had passed away, as is shown by the case of Buddhasena. We do not get reference to the Muslim administrative machinery except at Bihar Sharif, where there was a Muslim military headquarters.

Bands of Muslim soldiers were roaming about the country creating consternation among the population, probably by their loot and exactions...

When Dharmasvamin reached Vaisali on his way to Bodha Gaya, the town was all deserted on account of the apprehended arrival of a Muslim force. People used to desert their houses by day and come back to them at night (p. 62). Vikramasila had been completely destroyed before 1206 AD and its foundation stones had been hurled into the Ganga, (p. 64). The Bodha Gaya establishment had been deserted by all except four monks. The ancient image had been walled up by a brick wall and a new one had been put in the ante-chamber. The old image had, however, been already despoiled of its emerald eyes earlier. The king of Bodha Gaya had fled to forest. Dharmasvamin himself had to flee away for seventeen days. When it became clear that the Muslim force had gone away, people returned. The wall was removed, the ancient image was made available to devotees... King Buddhasena also reappeared on the scene along with his small force of 500 soldiers. Dharmasvamin refers to the ruins of the stone gate in front of the Bodha Gaya temple. This was also probably destroyed by the Muslims. Dharmasvamin mentions a number of small temples in the courtyard of the Vajrasana shrine, which were apparently undamaged.

The general impression that Nalanda was completely destroyed by the beginning of the 13th century is not confirmed by Dharmasvamin's account. He had lived there for about six months and gives us an eye witness's account. Nalanda was still in existence, but was a mere ghost of its past glory. Once it had seven temples and 14 big and 84 small monasteries. Dharmasvamin tells us that they were damaged by the Muslims and there was none to look after them or to make offerings (p. 90). Only two

Viharas called Dha-na-bad and Ghu-na-ba were in a serviceable condition. The surrounding wall of the establishment still existed with its eastern and western gates; they were decorated with paintings of Tara and other deities near the entrances (p.93). Thousands of monks belonging to the establishment had fled away, but the chief abbot Rahula-sri-Bhadra continued to reside and had declined to flee. He was an old man of more than 90 and probably felt that he should die at his post. At the time of Dharmasvamin's visit there were 70 monk scholars reading under him, being supported by king Buddhasena of Bodha Gaya and a rich lay Brahmana disciple named Jayadeva living at Odantapuri or Bihar Sharif.

If we are to believe the account of Dharmasvamin, the partial survival of Nalanda was due to the superstitious fears of the Muslims...

... The partial survival of Nalanda was probably due to the following causes:

- (1) The establishment had not many stone structures, which could supply stone for the erection of mosques.
- (2) It was too big to be thoroughly destroyed in one effort.
- (3) Nalanda was not, like Vikramasila, on the high way leading from Delhi to Bengal, and so the work of completing its destruction required a special expedition.
- (4) Of its numerous temples and monasteries, two monasteries were in a serviceable condition in 1235 A.D. So when the first avalanche of Muslim invasion was over, a few monks, about a hundred in number, returned with their head abbot to stay at the establishment, hoping that they would now be left undisturbed. Practically the whole province had been over-run by the Muslims and the constant danger of their harassment was present every where. Why then not stay in a place, which could at least afford some good accommodation for a limited number and was hallowed by its earlier associations?

In the summer of 1235 A.D. Nalanda suffered further from Muslim depredations. A military force had been stationed at Odantapuri (Bihar Sharif) and its commanding officer (attacked Nalanda)... All the seventy disciples fled away leaving the old Guru and his Tibetan disciple... Eventually both decided to quit, the pupil carrying his Guru on his shoulders, along with rice, sugar and some books. They however only shifted to the temple of Jnananatha in whose miraculous powers to save his devotees the Guru had an implicit faith. This temple was to the south-west of

(Contd. on page 40)

Arpita Das on Zafar Mahal in Mehrauli

The Mehrauli settlement ... began as a medieval Hindu citadel in the twelfth century A.D. It was then ... the seat of the Delhi Sultanate... It was in the late Mughal period that an extremely important monument was built at the heart of the Mehrauli settlement. This was Zafar Mahal... The construction was begun by Akbar Shah II (1803-36d). The structure was later expanded by Bahadur Shah Zafar (1837-57). Around the royal residence lay havelis, mosques, gardens, stables and orchards.

