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حیدرآباد



روزنامہ

روزنامہ ”عوام“ ملت کی تعلیمی تحریک کو پروان چڑھانے کے لئے اپنی اشاعت کے ذریعے اپنی ایک سالہ خدمات کا ایک مختصر مدتی لیکن شاندار ریکارڈ رکھتا ہے۔
اس عرصے میں ”عوام“ نے جس موثر انداز میں ملی مسائل تعلیم کے عصری رجحانات اور دیگر سیاسی، معاشی، تہذیبی، مذہبی، سماجی اور ثقافتی امور کو اپنے قارئین کرام کی خدمات میں پیش کیا ہے، وہ اظہار من القیاس ہے۔
اقلیتوں کی فلاح و بہبود کے ذریعے ملک و ملت کی بھلائی اور عوامی خدمت کے مقصد سے شائع ہونے والے روزنامہ ”عوام“ کی بقاء و ترقی کا اہم تقاضہ ہے۔ اس کے لئے ضروری ہے کہ
آپ

اسے پڑھیں، اور دوسروں کو اسے پڑھنے کا مشورہ دیں۔
ایڈیٹر: کے، ایم عارف الدین

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Medina Education Centre

Medina Women's College

Medina Public School

Hyderabad [A.P.]

'Hindu' and 'Muslim' Bombs Over the Sub-continent

India and Pakistan have banged their way into the foyer of the exclusive nuclear club though the existing members refuse to admit them on the ground that the admission deadline is past. But the fact that today there are 7 nuclear weapon States and not 5 cannot be denied.

The question is: having exhibited their possession of nuclear weapon technology and even of some proto-weapons, which the world had long suspected and recognised, having given rise to mass euphoria - to the point of jingoistic hysteria - where do they go from here?

The Sub-continent stands at a historic crossroad. Will mutual distrust and suspicion - a lingering after-effect of the Partition and the wars over Kashmir and Bangladesh, the unfading remembrance of **Ghauris** and **Prithvis**, with the persistent clamour for the restoration of Muslim rule, on one hand and for Hindu dominance on the other, will India and Pakistan opt for Mutually Assured Deterrence or translate the balance of terror into **MUTUALLY ASSURED DESTRUCTION**? Will the two countries under the overwhelming shadow of nuclear weapons come to terms and resolve the outstanding problems and convert the Sub-continent into a Zone of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation? Or, will the rulers continue with their military games to the neglect of the basic needs of their people - nearly 1/5 of the human race - for a life of dignity, rather than of deprivation?

Psychopathology of Hindu-Muslim Tension

The Partition did not solve the Hindu-Muslim problem; it merely internationalised it. In a Hindu-Muslim riot or even in an ethnic outburst anyone who has witnessed the brutal use of a knife or a fire arm or an explosive, anything that comes to hand, in a fit of frenzy and fury, can also visualise India and Pakistan using nuclear weapons against each other. It is this psychopathology, the possibility of irrational behaviour without cost calculation, unlike the behaviour of the super-powers even at the height of nuclear confrontation, that turns South Asia today into the most sensitive region with a very low ignition threshold and terrifies the world into imagining its possible conversion into a nuclear arena.

A New Dimension to Plight of Muslim Indians

Ever since India and Pakistan adopted a policy of confrontation, one in the quest of hegemony and the other, of parity, all initiatives aimed at promoting economic and cultural relations and even

human contact and information flow have floundered on the shoals of mutual distrust and suspicion. Development of missile technology have brought both countries within deadly range of each other. And now both threaten to fit their missiles and even bomber aircrafts with nuclear warheads. In Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan trains, arms and infiltrates armed militants, many of them, non-Kashmiris. Pakistan admits moral and diplomatic support to the 'liberation' movement, though it does not commit itself to independence for the State. India accuses Pakistan of waging a proxy war in the State and its ISI of spreading a network of saboteurs all over the country.

This situation and the resultant tension are of utmost concern to the Muslim Indians because confrontation with Pakistan is invariably translated into communal tension and violence against them.

There may have been reasons to suspect the loyalty of those Muslim Indians of the 1947 vintage who had agitated for the creation of Pakistan with a misplaced sense of self-sacrifice for the cause of Muslim solidarity. The vast majority of the Muslim Indians today know nothing of Pakistan, have played no role in its creation, regard Pakistan as no more than another Muslim state, realise that their future lies in India and in India alone, that the Muslim world can be of no help to them in solving any existential problem they might face. They have no extra-territorial loyalty. Yet day in and day out, they are looked at with suspicion, treated with hostility and their institutions - the Masjids and the Madarsas - are regarded as the dens of the ISI. The higher the tension rises, the angrier is the Hindu Indian and the sorrier is the plight of the Muslim Indian.

The nuclear tests have added a new dimension to his plight.

One must sadly admit that jingoistic vocabulary of the leaders and the irrational euphoria of the masses - celebrating their own impending doom like a bunch of cackling chicken on way to the slaughter-house - leave one with nothing but despair.

Mutual Fixation

One must also sincerely admit the limited security perception of India and Pakistan. Right from 1947, they have armed themselves against each other, first, with conventional arms of the Second World War vintage, then with increasingly sophisticated weapon systems - defensive and

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

offensive - to the delight of the arms dealers from the West and the East. They have a fixation with each other; they are not worried about the nuclear threats posed by the USA or Russia, for less than by UK or France. To rationalise its debut as a nuclear weapon state the Indian leadership and establishment have begun speaking of the nuclear threat posed by China.

But who believes them? So far they had ignored the Chinese dragon breathing down their neck. Pakistan has become a client state and India, despite the bashing it received in 1962, never whispers of regaining Aksai Chin which forms 17 per cent of the original territory of the State of J&K, while making a prestige issue, an ideological issue, of the Valley which forms only 9 per cent. Indian and Pakistani missiles and deep penetration aircrafts are deployed and targetted against each other, not against Peking or Moscow or Washington. Their armies stand face to face, in alert, across international boundary as well as the line of actual control in Jammu & Kashmir. Their school children are fed on distortions and taught to look down the other with contempt if not to hate it. Their politicians promote their future by pandering to hostile sentiments and promising thousand year wars, till humiliation, past or recent, are wiped out!

Therefore, any assertion that the nuclear weapons are meant to meet other eventualities is poppy cock and hardly credible in the eyes of the world.

Already Muslim fanatics in Pakistan dream of restoring Muslim rule over India and Hindu fanatics in India of conquering Pakistan and establishing Akhand Bharat by force of arms. A Hindu from Abu Dhabi non-chalantly writes to me of first destroying en masse the Muslims in Pakistan, then pushing the Muslim Indians en masse into Pakistan and destroying them! He also writes of his desire to recite the Vedas on the banks of the Indus. A Pakistani journalist sees the Bomb as the glory of Islam and threatens India with the combined might of the Muslim world - led by the only Muslim nuclear weapon state, Pakistan.

The fanatics on both sides call their bombs Hindu or Muslim. But they forget the Bomb has no religion; it only extinguishes life, all forms of life, poisons the environment, the human habitat. Kills without exception, without distinction as to religion or race or language.

People of Sub-continent Largely Ignorant of Nuclear Peril

The people of the Sub-continent, having escaped

death and destruction in the Second World War are indeed unable to visualise what the 'day after' would be like in a nuclear war. The governments and even the political parties have done little to inform and educate them on the horrors of a nuclear war. Denied knowledge and first hand experience, they can be misled by the fanatics and the merchants of hatred. The realisation of the awesome power in the hands of Man to destroy the planet made the two superpowers climb down their nuclear war-horse and today they are committed, at least in principle, to nuclear disarmament. Will a nuclear stalemate between India and Pakistan also make the Sub-continent a safer place to live in?

Will the politicians and the people on both sides realise that geographically situated as they are with a common wind and water system, next door to each other, neither will emerge as a victor in a nuclear war, no matter who strikes first and who lives to make the reposte and the second strike! These terms - so dear to a war strategist - make no sense in our geographic setting. Will the politicians then act as builders and not as destroyers of their countries? Will they eschew the false exhortations of patriotic favour, national pride? Will they show the wisdom inherent in a 5000 year old civilization to see through the nuclear 'Maya' and change the direction of the ship of state, away from doom and destruction to life, liberty and happiness for their people.

Nuclear Bomb Cannot Settle Territorial Disputes

If the politicians listen to the inner voice, the voice of conscience they will know that the nuclear bomb does not solve any territorial problems. If Kashmir question is the core of Indo-Pakistan hostility, then Pakistan cannot take the Valley by threatening the use of or actually using the bomb; India cannot silence the Kashmiris demand of self-determination. And certainly no sensible Kashmiri would risk the Valley being reduced to a scorched cinder.

Nuclear Weapon - A Satanic Fabrication, Per Se Evil

Indeed the nuclear bomb is evil incarnate, a Satanic fabrication. Its testing, its manufacture and its stock-piling are all directed against the common interest of humanity, its possession, itself, is a crime against Humanity, against Man, against Life. It must be destroyed before it destroys Man and human civilisation.

Nuclear Warfare is Immoral

All religions and moral system permit violence

vicarious responsibility of the non-combatants in a war. Modern war, specially a nuclear war, is not waged by combatants against combatants but largely by combatants against non-combatants. How can any strategic doctrine morally justify the destruction of millions of people with their habitation and all that they have built over it through centuries of toil. Modern war waged by amoral rulers is absolutely immoral as it targets the common man for no fault of his but that he was born where he was in the enemy territory. Such a war is utterly un-Islamic, un-Christian, un-Hindu.

The Balance Sheet

Once the euphoria dies, India will realise that the Kashmir issue has been de facto internationalised, that the doors of the Security Council have been barred in its face, that the demons of jingoism and chauvinism have been released and have taken possession of the soul of the nation, that its development has been decelerated by sanctions and the slow down in the inflow of foreign aid and investment.

And what has it gained? A sense of glory, a qualification to enter a club which it had long denounced and condemned as a den of vice and inequity!

India's Moral Authority Lost

India had long preached total nuclear disarmament, from a high moral pedestal. Having joined the Satanic Club, it has already fallen off the pedestal. If it undertakes mass production of nuclear weapons and inducts them in its armed forces, its voice will fall on deaf ears. But the socialist Defence Minister of India considers weaponisation inevitable and is pining to deploy them!

Where Do They Go from Here?

India and Pakistan can yet rise to the occasion and regain moral authority, by entering into a bilateral agreement permitting mutual inspection of nuclear facilities and placing a moratorium on the manufacture and deployment of nuclear weapons, guaranteeing no first use against any one, giving the P-5, the nuclear weapon States - a time limit to agree to a time frame to prohibit all types of nuclear tests and the production of nuclear weapons - strategic or tactical - and to destroy their nuclear stockpiles within a foreseeable period of, say, 10 years.

India and Pakistan should also enter into serious negotiation on the Kashmir question and resolve it in the common interest of the people of the Sub-continent, recognising the ethnic dimensions of

Kashmiriyat and, therefore, respecting the aspiration of the Kashmiris to be the master of their own house under the joint umbrella of India and Pakistan.

Having unilaterally announced moratorium on further tests, India and Pakistan should undertake confidence building measures such as mutual and balanced withdrawal from the borders, joint petrolling of the border zone to stop trans-border terrorism, advance information on troop movements, scaling down the level of confrontation in Siachen and elsewhere. They may even sit down to discuss phased limitation of conventional arms.

India and Pakistan may also revive the Agreement of 1950 on Minorities and enter into agreements on trade and investment, cultural exchange and flow of information.

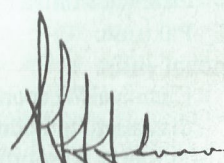
In case the nuclear weapon States agree to make a concerted and sincere move towards total nuclear disarmament and propose a universal no-first-use agreement as well the security of non-nuclear weapon states during the interregnum, India and Pakistan may offer to sign the CTBT.

What is done cannot be undone but a challenge can be turned into an opportunity. India and Pakistan can, if they overcome their war psychosis and adopt a policy of restraint, yet jointly regain the moral high ground and play their due role to save humanity from going over the nuclear brink.

Declaration of pious intention will not restore moral authority. All nuclear weapon states routinely renounce the first use of the Bomb against any other State; they also swear by peaceful intent and proclaim from housetops that they do not intend to use the Bomb, except in self-defence, presumably when they face a nuclear attack. But the button may be pressed in confusion, in nervousness, in a moment of madness or uncontrollable fury.

The people of the Sub-continent must rise to stop manufacture and deployment of nuclear weapons and through self-denial light the path of nuclear disarmament. This is what human security demands. This is what the land of Buddha, Nanak and Gandhi deserves.

New Delhi,
1 July, 1998


(SYED SHAHABUDDIN)

Proceedings of the Parliament

(27 May - 12 June, 1998)

I - Rajya Sabha

Obituary:

1 June : B.N. Pandey, ex-Member.

12 June : A.K. Refaye, ex-Member.

Papers Tabled:

27 May : A.R. of National Foundation for Communal Harmony, New Delhi for 1995-96.

: 47th A.R. of UPSC for 1996-97.

29 May : A.R. of Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad, for 1995-96.

: A.R. of National Book Trust for 1996-97.

1 June : A.R. of Delhi Urban Arts Commission for 1996-97.

: A.R. of Nat. SC, ST F&D Corpn. for 1996-97.

4 June : Report of Working Group on Right to Information and Promotion of Open and Transparent Government.

5 June : A.R. of National Institute of Unani Medicine, Bangalore for 1995-96.

8 June : A.R. of Nat. BC F&D Corporation for 1996-97.

10 June : A.R. of NHRC for 1996-97.

12 June : A.R. of CCRUM for 1996-97.

Special Mentions:

3 June : On Desecration of statutes of Jain Tir Thankaras in Shivpur by Raghoji, MP.

: On ISI activists in Tamilnadu and Kerala by O. Rajgopal (BJP).

: On VHP's Construction activities in Ayodhya by E. Balananda and K.M. Khan.

5 June : On US Statement on J&K as disputed land by A.P. Rajkumar.

8 June : On UN Security Council Resolution on Nuclear Tests by P. Mukherjee (Cong-I). PM replies.

9 June : On VHP's construction plan of Mandir in Ayodhya by Vyalar Ravi, O.K. Azmi, Azam Khan, A. Samdani, Shabana Azmi.

11 June : PM replies.

10 June : On communal situation in Hyderabad by K.M. Khan and W. Ahmad.

Government Statements:

28-29 : PM Vajpayee on Nuclear Tests in India and May Defence Minister Fernandes on Nuclear Tests in Pakistan.

Government Bills:

2 June : Chemical Weapons Convention Bill, 1997 moved, discussed and adopted.

Private Member's Resolution:

5 June : On Electoral Reforms moved by R. Agarwal. Discussed.

II - Lok Sabha

Pasnet of Chairman:

27 May : P.M. Sayeed.

Special Mention:

28 May : Expedition of Inquiry by Liberhan Commission by G.M. Banatwalla (IUML).

Government Statements:

27-29 : PM on Nuclear Tests in Pokhran.

May : Defence Minister on Nuclear Tests by Pakistan Jointly discussed. K. Natwar Singh, Laloo Prasad Yadav, Chandra Shekhar, P. Chidambaram, I. Shiv Shankar, P.A. Sangma, I.K. Gujral, H.D. Deve Gowda, Arif Md. Khan, G.M. Banatwalla participate.

9 June : BY MHA on Communal Situation in Moradabad and Hyderabad.

Private Members Bills:

2 June : Introduced by G.M. Banatwalla:

: The TADA (Withdrawal of Legal Proceedings) Bill, 1998.

: The Reservation (Services and Higher Education) Bill, 1998.

: The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1998 (Article 15).

A Constitutional Innovation

Supreme Court's Order on UP Situation

Jagdambika Pal, Petitioner v. Union of India and others, Respondents.

M.M. PUNCHHI, CJI,

S.C. AGRAWAL AND K.T. THOMAS, JJ.

- (i) A special Session of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly be summoned/convened for 26th February, 1998, the Session commencing forenoon.
- (ii) The only Agenda in the Assembly would be to have a composite floor-test between the contending parties in order to see which out of the two contesting claimants of Chief Ministership has a majority in the House...
2. The result is expected to be laid before us on 27th February, 1998 at 10.30 AM when this Bench assembles again.
3. ... This order shall be treated to be a notice to all the MLAs... In the interregnum, no major decisions would be made by the functioning Government except attending to routine matters, not much of any consequence. ...

(Source: AIR 1998 Supreme Court 998)

Minorities Council of India: Memorandum to Home Minister, 29 May, 1998

1. The practice of publication of community-wise census data related to socio-economic and educational level of each group of the Indian people was discontinued since 1951 census. Though relevant data have been collected during each decadal census after Independence, their official publication has not been undertaken presumably under the notion that they are divisive and undermine national integration.
2. However, data on population and decadal rate of growth of each religious community are officially published by the Census Commissioner/Registrar General. Publicity about higher rate of growth of a religious community, say Muslims, coupled with suppression of information about the same group's level of literacy, income, employment and housing etc. has given rise to all types of speculative-subjective theories about Muslims' higher rate of growth of population and its future projection. If simultaneously with publication of rate of growth of each community's population, the data on socio-economic and educational level of the communities were also published, it would be possible for people to seek and find objective explanations about rate of growth of population.
3. In our opinion information and awareness about the socio-economic condition of all segments of the Indian people will reduce intergroup conflict by making more advanced and affluent sections realise and accept the need for affirmative action programme for the comparatively backward sections.
4. The policy of non-publication of socio-economic and educational status of religious minorities does not enjoy any constitutional sanction. Minorities based on religion are a constitutionally recognised group of the Indian people with guaranteed rights. The Government of India has established a National Commission for Minorities under an Act (1992) of Parliament, entrusting it with the responsibility, inter alia, of "evaluating the progress of the development of minorities under the Union and the States". (Clause 9(1a)). How can the Commission perform this basic function of evaluation of progress of development of religious minorities, without public availability of the data periodically collected by the Census Commissioner on each religious community's socio-economic condition? ...

It is better to make all official and constitutional agencies/bodies function under the sound policy of recognition of social diversity and economic disparity as a fact of our national life, which must be objectively studied and findings widely disseminated so that measures are taken by the governments, the NGOs and the communities for removal of disparities...

This has been one of the objectives of all our national plans. By faithfully implementing the policy of wide publicity of the ground realities about all religious communities, alone we hope to secure justice to all citizens and sections of the people, and promote genuine national integration.

5. In view of the above the Government of India may direct the Census Commissioner/Registrar General to a) officially publish data on socio-economic and educational status of each religious community collected during Census of 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981 and 1991, and b) to devise the next census operation due in 2001 A.D. so as to clearly bring out the socio-economic and educational profile of all religious minorities in the country.
6. By taking these steps the Govt. of India will also be fulfilling its obligation to the international community under the UN which requires each member state to make the condition of its minorities known.

Shahabuddin's Letter to H.M. Advani 6 June, 1998

The religious minorities whose population is enumerated in every Census, have been demanding publication of cross-tabulated Census data relating to their education and economic status.

One fails to appreciate the rationale behind the policy of non-publication. The State is constitutionally bound to promote the advancement of the religious minorities. This is also an obligation under international conventions and declarations. The State has initiated many schemes and programmes to this end. A National Commission for Minorities exists. Both the Commission and the NSS of the Planning Commission undertake statistical survey but this is not the equivalent of decennial census.

Both the State and the communities themselves have to play a role in upgrading the educational and economic State. **But without such data**, they cannot find out whether they are going forward or backward and what is the speed of progression or regression as the case may be. How can the government review its policies and programmes and schemes for minorities in darkness? How can the minorities be asked to do more for themselves and invest time, energy and resources in the uplift unless they know where they stand? How can leakages and deficiencies in implementation be corrected?

You will agree with me that progressive and contented minorities are a source of strength of the nation.

I, therefore, request you to reconsider the existing policy and instruct the R.G. of India/Census Commission to publish the Cross-Tabulated Educational and Economic data relating to 1991 in the same manner as done for the SC's and ST's.

M. Ramakrishnayya on Politics in a Plural Society

India is not the only country that has a plural society. USA too has a plural society. But India is unique in the sense that at no point of time did Indian society try to brush the pluralities under the carpet or pretend that they can be melted down. Till recently, USA thought that it was a melting pot and the pluralities would vanish in time. But in India, pluralities were always recognised and given an integral place (but not always an honourable place) in the social scheme. Unity in diversity has been its theme all along. Now USA too has begun to subscribe to this theme and celebrate the diversities, albeit with emphasis on overall national unity. Indian pluralities are unique in another sense also, as some of them have behind them scriptural sanction and have thus acquired rigidity of an objectionable nature.

... Existing pluralities ... are products of history and are based on factors such as religion, sects within religions, castes and sub-castes, languages, tribes and ethnicity.

The founding fathers of our Republic made conscious efforts to safeguard the interests of pluralities, assure social justice to all and thus build a united nation in India. Freedom of religion, special provisions for religious and linguistic minorities, fundamental rights without regard to caste and creed, affirmative action in favour of historically disadvantaged groups like scheduled castes and tribes and the like are the more important steps they took. Subsequently, with the formation of linguistic states, and the retention of English as one of the official languages, language-based pluralities have been satisfied to a large extent. The process of co-opted pluralities into the mainstream is not a one-shot affair. It is a continuing exercise. Some more steps are due, e.g. the activation of the principles of cooperative federalism which were kept dormant in the interests of planned progress, the uplift of socially and educationally backward classes in some parts of the country, decentralisation of power to village communities and above all the effective implementation of the social justice policies already announced...

In a democracy, pluralities tend to multiply by subdividing themselves and by building new identities as a result of rising political consciousness and the lure of rising expectations. Thus, the numerous sub-castes based on crafts and occupations have begun to claim separate identities ... in contrast to the blurring of sub-castes among the forward castes... Most of the castes ... have no sanction in the Hindu Sastras and are clear perversions of the so-called Brahminical order or Chaturvarna system and the 'guna' based system of Bhagavat Geeta....

Politics may be defined as the social process by which human beings, individually or in groups, seek to influence others in order to protect their interests and to secure larger allocations of available resources to the causes close to their hearts. How ubiquitous from the

following phrases in common usage: family politics, university politics, organisational politics, electoral politics and above all, political parties. However, remarks here may be confined to political parties and electoral politics which aim at influencing the polity and controlling the instrumentalities of the state.

... Harold Laski described the modern state as an association... The instrumentalities parties which compete with each other can be said to be in a single association called the state, as they swear allegiance to the Constitution and willingly bind themselves to the preservation of unity, integrity sovereignty of the country. The question that arises is whether present political parties formed different social forces, that is, the existing pluralities in society, are in fact, adhering to the principles of the Constitution and strengthening national interests as contrasted from sectional interests.

The question is how to ensure that in a plural society like ours, political parties do behave as responsible members of a larger association called the Nation-State and how the existing pluralities in the society can be harnessed to the larger political task of building a nation.

First, there must be a law stipulating the duties, privileges, and functions of political parties as well as penalties for breaches of legal provisions...

Second, as regards religious pluralities, the Constitution has tried to reconcile their demands with the needs of unity by incorporating certain principles of secularism, without mentioning that particular word. After 50 years, however, it appears that the result in terms of truly viable Indian nation is not yet within reach... The saving feature is that every political party, including those which have religious sounding names, protests loudly and claims that it is really secular and that its opponents are doing false propaganda against it... We have seen major parties playing the communal and secular cards periodically according to the needs of electoral politics... Communal feelings based on religion and caste are always present, like dormant embers that can be fanned into a flame at will. Our political leaders take these communal feelings seriously, only after the flame has erupted. A continuing social engineering effort is needed... Ideas of communal harmony are comparatively ineffective during a highly surcharged juncture, if religious fanaticism and the attendant social hostilities are allowed to be nurtured by motivated groups and their leaders.... As in the case of liberty, eternal vigilance and continuous endeavour are the price of communal harmony and nation integration of religious pluralities.

Three lines of action may be suggested for adoption by our political leaders:

- (a) Inter-faith Dialogue;
- (b) Sublimation of Historical Memories; and
- (c) Emphasis on composite culture.

The first suggestion is based on the following seven

propositions:

- (a) Religion is an ever present and important element (in) life and has proved to be an efficient tool of mobilisation. It cannot be put aside by ignoring it through the western interpretation of the concept of secularism;
- (b) Secularism in India must mean equal respect for all religions by the State as well as the citizen and all concerned have to put this into practice to the maximum extent possible;
- (c) Respect for another's religion is born out of correct knowledge of the essential principles of another's religion in addition to one's own;
- (d) Inter-faith dialogue is the best means for promoting equal respect...
- (e) Ignoring religion or outlawing it from the educational curriculum in the name of secularism is not the best means of encouraging inter-faith dialogue. In fact this attitude leaves the field wide open for one-sided propaganda;
- (f) ... The current decline of values ... can be traced, to an accusation of undue interference against the self-proclaimed secular state; and
- (g) ... It is reasonable to expect similar constructive behaviour from (religious leaders) if they are made to meet periodically in the forum of a properly constituted National Council which may be established by order of Parliament through consensus among different parties...

As regards historical memories and their sublimation, the following five propositions may be considered:

- (a) Historical memories are partly based on incontrovertible facts and the accretions and emotional exaggerations down the years and partly on the interpretations by historians, writers, folk-lore artists, foreign rulers and others;
- (b) Historical memories usually generate two kinds of reactions, negationism and revanchism. Those who consider themselves to be the successors of the injured groups, be they based on religion, caste or ethnicity, develop feelings of revenge; and those who recognise themselves as the heirs of the injurers try to downplay the incidents or deny them outright. Obviously, both the attitudes are wrong and out of tune with the demands of the present and the future in regard to harmonious living;
- (c) The correct attitude to historical events is to identify all the complex factors that led to their occurrence, not to stress one or two factors only at the expense of the others and understand them in consonance with the ethos of the age in which they occurred and not for deriving advantages for, or imposing disadvantages on, one group or the other in the present age;
- (d) Both the groups must agree to sublimate them through a process of truth recognition, regret for the

offensive incidents, forgiveness and reconciliation in the interests of current life and future progress;

- (e) The writing of history books and the teaching of history in schools and colleges have to be completely revamped...

As regards the third suggestion relating to composite culture, it is not a new one and the Constitution refers to it in Articles 51A(f) and 351... Politicians ... talk of mainstream culture, dominant culture and cultural nationalism and thereby accentuate the confusion... To claim that one variety under each element of culture dominates the other varieties is not correct. What is correct is to say that a large number of people subscribe to one variety of culture, while other varieties are owned by smaller numbers. Again, to claim that any one variety of culture exists in isolation, does not influence or is not influenced by other varieties is also incorrect. As in a salad bowl or in a mosaic, each component has its role and must not vitiate the other components. Just as the dressing enhancing the taste of the salad and the design integrates the colours or pictures of the mosaic, there must be something that accentuates the taste, beauty and utility of the different components of composite culture too. This we must find, emphasise and glorify... Co-existence inevitably leads to modifications which we must recognise, encourage and glorify...

Lastly, politicians and political parties must recognise that excessive emphasis on group identities, albeit in the name of social justice and exclusive concentration on selected groups lead to erosion of national unity and consequently a breach of the constitutional obligations. Further, in the long run such acts do not also save their chosen interests. For, measures of social justice can be better implemented through a national consensus than through a confrontational approach... In a democracy, every plural identity has to secure the support of the majority of the people constituting the other identities as well as the relevant constitutional authorities for putting through social reforms successfully, although it may undertake agitational programmes in the beginning. For this purpose, a political party has to plan for wider social base and not confine itself exclusively to one of the plural identities. In other words, it has to bring about a coalition of multiple social forces at the grassroot level and function more or less like an umbrella sheltering diverse interests... In Indian circumstances of plurality, no political party can get to grasp governmental power unless it represents the interests of more than one identity and in the process actively promotes harmony and equilibrium among all the relevant identities. Hopefully, this will help make the separate identities realise that the mutual social bonds among them, visible and invisible, are not insignificant and that the over-arching societal and national identity is a necessary condition for their survival as well as advancement in a democracy.

(Source: The Politics India, April, 1998)

Committee for the Empowerment of Muslim Women Seminar on Reservation for Muslim Women in Legislatures

Background Note

Muslim women constitute a disadvantaged within a disadvantaged group and they are not only doubly disadvantaged, but doubly vulnerable and subject to discrimination on ground of religion and of gender and as Muslim women in situations of conflict.

The level of literacy and education among Muslim women is the lowest in India comparable and sometime lower than, that of women belonging to SC, ST and OBC's. Their representation in public and private employment is marginal. Indeed the destiny of the Muslim Indians depends in a large measure on the mobilisation of woman power for education and social work.

Muslim women are conspicuous by their absence in national institutions; they have not only a low salience but are almost invisible. Very few Muslim women have been legislators at the State or the Central level. No Muslim woman is an office-bearer in any national party at the national level. Thus circumstances have forced Muslim women to abdicate from a role in public life.

On the other hand, the burden of discrimination and persecution largely falls on the Muslim woman. She is defenceless against physical assault in social conflicts and is often targetted with vengeance as a person belonging to the "other" group. She loves her breadwinner and her children in social violence and her hearth and home, her agony goes unheard, her case, unrepresented in the communally surcharged atmosphere. She rarely evokes the sympathy and support of the other women.

The nation is moving towards social justice and towards empowerment of weaker section, of the disadvantaged, of the persecuted, of those who constitute a minority group at every level and those who have been deprived of their due share in the fruits of development.

A national consensus favours representation of women in the legislature. However it is doubtful that Muslim women who constitute 1/8 of the female population of the country shall benefit from this reservation. Apart from the quota for the SC and ST women, the general quota is likely to be utilised by the high castes and the political class for placing their women into Legislatures, to the exclusion of women from the lower castes or disadvantaged groups.

For effective amelioration of the condition of women, the benefit of reservation must be equitably, dispersed over the entire society and reach out to all sections. This can be brought about only by carrying out separate proportional sub-quota for each identifiable social group, with a proportion in the total population higher than a common cut-off limit,

National Seminar, Resolution, 31 May, 199

The National Seminar on Reservation in Legislature for Muslim Women organised by the Committee for Empowerment of Muslim Women,

Keeping in mind the principles of Equality, Justice and Fraternity in the Preamble of the Constitution of India and the provision therein relating to protective discrimination in favour of the Backward Classes of the people,

Welcoming the reservation for Women in the Panchayat Raj institutions and the proposed reservation in the Union and State Legislature for Women,

Declaring the sincere aspiration of Muslim Indian women to play due role in the public life of the country,

Conscious of the fact that Muslim woman is triply disadvantaged in contemporary India - as a woman, as a Muslim and as a Muslim woman,

Considering, in particular, that very few Muslim women have been elected to the Lok Sabha or the Rajya Sabha and even in State legislatures they have been marginalised and that in the 11th Lok Sabha only one out of the 43 women MP's is a Muslim,

Considering also that the Muslim community which constitute 1/8 of the national population has been under-represented in the legislature since the Constitution was promulgated,

Expresses its deep concern that in the existing state of affairs, Muslim women are likely to be deprived of their due share in the general quota for women, for the same reasons for which Muslims, in general, have been under-represented,

Demands that 1/8 of the women quota in the Lok Sabha be reserved for Muslim women alongwith equitable reservation in the State Legislatures,

Supports the demand for the OBC's and other similar disadvantaged groups for providing quota in the proposed legislation, and

Appeals to the political parties to give due place to Muslim women in the party structure and to nominate them as candidates in elections to legislatures.

e.g. the OBC's, the Muslims and any other similarly placed disadvantaged groups.

The Committee for the Empowerment of Muslim Women is of the view that the objective of equitable representation cannot be fulfilled in the present circumstances without a separate quota for Muslim women.

The Committee, therefore, while supporting the demand for a separate quota for the women belonging to the OBC's, seeks a separate quota for the Muslim women

Congress(I): V.N. Gadgil's Remaining Questions to A.B. Vajpayee

(Between December, 1997 and February, 1998, the Congress Spokesman V.N. Gadgil posed 7 sets of questions to the Prime Minister - presumptive Atal Behari Vajpayee. The 1st, 2nd and 5th sets have already been published in Muslim India. The remaining follows - Editor).

3rd Set

1. The RSS was established in 1925. It did not take part in any of the civil disobedience movements of 1930 and 1932, individual satyagraha of 1940 and the Quit India Movement of 1942. None of the RSS and BJP leaders participated in the freedom struggle and totally opposed Mahatma Gandhi. By what right you claim the legacy of the freedom movement and Mahatma Gandhi?
2. Your party reaction to the announcement of 27% reservation for other backward classes was that it was an "act of singular political immorality", which will result in "apartheid Indian style". Do you approve?
3. The Sangh Parivar never touches anything which does not originate from within it. No Hindu outside the Sangh parivar carries any credit with the Parivar unless the person has status in terms of wealth says Sita Ram Goel, a Pro-BJP publisher of "Voice of India". Do you agree?
4. The RSS organisation lacks any intellectual base. Suspicious of liberty of thought, the RSS thus produced a generation of "uneducated" leadership. In 25 years of its existence the Deen Dayal Research Institute, inspired by the Sangh, has published hardly anything that can be called a work of the solid Hindu Scholarship - Abhay Chatterjee, IAS (Retired) author of the book, Concept of Hindu Nation. Do you agree?
5. Before coming to power, the Delhi BJP made much noise about presence of 3 lakh Bangladeshi Muslim infiltrators in the national capital. But once in power the Khurana Government totally forgot about the whole thing and talked of issuing green cards to infiltrators. Do you approve?

4th Set

1. Nearly three years before the Muslim League in its Lahore resolution of 1940 propounded the Two-Nation theory, it was the father of Hindutva Veer Savarkar, whom you admire very much, had stated at Ahmedabad in December 1937 in his Presidential address at the Hindu Mahasabha Session that "India cannot be assumed today as a unitarian and homogeneous nation, but on the contrary there are two nations in the main the Hindus and the Muslims in India". Do you agree?
2. Guru Golwalkar of RSS had applauded the Nazi programme of extermination of Jews by stating: "Race pride at its highest has been manifested here - Germany has also shown how well-nigh impossible it is for races and cultures, having differences going to

the root, to be assimilated into one united whole, a good lesson for us in Hindustan to learn and profit by". Do you approve?

3. Although you are projected by BJP as the Prime Ministerial candidate, there is lot of resistance by RSS. That is the reason why you told Mr. Advani that you would prefer not to contest if Mr. Advani too was to be in the race for the Lok Sabha. Indeed you publicly said at a women's Rally of your party that "Like Ramachandra, I might be given "Vahavas" notice on the day of Rajtilak". Do you deny?
4. Asked if he would be prepared to extend his statement that the mosques in Varanasi and Mathura were not on the BJP's agenda into a guarantee that the BJP would respect their present status for all times to come, Mr. Advani declined to do so (Hindustan Times, 4 June, 1995). Do you approve?
5. Ahmediyas are branded as non-Muslims in Pakistan. In April, 1995, nine Ahmediyas who were peacefully distributing religious literature in Malegaon (Maharashtra) were attacked by a mob of armed Muslims. The police arrested 15 of the culprits. But the BJP and Shiv Sena Government of Maharashtra let them off (Indian Express, 16 April, 1995). Is this not appeasement, Mr. Vajpayee?

6th Set

1. Dr. Shreerang Godbole, an RSS activist from Pune, published a booklet questioning eight ideological formulation of the Sangh Parivar. He says, "I had sent copies of my booklet to all the state and local level RSS functionaries and some related intellectuals. They are all silent. It may interest you to know that I had sent a copy of my original letter to Shri Sudarshanji to Dattopant Thengadi for his specific answers with an additional question". If you truly feel that all religions are worthy of equal respect, will you advise the VHP to give up its campaign of Paravartan? This "tallest intellectual of the Sangh Parivar has not cared to reply". Is this the way Sangh Parivar functions, Mr. Vajpayee?
2. About 65 percent of the voters in Kishanganj are Muslims. Defending the party's shift in policy, District BJP President B.N. Mukherjee said "All political parties are engaged in appeasing Muslims. Why should not we? (Times of India, 2 March, 1995). Is that true?
3. In his press conference in Goa, Mr. Advani said illegal migration by the Bangladesh Muslims was being dealt with by the BJP Governments in the states but the issue was not the "top priority" (Indian Express, 7 April, 1995). Do you agree?
4. Commenting on RSS ideologue Govindacharya's views on Kashmiri Pandits, Panun Kashmir has described Govindacharya as "irresponsible and hypocritical" and accused him of practising the same "double standards that his people believe in". Anu

NATIONAL POLITICS

Tikoo the Mumbai coordinator of Panun Kashmir said: The BJP has been unable to protect the interests of Kashmiri Pandits in India. And so far as understanding of issues is concerned it is the BJP which has completely failed to understand the issue of elections in Kashmir (Indian Express, 25 September, 1996). Do you agree?

5. Commenting on March 1997 announcement of Ashok Singhal, Working President of VHP, that the VHP has dropped the "Direct Action Plan" to liberate Kashi and Mathura, Shri Sitaram Goel pro-Hindutva publisher of Voice of India says that "Mr. Ashok Singhal was speaking tongue-in cheek. He was hiding the truth that the Direct Action Plan was dropped at the behest of BSP which has formed a coalition Government with the BJP in UP, a few days earlier. The VHP is no more than pretensions plank for fooling Hindus into voting for BJP. The rest of the blah blah about the Cow, the Ganga and liberating Hindu places of worship is no more than a smokescreen". Do you agree?

7th Set

1. The questions pertains to the founding of the Sarva Panth Samadar Manch by Mr. Dattapant Thengdi of Sangh Parivar. These are asked not by me but by your Sangh Parivar RSS activist for 17 years, Dr. Shreerang Godbole of Pune:
 - (i) Do you feel that all religions are worthy of equal respect?
 - (ii) If so, will you disown VHP's "Paravartan" campaign?
 - (iii) If not, will you disown the Sarva Panth Samadar Manch?
 - (iv) If you disown neither, pray enlighten me as to how the activities of these two can be reconciled.

Appeal of NRI's in USA for Secularism

The people of India fought for the independence of our country on a secular and democratic platform and have successfully retained a government at the Centre formally committed to secularism.

We, representing non-resident Indians (NRIs) of both the USA and Canada, hope that the people of India would ensure the victory of secular and democratic forces in the present elections and not be deceived by the backward forces of Hindutva, which threatens to destroy the very fabric of the multinational, multicultural and multireligious culture and polity of India.

The victory of secular and democratic forces is a necessary condition for India entering into the Twenty First Century as a modern, democratic state ensuring communal harmony, progress and prosperity.