The main palace is an imposing three-storeyed structure made conspicuous by its lofty gateway which was built by Bahadur Shah Zafar in red sandstone and marble. Typical Shahjahani curved arches and pillars, and arcades flanked by rooms like the Chatta Chowk in the Red Fort characterise this building.

Behind the Mahal is a small courtyard containing the screen tombs of Bahadur Shah I, Shah Alam II, Akbar Shah II and Mirza Fakhru (heir apparent to the Mughal throne after Bahadur Shah Zafar). These graves, lying clustered together in the backyard of the royal residence, are an important indication to a declining empire.

Other monuments in the vicinity of the Zafar Mahal which once formed a part of the royal complex are the havelis of Mirza Babar and Mirza Salim (son of Bahadur Shah Zafar), and the 'Jharna' which Dargah Quli Khan calls 'Birka' in his celebrated seventeenth century work 'Muraqqa-i-Dilli'. This pleasure garden consisting of a colonnaded dalan, a water-fall and a tank was built in 1712 by Nawab Ghaziuddin Khan Feroz Jung. Additions were later made by Akbar Shah II and Bahadur Shah Zafar. Today, the once picturesque Jharna has become an overgrown garden the vandalised dalan occupied by a refugee family and the tank painted a garish blue by the MCD are a dismal sight - as is the rest of the Zafar Mahal complex. Although the palace is a protected monument, only a portion of it stands today as many structures within it have been demolished.

The upper floor of the gateway is gradually disintegrating. The staircase which leads to the uppermost level of the gateway has collapsed at certain places. Roofs of dalans have disappeared, parts of the mahal are even being used as a public toilet. Another part has become a rubbish dump.

The Haveli of Mirza Babar is now called 'Babar Building'. Refugee families shackled in here, after partition. Important parts of the haveli have been demolished in

recent years... Parts of Mirza Salim's Haveli which lies off the Kasai Wali Gali are now being used as shops. The screen tombs of the three Mughal emperors behind the Mahal lie in total obscurity and neglect. The marble screens around the graves are disappearing rapidly. Children from the Mehrauli village have made the tomb enclosure their playground. The tombstones themselves, are in a state of ruin.

The state in which the Zafar Mahal complex lies today may largely be attributed to general official antipathy. In the ASI handbook on Delhi and its neighbourhood, Zafar Mahal is not even mentioned as an independent monument. Only a couple of lines are dedicated to it under the write-up on the Dargah of Qutub Sahib. The two official programmes - the Delhi Master Plan in 1962 and the Village Development Plan in 1984 made no improvement in the condition of the Mahal complex...

Although suggestions continue to be made about the restoration of this monument and others lying around it, perhaps, the most important remedial measure would be to inform more inhabitants of our city about this splendid Mughal residence, which witnessed the decline of a magnificent empire, where Bahadur Shah Zafar spent many a contemplative monsoon evenings and where lie four of the last Mughals...

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 18 August, 1996)

(Contd. from page 39)

the Nalanda establishment. While they were staying there, suddenly some 300 Muslim soldiers appeared, armed and ready to fight. 'Though they were sure to kill them, they did not find them and went back' (p. 94). This party might have wrought further devastation at Nalanda, though Dharmasvamin is silent upon the point.

Apparently the Guru and his Tibetan pupil continued to stay in Nalanda during the ensuing rainy season after the departure of the Muslim soldiery. The text is not clear on the point... Towards the end of the 9th chapter we read of Dharmasvamin's completing his studies at Nalanda, when he asked his Guru's permission to depart. This would suggest that both of them were living at Nalanda, probably in the temple of Jnananatha...

Dharmasvamin does not refer to the libraries at Nalanda, nor did he get any MSS copied there. **The library buildings seem to have been destroyed earlier than 1235 A.D.** The monks who were staying at Nalanda had however a few MSS with them.

Sati Goes Unpunished

All the three main accused in the infamous Deorala sati case, which had rocked the country about a decade back, have been acquitted.

The Additional District and Sessions Judge of Neem ka Thana, Mr. Om Prakash Gupta, exonerated ... father-in-law of Roop Kanwar, the victim ... younger brother of Roop Kanwar's husband and Magan Singh were exonerated of the charges.

On September 4, 1987 after the death of Mal Singh, his young widow Roop Kanwar following the old but banned tradition of Sati, immolated herself along with the body of her husband.

According to FIR lodged by the police after a few days of the incident, Roop Kanwar did not commit Sati but was forced to immolate herself along with the body of her husband.