Coalition Against Communalism, Berkeley, USA

Punjabi People's Cultural Association, ConCord, USA

Coalition for Egalitarian & Secular India, Los Angeles, USA

Gadarite Cell, Bakersfield, CA, USA

Alliance for a Secular and Democratic South Asia, Cambridge-Boston, MA, USA

West Bengal: Panchayat Poll at a Glance Result of Panchayat Elections 1993, 1998 and Percentage of Seats

Party	1993		1998		Loss/Gain 1993-98
	Seats Secured	Percent- age	Seats Secured	Percent- age of	
<u>Panchayat:</u>					
Left					
Front	39,209	64.31	27,375	56.04	- 8.27
CPI(M)	35,328	57.94	24,379	49.90	- 8.04
CPI	806	1.32	675	1.42	+ 0.10
RSP	1,517	2.49	1,373	2.71	+ 0.22
FB	1,252	2.05	938	1.92	- 0.07
Cong.	16,300	26.73	5,872	12.02	- 14.71
BJP	2,372	3.89	3,719	7.61	+ 3.72
TMC	---	---	9,694	19.84	+ 19.84
Others	1427	2.34	2,192	4.49	+ 2.15
<u>Panchayat Samiti:</u>					
Left					
Front	6,871	72.72	5,663	67.43	- 5.29
CPI(M)	6,341	67.12	5,115	60.91	- 6.21
CPI	95	1.01	135	1.30	+ 0.29
RSP	239	2.53	256	3.05	+ 0.52
FB	169	1.79	152	1.81	+ 0.02
Cong.	2,155	22.81	798	9.50	- 13.31
BJP	121	1.28	311	3.70	+ 2.42
TMC	---	---	1,428	17.00	+ 17.00
Others	100	1.06	198	2.36	+ 1.30
<u>Zila Parishad:</u>					
Left					
Front	572	87.33	609	82.02	- 1.69
CPI(M)	530	80.92	539	78.92	- 2.00
CPI	6	0.92	17	2.34	+ 1.42
RSP	14	2.14	25	3.66	+ 1.52
FB	17	2.60	22	3.22	+ 0.62
Cong	72	10.99	29	4.25	- 6.74
BJP	---	---	1	0.15	+ 0.15
TMC	---	---	33	4.83	+ 4.83
Others	1	0.15	12	1.76	+ 1.61

(Source: The New Age Weekly, 21-27 June, 1998)

BJP: President Thakre On Hindutva as Bhartiyyata

... Asked what was the new ideology of the new BJP, Mr. Thakre described it in cultural and not political terms. "It is not a new nation born just in 1947. It's historical country of more than 5,000 years and during those years we have developed a style of life, certain norms, which are our guiding principles... They have been described in various ways: Hindutva, Bharatiyyata or Indianness. But (whatever you call it) there is a distinct style of life in India. It is an inclusive ideology, not exclusive."

Asked why this ideology which he defined in terms of India's cultural uniqueness had to be called Hindutva and not by another religiously more neutral term...

Kuldip Nayar on the RSS Game Plan

... Kushabhau Thakre the BJP chief ... belongs to the RSS hard-core... The RSS high command wanted its own man, who had gone through the mill.

... The initial phase of utilising liberal faces in advancing the party is being pushed to the background. The RSS wanted them to articulate Hindu revivalism. They have acquitted themselves well in the task...

... The RSS feels that it has reached a stage where it has less and less use for liberals. It is, however, gratified that the strategy has worked. The BJP has increased its strength from mere eight in the 1980 polls to nearly 180 in the current election, within a span of 18 years. Not only that, some political parties, once sworn enemy of the BJP, have helped it...

But now that the ground has been prepared, the RSS wants to consolidate the BJP... Ideologue Govindacharya has been brought back with a new designation to reorganise the set-up. This looks like a phase of delineating the concept of Hindu Rashtra, giving it more depth. The RSS has found that liberal members in the BJP hedge and do not unequivocally take a stand when the option before them is straight Hindutva. The RSS also anticipates some sort of confrontation with the BJP-led government at a later stage... It wants a different programme in the cultural and information fields. Mr. Thakre has said that the BJP has a different agenda from that of the government... The RSS feels relieved that their confidant will not swerve from the path it has chalked out to convert India into a Hindu state...

All the RSS campaign has been against secularism, a concept of pluralistic society which does not give Hindus "its due". The composite culture has been regarded as an antithesis of Hindutva. How can it accept even in a diluted form a philosophy which goes against the grain of its policies. Whenever Advani says that there is no going back on secularism - he was commenting on changes in the Constitution - the RSS cadre and its supporters feel confused. They wonder where does the BJP, which is a creative of stirrings for Hindu Rashtra, stand? After all, when the erstwhile Jana Sangh converted itself into the BJP in 1980 it made no secret that it preferred the fundamentalist RSS to the liberal Janata. Otherwise, it would not have left the party...

A recent meeting of Vishwa Hindu Parishad, a wing of the RSS, was reportedly rowdy and uncontrollable. The RSS had to intervene to stop them from raising the demand for building the Ram temple... Apparently, the BJP does not have a strong legal case because Advani appealed to Muslims to withdraw their petition regarding the ownership of the Babari Masjid site from the Allahabad High Court.

Even if the Babari Masjid-Ram Janambhoomi dispute is settled amicably, the RSS cannot afford to change its line of Hindu Rashtra because that is its *raison d'être*. All its support emanates from that resolve. Those who make

religion the basis of a state ride a tiger which tension dismount... Fanaticism is like fire which cannot be quenched, it can only destroy whatever comes its reach. Ethnic minorities and lower caste groups do not tend to think of their identities in a comparably exclusive fashion...

What the RSS does not realise is that the most striking feature of Indian politics is its persistent (secularism)... Violence is an outburst or aberration and not suited to the Hindu genius. It has withstood pressure from fanatics and fundamentalists, whose fervour has always subsided eventually, because tolerance is firmly implanted in the mind of Indians... They cannot sell the nation a dogma which mixes religion with politics.

The violence associated with the Ram Janambhoomi campaign may have stimulated popular involvement in the short run but it ultimately backfired...

The RSS should realise that it cannot tilt India's ethos to the right. It has already done great damage to the polity by fomenting hatred between Hindus and Muslims. One feels that it would only burn its fingers if it were to push its strategy further...

(Source: The Hindustan times, 9 May, 1998)

(Continued from page 303)

mouthpiece, Vajpayee hurriedly said he was not the author. He dissociated himself from the views expressed in the article on the minorities and what "should be done" to "change" them. But again, the fact remains that the journal clearly approved of the views and senior BJP leaders did comment privately at that time that they found nothing wrong with the views expressed in that article as they conformed to the teachings of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya...

The so-called "hidden agenda" of the BJP may not manifest itself in government policy - for it is a coalition government. But, surely, the RSS and its various arms will take forward the not-so-hidden agenda of Hindutva or "cultural nationalism" or "nationalism" as the BJP now prefers to call it - **under the protective umbrella of the BJP, government at the Centre.**

This could manifest itself in the Bajrang Dal attempting to put together an army of "Hindu youth" or the VHP starting once again to "raise Hindu consciousness" on Mathura and Kashi or even the BJP, through the Ministries of Human Resource Development and Information and Broadcasting, propagating the "new values" of the new Government...

Vajpayee declared at the BJP national executive committee that the party would lead the Government. It seems that the BJP, led by the RSS, will lead the Government, it will create the "climate" which will make events such as the demolition of the mosque in Ayodhya possible, even dangerously acceptable. The Bajrang Dal will lay down what is "culturally correct". Perhaps, that is the party's "hidden agenda".

(Source: The Hindu, 21 April, 1998)

The Anti-Woman, Anti-Dalit and Anti-Secular Character of BJP's Hidden Agenda

Kancha Ilaiah in *The Hindu*, 29 April, 1998

... Whatever the BJP's pronounced intentions, it is now caught between the Hindutva spiritual ideology of its Parivar - RSS, VHP and Bajrang Dal - and the pressures mounted from the secular-civil and political society. While the BJP in power may appear to have nothing to do with that agenda, the other parivar members would be allowed to push for and implement the agenda...

The politico-ideological objectives of the RSS, right from the Hedgewar, Savarkar and Golwalkar days, have always been double-edged. Though the RSS was started with a declared enmity towards the Muslim League, opposing Gandhi's Ahimsa-centred satyagraha and Ambedkar's anti-caste and anti-Hindu agitations... One of the early architects of the RSS ... said, "Gandhi's use of Ahimsa in the non-cooperation movement would uproot the very principle of Hinduism and Aryan philosophy". The early architects ... were also perturbed over Gandhi's programme of Harijanisation of untouchables and his programme for temple entry for them. ...

Though Savarkar spoke the language of social reform and construction of Hindu nationalism, Hedgewar and Golwalkar were more concerned with the restructuring of Varnavyavasta. Their understanding of Samajika Samarasata (social harmony) never aimed at establishing a casteless society. The RSS's recruitment of cadre, its concept of Hindu cultural nationalism and the food and dress it adopted were all mainly drawn from Brahmin wadas. The only thing that appeared somewhat "unbrahminic" was its shaka training of militancy... It was a conscious decision of the early Sanchalaks to "Kshatriyaise" Brahmins and other upper caste activists who were drawn into its fold.

What was/is the social reform agenda of the RSS? On its own, the RSS has not conducted any ... temple entry campaigns for the Scheduled Castes. It is yet to tell the nation how many SC, ST, OBCs were made priests by the Sangh Parivar. Did it at least produce prominent leaders from these communities who are in a position to command its organisational structures? While the BJP pretends to be genuinely interested in 33 per cent reservations for women, what kind of political space has it provided for women within the Sangh Parivar? The women's reservation agenda emerged out of Mandal consciousness and the BJP was totally opposed to the Mandal agenda in the beginning. In fact, its Mandir agenda was a response to the ... Mandal agenda. No woman has been allowed to grow in the RSS to occupy the position of party president and no Dalit-Bahujan has occupied the top positions... The Sangh Parivar till today believes that Jatis

and women should play their assigned roles within Varnadharma and pitrusamya. Though India as a nation is defined as Matrubhoomi, the pitru (father) is granted the hegemonic position in the RSS scheme of things.

What is important, however, is that the Sangh Parivar philosophically believes in inequality. Golwalkar once said, "My feeling is that nature abhors excessive uniformity." For them, inequality of castes and women is natural. Historically, the Hindutva school did not hesitate to compromise when Dalits and women emerged as rulers but on its own never allowed them to go beyond the parameters of Jati dharm and Nari dharm...

The BJP and its allies promised the National Agenda for Governance that they would work for "social justice" based on the principle of Samajik Samarasata (social harmony)... The very fact that the "National Agenda" qualifies social justice with social harmony itself is indicative of the fact that the social justice concept is a Trojan horse of the unprincipled allies and the RSS philosophy has balanced it with social harmony. The hidden agenda is to hoodwink the toiling Dalit-Bahujan masses.

The philosophical slogan of the RSS is gyanam, sheelam and ekata (knowledge, character and unity). Its concept of gyanam ... puranic gyanam... The Hindu notion of sheelam is not based on sacrifice. The images of Hindu deities are built around heroism. If Indian society has to build its character, it should draw inspiration from the Buddha or from modern personalities such as Phule, Periyar, Ambedkar and so on...

India as a nation should turn to building up character on the secular and democratic principles, where we cannot invoke the Brahminical symbols in any form. Symbols like Yagya and tapasya are not only anti-Dalit-Bahujan but also anti-production. Ekata or unity can be achieved only by annihilating caste and by establishing democratic relations between different religions... But because of the deep internalisation of the Varnadharma ideology of the RSS, the language of the Prime Minister and Home Minister even in their administrative functions is reflecting only Brahminical thinking. For example, Advani repeatedly compares the Indian nation to a Ram temple. The Prime Minister compares the "National Agenda" with yagya and tapasya. Their very language is anti-secular.

... The National Agenda ... gives us the impression that in this so-called yagya the priest and the rulers are going to benefit and the Dalit-Bahujans will be used only as Balipashus (sacrificial animals)...

Neena Vyas on Promotion of Hindu Agenda by RSS Under the Protective Umbrella of BJP-led Government

On April 7, exactly two weeks after the Vajpayee Government took its oath of office, an announcement was made by the Bajrang Dal convener, Surendra Kumar Jain, that "Hindu "Hindu youth" were to be trained in the martial arts of judo and karate, first through centres to be opened in all 750 districts and then expanded to cover 7500 blocks... If the plan is implemented in the manner and for the purpose announced by Mr. Jain, it could signal the formation of an army of "Hindu youth" claiming to be the defenders of the faith and deciding what was culturally correct. The very idea of a Bajrang Dal, or any other organised force, taking on the task of a kind of religious police is too dangerous and uncomfortable to be glossed over.

"We have already set up 212 pickets for the checking of vehicles carrying cows and calves for slaughter ...", Jain announced to the press. Mr. Giriraj Kishore, secretary-general of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad ... looked on patronisingly. Besides protecting cows, the "Hindu youth" would be trained in martial arts to enable them "to deal with such social problems as infiltration by the ISI ... conversion of Hindus by Christian missionaries and cultural invasion", Mr. Jain said.

How would the Bajrang Dal do this? What authority does it have to check vehicles at pickets set up by its volunteers? Is it going to take on the task of the Intelligence Bureau and identify "ISI agents" and then would its volunteers "deal" with those identified by it? And, finally, what is its definition of cultural invasion? Will men and women wearing jeans be at the receiving end of the "Hindu youth" trained in judo and karate? Will someone eating a pizza be attacked? Or, perhaps, someone speaking English or watching a Hollywood film?

Yet another announcement by the Bajrang Dal chief was that they would not allow "denigration or commercial exploitation of Hindu gods and goddesses"... The question is whether the Hindus have appointed the Dal guardian of their faith... And who is to decide what constitutes denigration of a god and what does not? Many think that the 'filmy' style Ramayana serial on television ... did constitute denigration of Hindu gods and, at the very least, the whole thing was certainly tasteless.

A senior BJP functionary ... close to ... Advani, as well as to ... Vajpayee, pooh-poohed the Bajrang Dal announcement saying it was simply not feasible. But the question remains. Even if it is not able to implement the idea, the idea itself is dangerous, even fascist. Hitler's idea of a "final solution" of the Jewish question would hardly have been considered feasible, but it was carried out with a frightening efficiency.

What makes all this even more dangerous is the obvious fact that the Bajrang Dal, an RSS organisation, will naturally enjoy the political patronage of a government

led by the BJP, in itself the political arm of the RSS.

The BJP ... owes its allegiance to the RSS, which is anything but democratic. The RSS is the inspiration and the guiding force of the BJP, its conscience-keeper, or rather the RSS actually controls the BJP. There has been no major decision taken by the BJP, political or otherwise, for which the party did not seek prior RSS sanction.

Senior BJP leaders, including Advani and Vajpayee, have been RSS members since their teens and they virtually declared in Parliament that they would remain its loyal soldiers. The RSS is not just any ordinary club and its leading lights have stated in their books that their aim is the establishment of a Hindu Rashtra.

There are important issues related to the parliamentary democratic system which arise from this specific relationships between the BJP and the RSS. It was the BJP which contested the elections, but it may well be the RSS which will dictate the party's policies and programmes and the latter is clearly outside the parliamentary democratic system and is accountable to no one - not even to the BJP.

Having won the elections on the strength of the cadre of the RSS, it is the BJP which is accountable to the former, it is committed to taking forward the RSS ideas, to spread what it calls Hindutva or what is now being called "cultural nationalism" or even just plain "nationalism". The next step may well be that all those who do not agree with the RSS-BJP view of what constitutes this "nationalism" will be described as "anti-national". And that is where perhaps the role of the Bajrang Dal will come in...

The RSS is itself an entirely undemocratic organisation. Its chief, Sarsanghchalak, is appointed by the outgoing chief for a lifetime, unless he decides to resign for personal reasons. One Sarsanghchalak appointed another by simply writing his name on a chit of paper which is opened after his death. No questions are asked, and the new chief then "rules" over the entire ... Sangh Parivar which includes the BJP and all the other wings such as the VHP, the Bajrang Dal, the Durga Vahini and so on.

In the Lok Sabha, during the trust vote debate, a senior Opposition leader did question Vajpayee and Advani on what they had to say about the views of one of the venerated RSS gurus, Golwalkar, on the "minorities' problem" as stated in his book, *We The Nationhood Defined*. Golwalkar's views on the minorities were chillingly close to Hitler's ideas on the Jews... Advani ... interrupted to say the book was out of print and that the author himself had changed his views later. But to this day, it is not yet clear where this has been done. Certainly, no senior BJP leader has ever publicly condemned Golwalkar for his views on the minorities.

Recently, when a controversy arose over an article supposedly written by Vajpayee in *The Organiser*, RSS

(Continued on page 301)

Amulya Ganguli on Hindutva from Babari Masjid to the Bomb

... The presidential system and the nuclear bomb have long been on the BJP's agenda - longer, in fact, than the temple. From its Jan Sangh days, this Right-wing outfit has been insistent on these two points, its belief being that these would help to project India as a strong country under a strong leader. The party's and the Sangh Parivar's disdain for the "non-nationalists", also described as pseudo-secular, is based on the conviction that they lack martial valour and are, therefore, responsible for all of India's ills, going back to the invasions of the past and the inability to stand up to the world at present....

(RSS') eagerness to confine itself within the bounds of the colonial rules ensured that the freedom struggle would remain in the hands of people like Gandhi whose "femininity" ... earned him the hostility of the Hindu nationalists. The other reason why the Sangh parivar remained aloof from the independence movement was its antagonism towards Muslims, who were sought to be included in the movement by Gandhi and others...

After 1947, while the pacifist turned to the socialist model of development and founded the anti-American non-aligned bloc, the Jan Sangh-BJP had a pro-American and pro-capitalist image. Its model was Israel, no doubt because the latter was waging a life-and-death struggle against Muslims in West Asia and also because, even without a presidential system, it gave the impression of strength... The reason why the BJP has brought the bombs out in the open at the present time is not only due to its customary preference for pursuing a policy of machismo and atavism, but presumably to divert attention from its coalition troubles. The election results were a disappointment for the party. Not only did it fail to get a majority, its partners in government have also been giving it no end of trouble. Besides, its own hardliners were distressed over the shelving of their pet projects like the Ayodhya temple...

... What the nuclear tests have confirmed is that India always had the capacity. Only it did not display it not so much because the pacifists then in power lacked martial vigour as because they were mature enough not to plunge India into a situation where ... it may find itself bracketed with Cuba, Iraq, Iran and Libya... Besides, since India's adversaries knew of, or at least suspected, India's nuclear prowess, there was no need to advertise it anyway. They would have kept their distance...

The BJP's exercise of the nuclear option, therefore, does not change anything, except that having emerged from the closet, India will now have to bear the brunt of international opprobrium and sanctions. Pakistan, too, will have to respond; otherwise its rulers will be seen to be lacking in spirit. In the process, an entirely avoidable atmosphere of conflict - in which China, too, will be drawn in - will be

created in South Asia.

Ironically, the tests have come at a time when the threat perceptions are somewhat less than before...

The BJP, on the other hand, is known to have a tendency to bank on emotive appeals ever since its 1989 electoral success convinced it that the avowed goal of moulding India according to the Sangh parivar's image is within sight. In adopting such a course, it sometimes overshoots the mark, even damaging itself in the process. Ayodhya is a typical example whose ramifications it has yet to live down...

There may not be anything wrong, per se, in opting for the bomb if it is genuinely required for the sake of national security. But the step must carry conviction, and not be seen as a jingoistic measure for partisan purposes... A decision of this nature should be taken by a ruling party or an alliance which has a clear mandate, having won on the basis of a large percentage of votes and with a consistent record of such percentages in the past, and which is widely recognised as stable. The present government does not meet these requirements.

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 18 May, 1998)

Abhijit Bhattacharyya On Euphoria over the Bomb

... The Indian sub-continent experienced the dawn of civilisation alongwith the riverine civilisation of the Nile, Euphrates, Tigris and the valleys of the Hwang Ho and Yang Sikiang of China. But the Indian civilisation also attracted hostility from the people belonging to other areas where both waster and food were scarce...

Hordes of horsemen and motivated soldiers from comparatively sterile terrain found it convenient to pour through the passes of North-west India... Invasions became a recurring phenomenon. Invasion, defence, defeat, subjugation and loot continued to be the order for almost a thousand years...

The original inhabitants were at the receiving end owing to both internal diversion and external aggression...

... The battering of the Indians for centuries at the hands of those who did not belong to the sub-continent, to this day constitutes a sore point at the back of most Indians' mind.

... Partition ... created a permanent scar... India ceased to be a united country... An acute sense of suppressed agony and pain burst out and manifested in the detonation of five nuclear devices at Pokhran on May 11 and 13, 1998.

... Pokhran temporarily appears to have overshadowed the inherent goodness of the Indians who have down the ages paid heavily for their tolerance and avoidance of "first-strike" intention, despite occasional capability. The wounded psyche runs deeply embedded...

(Source: The Pioneer, 11 June, 1998)

NATIONAL POLITICS

opponent...

... However, of late, a view has emerged among a section of Muslims that he has a stake in the preservation of communalism to play the crusader and bag the Muslim vote. Fortunately for Mulayam, this view has few adherents and even they are prudent enough not to be too vocal at this stage as the political alternatives before the UP Muslims are limited.