This episode not only rocked the country but also attracted the attention of the international media. The incident took place in a small village Deorala in Sikar district, about 100 km from (Jaipur). ...

Nobody was willing to come forward and say in the court that he had seen Roop Kanwar being forced to climb her husband's pyre. And the 39 accused went scot-free, lamented the Additional Public Prosecutor.

(Sati) which was witnessed by more than a thousand people has gone unpunished. But ... for the majority, including Roop Kanwar's 65-year-old father-in-law ... it is the victory of justice. Sitting in the village chaupal flanked by admirers. (He) is a retired Hindi lecturer is remorseless.

"It was her decision. We did not force her on to the pyre. At least 10,000 people had gathered at the 'Rajput Samshan Bhumi' to witness the Sati", he said, sitting in his house in village Deorala, hailing the court judgement letting him and 38 others go scot-free.

"Ironically no one came forward in the court and said convincingly that Roop Kanwar was forced by her in-laws to immolate herself on her husband's funeral pyre", C.R. Yadav, additional public prosecutor at the Neem Ka Thana court.

Deorala ... the accused received a hero's welcome when they returned "victorious" from court. ...

Reminiscing, a Rajput farmer at the village, said that she had travelled almost three kilometers with her husband's body to the pyre. The word has spread and thousands of people had already come in from far off places in trucks and tractor trollies. All the women were in their bridal finery and were singing hymns, chanting mantras. And like a true Sati she walked up to the pyre and sat down. And then he lit it.

When asked who "he" was, the farmer turned away and said he did not want to end up in court. Sehrawat,

P.T. Bopanna on Mother of All Yagnas!

Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda's name has been linked to one of the biggest-ever yagnas to be performed near Mangalore in Karnataka from December 11.

The "mother of all yagnas", involving an expenditure of crores of rupees, will be held at a 900-year-old temple near Belthangady in Dakshina Kannada district for which 1,200 specially trained priests will be brought from Kanchi, Sringeri and Hyderabad.

An estimated 2,250 kg each of ghee and honey will be consigned to the flames to propitiate the gods to invoke the blessings "for the welfare of entire humanity"

The yagna will be held on a specially erected pandal measuring 375 feet by 160 feet. An estimated 20 tonnes of jackfruit tree barks will be used to keep the fire burning in 120 pits.

Mr. Vasanth Bangera, Janata Dal MLA, who is the moving force behind the yagna, denied rumours that the yagna has been sponsored by Mr. Gowda on the advice of astrologers to ensure the stability of the United Front Government at the Centre, though the local people in the area are referring to the event as "Gowda's yagna"...

However, ... the State Government has allotted Rs. 2 crore for improving roads near the venue and the Dakshina Kannada zilla panchayat has sanctioned Rs. 40 lakh for other preparations.

Over two lakh devotees are expected to converge on ... the Ayutha Chandika Yagna (site) from December 11 to 22. ... As part of the ritual, a buffalo (usually a horse is used) is being taken around ... and has already covered 50 villages out of the 80 scheduled... After the yagna, the buffalo will be donated to (a) temple though rumours are rife that the animal will be sacrificed".

(Source: The Pioneer, 22 October, 1996)

meanwhile, refused to discuss this issue. "My son died and so did his wife. Please don't probe so deep and make my wounds bleed again", he said...

Sehrawat and most others in the predominantly Rajput community village said that the lengthy court process was just to harass them. "I was made a pawn of State politics. Some sections of the Congress wanted to oust the Chief Minister and used this incident. They achieved their aim but we lost nine years, one month and seven days of our life, he said angrily.

"... Roop Kanwar not the only woman in Rajasthan to have committed Sati", the father-in-law said... "And there are so many Sati temples here. Even police officers go there to worship. We are Rajputs and our tradition will live on"...

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 13 October, 1996 and The Indian Express, 15 October, 1996)

A Devout Hindu Mosque Builder in Kerala

On the day fanatics razed the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya, a devout Hindu was building a holy structure for Muslims in Kerala. G. Gopalakrishnan, 59, is an expert on Islamic architecture and has painstakingly restored and created some of the most sacred mosques in the state. In a career spanning over four decades, he has built more than sixty including the one at Beemapalli near Thiruvananthapuram, a major pilgrimage centre in South India... Gopalakrishnan ... has no formal training in architecture. His wife is a Christian, Jaya, and he has given the freedom to his three children to pursue the religion of their choice. He believes, "the construction of religious centres becomes complete only when they are built in the minds of the people too".