Why the BSP figures so low in the Muslim mind needs some explanation...

... Mayawati's arrogant style of functioning and her thoughtless statements have often hurt the sentiments of various social and religious groups, including Muslims. The manner in which she dismissed and humiliated one of her ministers ... also gave Mulayam an opportunity...

The way Mayawati deserted the SP and formed a government with BJP support was projected by Mulayam as treachery and betrayal of the secular mandate. All this alienated the Muslims from the BSP. However, Mayawati's anti-BJP rhetoric, and her bold and uncompromising attitude on Kashi and Mathura even when she was dependent on BJP support, has not failed to impress a section of Muslims. Nevertheless, even today, the BSP is only acceptable to the Muslims in combination with SP. They have pleaded with the leadership of the two parties to bury the hatchet and forge an electoral alliance.

... On being asked why Muslims failed to contain the BJP in UP in the 1996 election, 41 per cent attributed it to a division in the Muslim votes in their constituencies, 31 per cent stated that there was no consensus on whom to vote for, 22 per cent felt that Muslims did not vote in large numbers, and only 6 per cent - a very tiny percentage of Muslims - attributed BJP's victory to a consolidation of Hindu votes. The fact that such a large percentage of Muslims admit to a division of their votes, or a lack of consensus on whom to vote for, should be an eye-opener to those who expound theories about block voting among Muslims or about consolidation of Muslim votes. That a reasonably large number felt that the Muslim turn out was low, reinforces the general feeling of apathy, cynicism and disenchantment with politics...

... In the recently held election, the Muslims overwhelmingly voted against the BJP-Shiv Sena government in Maharashtra... Perhaps ... they still mistrust the overtly Hindutva driven governments, despite the symbolic concessions offered. In this election they had a viable, credible and winning secular alternative and they voted for it with zest. In UP, on the other hand, where there was no such alternative, their voting pattern continued to be marked by confusion, cynicism and apathy.

(Source: The Seminar, May, 1998)

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Shahabuddin's Letter to H.M. Advani

6 June, 1998

The question of the VHP's preparation for the construction of the proposed Ram Mandir in Ayodhya on the disputed site, including the site of the Babari Masjid was raised in the Rajya Sabha on 3 June, 1998 by Shri C. Balanandan and Shri K.M. Khan.

You are reported to have said that no construction activity was going on at the disputed site and that the carving of stones (at places away from the disputed site and at some villages in Rajasthan) did not constitute violation of any law. However, your statement does not touch the question of transportation of carved pillars and other architectural elements to Ayodhya. There is legal view that since the pillars etc. are admittedly meant for the proposed Mandir whose construction stands prohibited by the Supreme Court (SC), the purpose of taking them to Ayodhya is malafide.

I would, therefore, reiterate my request that the government should instruct the VHP: a) not to take the pillars etc. to Ayodhya; b) not to make public declaration of their intention to begin the construction at an early date without waiting for the Order of the SC.

Shahabuddin's Letter to Sonia Gandhi

10 June, 1998

The Babari Masjid Movement Coordination Committee is grateful to you for writing to the Prime Minister on the question of VHP's plan for the construction of the proposed Ram Janambhoomi Mandir. May I say that in his reply, the Prime Minister has tried to mislead you, exactly as he and his Home Minister tried to mislead both Houses of Parliament.

No one has alleged that any construction is going on at the disputed site. The case is that pillars and other architectural elements, in accordance with the design for the ground floor, which are being cut, carved and polished in Ayodhya (at Kar Sevakpuram which is at some distance from the disputed site) and in various places in Rajasthan and are being transported to and stored in Ayodhya.

Since the Special Bench of the Allahabad HC has not yet completed the examination of witnesses and the final judicial verdict (presumably by the Supreme Court) on the title to the disputed site is not even on the horizon, the intention behind transportation and to storage in Ayodhya raises reasonable suspicions about the intention and plan of the VHP to mount a sudden operation with the collusion of the State Government (as in December, 1992) to put the pre-fabricated pillars etc. on the concrete platform which is to serve as the base of at least half the temple and which already exists.

I would, therefore, request you to ask the Prime Minister to ban the transportation of pillars etc. from Rajasthan to Ayodhya and impound the stocks in Ayodhya. Secondly, you may also like to ask the Prime Minister to prosecute the VHP for repeated public

(Continued on page 308)

BMMCC Demands Stop to Clandestine Construction by VHP,

New Delhi, 12 June, 1998

"While thanking the Congress(I) and other secular parties for taking up in Parliament the question of clandestine preparation for the construction of the proposed Ram Mandir on the disputed land in Ayodhya, including the Babari Masjid site, the BMMCC regrets the failure to clinch the issue and to unmask the eloquence of the Prime Minister and the pseudo legality of the Home Minister and the other colleagues.

The question is not whether any construction is going on in the disputed land or even on the concrete platform or the Babari Masjid site. The pertinent questions are:

- 1) Why the pillars and other architectural elements, which are being admittedly cut, sculpted and polished at various places in Rajasthan are being transported to and stored in Ayodhya within a stone's throw of the disputed land?
- 2) Whether it is not a fact that the concrete platform unlawfully constructed in July 1992 corresponds to the architectural site-plan of three sections of the proposed Mandir, excluding the Grabha Griha which is to be located on the Babari Masjid site?
- 3) Doesn't the proximity of the finished pillars to the platform provide a reasonable suspicion about a secret plan hatched by the VHP to mount a sudden operation to install the pillars on the existing platform, with the help of its trained karsevaks, with friendly governments at the Centre and the State looking the other way?
- 4) Whether it is not a fact that the VHP has time and again proclaimed its defiance of the rule of law and reiterated its intention to construct the proposed Ram Janambhoomi Mandir on the disputed site, within 2 years, law or no law? Does it not amount to contempt of court or an attempt to terrorise the Muslims into surrendering the claim?
- 5) Why the Central and State Governments have not taken any cognisance of anti-constitutional, anti-national and incendiary statements of the VHP and invoked the law of the land against its spokesman.

Since the site for the Mandir shall be decided by the Supreme Court in the light of the final judicial verdict on the question of title which the Prime Minister has committed to execute, the finished pillars etc. may well be stored where they are in order to remove the apprehension in the public mind.

The BMMCC demands that:

- a) The transportation of the pillars to Ayodhya be banned by the Rajasthan and UP Governments.
- b) The stocks of pillars within Ayodhya be impounded and taken charge of by the Central Government.
- c) The leaders of the VHP may be prosecuted for their statements under the law of the land.

The BMMCC appeals to all secular parties, particularly the Congress(I), to persevere in their efforts to nail down the VHP's conspiracy."

BABARI MASJID

AIBMAC: Statement on PM Vajpayee's 'Assurance' on Implementation of Judicial Verdict, 9 June, 1998

It is distressing to note that A.B. Vajpayee has very shrewdly avoided to give a specific and categorical assurance to the nation for implementing the Court judgement if it goes in favour of the Muslims...

While saying that verdict for construction of Ram Mandir will be given effect to, should have specifically declared that verdict for Babari Masjid will also be given effect to and by not saying so, he has only strengthened the doubts and apprehensions that his Government is partisan in this matter and cannot uphold the rule of law and dignity of the Court... Let Mr. Vajpayee instruct the Attorney General to request the Special Bench of the High Court dealing the Babari Masjid suits to dispose of the cases by holding the trial on day-to-day basis.

It would also be desirable that the carving of stones etc. and other preparations being carried on by VHP for construction of temple be stopped forthwith and persons like Giriraj Kishore, throwing open challenge to the Supreme Court also, be taken to task.

Indrajit Gupta's Letter

On Construction of Mandir, 24 Jan., 1998

Kindly refer to your letter dated 22nd August 1997 enclosing a copy of the news report in the Hindu dated 12th August 1997 wherein it was mentioned that a temple is taking shape at Ayodhya at the site of the Babari Masjid.

I have had the matter examined. No construction activity is going on at the disputed Ram Janambhoomi Babari Masjid site at Ayodhya. It is a fact that some cutting and carving of stone pillars is going on in the workshop established by the VHP which is two kilometers away from the disputed site. Since this activity per se does not constitute any violation of the law it would not be possible for the Government of India or the District Administration to take any action in the matter.

I would like to assure that in compliance of the Supreme Court order dated 24.10.1994, status quo is being maintained at the disputed site.

L.K. Advani's Endorsement, 9 June, 1998

The Government endorses the stand taken by the Gujral Government.

(Continued from page 307)

declarations that no power on earth, not even the SC, can stop the construction and that it shall begin within 2 years? Is the VHP trying to terrorise and humiliate the SC? The concrete base, constructed in July 1992 against the status quo Order of the SC on the disputed land, is illegal and should have been demolished in ordinary course of law. You may like to examine whether the SC may be moved to order the demolition of the platform, not only to remove an illegal structure but also to allay all fears and apprehensions of any construction by the VHP. In case you need some clarification, I am at your service.

Left Parties Joint Statement On Situation in Ayodhya, 14 June, 1998

The Left Parties team comprising Basud Acharya, Dipankar Mukherjee, Gurudas Dasgupta, Amar Roy Prahadhan, Abani Roy, Ajay Chakraborty and Joachim Baxla visited Ayodhya on June 13, 1998 and issued the following statement - Editor.

... The construction work of the Mandir was being carried on in a workshop, which is at a distance of 1 km from the disputed spot.

The model of the Ram Mandir is on display in the workshop... Nearly 50/60 workers along with the supervisors and managers are at work. The workshop has recently installed a large stone cutting machine to expedite the work... the work at the place is constantly supervised and monitored by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and RSS.

The structure of the Mandir above the ground level is being constructed in pieces, by parts, and the predetermined strategy is to enable the organisers to assemble the parts and set up the Mandir, with breakneck speed, as and when the opportunity arises...

... Similar construction work is going on with pink stones in three other places at Pindori in Rajasthan. Therefore ... the construction of the 'structure' ... is taking place in four different places, in a well advanced stage and is going on in the states where the BJP is in power.

When we asked the people at work where the Mandir will be built, we had the unambiguous answer that it will be the Ramjanmabhoomi area.

Therefore, the point is that, when the court is seized with the issue of construction of Ram Mandir at the disputed site called the Ramjanmabhoomi and the judicial verdict is yet to be pronounced, why such work ... is being undertaken.

While the judicial pronouncement cannot be prejudged, Vishwa Hindu Parishad, RSS and Bajrang Dal ... must have been guided by the political consideration of keeping the issue alive, whipping up passions among its hardcore support base, thus putting constant pressure on the judiciary...

To indulge in the build-up of a Mandir in parts so near to the disputed site, gives clearly the signal of an attempt to set up the Mandir at any cost, only at the disputed site and nowhere else. Therefore, the development is a matter of grave concern, too dangerous to be overlooked by the country and by the government.

The assurance of the Prime Minister on the floor of the parliament ... is of little significance in view of the construction being done, so close to the disputed area, with the avowed declaration of the VHP and RSS that the Mandir will be built only where the disputed site is.

It is for the government to take appropriate steps to ensure that judicial process is not again subverted on the soil of Ayodhya.

Comments of National Press

The 'Hidden' Agenda

Editorial, The Hindu, 27 May, 1998

The flurry of activities in a remote village in Rajasthan ... is sufficient proof that fears about the BJP's hidden agenda are not just visceral. The construction-related activities establish beyond doubt the continuing agenda of the Sangh Parivar to systematically erode the secular spirit of the national polity... Construction of the temple is very much an integral part of their agenda. That these activities had picked up pace soon after the BJP-led alliance came to power at the Centre cannot be seen as a mere coincidence. Instead, it reveals very clearly a tried and tested strategy of the Sangh Parivar - to ensure that the law enforcing agencies are rendered passive spectators while they carryout such activities

... The reports about the VHP's project now on in Rajasthan, a BJP-ruled State, cause real concern. Indeed, the BJP Government in Rajasthan was found wanting in enforcing the ban imposed on the RSS and various other arms of the Sangh Parivar in the aftermath of the demolition and was dismissed for that reason. And a nine-member Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court upheld the dismissal... All these makes it explicitly clear that the BJP's leaders, particularly those holding elected office, have time and again colluded with the VHP and the other arms of the Sangh Parivar in furthering the communal and fascist agenda. In this context, it would be a mistake to underestimate the implications of the construction-related activities now reported...

... Ever since the new Govt. took over, the various arms of the Sangh Parivar have been allowed to carry on with their communal and divisive campaign with impunity. The attack on a painting exhibition in Delhi ... and the fascist behaviour of the Shiv Sena men in Mumbai ... were allowed to be carried out by the State machinery... All these - the attack on artists and the construction-related activities in Rajasthan - must be seen in the context of the increasing jingoism that has come to mark the pronouncements by senior members of the Union Cabinet ever since they assumed charge and particularly after the nuclear explosions in Pokhran... The BJP is beginning to show its real face, even as it seems to be slipping back into its familiar tactics of communal mobilisation.

Still Cause for Concern

Editorial, The Hindu, Madurai, 11 June, 1998

The assurance by PM Vajpayee ... will allay fears only if it is followed by appropriate steps. These steps must aim at ensuring that the various arms of the Sangh Parivar categorically jettison the temple construction project... The leaders of the VHP and others in the Sangh Parivar have stated unambiguously that the artisans in the Rajasthan village are engaged in carving stone pillars meant for the proposed temple at the very site where the Babari Masjid stood in Ayodhya. Despite such overwhelming evidence, there was evasiveness on the part of the Government ... which did not at all clarify

The Bomb, the Budget and the Mandir

Editorial, The People's Reporter, 1-15 June, 1998

... The continuing furore at home and abroad over the nuclear tests in India and Pakistan, and the likelihood of the Ayodhya issue coming centre stage politically and in terms of jeopardising civil harmony ... pose severe challenges to the BJP government. Their capacity to inflame jingoistic emotions and to be dangerously divisive is heightened by the Bomb and the Mandir being article of faith with the BJP and its most fanatic supporters, the RSS and the Sangh Parivar. Any attempt to say that BJP and RSS are autonomous bodies, not accountable to each other, will not wash. They are a jekyll and Hyde composition personality. Hindutva and Ayodhya are the core of their ideology for all times. The withdrawal of these from the BJP manifesto is a temporary compromise meant only to last till they come to power on their own strength in a parliament dominated by them. The response of the Government to the news of hectic preparations by the VHP to build the Mandir is less than honest, evasive: Madan Lal Khurana says the Government has no information; the Prime Minister and the hawkish Home Minister say that they will abide by the court order about maintaining the status quo at Ayodhya. They are not saying that they will stop others from flouting the Supreme Court order or curb the VHP from keeping the issue alive by its inflammatory, militant talk about building the temple at any cost... In fact, the PM has expressed his reluctance to rein in the sangh parivar. Their words and deeds today are becoming increasingly ominous, and defiant of all authority as in the days leading to their vandalism... on December 6, 1992... After Babari Masjid and Pokhran II, BJP seems to believe that its sure path to achieve its aims in the face of the inconvenient constraints of India's egalitarian, democratic and secular polity is from fait accompli to fait accompli. If it succeeds in exploding the Mandir bomb by conniving at VHP raising a pre-fabricated structure ... at Ayodhya, we might as well say good-bye ... to national growth and development, and a united pluralistic India.

whether such construction activity was taking place and, if so, for what purpose... Assurances such as the one made by the PM have been handed out by the leading lights of the BJP on several occasions. One such occasion was just a couple of days before the horrifying demolition ... on December 6, 1992.... Vajpayee's observation that it was a result of the "restlessness" caused by inordinate judicial delay in a case involving people's "emotions" gave tacit legitimacy to the act of demolition. It also obliquely justified the Sangh Parivar's drawn-out campaign on Ayodhya. Rather than indulging in laboured and unconvincing explanations about what led to the demolition, Vajpayee would do better to ensure that passions are not whipped up once again. The BJP cannot distance itself from its constitutionally mandated responsibility to ensure that Ayodhya is not the focus of another searing and disintegrative campaign.

Vir Sanghvi

On the Sangh Parivar's Temple Policy

... For all its talk of discipline, the truth is that the Sangh Parivar is a loose federation of an assortment of organisations and mind-sets. There may be the moderates like Vajpayee who regard the Ayodhya demolition as regrettable. But there is also a lunatic fringe that treats December 6, 1992 as a day of pride...

It is possible - probable even - that Vajpayee has no desire to see Ayodhya return to haunt the BJP. From all accounts he was never enamoured of the 1989 rath yatra or of the party's obsession with a medieval monument. It is also true that he has managed with effort and finesse to keep such temperamental allies as Jayalalitha and Mamata within the fold. But he must realise that ultimately, it is not the allies who will present his government with its greatest threat.

That threat will come from within the Parivar. It will come from those who wish to impose a divisive and essentially negative agenda on this government. They will push Vajpayee further than he is willing to go. And they will scare away those allies and friends who believe that the BJP has tempered its old militancy. The Prime Minister deserves our congratulations for publicly assuring us that the events of December 6 will never be repeated.

But now, he needs to go further. He needs to tell us that Ayodhya is off the radar screen because it is a regressive and inflammatory issue that this is ill-suited to our times, not because there are some legal delays. And when the Parivar speaks out of turn, he must tell it to moderate its rhetoric. It is not enough for him to tell us to approach the law to take action against inflammatory statements... He must be much more assertive than he has been.

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 12 June, 1998)

Reprieve on Ayodhya

Editorial, The Hindustan Times, 11 June, 1998

It seems the BJP is setting the standards for mishandling issues for others. The first to catch the infection is the Congress party which decided to move an adjournment motion against the Government on the Ayodhya temple issue... Suddenly ... the situation changed and the Congress withdrew its decision to table the adjournment motion...

Despite the ham-handed manner in which the ruling party has handled various issues... the Opposition seems hopelessly handicapped in getting its acts together to even embarrass the Government let alone topple it. That does not, however, mean that the Government can wish the Ayodhya issue away. But it sure means a reprieve.

Preeti Singh

On Mandir-Masjid Issue

... For BJP, Ayodhya has proved to be a goldmine in terms of electoral gains! In 1984, the party could hardly manage to get two members elected to the parliament. However, after the Mandir-Masjid issue burst upon the national scene, the BJP hasn't looked back. In the 110 Lok Sabha, it had 173-member-strong presence. One reason for this is that the party has been able to swing a sizeable chunk of Hindu votes by exploiting their religious sentiments...

Knowing this and its electoral implications, the BJP leaders dismiss any evidence that goes against their stand on the issue. They have rejected all proof or logic against Ram temple having ever stood at the place where Babari Masjid was erected on the ground... In short, they must have their way at any cost. It is against this background that Thackeray's suggestion for erecting a national monument at the demolished Babari-Masjid's site assumes significance.

To be frank, Thackeray has created a lot of embarrassment for and even anger in the entire leadership of the BJP. The fact that it comes from the Shiv Sena 'paramukh' (Head) is something that the party can neither swallow nor vomit save at the cost of losing power in Maharashtra. However, Thackeray's suggestion is indeed sensible. If accepted by Hindu and Muslim leaders and then implemented, it could indeed ease social and religious tension between these two most-popular communities. Some political analysts think that political parties opposed to the BJP like the United Front, the Congress and so on have welcomed Thackeray's suggestion in order to nettle the 'Sangh Parivar'...

... Thackeray's suggestion could raise lot of political dust. And it is just possible that a national debate on this issue may be revived on the problem in the near future.

It is also possible that even the BJP may well be made to change its rigid stand by its newly-found political allies in the country, especially those in the southern states. After all it is not easy, or even politically feasible for a political party aspiring to capture power in the Centre, to continue sticking to its rigid stand for long. Already political allies of BJP like the Samata Party, for instance, have decided to delink themselves from BJP on Mandir-Masjid issue.

Other BJP allies may also follow this route if they find it helpful to come to power. However, right now the BJP can neither drop the Mandir-Masjid issue for fear of losing votes nor seem to reject suggestions that look sensible and reasonable for solving this thorny problem. This is a dilemma that the BJP finds itself in and which

Amnesty International's Appeal to Armed Opposition Groups in J&K

A Summary of India Report ASA 20/38/97, London, August, 1997

Armed opposition groups involved in the armed conflict in J&K have over the years been responsible for human rights abuses, contravening basic principles of humanity. The rules of international humanitarian law prohibit hostage-taking, torture and the deliberate or indiscriminate attack on civilians and those not taking direct part in hostilities and place obligations on armed groups to take concrete steps to avoid such attacks.

The abuses committed by armed opposition groups in J&K have included torture, hostage-taking and deliberate and indiscriminate killings of civilians. Armed opposition groups have also harassed and intimidated civilians with the threat of such abuses. The targets of abuses have included civilian men, women and children, journalists and members of the Hindu minority and civilian officials whose public function is not directly related to the conduct of hostilities.

The report lists several deliberate and arbitrary killings of civilians and indiscriminate attacks in which armed opposition groups have ignored their obligation to distinguish between military and civilian targets and to refrain from attacking civilian targets.

The report then spells out the international legal obligations of all parties to an armed conflict which are contained in Article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 which states:

"In the case of armed conflict not of an international character occurring in the territory of one of the High Contracting Parties, each Party to the conflict shall be bound to apply, as a minimum, the following provisions:

- (1) Persons taking no active part in the hostilities, including members of the armed forces who have laid down their arms and those placed hors de combat by sickness, wounds, detention, or any other cause, shall in all circumstances be treated humanely, without any adverse distinction founded on race, colour, religion or faith, sex, birth or wealth, or any other similar criteria.

To this end, the following acts are and shall remain prohibited at any time and in any place whatsoever with respect to the above-mentioned persons:

- (a) Violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds, mutilation, cruel treatment and torture;
- (b) taking of hostages;
- (c) outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment;
- (d) the passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without previous judgement pronounced by a regularly constituted court affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognised as indispensable by civilized people..."

Amnesty International reiterates its calls made many

times before to all the armed opposition groups involved in the armed conflict in Jammu and Kashmir to abide at all times by the minimum standards set down in the provisions of Common Article 3 and to instruct all fighters under their command to honour these obligations.

Lal Bahadur Shastri Memorial Foundation Suggestion for Resolving Kashmir Problem

For ensuring lasting peace, stability and harmony in the region, one possible solution for the Kashmir discord can be that unified Kashmir may be given autonomy under the joint suzerainty of India and Pakistan provided the minority communities vote in its favour. Kashmir, not allowed its own military, will be provided security cover jointly by India and Pakistan. Such joint ownership will generate a sense of brotherhood between the two nations. Jammu and Ladakh, presently linked with Kashmir, can remain with India or their people given an option through referendum to join Kashmir. ...

There can be shortcomings in every solution. The people of South Asia ... especially those from Kashmir ... should organise public consultations inviting alternative solutions so that a solution acceptable to the concerned people and nations may emerge. Such a dialogue will generate all round goodwill leading to solutions for lasting peace and prosperity in the region...

Government Statement on Army Jawans Killed in Anti-Insurgency Operations in J&K

Year	Officers	JCOs	OR	Total
1995	19	25	209	253
1996	20	17	223	260
1997	23	20	228	271
Total	62	62	660	784

(Source: LSUQ No. 1451 dated 4 June, 1998 by P.J. Kurien)

(Continued from page 312)

the Muslim majority part of Jammu is to provoke communal violence and create a sense of insecurity in the minority to encourage its migration. If Hindus could be provoked to retaliate in Hindu majority districts of Jammu and a vicious circle of retaliation could develop, Pakistan could succeed in creating an emotional and ideological support base in a strategically crucial belt between Hindu majority area of J&K valley which can help to it more than recover the lost ground in the Kashmir Valley. The new phase of militancy, if not checked in time, might turn out to be far more explosive, in terms of human life and values than the one that government claims to have contained.

Nothing would thus be more fatal than to treat the new phase as a spill over of militancy in Kashmir or as a last desperate bid of a frustrated or a defeated foe...

(Source: The Janata, 24 May, 1998)

Balraj Puri on Jammu Side of Pir Panchal in Flames

A spate of massacres of innocents has spread like jungle fire on the Jammu side of Pir Panchal...

There may be also some truth in accusations and counter-accusation between state government and the Centre but none can absolve itself of its own responsibility in not heeding to the warning signals that had been given by the militants.

Some useful lessons may be drawn from this controversy to plug the loopholes in the security system... But ... certain vital factors (must be considered) in planning an effective policy to deal with the situation. Firstly, what are the changes that have taken place in the character, composition, objectives and strategy of the militant movement and its differences from what it was in the earlier phase in the Kashmir Valley? Secondly, why the present area of its operation did not respond to the call of the militants earlier and why it has become more hospitable now? Connectedly and thirdly, what are the political inputs needed to supplement the security operations?

Initially it was a Kashmiri revolt by Kashmiri youth under Kashmiri leadership... They got all the support they needed for the revolt from Pakistan... As contradiction developed between Kashmiri urges and Pakistan's objective in Kashmir, the latter sponsored parallel militant outfits, closer to its objectives and ideology. Gradually the Kashmiri cadres and leadership of militant movement were replaced by those based in Pakistan or Pak-held part of the state. Meanwhile Kashmiri ethnic stock of militant youth had been considerably depleted.

As long as the militancy retained its Kashmiri character, was led by and comprised of Kashmiris and was inspired by what is broadly called Kashmiriat, it had little appeal for non-Kashmiri Muslims, across Pir Panchal on Jammu side. The new brand of militancy is alien in character and spirit to the Kashmiri ethos...

The non-Kashmiri militants are much closer to the ethnic stock in the border districts of Poonch, Rajouri and Udhampur hills... Meanwhile the Muslims majority of this area had many reasons to feel disillusioned with the Kashmir based leadership of the ruling National Conference. With the collapse of the Congress in the state, they had earlier shifted their allegiance to the new ruling party.

Gujars are a vital Muslim community in the area. They were considered to be one of the most loyal communities of the state and often supported the ruling party. But they did not get as many seats in the assembly in the present dispensation as they used to. There is only one Gujar MLA out of five Muslim majority constituencies of Rajouri and Poonch against three they held previously. The community had also expected more representation on the basis of its scheduled tribe

of state elected from Kashmir region whereas earlier its representation used to be larger with at least one cabinet minister. It has no representation in the six member Regional Autonomy Committee. Gojri language, the symbol of identity of the community, has still not been recognised in the Constitution of the state.

In sheer desperation, some Gujars joined the BJP. But the capacity of the party to accommodate aspirations of any Muslim community still remains extremely limited. With the Congress, in a state of hibernation, the Gujars seem to be losing a sense of political belonging and thus are not entirely invulnerable to appeal from the other side of the border.

The other major community living both sides of the Line of Control is Pahari; which has its own list of grievances. It has been fed on false promises on grant of scheduled tribe status ever since the Gujars were granted this status in 1991. Its worst tragedy is that its identity and its aspirations are least understood by the government or by other communities. The Chief Minister does it less than justice when he described Paharis as people living on Pahars (hills). In fact it is a distinct ethnic community including Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs and aspires for recognition and empowerment.

During the entire turmoil of the last decade, the two border districts remained a model of communal harmony. The same was true of the adjoining north east hilly areas of Udhampur. But further north east Doda district, was the first target of militancy in Jammu region which was facilitated by local communal tension. The problems of the entire belt from Poonch to Kishtwar along south eastern side of Pir Panchal are aggravated by under-development, growing number of educated unemployed youth and lack of communications.

The recently concluded parliamentary election almost completely polarised politics of Jammu along communal lines. The BJP which had failed to get a majority in any assembly segment of the two Lok Sabha constituencies of Jammu region in the election of 1989 and had lost its deposit, won, for the first time, both the seats. It swept the poll in all Hindu majority constituencies. Actually both parties benefited by negative voting... But the new polarisation not only left all communities discontented but also weakened the regional identity and its role as a cementing force between religious community.

New thrust area of Pakistan's political and militant offensive is the Muslim majority belt of Jammu, from Poonch to Kishtwar, which is tending to feel religiously insecure and starved of its ethnic urges.

From the very beginning pro-Pak rather than pro-Azadi militants have been active in Jammu region. While in the Valley pro-India Muslims and members of the establishment were the main targets... In Jammu region the targets were not political but communal.

From the Archives

Kashmir Solution Presented by Sheikh Abdullah to President Nasser of Egypt, 1965

The dispute between India and Pakistan with regard to the future of the State of Jammu and Kashmir has strained the relations of the two countries for the last 17 years and now and again has been leading to (such) an aggravating situation that at any time its continued tension may burst into a shooting war, leading to devastating consequences in that region of the world. Moreover, this situation has saddled both the countries with huge military expenses which has crippled both economically. Yet another tragic aspect of this situation is the continued agony for the 5 million people of the State, whose economy and well-being is completely paralysed, due to the resultant uncertainty and insecurity.

The urgency and importance of an early settlement of this dispute cannot therefore be over-emphasised. Many statesmen and friendly countries have, during the past 17 years, made a number of proposals, suggesting a peaceful settlement of the dispute. No doubt the best and most democratic solution could be through a plebiscite, to which not only both the countries but also the UNO is committed. Should however, holding of a plebiscite not be feasible, there are other practicable solutions suggested in the past. One such solution was made by Sir Owen Dixon, the UN Representative appointed to negotiate a settlement between India and Pakistan. Broadly speaking, Sir Owen Dixon proposed that:

- (a) The Southern parts of the State comprising Kathua, Jammu and parts of Udhampur districts (now being predominantly Hindu areas) may be annexed with India.
- (b) The area, now known as Azad Kashmir, and Gilgit Baltistan being exclusively Muslim, be annexed with Pakistan.
- (c) The Valley of Kashmir, along with the adjoining areas across Banihal (i.e. the district of Doda and the Naibat of Arnas, Gulab Garh) to be allowed to decide its future through a plebiscite. Leh is to follow the result of plebiscite, held in this territory (Kargil being exclusively Muslim in population to go with the Valley).

"Sir Owen Dixon took a detached view of things and considered this as the best practicable solution under the circumstances. It appears to be a fair method of resolving the present tangle. In order to avoid a number of complications that might arise by holding a plebiscite immediately in the territory referred to in clause (c) above, a reasonable way can be found in keeping the said territory under UN Trusteeship for a specified period (i.e. 5 to 10 years). The people of the territory can be given an opportunity for the exercise of the right of self-determination in a suitable way after that period. In the interim period, it is hoped that tempers will cool down and much of the emotional factor, now surcharging the situation, will die out. Further, the interim period can be

utilised for the development of these areas towards which the two countries, as well as the UNO will suitably contribute.

The above proposal can be a very good basis for discussion between India and Pakistan and Kashmir. It is hoped that friendly countries, interested in a settlement, will take up this proposal for extensive lobbying at the diplomatic levels as well as the international conferences.

Needless to say that an earnest effort in this direction will be the greatest service to the cause of peace in the world.

Kashmir Question Internationalised

Bharat Bhushan in the Hindustan Times, 4 June, 1998

...Up to now, Pakistan had not been able to invite the intervention of the big powers in the Kashmir issue despite exerting enormous diplomatic and political efforts. Now, suddenly the prospects of third party mediation seem to have brightened...

... What Pakistan could not do for years the BJP Government seems to have achieved for Islamabad in a short period.

... In late 1996, Jang Jemin during his visit to the subcontinent had advised Pakistan to set aside the Kashmir issue and normalise its relationship with India... But it would not be unreasonable to expect that after last month's developments, China would harden its stand vis-a-vis India.

To stave off international pressure on Kashmir, India may need to do more than merely harping on the Dhaka proposals of January 1998... India is in a position to offer unconditional talks with Pakistan on all outstanding issues including Kashmir. And it should do so without any further loss of time...

India is also unlikely to win many friends on account of its latest nuclear doctrine... A no-first-use offer made unilaterally and without any negotiations would have carried much more conviction with the international community...

The BJP Government ... needs to explore possibilities beyond the position it is locking itself in. Having demonstrated Indian's nuclear capability, the Vajpayee Government ... might consider declaring that it will never deploy or use nuclear weapons... The Indian Parliament could consider passing a resolution that India would not carry out any more nuclear tests...

...The Government has said that the global elimination of nuclear weapons will enhance India's security as well as that of the rest of the world. If this were indeed the case, would it consider announcing a unilateral moratorium on the production of fissile material for weaponisation purposes? But it remains unclear whether this would be in consonance with the BJP scheme of things.

NCM Studies Jurisdiction over Hindu Minorities in Some States

... The word "Minority" is not defined either by the Constitution of India or by any other law of the country. The National Commission for Minorities Act 1992 also does not define it. It merely says that for the purposes of this Act "Minority" means "a community notified as such by the Central Government" [Section 2(c)]. Under this provision the Government has notified the Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsis to be regarded as Minorities [S.O. 816(E) of 23 October 1993].

Since the NCM Act "extends to the whole of India except the State of J&K" [Section 1(2)] - these five communities are to be regarded as the National-level Minorities. The State Minorities Commission Acts of Bihar (1991), UP (1994), Karnataka (1994), MP (1996), W. Bengal (1996) and AP (1998) have their own provisions regarding the scope of the word "Minority" as appearing in their texts. The Minorities recognised under these State Acts are also the same as under the NCM Act. The same is the position in Assam and Gujarat where State Minorities Boards are in existence.

The Hindu community is the Majority community at the National level and also in all those States where there are local Minorities Commissions or Boards. In four States - J&K, Punjab, Meghalaya and Mizoram - it is, however ... a Minority at the State level. In these States, there are no local Minorities Commissioners or Boards... The NCM is now exploring the feasibility of getting its jurisdiction legally extended to the Hindus in Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Mizoram and Meghalaya in order to attend to their problems...

(Source: NCM Newsletter, Summer 1998)

NCM: Annual Reports - 1991-1998

1. Sections 12-13 of the NCM Act 1992 require the Commission to submit to the Government an Annual Report for each financial year and the Government to table in Parliament each such Report along with its own action-taken statement...
2. The first National Commission for Minorities (1993-96) had just before vacating office in July 1996 - submitted its first two Annual Reports for (1993-94 & 1994-95)...
3. The present Commission, after assuming office in November-December 1996, got the third Annual Report of the outgoing Commission prepared and forwarded it to the Government in June 1997.
4. The present Commission submitted to the Government its own first Annual Report for 1996-97 ... on 28.8.1997 with a request that it be given priority for tabling in Parliament. The Government is now reportedly preparing its action-taken statement on the said Report. ...
5. The Annual Report for the year 1997-98 due for submission to the Government is in the last stage of

PM's Letter to Chairman 25 March, 1998

... I am sure that the National Commission for Minorities will continue to fulfil its significant role in the social and economic development of the minorities in the country.

NCM: Chairman on Formation of Religious Harmony Group, 9 June, 1998

... Deeply distressed by the growing estrangement, disaffection and distrust between the majority community and the various minorities - especially the Christians and Muslims. The NCM has established a Group of enlightened religious scholars drawn from all the Indian communities, including the majority community to work for and suggest ways and means to ensure complete harmony, mutual respect and love among all the religious communities of India. On the basis of its work and suggestions the NCM will from time to time recommend appropriate remedial measures to the Government...

The Commission approved the proposal on 12.5.1998 and authorised Chairman to finalise and announce the composition of the proposed Group. The Chairman has requested the following persons to be Members of the Group (NCM-RHG):

Swami Gokulananda	Swami Agnivesh
Shyamanand Saraswari	Wahiduddin Khan
Khawaja Hasan Sani Nizami	Abdul Karim Parekh
Bishop Pinto B. Santram	Samuel Rayan
Jathedar Majith Singh	Bhikkhu R. Mahethero

(Continued from page 328)

by the end of the year. Armed political groups committed grave human rights abuses, including torture, hostage-taking and killings of civilians...

Scores of people, including civilians, were killed by armed political groups in J&K. Victims included politicians, journalists and members of the Hindu minority... Amnesty International published a number of reports, including: India: J&K - remembering Jilil Andrabi, in March; India: Official sanction for killings in Manipur, in April; India: The "Enron project" in Maharashtra - protests suppressed in the name of development, in July; and India: Appeal to armed opposition groups in J&K to abide by humanitarian law, in August. In July Amnesty International submitted a detailed analysis of the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in India to the UN Human Rights Committee.

In May, August and September Amnesty International delegates visited India and met government officials and representatives of the NHRC. At the time of the annual meetings of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in Hong Kong in September, Amnesty International highlighted cases from India which demonstrated the use of repressive measures to facilitate

The Pioneer Report on Hyderabad Riots, June, 1998

With the outbreak of communal riots last week in Hyderabad, yet another dark chapter has been added to the history of the old city around Charminar... It was eight years ago that the city saw its last major riot, largely believed to be triggered off by a dissident section within the State Congress to force the ouster of then chief minister M. Chenna Reddy. Over 200 people had lost their lives in that riots.

Compared to the dismal record of the Congress, the NTR regime had a much better showing and was to a large extent free from communal riots in Hyderabad. To Rama Rao's credit, he never condoned or encouraged any attempt to trigger communal tension on any occasion. Despite his religious Hindu image, Rama Rao was not seen as a communal man... Why did the Chandrababu Naidu Government fail this time?

The large scale violence, undoubtedly, was the result of sheer failure on the part of the administration and the police force in anticipating and checking the armed clashes. At the same time, linking this violence only to an obnoxious and provocative pamphlet will be to oversimplify the matter. The mysterious pamphlet, making insulting remarks against the religious faith of the minority community, was in circulation for almost four days. Several representations were made to various people to take action... Even the intelligence gathering machinery had warned the police of imminent trouble on Friday...

... When trouble broke out as a section of people coming out of the mosque started rioting, there was not sufficient force to quell the mob. More than 40 people were injured in the violence within one hour. The backlash came the next morning, highlighting again the lax attitude of the city police. Armed bands were given a free hand for almost three hours in the highly sensitive areas of old city where a cluster of houses of Muslim community were left at the mercy of the mobs. By the end of the day, many more lives had been lost, houses and shops plundered even as curfew was belatedly imposed on a large part of the city.

Though the situation now seems to be limping back to normal ... the image of the TDP government has taken a severe beating. In particular, the minority community, already hurt with Naidu's earlier decision to support the BJP Government at the Centre, is further alienated from the TDP. ...

While during the communal trouble in the past, the TDP used to equally target the BJP and the MIM as two sides of the same coin ... this time significantly it is only the MIM which has drawn the ire of the chief minister. While the two legislators of MIM along with many other

leaders and workers of the party were arrested and charged with inciting violence, the BJP leaders faced no problem in freely moving around in the riot-affected areas...

The TDP leader is ... concerned over the possible political fall out of the incident. A riot in the State capital, hardly a year before the Assembly elections is not happy news for any ruling party. Naidu is also apprehensive that these happenings can adversely affect his dream of developing Hyderabad into an "IT hub", "model city of India" and "knowledge society"... Violence will put paid to his efforts to attract the multinationals to Hyderabad.

These apprehensions have forced Naidu to seriously take up the damage-control exercise...

There has been a considerable change in the ground situation in the old city since the last major riot in 1990. The Ramanna Chary committee, which was set up by the then State Government after the 1990 riots had submitted ... a long list of recommendations. However, most of them ... remained on paper. For instance, the committee had suggested that the living conditions of the old city denizen should be improved and the area be decongested. Though some improvement has come about in the old city but by and large it still lags far behind in comparison to the other parts of the city.

... It remains to be seen how far would (Naidu) succeed in making a reality of his promise to make the old city free from the riots and turn it into a model city.