Gopalakrishnan's flexibility towards matters religious finds an expression in his architecture too which is a blend of different cultures and concepts. For example, the Kaduvayil Jama Masjid has large domes typical of the Indo-Persian style with a sloped roof in Kerala vastu tradition.

At the Kattumurackal Jama Masjid, it is a mix of both modern and traditional architecture. He has introduced lotus petals atop the domes of the Beemapalli mosque, to achieve a rare combination of traditional Indian and Muslim-Persian design at its best. ...

The re-building of the famed Vavar mosque at Erumely in the high ranges was among his most daunting assignments. Vavar, the legend goes, was a follower of ... Ayyappa, the deity at the Sabarimala shrine. During the annual pilgrimage, thousands of pilgrims circle the mosque, dedicated to Vavar, on their way to the shrine, making it a vivid symbol of religious amity. The re-building became necessary as the mosque could not cope with the increasing number of Muslim devotees...

Gopalakrishnan ... suggested building a huge pillared verandah on the ground floor through which the Hindu devotees could go around the mosque without intruding into the sacred spaces; Muslims could use the same verandah to access the prayer hall... Construction which began in 1989 is expected to be completed soon....

Gopalakrishnan has never seen the Islamic architectural feats outside Kerala. He ... draws his inspiration from the Indian Architecture-Islamic Period written by Percy Brown... Though he has never seen the Taj Mahal, Gopalakrishnan has succeeded in capturing its essence in the Sheikh Masjid at Karunagapally. ...

Gopalakrishnan (says) "Perhaps I have been destined to build mosques and so bridges across the religions".

According to him, "attempt is an abode of mystery compared with the clarity of a mosque (makes it) more visible and intelligent ... and reveals a formal mind". ...

(Source: The Week, 6 October, 1996)

Son Sacrificed for Daughter's Normal Delivery

A mother Sacrificed her son, a 32-year-old farm worker called Jagmal in (Mansoorpur village) 45 km from Meerut ... so that her 29-year-old daughter could have a normal childbirth. Jagmal's wife Rajdulari was also attacked along with her two sons and one daughter. Rajdulari is currently in hospital with serious injuries... The incident occurred when most members of Jagmal's family and many other residents of the village were present. Jagmal was forcibly dragged out of his room, beaten up and tied to a charpoy. His mother, Prakashee, then brought out a darantee and gave it to eight male members of her family who then beheaded Jagmal.

It appears that nobody from the village tried to prevent the gruesome crime... The ... killers then caught hold of Rajdulari and tried to sacrifice her as well. But residents of the village foiled their attempt. ...

The decision to sacrifice Jagmal and his wife was taken three days ago by the family following Prakashee's return from the house of her pregnant daughter's in-laws.

(Source: The Times of India, 26 August, 1996)

Idol Offering Ghee and Milk to Devotees

A year after Lord Ganesha went on a nationwide milk-drinking spree, ... now ... Sriman Kalki Bhagavan ... is said to be offering his devotees ghee, milk and honey.

Bangalore's middle-class Austin Town is all agog with what one of its residents claims is a miracle - over the past week almost two kg of ghee has poured out from a picture of Sriman Kalki, who is believed to be the 10th avataar or incarnation of Lord Vishnu...

Kalki Bhagavan is supposed to have been performing the "miracle" on November 17. In addition to the ghee, even milk had been coming out from the hands in the full-length picture, framed, complete with a glass screen. ... His devotees say that the avataar in human form currently lives in Chennai and is "due to give darshan to his devotees in 1998". ... Kalki Bhagavan has lots of followers in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh and increasingly ... in Karnataka as well.

(Source: Avinash Thombre and Sriranjana Chaudhuri in The Times of India, 26 November, 1996)

Witch-Hunting in A.P.

... (Under) Medchal Police ... at Sutarguda village ... three men were tortured, their skin scrapped off with a scalpel and then burnt by pouring acid, all under the suspicion that they were practising witch-craft ... in front of the villager's eyes, at ... community hall, by a group of 50-60 persons. While eight have been arrested, the rest are absconding.

(Source: The Indian Express, 27 November, 1996)

International Seminar on Muslim Communities in Non-Muslim States, Declaration, London, July, 1978

I

We the participants in the Seminar:

- I. 1. (a) Affirming the commitment of Islam to the values of justice, human dignity, tolerance and the inalienable rights of man;
- (b) Aware of our sense of belonging to the Ummah which transcends geographical, racial and political boundaries;
- (c) Conscious of our divinely ordained duty to struggle for the relief of the oppressed of mankind wherever they be;
- (d) Realizing that at no time in history was there a greater need for concerted efforts, individual as well as institutional, in this direction:

Yet at the same time:

2. (a) Regretting the systematic denial of human and civil rights of Muslim communities in some Communist and non-communist lands;
- (b) Condemning the recent brutal persecution of Muslims in Ethiopia, Eritrea, the Philippines, Thailand, Burma and Cambodia;
- (c) Viewing with apprehension the inability of the government of India to prevent the widespread incidence of communal riots in the country;
- (d) Noting with deep anguish the continued violation of the sanctity and the rightful sovereignty of the city of Jerusalem and affirming our commitment to the restoration of the integrity of the Holy City as an integral part of the heritage of Islam:

II

Resolve to:

- II. 1. (a) Call upon all governments to take effective measures to enforce human rights within their jurisdictions, provide constitutional safeguards and establish socio-political instructions to ensure justice, freedom and equality for all irrespective of race, ethnic origin or culture.
- (b) Urge all countries where Muslim communities reside to recognise their right to pursue the Islamic way of life and to provide them opportunity for the expression of their Islamic identity in all its manifestations.
- (c) Suggest to the Government of India to repeal the provision in the Indian Constitution for a uniform civil code in order to guarantee the inviolability of Muslim Personal Law.

Urge all Muslim States to:

2. (a) Extend full support, with due regard to sovereignty of states, to Muslim communities in non-Muslim states whenever their rights are threatened, or whenever they suffer from discrimination and persecution.
- (b) Assist Muslim communities in non-Muslim countries in preserving and strengthening their religio-

cultural identity by establishing social institutions such as schools, hospitals and orphanages with a view to saving their future generations from alienation and cultural assimilation.

(c) Offer scholarships, job opportunities and training facilities in professional and technical fields to members of Muslim Communities in non-Muslim states and arrange a programme of educational and cultural exchange.

(d) Give preferential treatment in their immigration laws to Muslim individuals from non-Muslim countries, independent of the policy adopted towards the governments of such individuals.

(e) Incorporate into their own educational systems provisions enabling students to be informed about various aspects of the life of Muslim minorities.

(f) Above all, to speedily accomplish in their own jurisdiction the goal of transforming existing constitutional and legal structures which are a legacy of the colonial past into conformity with the Islamic Shariah.

Urge all Muslim Communities to:

3. (a) Make efforts to preserve their Islamic identity, strengthen the fraternal bonds with the Ummah and at the same time participate fully in the life of their societies or residence.

(b) Make efforts to arrive at an accurate estimate of Muslim populations in their countries and to undertake in-depth sociological studies concerning various aspects of their life.

(c) Be financially independent and self-reliant in funding their mosques, religious schools and other Islamic institutions.

4. Further we,

(a) Call upon the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Islamic Solidarity Fund and the Islamic Council of Europe to set up a permanent international commission with headquarters in London to monitor the conditions of Muslim minorities and whenever necessary take appropriate measures to deal with any situation of discrimination, injustice and denial of human and civil rights.

(b) Urge the above organisations to establish an International Muslim University of Science and Technology that would enable Muslims from all parts of the world, and particularly from Muslim communities in non-Muslim states, to pursue advanced modern knowledge and research within the framework of Islamic belief and in consonance with the spirit of Islam.

III

Finally:

- III. (a) Welcome the declaration by the Secretary General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference concerning the setting up of a "Department of Muslim

(Contd. on page 44)

**American Federation of Muslims from India: Sixth Annual Convention,
New York, NJ, Statement, 6 October, 1996**

The Convention applauds and supports:

the decision of Deve Gowda's Government to give representation to minorities in public sector and social institutions...

... Demands that the TADA cases should be expedited, the guilty be punished and the innocent be released.

... Hopes that the new government (in J&K) would adopt measures that would (restore) the confidence of the Kashmiri people in democracy and justice (and) urges the Government of India to compensate (the Kashmiris) for the loss of life and property (in) the violations of human rights. ... Supports the Government of India ... on taking a principled stand on CTBT and believes that ... the weapons of mass destruction could be eliminated once and for all. ...