(Source: The Pioneer, 9 June, 1998)

Representation of Muslims in Police Force

S.No.	States/UT	Police Strength		Percentage Police/State
		Total	Muslims	
1.	AP	63,147	10,499	16.6/8.91
2.	Assam	43,990	3,936	8.9/28.43
3.	Bihar	83,323	--	--/14.80
4.	Gujarat	63,092	3,897	6.2/8.73
5.	J&K	40,180	18,045	44.9/65.0
6.	Karnataka	49,322	3,557	7.2/11.63
7.	Kerala	34,375	3,270	9.5/23.33
8.	M.P.	88,673	3,720	4.2/4.96
9.	Maharashtra	158,543	6,633	4.2/9.66
10.	Manipur	11,032	934	8.5/7.29
11.	Orissa	36,995	1,029	2.8/1.83
12.	Rajasthan	57,167	3,221	5.6/8.01
13.	Tamil Nadu	69,021	3,024	4.4/5.47
14.	Tripura	11,161	253	2.3/7.11
15.	Uttar Pradesh	163,875	8,072	4.9/17.33
16.	West Bengal	59,137	3,442	5.8/23.61
17.	Delhi	50,798	1,160	2.3/8.91
18.	Lakshadweep	359	163	45.4/94.31

Study on Psycho-Social Dimensions of Communal Riots (Extracts)

By V. N. Rai, IPS

Findings: The main findings of the present study are as follows:

- (a) Police behave partially during most riots. In all the riots discussed in this study, they did not act as a neutral law enforcement agency but more as a "Hindu" force.
- (b) Perceptible discrimination was visible in the use of force, preventive arrests, enforcement of curfew, treatment of detained persons at police stations, reporting of facts and investigation, detection and prosecution of cases registered during riots. Muslims suffered in all the above mentioned cases.
- (c) The perception by Hindus and Muslims of the police during communal strife is diametrically opposed. Hindus view policemen as their friends and protectors during communal riots. Muslims, by and large, consider policemen their enemies in similar situations.
- (d) An average policeman does not shed his prejudices and pre-determined beliefs at the time of his entry into the force, and this is reflected in his bias against Muslims during communal violence.
- (e) The expectations of the Indian society from an average policeman is communal. The policeman is believed to be a protector of the interests of his community.
- (f) The inimical relationship between the police and the Muslims make them over-react in a confrontation like situation.

Recommendations:

* Communalism is a malaise which influences all sections of society, much more so when there is no tough and effective resistance from the state. Even those parts of the bureaucracy which are supposed to combat communalism are as much influenced by preconceived notions and prejudices as any other section of society. There is nothing unnatural about this. The different parts of the machinery of law enforcement hail from various sections of society. It should therefore not be surprising that even after joining government services they retain their parochial perceptions about communal riots or social tensions, which they have acquired and continue to acquire as members of society. This reality is no doubt more problematic in the case of the security forces, particularly the police.

To check the problem of communalisation in the police forces and to make them function in a manner that is perceived to be neutral by the general public, and more so by the minority communities, it is necessary that certain basic remedial measures be taken. First of all, the senior leadership of the Indian police should agree, that handling of communal riots is an area which requires a lot of introspection. They

may absolve themselves from the allegations of partisan handling of these disturbances but the fact remains that the Indian police, as such does not enjoy the confidence of the minorities and as we have found in this study, in almost every incident of communal strife, it has been accused of displaying a pro-Hindu bias, not only by the Muslim leadership but also by the secular media, social activists and champions of human rights. This failing on the part of the Indian police makes it imperative that remedial measures should not only be drastic but should be taken without delay.

(There are) four major areas where basic changes are required. These are the recruitment policy for various levels in the police, training interventions, accountability of the police leadership and the involvement of the people in combating communalism.

(Source: Combating Communal Conflicts by V.N. Rai)

Amit Sharma

On Status of Special Anti-Riot Force in UP

At a rented house in Gomti Nagar in Lucknow, 22 police officers spend their days almost doing nothing. It's an entire special police force - they include an Additional Director General, two IGs, three DIGs and four SPs.

The special force, Shanti Suraksha Bal (SSB), was created in 1991 by Mulayam Singh Yadav when he was the Uttar Pradesh chief minister. The aim was to form a force parallel to the Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC), which has been charged with pro-Hindu leanings and aggressively partisan behaviour in communal riots.

But the force did not take off as Mulayam's successors were not keen on it. After seven years of existence in no-man's land, the Shanti Suraksha Bal is likely to be disbanded... Mulayam's idea was to create a secular police force to tackle communal riots. Senior officials were placed in the wing soon after it was created and orders issued to recruit constables with the condition that each community, especially the Muslims, should get adequate representation.

The cost of the paraphernalia for the new force was estimated at around Rs. 50 crore. The original plan was to create 10 battalions of the Suraksha Bal, each with a force of 1,600 constables and headed by one SP, four ASPs and 18 DSPs... The recruitment process was halted when the Allahabad High Court stayed the process following a petition by a VHP leader, Mulayam's government collapsed and the government that followed did not appeal against the verdict... Mulayam and Kalyan Singh put it on the back burner. The equipment and vehicles purchased for the Suraksha Bal were diverted to other departments. ...

The SSB in fact has become...

Hamdard Education Society: Genesis and Achievement

A Report by Saiyid Hamid, Secretary

The Hamdard Education Society was constituted in 1981 and registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860. The first Governing Body of the Society consisted of the following:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Janab Hakeem Abdul Hameed | President |
| 2. Mr. Shaikh Mohd. Abdullah (d) | Member |
| 3. Gen Shahnawaz Khan (d) | Member |
| 4. Mr. Abdul Mueed | Member |
| 5. Prof. Sarup Singh | Member |
| 6. Mr. S. Hamid | Member |
| 7. Mr. Arshad Ali Kidwai | Member |
| 8. Mr. S. Shahabuddin Desnavi (d) | Administrator |
| | Member |

Its aims and objectives, as incorporated in Memorandum of Association, are as follows:

- To promote among the weaker sections of the Indian society, particularly Muslims, high standard of education and character building;
- To advance social and general welfare of the weaker sections of the Indian society to ensure the advancement of the nation as a whole.
- To collect, tabulate, store and analyse statistics and conduct studies and surveys relating to the development of India, its peoples and its neighbours.
- All income of the society shall be utilised towards the promotion of aims and objectives of the Society.

The Society has been carrying out three-pronged activities:

1. School Management

The Society is managing Rabea Girls Public School, Ballimaran in the walled city; Hamdard Public School in Talimabad (1993) and Hamdard Primary School in the Campus of Jamia Hamdard.

2. Hamdard Talent Search-cum-Scholarship Scheme

... Started in 1985, over the period of nine years upto 1995, 152 candidates were awarded scholarships and 103 were given book grants. Out of 255 students, 100 (91 Medicines, 108 Engineering and 1 Industrial designing) related to professional courses, leaving out only 55 awards for non-professional studies, or for such disciplines as Agriculture, Architecture, Education etc... Initially scholarships were given by way of grant, but later on the scheme was change to provide for loan scholarship so that the funds could revolve... Scholarships are given at the following rates:

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| (i) For High School or | |
| Higher Secondary Passed | : Rs.250 p.m. |
| (ii) B.A., B.Sc. students | : Rs.350 p.m. |
| (iii) Post-Graduate students | : Rs.500 p.m. |
| (iv) Students pursuing | |
| Doctorate degree Course | : Rs.1200 p.m. |

These are meant for the entire academic career provided there is no fall in standard.

3. Conducting of Surveys and Studies.

The Society has-

also conducted a number of surveys and studies:

- Survey of Muslim Managed Schools and Colleges. The Survey (1982) covered 430 schools and 44 colleges and continues to be an authentic document on the state of Muslim educational institutions. The updated survey for 1997-98 is likely to be available by the end of 1998.
- ... **Survey of Deeni Madaris:** This is considered to be the most comprehensive and most authoritative survey ... conducted ... by Dr. Qamaruddin, formerly of NCERT, who is working with the Society as Director (Projects).
- Educational Survey: Carried out under the direction of Prof. Aijazuddin Ahmad, formerly of JNU, four volumes under the title "Muslims in India" ... have been published in book form and have been well received:

- | | | |
|-----|-----------|----------|
| (a) | Bihar | Vol. I |
| (b) | Rajasthan | Vol. II |
| (c) | Delhi | Vol. III |
| (d) | UP Urban | Vol. IV |

Another six reports are awaiting publication. The Education Survey throws a considerable light on the educational, social and economic status of Muslims.

4. Establishment of Institutes for Study and Research:

- The Institute of Federal Studies under the direction of Late Professor Rasheeduddin Khan of JNU;
- Centre for South-Asian Studies under late Professor Moonis Raza, former Vice-Chancellor of Delhi University. The latter institution unfortunately was cut off in its prime because of the long illness and demise of its Director. The former institute, however, was widely accepted as being the first of its kind in the country and meeting a felt need. It published two books, namely i) Federal India: Design for Change; ii) Bewildered India: Identity, Plurals and Discord. Later ... the Institute was transferred to Jamia Hamdard and the UGC...

5. Coaching Institution:

It was in 1992 that the Society established an institution for coaching candidates preparing for Civil Services Examination conducted by the UPSC. It was designated as Hamdard Study Circle. It included in its Advisory Committee the following educationists and intellectuals:

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Janab Hakeem Abdul Hameed | President |
| 2. | Mr. Abdul Mueed | |
| 3. | Mr. P.N. Haksar, ICS (Retd.) | |
| 4. | Mr. Govind Narain, ICS (Retd.) | |
| 5. | Prof. A.M. Khusro | |
| 6. | Prof. Rasheeduddin Khan | |
| 7. | Mr. U.C. Agarwal, IAS (Retd.) | |
| 8. | Mr. B.C. Mathur, IAS (Retd.) | |

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9. Dr. Amrik Singh
10. Prof. Aijazuddin Ahmad
11. Dr. Abid Hussain
12. Mr. S.M.H. Burney, IAS (Retd.)
13. Prof. Sarup Singh
14. Prof. M.S. Agwani
15. Mr. Naved Masud, IAS
16. Mr. Mahmood-ur-Rahman, IAS
17. Prof. Alauddin Ahmad
18. Mr. Saiyid Hamid, IAS (Retd.)
19. A nominee of the Ministry of Welfare (GOI)
20. Smt. S.N. Sarah Khan,
Deptt. of Social Welfare, NCT of Delhi
21. Prof. Usman M. Adhami, Member Secretary

The record of the Study Circle has been very satisfactory.

H.S.C. Candidates Finally Selected for Civil Services (1984-97)

Muslims				Non-Muslims			
General	OBC	ST	Total	General	OBC	SC/ST	Total
72	11	1	84	6	15	17	38

Total Muslims selected = 143 HSC Share = 60%

The Study Circle has also started a Guidance Cell for students with regard to the admission and employment possibilities. It has prepared three sets of books for the candidates who have passed Plus 2 Examination, separately for Physical Sciences, Life Sciences and Commerce Groups. These are available to Muslim schools and colleges...

The Society scrutinises important English and Hindi newspapers and magazines to find out the material appearing in them and biased against the minority community and proposes to send to clarify the Muslim view.

... It is proposed to publish all the remaining six volumes of the A.I. Education Survey by the end of 1999. On the cards for 1999 is also a Director of Religious Madarsas and updating the working of the survey report of Muslim Schools and Colleges.

... For the evaluation of the scheme of modernisation of Madarsas introduced by the Ministry of HRD, the Society has been designated the agency for Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh... The work is likely to be completed and finally published by the end of 1999.

... The Hamdard Education Society has taken an all-India view of Muslim education and tried to create a data infrastructure for triggering an education movement.

One of the important objectives of the founder President of the Society is producing leaders among the Muslim community ... including Civil Servants...

The Society was instrumental in establishing the first Muslim University after Independence, namely Jamia Hamdard. Its project report was prepared and processed by the Secretary of the Society.

The Society is consulted by the Ministry of Human Resource Development and University Grants Commission in respect of various programmes relating to the education of Indian Muslims.

Medical Council of India

Norms and Guidelines for fees and admission in Medical Colleges Regulations, 1994

9. Miscellaneous (a) Regulation of admission in Minority Institutions:

- (i) 50 per cent of seats in minority educational institutions shall be filled on the basis of merit list prepared by the competent authority. Out of these seats half shall be payment seats and other half shall be free seats. The remaining 50 per cent of seats shall be filled by the management from amongst the candidates belonging to the concerned minority out of which half will be payment seats and other half will be free seats.
- (ii) After completing the admission, each minority college shall submit to the competent authority, the concerned University and the concerned State Government, a statement containing full particulars of the students admitted against 50 per cent filled up by the management from amongst the candidates belonging to the concerned minority.
- (b) Admission of NRIs/Foreign students-Private medical colleges shall be permitted to admit the NRIs/Foreign students upto a maximum of 10 per cent of the total sanctioned intake capacity from the academic year 1994-95. This 10 per cent will be out of "payment seats". The NRIs/Foreign students shall be admitted on the basis of merit. But in view of different backgrounds they come from, it is for the management of the college concerned to judge the merit of these candidates, having regard to the relevant factors.
- (c) **No quota for management** - There shall be no quota of seats for the management or for any family, caste or community which may have established such a college or institution. However, the management may fill at their discretion any seats that remain unfilled in the 10 per cent quota under clause (b) above.
- (d) **Reservation** - It shall be open to a private medical college to provide for reservation of seats for constitutionally permissible classes with the approval of the affiliating university. Such reservations, if any, shall be made and notified to the competent authority and the appropriate authority atleast one month prior to the issuance of notification calling for applications for admission to such category of colleges. In such a case, the competent authority shall allot students keeping in view the reservations provided by a medical college. The rule of merit shall be followed even in such reserved categories.
- (e) **Interpretation of regulations** - In case of a dispute of interpretation of these regulations the decision of the Central Government shall be final and binding on all concerned.

Forgotten Guidelines for Recognition of Minority Status of Educational Institutions GOI, Department of Education's Circular Letter to all States/UTs, 5 October, 1989

The National Policy on Education and the Programme of Action which were formulated by this Ministry envisage that guidelines for recognition of minority managed educational institutions and for the timely disposal of applications for such a recognition, be laid down. It is also indicated in the Programme of Action that each State Government/Union Territory would formulate its recognition policy and give wide publicity to the same... The Minorities Commission prepared a set of guidelines which were circulated to the State Governments/Union Territories in December 1988 for facilitating the formulation of these guidelines by them... (Since) much progress has not been made by many States and UT Administrations in evolving these guidelines and norms, it was, therefore, felt that it will be helpful if broad policy norms and principles for recognition of minority managed educational institutions other than those meant exclusively for imparting religious instruction are evolved and forwarded to the State Governments/Union Territories for appropriate action at their end. These policy norms have since been finalised after consulting other Ministries etc. and a copy is enclosed.

Policy Norms and Principles for Recognition of Minority Managed Educational Institutions Other Than Those Meant Exclusively for Imparting Religious Instruction

1. Minorities can be based either on religion or on language.
2. Minorities may be in terms of a religious or linguistic community which is numerically less than 50 per cent of the population of the State concerned.
3. The agency managing the educational institution will have to possess some legal status - an Association of persons registered under the Societies Registration Act or a body with corporate soul etc.
4. Admission into minority managed educational institutions need not be confined to members of the minority.
5. Right to administer educational institutions shall be subject to reasonable regulations, which may include:-
 - * stipulations regarding conditions of recognition by relevant authorities (such as Directorate of Education, Boards of Secondary Education, Universities, AICTE);
 - * Qualifications and conditions of service of teachers;
 - * a requirement that the educational institutions run by a minority shall do nothing which may come in the way of communal and social harmony;
 - * a requirement that the institution will not use its privilege as minority administered institution for pecuniary benefit of an individual or group;
 - * disciplinary rules of the institutions in respect of their teaching and non-teaching staff being consistent with

- principles of natural justice;
 - * observance of principles of sound administration;
 - * enforcement of general laws of the land pertaining to the educational institutions concerned.
6. The minority managed educational institutions shall have the freedom to appoint any qualified candidate, but it would be advisable for them to select teachers and other employees through Employment Exchange or open advertisement.
 7. Teachers in minority managed educational institutions should possess requisite qualifications.
 8. The regulations shall not be such as to render the constitutional rights of the minorities nugatory, for example -
 - * Conditions that the Government shall have the right to take over the management of the institutions;
 - * That the Government shall have powers to constitute managing committees;
 - * That the Governing Body of the institution shall include persons other than members of the minority community;
 - * That the Government can require the institution to reserve seats;
 - * That scholars of the institutions would not be eligible to opportunities in higher education;
 - * That the Government shall have the right to insist on use of any language as the medium of instruction;
 - * That the institution shall not charge fees from students, etc.
- The stipulations should be regulatory and/or educational character and conducive to making the institutions effective vehicles of education for minority communities.
9. There shall be no discrimination between minority and non-minority educational institutions in the matter of sanctioning grants-in-aid. Such grants-in-aid can be made conditional upon appropriate regulatory measures to ensure that the funds are used for purposes for which they are sanctioned.
 10. Minority managed educational institutions receiving State aid -
 - * shall not deny admission to persons outside the minority on grounds of religion, caste, etc.
 - * shall not, without the consent of the pupil or his guardian, impart religious instruction or compel students to attend religious worship.
 11. Procedures should be clearly laid down in respect of:
 - * eligible of a society/trust to be treated as minority;
 - * competent authority to grant recognition;
 - * procedure for grant/withdrawal of recognition;
 - * time limits for making decision.
 12. Where recognition is not considered favourably, grounds of rejection shall be communicated to the educational institution to help it overcome obstacles in the way of recognition.

EDUCATION

Allahabad High Court on Reservation in Medical Course for Internal Candidates

Dr. Deepak Kumar Singh and another, Petitioners v. Vice Chancellor of the Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi and others, Respondents.

SUDHIR NARAIN, J.

The reservation of 75 per cent seats of post-graduate course to the students of M.B.B.S. of Institute of Medical Sciences, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, leaving 25 per cent to the general candidates is not proper. The institutional preference can be given only to the extent of 50 per cent of the total seats... The Institute of Medical Sciences, BHU, is of national character and is not confined to cater the need of any State or region. There does not seem to be any justification... More so when, there are 50 seats for MBBS course and for the post-graduate course at the Institute, there are 83 seats. This figure shows that the students who pass MBBS Examination from the Institute their seats in the post-graduate course are guaranteed. None of the students have to appear for entrance test... Those students who might have failed earlier and if they secure passing marks in next examination, they are also entitled for admission to the post-graduate course... Institutional preference is given only on the basis that the students may have stability and continuity but this preference cannot be granted to all the students who had joined MBBS course... The students who had taken admission after having passed the entrance test on all India basis ... should again compete with other candidates who have also passed MBBS course from other universities.

(Source: AIR 1998 Allahabad 145)

On Pursuit of Excellence

Dr. Zakir Hussain's Letter to Dr. A.R. Kidwai, then a Research Scholar in U.S.A., 23 June, 1947 (Extracts)

"The Partition of India has been decided but it seems that this will not solve any problem and all difficulties will remain as they are. However, may Allah bless whatever has happened to be beneficial to all! For those who reside in the Muslim minority provinces the situation is causing much concern but this concern will give us an opportunity to prove our capacity. May Allah give us the capacity to benefit from this opportunity. We have to strive that people do not count us but weigh us. We have to depend not on numbers but on our quality and I hope that we shall be able to earn tributes from all for the excellence of our work."

Civil Services (Main) Exam, 1998 Results:

Muslim Candidates

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Aseem Raja | 2. Mohd. Salman Khan |
| 3. Mohammad Shahid | 4. Shah Nawaz Qasim |
| 5. Parwez Ahmad | 6. Zubair Riaz Kamili |
| 7. Nasim Arshi | 8. Hoveyda Abbas |
| 9. Afzal Karim Shamsi | 10. Mohd. Salim Khan |
| 11. Mohammad Altaf | 12. Mohammed Sagheer |
| 13. Najmul Hoda | |

Total : 620 Muslims : 13 Percentage : 2.10

Kishanganj Town:

A Study in Muslim Educational Backwardness

Distt. Total Population (1991)	: 984,107
Distt. Muslim Population (1991)	: 648,624
Percentage of Muslims	: 65.91
% of Muslims in Kishanganj Town	: Nearly 50%

	Private Schools		Govt. Schools
	Muslims	Non-Muslims	
No. of Schools	6	14	16
No. of Students	593	3222	7569
Muslim Boys	383	466	1351
Muslim Girls	184	268	924
Non-Muslim Boys	16	1416	2975
Non-Muslim Girls	10	1072	2319
Total Numbers of Students			: 11384
Total Muslims and %			: 3606- 31.41%
Non-Muslim Students and %			: 7808 - 68.51%
Total Muslim Boys and %			: 2200 - 19.33%
Total Non-Muslim Boys and %			: 4407 - 38.71%
Total Muslim Girls and %			: 1376 - 12.09%
Total Non-Muslim Girls and %			: 3401 29.87%
Total Muslim Students in non-Muslim Schools and %			: 734 - 22.78%
Total Non-Muslim Students in Muslim Schools and %			: 26 - 4.38%

(Collected by Maulana Nayeem Qasmi, Kishanganj)

Government Statement On Declaration of Education a Fundamental Right

The Report of the Standing Committee on Constitution (Eighty-Third Amendment) Bill is under examination. It is felt that a wider debate on the implication of the proposed legislation should be initiated.

(Source: LSUQ No. 669 dated 1.6.1998 by S. Lahiri)

T.C.A. Ramanujam on Introduction of Uniform Civil Code

... In the Constituent Assembly, Muslim members insisted that personal law was a part of their religion and that they would never submit to interference with their personal law (CAD) VII 541, 839. The suggestion to guarantee such inviolability was not, however, accepted. Even while Articles 25 and 26 in Part III of the Constitution guaranteed the fundamental right to freedom of religion, Article 44 was introduced in Part IV of the Constitution directing the state to establish a common civil code.

The Constitution gave no immunity to Muslim Personal Law as can be seen from the fact that the legislative power is conferred on Parliament to legislate on all matters in respect of which parties in judicial proceedings were immediately before the commencement of the Constitution subject to their personal law (Entry 5 of List III of 7th Schedule).

Is there a conflict between Articles 25 and 26 on the one hand and between the two and Article 44 on the other? Jurists and the courts agree that there is no conflict...

The question then is why even after 50 years, the Government has not been successful in enacting a uniform civil code. Even the Supreme Court had suggested such an enactment in several cases... Following a protest by the majority community, the government (has) promised to introduce a uniform civil code in due course of time. It was also announced that such a code would be voluntary and not compulsory, making a mockery of Article 44.

It is unfortunate that the demand for a uniform civil code has been hijacked by the Hindu right to have a dig at the apparent contradictions in the Islamic Laws relating to marriage...

In all the fiery debates on the need for enacting a Uniform Civil Code, the focus is always on the minority community. Will the majority community turn the search light inwards? There was a partial codification of the Hindu law in the form of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, the Hindu Succession Act, 1966, the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1966 and the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956.

Various schools of Hindu Law were sought to be unified and replaced with one uniform code for all Hindus of this country regardless of the school of scriptural law by which they would have otherwise been governed. While defending the presentation of the Hindu Code Bill, instead of a uniform civil code in Parliament in 1954, Jawaharlal Nehru said, "I do not think that at the present moment, the time is ripe in India for me to try to push it through".

The question why women are still discriminated against even under the Hindu Succession Act has not been answered. There is no uniformity with regard to succession and property right for women and their rights vary from State to State. Sections 29A, 29B and 29C of the Hindu Succession Act conferring rights on daughters in joint family property applied to the southern States and Maharashtra but not to the rest of India.

Kerala has abolished the concept of the Hindu Undivided Family. Jurists in tax laws have often to contend with various schemes for tax planning through the medium of HUF. Daughters enjoy better rights in the Southern School of Hindu Law even after partial codification of the Hindu law in 1956. The personal law is often invoked by all the communities in order to mitigate the rigours of taxation. It may be a good idea to start with a uniform tax code before attempting a uniform civil code.

The pluralist society comprising multi-ethnic lingual and religious communities will have to tolerate the different types of laws operating in respect of various segments. Before talking of a uniform civil code applicable to the whole of India, it will be nice to think of a uniform Hindu code applicable to the Hindus from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. Regimentation has its limits. A free society can trample on the customs and traditions of the minorities only at its own peril.

(Source: The Hindu, 12 May, 1998)

Patna High Court

On Joint Family in Muslim Law

Rukaiya Begum and others; Appellants v. Fazalur Rahman and others, Respondents

S.K. CHATTOPADHYAYA AND M.Y. EQBAL, JJ.

Muslim Law - Joint family - Presumption as to jointness - Absent in Muslim Law - Court however, in certain circumstances can uphold such eventuality.

Notwithstanding the fact that there is no presumption of jointness and joint family business in Mahommedans, but in certain circumstances the Court may uphold such eventuality. There is nothing contrary to law in Mahommedan adult members of a family carrying on family property for the benefit of all the members of the family including the minors and females, and the Court may uphold it and such legal consequences as follow from it, although the Court will not impart into it all the legal consequences, which would follow from such a family trade when it is conducted by Hindu Joint family or of the legal consequences of a lawful partnership.

(Source: AIR 1998 Patna 1)

Shahabuddin's Correspondence with VC, Maulana Azad National Urdu University on University Plans

I - Shahabuddin's Letter, 11 June, 1998

I thank you for your letter dated 4 June 1998. I appreciate that the gestation period is going to be long but the question I had raised relate to the very purpose and vision of the University. I am indeed familiar with the Act of 1996 which I consider to be inadequate. However, I was advised that much will depend upon the first Vice-Chancellor on how he shapes the Institution. That is why, I wrote to you.

The question I would like you to ponder over is whether the University can promote and develop Urdu language without establishing first rate degree and honours courses, at least in all major subjects and disciplines? This is why it is important that the University establishes three year degree courses in Arts, Sciences and Commerce, to begin with, and that it is authorised to affiliate Urdu medium degree colleges, else where in the country. The University may also consider setting up a national level Urdu Secondary and Higher Secondary School Examination Board to which Urdu medium School, may be affiliated & this provide feeders for the Urdu medium degree colleges. You would agree with me that the Urdu medium is not to be used only for vocational and technical education and that distance education is no substitute for a teaching campus.

II - Reply of the VC, 16 June, 1998

Thank you very much once again for taking keen interest in the affairs of this University during its crucial formative phase. I am sure you will greatly appreciate that I am bound by the Act of the University that has been handed over to me, and shall try, within the parameters available, to do maximum for the cause of Urdu and Urdu-speaking population of this country. However, the obvious difficulties must be realized and appreciated keeping in view the fact that it is a twin-university and all the text books that are going to be needed by the students shall either have to be prepared or translated from other languages largely English.

Given the circumstances, it is not an easy task and a long time is required to achieve any appreciable success and break-through. Let me assure you that we have no idea of minimising the importance of campus education where the teacher and taught, both in the classes and laboratories, are face to face with each other. Consequently, the level of transfer of knowledge is far greater then in the Distance Education Mode. But can one campus serve the needs of the entire Urdu-speaking population of this country? The answer would be - No.

I would like to assure you that one of the first courses that we intend to start will be the Graduate courses involving Arts, Science and Commerce, as material in Urdu from a sister-university is likely to be made available. There is certainly a proposal to set up an Open School but it would largely depend on the approval of the Government of India and the grants to be made available to the University for this purpose.

I can assure you that this University shall do everything that is possible to promote Urdu. But the promotion of Urdu should not be considered the exclusive responsibility of this University. I consider that the will of the people to study the language as also the desire of the students to come forward to study Science and Technology in Urdu medium is a prerequisite. When this University is providing the possibilities of higher education, why can't other organisations indifferent parts of the country where the Urdu-speaking people are concentrated do something to provide the feeder-channels?

III - Shahabuddin's Response to VC, 20 June, 1998

Thank you for your letter of 16 June, 1998.

I detect a basic dichotomy in our thinking. Is the University to serve the interest of Urdu or of the Urdu-speaking community? The interest of the Urdu-speaking community is not served by a parallel system of Urdu-medium education which has no organic linkage with the national economy, public or private employment or administration. Not even 100 Universities with multiple campuses can change the objective situation. But the University can encourage and promote the development of Urdu as a modern language and provide Urdu-medium university/vocational education to the small section of Urdu-speaking people, who have been schooled through Urdu-medium for the marginal openings that are and may be available.

Just as the AMU, Aligarh, has no exclusive responsibility for the education of Muslim, so the MANUU has none for promotion of Urdu. But it has a critical role as the only Urdu-medium university in the country.

I agree with you that to take advantage of the facilities of the University, Urdu and Muslim organisations and institutions throughout the country should motivate students. That is why I am anxious that the University has the authority to affiliate Urdu-medium schools and colleges throughout the country.

Debashis Chakravarty

On Urdu as a Victim of Communal Politics

Urdu is the sixth major language of India in terms of the people who use it. Numerically it comes after Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Tamil and Telugu. Till the census of 1941 Urdu was bracketed with Hindi, Punjabi and Pahari dialects and all these put together were put under the title of Hindustani. In the 1951 census these languages were put separately. According to the 1971 census, the number of Urdu speakers was 28,607,874 which rose to 35,323,282 in 1981. In spite of the fact that Urdu is a stateless language, its inter-state character makes it an all-India language. It is the second most popular language in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh. It is the third most important language in Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan and West Bengal. It is the first official language in Jammu and Kashmir and second in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

Although it is fashionable to characterise Sanskrit as the mother of all Indian languages, the fact of the matter is quite different. At least with respect to Hindi, Sanskrit is as remotely related as a great grandparent. Her mother, if the allegory has any meaning, is Urdu. To grasp this hereditary linkage, note that: (a) the entire grammar of Hindi is taken from Urdu; (b) the idioms and syntax are also Urdu-genous; (c) all the personal pronouns and all prepositional terms are taken from Urdu; (d) all the important verbs and adverbs and most of the conjunctions are adopted from Urdu. The nouns and other non-Urdu vocabulary are borrowed from Sanskrit to replace Urdu words where possible.

Urdu played a vital role in India's freedom movement. Our independence struggle was stirred by the Urdu slogan, "Inquillab Zindabad" and the songs, "Sare Jahan Se Achcha Hindostan Hamara" (Iqbal), "Sar-froshe Ki Tamanna Ab Hamare Dil Mein Hai" (Bismil), to mention a few. National leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru recognised the importance of Urdu...

Other Indian languages are also indebted in varying degrees to Urdu. The grammars of the Kashmiri, Punjabi, Gujarati and Marathi languages are similar to that of Urdu and are surely adapted therefrom. All the important verbs in these languages as well as in Bengali, Assamese, Oriya, etc are also Urdu-genetic. Urdu words form considerable parts of the vocabularies of these languages. Thus Urdu among all the living languages of the country has the broadest linguistic interface. It was this feature of Urdu which prompted Mahatma Gandhi and Subhash Chandra Bose to propose Hindustani as the official language of the then emerging multilingual nation state.

... The Constituent Assembly, on the strength of a single additional vote, assigned the status of central official

... language role of Hindi and relegated the other languages to the position of regional languages...

Since the beginning of the 20th century, with the gradual rise of communal politics ... language became communalised. Urdu became the language of the Muslims; Hindi of (Northern India's) Hindus. With the partition of India, the Pakistan having adopted Urdu as its official language, Urdu became a "foreign" element and its presence "repugnant" to Indian culture. It was in this background that the slogan of "Hindi-Hindu-Hindustan" ... has determined the subsequent metamorphosis of official Hindi.

... In the course of implementation, powers-that-be in Delhi soon began to ... delink the official Hindi from Urdu vocabulary... The so-called Hindustani has yielded place to a Sanskritised Hindi... It may sound paradoxical that Hindi is nothing but Urdu in Devnagari script. What is going by the name of official Hindi is actually a local, Mathura variant of the spoken Urdu. Language fundamentalists may be offended by such utterances. But facts remain facts...

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 7 May, 1998)

Shahabuddin's Letter to A.P. Chief Minister On Status of Urdu, 26 May, 1998

Thank you for your letter No.921/N/CMP/98 dated 17.5.1998 regarding the status of Urdu as the second official language of Andhra Pradesh. Since the Act of 1996 was subject to a notification by the State Government, I would be grateful to be informed of the date of notification and whether, subsequent to such notification any specific instructions or guidelines have been issued to the District Collectors of the eight districts named therein in respect of the specific purposes for which Urdu shall be used.

I would also request you that you may kindly consider that even in the other districts of A.P., if a sub-district or taluka or tehsil or even a block or a panchayat or a municipal area has more than 10 per cent Urdu-speaking population the same facilities should be available for the Urdu speaking population of those areas.

(Continued from page 331)

when Muslims would be included in the fold of the Hindus? If this is so, how can Hindutva be anti-Muslim?

... Savarkar ... was father of Hindutva-Hindu Nationalism. Now Hindutva has gathered its own momentum. No denigration of Savarkar will stop the growth of Hindutva.

(Source: Publication No. HVK/18 of Hindu Vivek Kendra)

Analysis by Robin Jeffrey of Readership of Urdu Press

Shahabuddin's Letter to The Economic and Political Weekly, 28 May, 1998

Considering the high academic stature of Mr. Robin Jeffrey I would like to point that his analysis of the readership of the Urdu press, present or future, is based on two untenable assumptions:-

1. That the circulation figures published in the annual Press in India by the Registrar of Newspapers in India (NRI) reflect the actual state of affairs.
2. That the Muslim children on the rolls of the madrasas constitute a considerable segment of Urdu-speaking or Urdu-learning children.

Neither of these assumptions are correct.

The circulation figures of the RNI simply cannot be relied upon. These figures are by and large compromise figures worked out by the owner, publisher, printer and editor of an Urdu newspaper and the Press Inspector. If Mr. Jeffrey were only to visit the places of publication he need not have to dig too deep to realise that the published circulation figures represent balance of financial interest. Perhaps as he has brought out, these figures also reflect the deliberate adoption by the establishment of a not very costly way of silencing the critics about quantum of state patronage and support to the Urdu press. No doubt Mr. Jeffrey himself questions the authenticity of these figures. Yet he builds his castle on this sandy foundation.

Secondly, there are no reliable figures on the number of Urdu students enrolling in madrasas in the Urdu-concentration States or in the country as a whole. Most madrasas are really 'maktabs' where children learn to read the Holy Quran and acquire some working knowledge of Basic Urdu. Urdu-literacy does not last very long once they go out of madrasa, unless they go on to study Urdu in primary, middle or high schools. Certainly it does not make them regular buyers or readers of Urdu press.

The number of Urdu-speaking students who receive the equivalent of secondary education in madrasa cannot possibly constitute even 10% of the total number of Urdu-speaking students who are receiving education at a given point of time. It is well known that the level of school enrollment of the Urdu-speaking students who largely belong to the Muslim community is much lower than the national average. Surely Urdu press cannot hope to prosper or even survive on such limited support.

Mr. Jeffrey acknowledges that unless Urdu language and the script have a place in administration and education which shall open the doors of employment opportunities, say, as teachers or clerks or translators, there is not much future for Urdu.

But, here he needs to be corrected. Urdu neither claims nor expects first language status in administration and education in any part of the country. Even in the State of J&K where it nominally has, it stands on a very brittle base which can be demolished by first surge of Kashmiriyat. Urdu expects recognition as a subsidiary

language (call it second official language) in States/districts/blocks/gram panchayats where Urdu population forms at least 10 per cent of the total population. But even this is being denied except in Bihar and parts of Andhra Pradesh.

Universal introduction of Urdu as the medium of primary instruction for all Urdu-speaking children and as First Language under the Three Language Formula for them at the secondary level would alone make a difference. Both these measures will inject fresh blood into the shrinking veins of Urdu. One more point. The number of non-Muslims opting for Urdu as a Second Language in Hindi-speaking States or Urdu-concentration States is insignificant and negligible. On the other hand, Urdu readership may increase if the increasing demand for learning Urdu among the youth (and the middle-aged) through distance education is met. This demand is essentially generated by the appeal of Urdu poetry and of Urdu vocabulary used in films and other electronic media. Urdu press may continue to get a share of official advertisement on political ground. But it is likely to shrink. On the other hand, it is not likely to receive any substantial share of commercial advertisement in the near future. I wonder whether even a Murdoch or Citizen Kane can help!

Government Statement

On Status of Maulana Azad Urdu University

Dr. Mohd. Shamim Jairajpuri, Prof. of Zoology, AMU has been appointed as the first V.C. of the University w.e.f. 9.1.1998 and Dr. Mohd. Suleman Siddiqi, Prof. of Islamic Studies, University College of Arts and Social Sciences, Osmania University has been appointed as the first Registrar w.e.f. 1.5.1998.

Subsequent to the appointments of the first Vice-Chancellor and the first Registrar by the Visitor, the following progress has been made in setting up of the Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad:

- (i) The Government of Andhra Pradesh has allotted 200 acres of land for the University.
- (ii) Administrative Office at Hyderabad has been set up with the skeleton staff.
- (iii) Regional Offices at Delhi, Patna and Bangalore have been approved.
- (iv) Two Symposia have been organised by the University to formulate its developmental proposals layout.

The process of constituting the first Executive Council of the University has already been set in motion.

A sum of Rs.100 lakhs was released to the University during the year 1997-98.

The University is expected to start its academic activities during the ensuing academic year.

(Source: LSUQ No. 654 dated 1.6.1998 by G.M. Banatwalla)

On Lease of Qabristan in Karnataka Shahabuddin's Letter to Maneka Gandhi,

26 May, 98

On 27 January, 1997, I had raised the question of lease by the Karnataka State Board of Wakfs of a Qabristan and the Central Wakfs Council. I have received the following report from your Ministry vide letter No.13(8)(2)97-Wakf dated 13.5.1998.

"The old Qabristan land situated at Sy. No. 38 measuring 0.37 guntas at Kengeri is a notified Wakf property being managed by the Jamia Masjid, Kengeri, Bangalore.

On the proposal received from the management of the above mosque, the Chairman, District Welfare Committee in his letter addressed to the Karnataka State Government of Wakfs, has recommended for lease of the above land to one Smt. D.T. Sangeetha wife of Shri H.P. Madhusudha, Vijayanagar, Bangalore.

The subject was placed before the Lease Sub Committee to approve the same and to recommend to Board for approval. Accordingly, the subject was placed before the meeting of the Board which approved the grant of lease to the said Smt. D.T. Sangeetha under Section 56 of the Wakf Act, 1995 read with Rule 54 of the Karnataka Wakf Rules 1997 with the following terms and conditions:

- (a) Lease period be for a period of three years.
- (b) Non-refundable deposit of Rs. 5.00 lakh.
- (c) Monthly rent of Rs. 6000/-.

On queries made by this Ministry, the Board has further clarified that the said piece of land was a disused graveyard for the last several years and the local Muslims were not able to either develop or protect it. The Board has further confirmed that the advance and rents fixed are in accordance with the prevailing market value of that area. Further, 20% of the revenue received has been earmarked for educational purposes of the Muslim students of the town."

I would be grateful to know the purpose for which the Qabristan shall be used by the lessee and whether the purpose will involve excavation.

I would also like to know whether there are any pucca graves in the Qabristan, and if so, whether they are liable to be demolished by the lessee. On these necessary clarification may please be sought from the Karnataka State Board of Wakfs.

The Report also raises a number of questions of policy:

- 1) Can a 'disused' Qabristan be leased out?
- 2) If so, can it be leased out for any purpose?
- 3) Can the market value be determined without an open tender?
- 4) If the local Muslim community is not in a position to protect or develop it, can't the State Wakf Board undertake the construction of a boundary wall or fence and its development.

I think these need to be considered by the Central Wakf Council.

Supreme Court

I - On Wakf Property

Sayyed Ali and others, Appellants v. Andhra Pradesh Wakf Board, Hyderabad and others, Respondents.

DR. A.S. ANAND AND V.N. KHARE, JJ.

Wakf Act (29 of 1954), Section 3(1) - "Wakf" property - Character of - Dedication of property need not be in favour of Dargah - Grants by way of service inams for purposes recognised by Muslim Law as pious, religious or charitable - Constitute property as "wakf" - Wakf being permanent dedication, grant of patta under Inams Act does not nullify it.