Urges Indian and foreign companies to ensure that the economic benefits reach all levels of Indians society without eroding social values. (Suggest that) additional funds be allocated to finance projects that would help the underprivileged sections of the Indian society. ...

Supports the decision by the Government of India ... reserving 30 per cent position in government and other political institutions for women... Believes that through empowering women through education, the existing social and cultural anomalies can be overcome.

Views with concern the efforts to impose a unified civil code on Indian society.... Urges the government to leave .. Muslim Personal Law to Muslim scholars, intellectual and

leaders.

Urges the government to promote Urdu as a national language...

Urges the government to protect minority institutions (established under) Article 30 of the Constitution.

Views with great dismay the recent talks between the Prime Minister and Bal Thackeray... as such meetings give legitimacy to forces of evil and encourages nefarious tendencies to take roots in society.

(Condemns) recent killing of Muslim Indians in Lucknow and other Indians ... in the name of caste and demands prosecution of evil forces responsible for such hateful acts...

(Contd. from page 43)

Communities in Non-Muslim States" at the Secretariat General in Jeddah. We request the Secretary General to give top priority to the establishment of this department so that the tasks assigned to it may be carried out speedily.

(b) We note with satisfaction the offer made by the Chairman of the Islamic Solidarity Fund to extend financial cooperation to projects relating to Muslim minorities of the world, and hope that this support shall be available adequately and soon. ...

(Source: Muslim Communities in Non-Muslim States - Islamic Council of Europe)

WITH BEST COMPLIMENTS

FROM

KALEEM KAWAJA

**THE ASSOCIATION OF INDIAN
MUSLIMS OF AMERICA**

**THE ORGANIZATION FOR UNIVERSAL
COMMUNAL HARMONY**

WASHINGTON DC USA

USA: Ethnic Vote in Presidential Election

Both the Democratic and Republican parties are making an unprecedented effort during the 1996 campaign to win the ethnic vote, which could provide a crucial margin of victory....

Immigrants have come to America from all over the globe. But during most of the life of the Republic, they came preponderantly from Europe. It is their descendants who are most often referred to as ethnic voters, even though in recent years, large numbers of Asians and Hispanics from Latin America have settled in the United States.

According to the Ethnic Almanac, during the last 150 years, over 80 per cent of the more than 60 million people who emigrated to the United States came from just ten countries, most of them European: Germany (14.8 million); Italy (11.1); United Kingdom (10.3); Ireland (10); Austria/Hungary (9.2); Canada (8.6); Russia (7.1); Mexico (4.1); West Indies (3); Sweden (2.7). There also are significant numbers of Albanian, Armenian, Croatian, Greek, Polish, Portuguese, Norwegian, Slovak and Ukrainian-Americans, descendants of immigrants from those countries.

Traditionally, the entire vote was mostly Democratic, explained Richard Engstrom, a political science professor at the University of New Orleans in Louisiana and an expert on ethnic voting patterns...

But in the years after World War II, some ethnic voters defected to the Republic Party, especially during the presidency of Ronald Reagan, Engstrom noted...

"The explanation for the defection is simple", said Edwin Derwinski, chairman of Ethnic-Americans for the GOP ... "the Republicans were tougher on the Soviet Union, and even after the Cold War, the party has advocated a stronger foreign policy and a stronger defense"

Derwinski said that the first major defection of ethnic voters from the Democratic Party occurred even earlier - "after (Democratic) President Franklin Roosevelt's agreement with Stalin at Yalta, which laid out the terms for the division of Europe after World War II". Many ethnic Americans felt the Democrats were not tough enough with the Communist regimes that took over in their former homelands, he explained. ...

"Ethnic voters, who were one of the original bedrock constituencies of the Democratic Party, are coming back; many who voted Republican didn't feel comfortable doing so", Democratic staffer Albert noted. "The Republicans may have been seen as tougher on the totalitarian regimes in Eastern Europe during the Cold War, but now the Cold War has ended and the Republicans no longer have that issue with ethnic voters"

Asked if foreign policy is more important in general to ethnic voters, both Albert and Derwinski said yes, particularly among those groups that still follow events in their ancestral homelands. ...

Appealing to ethnic voters has a long tradition in American politics, but politicians, especially national leaders, cannot afford to tailor their policies too closely to the interests of particular ethnic groups for fear of offending other groups, or being seen as pandering, said Engstrom.

But all politicians, national and local, are required to pay homage to important ethnic traditions, whether it is showing up for the Pulaski Day Parade, or the wearing of the green on St. Patrick's Day. ...

Whatever the outcome of the election this year, Engstrom said, he doubts whether the ethnic vote will ever again be a bloc vote permanently in the hands of any one political party. "It was never a completely bloc vote for the Democratic Party the way, for example, the black vote has been," he said.

"In addition, increasingly it is difficult to distinguish between the concerns of ethnic Americans and Americans in general. There now is much less spatial segregation of ethnics in residential neighbourhoods, for example, and also much greater diversity of income and employment," Engstrom said. The major political parties will have to compete aggressively for the ethnic vote in future elections as well, he concluded. ...

Singapore: Multi-Racial Group Constituencies

... In 1988, an amendment was passed to the Parliamentary Elections Bill whereby the concept of the Group Representation Constituency (GRC) was introduced. This amendment institutionalized multi-racial representation in Parliament. The GRC scheme requires that aspiring MPs (except for a minimum of 8 single-seat constituencies out of a total of 83) stand for election as a team of three to six members, with at least one belonging to one of the minority racial groups - Malays, Indians and Eurasians. Otherwise, minority candidates were unlikely to be represented in Parliament as the Chinese form 77% of the voting population.

(Source: The Asiaweek, 13 December, 1996)

(40) at next hearing on 6 December (16 Nov). *Muslims respond all over country to Babari Masjid Movement (AIMPLB-BMC, BMMCC and AIBMAC)'s joint call for half day Bandh. Massive Public meeting organised in Hyderabad, 20,000 court arrest in Madras (6 Dec). Issue raised in both Houses of Parliament. Joint Memorandum submitted to PM (See Text). Congress leader Jagannath Mishra calls for reconstruction of Babari Masjid on original site (6 Dec). *Shankaracharya Adhikshanand recognises Muslims claim on Babari Masjid site and calls demolition a mistake (6 Dec). *Shankaracharya Swaroopanand agrees to wait till judicial verdict for construction of Ram Janambhoomi Mandir on Babari Masjid site (12 Dec). *RSS considers 6 December as the 'first sign of Hindu awakening' (11 Nov). Shiv Sena observes Vijay Diwas (6 Dec).

OTHER MATTERS OF CONCERN

Urdu: *Maulana Azad National Urdu University Bill passed by Rajya Sabha (27 Nov) and by Lok Sabha (11 Dec). *S.C. orders maintenance of environment of Ghalib's Mausoleum in Hazrat Nizamuddin and appoints Composite Committee (19 Nov). *Delhi H.C. orders ASI and Delhi Government to formulate plan for conservation of Ghalib's House in old Delhi (9 Dec). *Alami Urdu Conference inaugurates Firaq Centenary Celebration (15 Dec).

TADA: *S.P. leader Mulayam Singh Yadav threatens agitation for release of TADA detainees (17 Nov).

Animal Slaughter: *All India Cow Protection Council holds Dharna in New Delhi to demand Central legislation for total ban (20 Nov). Posters create tension in Delhi. *Vaghela Government in Gujarat promises to enforce strictly ban on cow slaughter. *Rajasthan decides to rename "Neel Gai" as "Roz" to facilitate its killing in order to protect crops. *SC permits Idgah abattoir in Delhi to function upto 30.6.1997 but on reduced scale and for goats and sheep only. Buffalo meet price goes up. Slaughtering goes underground (30 Nov). Muslim organisations and leaders condemn orders (4 Dec).

Reservation: *Parliamentary Joint Select Committee on Reservation in Legislatures for Women submits positive report with notes of dissent by 3 members (9 Dec). Government defers consideration because of increasing pressure for priority to reservation for OBCs, resisting collective insistence by women MP's (12 Dec). *P.M. Deve Gowda supports reservation for Dalit Christians and promises to try for national consensus (27 Nov). BJP President Advani reiterates opposition to recognition of Christian Dalits as SC's (13 Dec). *UGC advises Universities to introduce reservation for OBC's in recruitment of teaching and non-teaching staff (10 Dec). *PM Deve Gowda in his address to Dalit Rally, proposes extension of reservation to public sector (21 Nov). Proposal attracts criticism from business circles (22 Nov). Also promises lifting of 50% ceiling (21 Nov). *Delhi Muslim B.C. Federation submits memorandum to Welfare Minister for separate quota for Muslim OBC's (30 Nov). *PM proposes reservation for Jats and Vokkalingas. Mulayam Singh opposes. Ajit Singh supports.

Muslim Organisations: *AIMMM establishes Committees to review Constitution (25 Nov) and to assist the next-of-kin of victims of air accident (12 Nov) with Syed Yusuf as Convener. *Tablighi Jamaat Ijtema in Jajapur, Orissa, passes off peacefully, despite Bajrang Dal's opposition. *A.I. Imams Organisation holds Convention in Delhi. Decides to file petition to S.C. for

implementation of award (10 Dec). *Markazi Jamaat Ahl Hadith holds 3 day Quran Recitation Competition in Delhi (9-11 Dec). *A.I. Minorities Front organises Seminar on Educational and Economic Development of Minorities (14 Dec). *A.I. Tehrik Himayatul Islam organises Annual Conference in New Delhi (12 Dec). *Abul Kalam Azad Islamic Awakening Centre, New Delhi holds 5 day convocation (27 Nov-1 Dec). *Al-Ameen Educational Trust establishes Information Centre in Delhi (1 Dec).

Communal Violence: *Government of Maharashtra absolved by Supreme Court of ineffective investigation and prosecution of cases relating to Bombay disturbances (27 Nov). *Communal clash in Hyderabad after procession taken out to mark anniversary of demolition of Babari Masjid. Police firing kills 1 Muslim youth, injures 6 others (6 Dec). *Communal clash in Mulbagal (Kolar Distt., Karnataka). Police firing on Muslim demonstrators against desecration of Masjid; 2 killed, 20 injured (14 Dec). *Communal clash in Dhar (MP) due to conflict on Bhojshala Muslim Dargah claimed by Hindus/Muslims; 12 injured. Indefinite curfew imposed (12-14 Dec).

Anti-Islamic Writings: *Delegation led by Tausif Raza Khan waits on Home Minister to demand prosecution for Shiv Sena leader Bal Thackeray for his offensive 'remarks against Holy Prophet in his paper Saamna (12 Dec).

Azaan Issue: *Calcutta High Court's Order banning use of PA System for Azaan criticised widely (21 Nov).

Hindu Chauvinism: *IUML MP's and others oppose BJP proposal for renaming of Ahmedabad as Karnavati (4 Dec).

Education: *Jamia Millia Islamia accuses local MLA Hashmi of grabbing Jamia land (21 Nov). *Mohammad Shoaib elected as President of JMI Students Union (10 Dec). *Azam Khan, SP M.P. demands CBI probe in AMU firing (6 Dec). Sits in Dharna in AMU (8 Dec). Counter-dharna organised by local SP and teachers and students (8 Dec).

Human Rights: *Former Chief Justice of India M.N. Venkatachaliah takes over as Chairman of National Human Rights Commission (26 Nov). *Amnesty International, PUCL and ICWA hold functions to observe Human Rights Day (10 Dec). *Chief Justice Ahmadi calls for public awareness of human rights (10 Dec). *S.C. directs NHRC to probe alleged mass cremation of suspected militants by Punjab police (12 Dec).

Minorities Commission: *Dr. Tahir Mahmood takes over as Chairman. *Government of Rajasthan 'de facto' abolishes State Minorities Commission (9 Dec).

Wakf: *National Seminar on Wakfs held in Delhi sets up A.I.W.B. Coordination Committee (28-29 Nov).

Haj: *All valid applications for Haj accepted by Haj Committee (10 Dec). *J&K CM lays foundation stone of Haj House in Jammu (16 Nov).

Pakistan Visa Policy: *Criticised by Foreign Minister Gujral as highly restrictive (9 Dec).

Commemoration: *Urs of Khwaja Saheb concludes in Ajmer (17 Nov). *Delhi Urdu Academi organises commemorative meeting to honour JOSH Malihabadi. *Seminar on Syed Sulaiman Nadvi organised by Jamiatur Rasheed, Azamgarh (28 Nov-1 Dec).

*Death anniversary of Shahnawaz Khan observed in Delhi (9 Dec). *Maulana Mohammad Ali Johar's 118th birth anniversary observed in Delhi (12 Dec).

(Contd. on Page 6)