Civil P.C. (5 of 1908), Section 11 - AP (A.A.) Inams (Abolition and conversion into Ryotwari) Act (1956), Section 3 - Res judicata - Suo moto enquiry by Tahsildar for grant of patta under Inams Act - Tahsildar cannot adjudicate upon character of wakf property as same can be decided in manner provided in Section 6 of Wakf Act - Finding of Tahsildar that disputed property is not wakf property - Is erroneous and without jurisdiction - Finding cannot operate as res judicata in subsequent suit filed by Wakf Board under Section 6 of Wakf Act for deciding character of wakf property...

(Source: AIR 1998 Supreme Court 972)

II- On Income Tax Exemption for Trusts

S.R.M.M.C.T.M. Tiruppani Trust, Appellant v. Commissioner of Income-tax, Respondent.

Mrs. SUJATA V. MANOHAR AND

D.P. WADHWA, JJ.

Income-tax Act (43 of 1961), Section 11. Charitable or Religious Trust - ... applying its income for charitable purposes in India - entitled to exemption under Section 11(1) to that extent - Further accumulating 25% of its total income of that year - Such accumulated income also is entitled to be exempted under Section 11(a).

Under Sec. 11(1) every Charitable or Religious Trust, irrespective of whether it has filed a declaration under Sec. 11(2) or not, is entitled to deduction of certain income from its total income of the previous year. The income so exempt is the income which is applied by the Charitable or religious Trust to its charitable or religious purposes in India. If the entire income is so applied, the entire income would be exempted. If the entire income is not applied but some income is accumulated by such a trust, then also under Sec. 11(1)(a), such accumulated income to the extent of 25% of the total income (or Rs.10,000 whichever is higher) would be exempted from Income-tax. Sec. 11(2), in turn, provides that the restriction which is specified in Clause (a) of sub-section (1) as regards accumulation, shall not apply if the assessee gives notice as prescribed under Sec. 11(2)(a) and invests the amount accumulated in Government securities as per Sec. 11(2)(b). The restriction specified in Clause(a) of sub-section (1) is clearly the restriction of 25% of the accumulated income (or Rs.10,000, whichever is higher) being exempt. If more than 25% (or Rs.10,000) is to be exempted then the assessee has to comply with the conditions prescribed under Sec.11(2)...

(Source: AIR 1998 Supreme Court 1107)

Krishna Mohan Shrimali on Evolution of Composite Culture

... Composite culture was a fact of life well before the advent of Islam in India. In India, religion has never been the only way of forging identities. One would do well to remember the presence of a strong Dravidian substratum in Vedic Sanskrit. Later, a Sanskrit-Prakrit interface can be seen both in literature and inscriptions. Closer to the times when Islam first set foot in India through Arab traders in the early seventh century, there were interactions between Arabic speakers and those of many other Indian dialects, specially in Gujarat and other regions of western India. Almost 100 years before the sack of Somnath by Mahmud Ghazni, Ibn Haukal tells us that Arabic had become a spoken language in Gujarat. Would the cultural nationalists confirm that purifying "Indian" languages by purging "foreign" or non-Sanskritik influences, is not on their agenda?

The presence of a large number of "foreigners" such as the Shakas, Kushanas, and Hunas following the exit of emperor Ashoka in late third century BC was instrumental in creating conditions for integration at various levels. The Kushanas and Shakas adopted names such as Rudrasimha, Vasudeva, etc. and Indian divinities such as Samkarshana-Balarama, Buddha and Shiva in various forms figure on their coins. The entire Brahmanical social order was being reordered to make room for "foreigners". Manu's elaborate schema of varnasamkaras (mixed castes) is a product of those times. Even the so-called "external accoutrements" show considerable eclecticism. Boots, stitched garments such as the long coat (possibly a precursor of the modern day nationalist' sherwani) and tufted cap - all brought by

the so-called mleccas - make their entry in these centuries. Such was the social reality.

Explanations for integration should not be sought in a simplistic manner by attributing it all to the "catholic" Hindu mind. On the contrary, several historical forces operated... Larger historical processes of acculturation at different levels - linguistic, social, sustenance mechanisms, etc. spread of agriculture in non-Sanskrit speaking areas... (resulted in) adaptive manifestations...

The modern culture nationalists, however ... fine the parameters of only 'Hindu sensibilities' and that too in terms of a hegemonically homogenised pantheon. It is well known how they senselessly demolished not only the Babari Masjid but also abodes of 'small Hindu' deities to create space for the 'big new Rama' at Ayodhya.

... Cultural nationalists ... in the last two months, the cultural nationalists have stepped up their unabashed onslaught against Christians in various parts of India under the specious plea of stopping religious conversions by missionaries.

There should be no doubt about what is in store for the proponents of composite culture, for, the contours of the "one people, one nation, one culture" agenda are very clear. It is ironic that cultural nationalists accuse secularists - and perhaps by implication believers in composite culture - of being intolerant of dissent. It is not composite culture but cultural nationalism which poses a danger to India by seeking to constitute (national) identity in terms of religion...

(Source: The Times of India, 26 May, 1998)

With Best Compliments

From

Nalanda Export Pvt. Ltd.

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

CPI(M): Statement on Pak Nuclear Tests

... The five tests conducted by Pakistan ... is not a vindication of the policy adopted by the BJP-led government ... but an inevitable confirmation of how wrong has been the reversal of India's longstanding nuclear policy. It has undone the progress in establishing good neighbourly relations with our neighbours and securing peace in the region. The shortsighted step taken by the Vajpayee government and the reaction of the Pakistan government is leading to the step by step escalation in the nuclear arms race in the subcontinent and its attendant tensions.

Such a course is harmful to the peoples of both countries and will only serve to divert attention and resources from the pressing and massive problems of poverty and underdevelopment in both India and Pakistan... Any move to whip up tensions will only hamper and retard the prospects of economic and social progress of both countries.

The Vajpayee government should not seek to rouse national chauvinism in a sensitive issue like nuclear weapons. It should immediately open a dialogue with the Pakistani government to defuse tensions (and evolve) a national consensus ... on the following basis.

- (a) India should not go for weaponisation and the Vajpayee government must not make or deploy nuclear weapons;
- (b) The government should immediately declare no first-use of nuclear weapons;
- (c) The government should not proceed towards signing the CTBT;
- (d) India should step up effort for universal nuclear disarmament...

(Source: The New Age)

Joint Statement

On Indo-Pak Arms Race, 2 June, 1998

We the working journalists of India and Pakistan appeal to both our governments not to build up tension in the sub-continent by participating in senseless arms race ... when the entire world is moving towards peace ... particularly when both the nations are celebrating golden jubilee of Independence. We appeal to the political parties and governments ... in both the countries to desist from building nuclear weapons and other destructive arms...

Let both the nations compete with each other in eradicating poverty and illiteracy and attain self-sufficiency in all major fields and let us not divert our precious resources to destructive purposes...

(Let) the intellectuals, writers, artists in particular and concerned citizens in general bring pressure on both the governments to restructure the sub-continent as a peace zone.

Abdul Hameed Chhapra,
President, Pakistan Federal
Union of Journalists,
Karachi

K. Srinivas Reddy,
Secretary General,
Indian Journalists' Union
New Delhi

Pakistan Action Committee

Against Arms Race, 2 June, 1998

We reject the claim by the Government of Pakistan that it's nuclear weapons tests were justified because of the existence and testing of nuclear weapons in India. We similarly reject the claim by the Government of India that it's nuclear weapons were justified by those of others. In the same way that murder does not justify more murder, seeking a capability to carry out mass destruction cannot be justified by saying that others already have it.

We believe that by their actions, India and Pakistan have increased the possibility that nuclear threats may be made, and nuclear weapons deployed and used in South Asia. In a region that is home to one fifth of humanity, this would be a catastrophe so great that it can barely be imagined and must be prevented.

We believe there can be no justification for any state to engage in activities that allow it to design, develop, test and maintain nuclear weapons since these are fundamentally weapons of terror and mass destruction. These weapons are repugnant to civilised society. The only acceptable solution to the threats posed by existing nuclear weapons is not more nuclear weapons but the abolition of all such weapons.

We believe our fellow citizens of Pakistan, and the world as a whole, must respond to this grave crisis and that four responses are required:

1. We call on the government of Pakistan to give a binding commitment that it will not further test, develop or deploy nuclear weapons.
2. We call on the government of India to do the same.
3. We call upon the governments of Pakistan and India to enter into dialogue to resolve outstanding disputes so that a sound basis can be laid for peace and development in the region. There are two underlying issues which need to be addressed immediately in regard with normalization of relations between Pakistan and India. First and foremost is the Kashmir dispute. This issue needs to be resolved according to the wishes of the people of Kashmir. Existing policies and positions of both Indian and Pakistani states remain untenable and illegitimate without an expressed mandate of the Kashmiri people. Second, to move towards substantive peace between the two countries, it is imperative that the states of India and Pakistan, stop forthwith, molding public opinion towards the hatred of the other on the basis of communal, religious, cultural or other grounds.
4. We call on the nuclear weapons states to immediately and publicly declare that they will uphold their binding commitments under Article VI of the NPT and initiate negotiations on an international Convention to ban all nuclear weapons.

India: Human Rights Record

Extracts from Amnesty International's Annual Report, 1998

... In October (1996) the government signed the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

In July (1996) the UN Human Rights Committee recommended that India remove restrictions on the National Human Rights Commission (UNRC) which prevent it from investigating complaints of human rights violations by the armed forces, and abolish the requirement that central government approve prosecutions of members of the security forces. The Committee also expressed concern at the widespread use of preventive detention, notably under the provisions of the National Security Act and the J&K Public Safety Act. The Committee recommended "the early enactment of legislation for mandatory judicial inquiries into cases of disappearance and death, ill-treatment or rape in police custody". It also highlighted discrimination faced by women and vulnerable groups such as SCs, STs, backward classes and ethnic and national minorities.

At the end of 1996, the Supreme Court issued a landmark judgement establishing requirements to be followed during arrest and detention to prevent abuse...

In November the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act - which gives the security forces powers to shoot to kill with virtual impunity...

The NHRC continued to monitor human rights abuses and raise concerns on a broad range of human rights issues. By the end of the year human rights commissions had been set up in three more states - J&K, Punjab and Tamil Nadu. However, the state commissions were prevented by their mandates from investigating violations by the armed forces...

Armed conflict between government forces and armed political groups continued in various parts of the country, including J&K, the north-eastern states and AP. Allegations that so-called "renegades" (armed groups cooperating with security forces) were responsible for abuses in J&K continued. In Bihar, armed groups with links to state officials and political parties were involved in several violent attacks on rival political groups and their alleged supporters. Children and women were among those killed.

Thousands of political prisoners, including prisoners of conscience, were arbitrarily detained...

Preventive detention provisions in state and central legislation continued to be used widely. For example, in Tamil Nadu alone, around 2,000 habeas corpus petitions were reportedly filed each year for the release of men and women detained under state legislation allowing detention without trial for 12 months. ...

In J&K, leaders of the All Party Hurriyat Conference

subjected to arbitrary detention and harassment. In November scores of activists were arrested and detained under preventive detention provisions of the ordinary criminal law while peacefully protesting against human rights violations. Some were still in detention at the end of the year.

Torture, including rape, and ill-treatment were endemic throughout the country. Victims included suspected political activists, criminal suspects, members of vulnerable groups, and those defending economic and social rights...

There were increasing reports of rape by members of the armed forces... Rape by the police continued... At least 300 people were reported to have died in custody; at least 94 of them in police custody in J&K between January and March...

Many prisoners and detainees continued to be held in conditions amounting to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Severe overcrowding, lack of medical facilities, poor sanitation and ill-treatment by prison staff were reported. However, NHRC recommendations calling for reform of prison legislation were not implemented... "Disappearance" continued to be reported and the fate of hundreds of people who "disappeared" in previous years remained unknown...

The J&K Home Minister told the state assembly in April that since 1990, 454 people had "disappeared" in the state... In April an investigation ordered by the Jammu and Kashmir High Court into the abduction and killing of Jalil Andrabi, a lawyer and human rights activist ... identified a major in the Territorial Army as responsible. By the end of the year police had failed to arrest him.

Investigations continued into the alleged extrajudicial execution of hundreds of young men who "disappeared" in police custody in Punjab between 1980 and 1994, and the illegal cremation of their bodies. The Supreme Court directed the NHRC to examine "related issues", including compensation for the victims' families. However, at the end of the year, the NHRC's role was challenged in the Supreme Court by the central government, thereby delaying progress in investigations... Extrajudicial executions continued to be reported from J&K, states of the northeast, Andhra Pradesh and other parts of the country...

In March the NHRC requested all state governments to ensure that all deaths as a result of "encounters" with police be investigated by an independent agency...

In July, 10 members of a dalit community (disadvantaged group determined by caste hierarchies) were killed and 14 injured when the police in Mumbai opened fire on a protest against the desecration of the

RSS View of the Non-Hindus in India

... Whom should we call non-Hindus? There are sects and movements in Hinduism who call themselves non-Hindus. For instance Buddhists, Sikhs and Jains are unwilling to be included among Hindus, in Hinduism and the Hindu society.

It is mainly the lure of the special protection and special rights and privileges available to religious minorities of this country which is responsible for this situation...

In the legal definition which ... Ambedkar has given in the Hindu Code Bill, Buddhists, Sikhs and Jains are included among Hindus. The Hindu Code Bill is therefore applicable to them all. If any of them challenges it, then the onus of proving that the Bill does not apply to them rests on the concerned sect...

Then who are ... non-Hindus? The Muslims, Christians, Parsis and Jews are the religious groups following their own respective method of worship easily qualify for inclusion in the category... The bulk of the Jewish population migrated to Israel after that country came into existence. The number of Jews now living in India is very negligible.

... (The Parsis) have identified themselves with the nation in terms of culture, language and dress styles. They have made rich contribution to the country's patriotic struggles with foreign powers and were pioneers in the area of industry and trade. They have not raised any problem before the country in the name of religion.

The same unfortunately cannot be said of Muslims and Christians who have a turbulent history of expanding their religions by proselytisation. The Muslim invaders converted large number of Hindus by brute force. The Christian missionaries followed suit...

... The erstwhile Hindus who were converted to Islam and Christianity were not only forced to change their modes of worship but they had also to change their dress, their names, their culture, their value system and their lifestyles. Their conversion, had it been purely religious, would have been confined to their mode of worship as had happened in the case of China...

Ours is an ancient and enduring national civilisation. We call it the Hindu civilisation. It covers modes of worship and prayer, philosophy, religion, culture. They all are comprehensively called Hindu. When our 'converted brothers' who were like us before conversion, take anti-national stand, it creates grave problems. The change in dress habits, languages and values of life after conversion produce fissiparous tendencies which in turn are followed by demand for separate states. Demands are voiced for secession from the country. An important aspect of our country's history is that whenever Hindus in any of its parts are pushed into minority, that part or province secedes from the country. Afghanistan, Baluchistan, North-West Province, West Punjab and East

Bengal broke away from India because Hindus there were pushed into minority by Muslims. The same scenario is emerging in Kashmir and North-East. Muslim majority areas in the country pose a threat to the unity and integrity of our country. We have made constant efforts to awaken our people to this extremely serious danger...

We inherit a rich and ancient civilisation called the Hindu civilisation. We have our own distinct way of life, customs and traditions, philosophy and literature and religion. We call this comprehensive civilisation the Hindu nation. When a convert from Hinduism to Islam or Christianity takes a hostile stand against this civilisation, it created a plethora of problems...

The Christian and Muslim problem transcends the barriers of faith and worship and tends to create social and political tensions in an anti-national perspective. It is not that only we are aware of it. Many luminaries have underscored this great danger...

To bring non-Hindus into the mainstream politics is exceedingly a difficult task. In the past such efforts were made particularly in the field of spirituality. Guru Nanak and Sant Kabir strove for such integration, but their efforts proved futile...

In the political sphere, Mahatma Gandhi made efforts to bring Muslims in the mainstream. He advised Hindus to regard Muslims as 'younger brothers' and concede to them their various demands. This attitude of Gandhiji is known as the appeasement policy. It was a grand and resounding failure. Muslims' demands went on growing and culminated in the partition of the country.

In the context of this appeasement policy, Gururji Golwalkar used to refer to the story of Bakasur in the Mahabharata. Bakasur's demand constantly grew and the time came when he required a cartload of food, a man and a bull. Finally this appeasement came to an end when Bhim destroyed Bakasur. Problems are required to be solved on our strength, not by abject appeasement...

Muslims who had supported the demand for Pakistan remained in India. The Christian movement for secession did not have complete success. It was difficult for these people to join the mainstream nationalism. The concept of secularism emerged to accommodate them... At the practical level, in actual operation, it came to mean appeasement of minorities. Some people floated phrase 'majority communalism'... This is a ridiculous expression. Majority in any country forms the core of the respective nation. How can it be communal? Secularism gave the right of veto to minorities. Minorities used this veto to oppose uniform civil code, family planning, ban on cow slaughter, ban on religious conversions. Because of this use of veto, the basic problems remained unsolved.

There have been many efforts and experiments to tackle the problem of non-Hindus at the national level. The efforts were designed and implemented by those who

call themselves secularists. ...

... Now there is a force called Hindutva. Henceforth this problem will have to be tackled by the Hindu society in the context and perspective of Hindutva. Hindutva is now a force to reckon with in this country. It occupies a top position in the social and political reference books and in all walks of national life. The political transformation will occur in this country on the basis of Hindutva only. All national problems will have to be solved with reference to Hindutva and the Muslim and the Christian problem is on the top of the list.

... Three difference solutions appear before us. They are 1) to massacre them 2) to drive them out of the country 3) to convert them all to Hinduism by an act of Parliament. These methods appeal to different people in different ways... People who want these types of methods in our country are negligible. Massacres are totally alien to the temper of Hinduism. Violence and bloodshed do not fit in the Hindu religious outlook...

It is inconceivable to even think of driving out non-Hindus from this country. They belong to the same Aryan race and their forefathers lived in this country. Their racial and cultural roots are deep in the soil of this country. There are very few non-Hindus who have come from other countries. It would be perfectly justified if they are sent back to their countries...

Mass conversions of Muslims and Christians are beyond the pale of practicability. Doors of course should be kept wide open to those who want to return to Hinduism, their original religion. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad at its session at Prayag has passed a resolution that Hindus converted to other religions can come back to Hinduism. The idea of compulsory reconversion to the Hindu fold should however be discarded. Procedures should be simplified for conversion only of those who out of their free volition wish to return to their ancestral religion. Others should be allowed complete freedom of faith and mode of worship and efforts should be made to assimilate them in our cultural and national mainstream...

Our civilisation is inclusive and comprehensive. From time immemorial it has absorbed and assimilated countless thought processes, religious sects, philosophical nuances, races, castes and languages. This process of absorption continued till the advent of Muslims and Christians... Unfortunately both of them did not assimilate in our cultural life. This was our cultural defeat. The formation of Pakistan was not only our political defeat but more seriously also a major cultural reverse. We are proud of our cultural heritage and to strengthen and enhance it is our bounden duty. The cultural defeats should spur us to greater and greater efforts to bring non-Hindus in our cultural mainstream, to assimilate them in our great and glorious civilisation.

... The population of non-Hindus in our country is

conflicts, riots and will involve threats to life and property. Democracy has come to stay in our country and ... all citizens have equal rights, adult franchise and right to contest for legislative seats. The dependence on foreign countries on the part of Muslims and Christians will create conditions of political instability and against the interest of everybody.

In the light of these three points we must chalk out a strategy to tackle the problem of non-Hindus from the Hindutva point of view. We must take into account our own strength and social and political environment... Today we are occupying a centre of power and non-Hindus for this reason may seek a dialogue with us...

... First and foremost to educate the people we will have to train our own people, swayamsevakas, workers and karyawahs in the perspective of the problems of non-Hindus and the needs and techniques to absorb them in our cultural mainstream.

In educating the Muslims we will have to break the bubbles of their three illusions viz 1) The global Islamic fraternity (Pan-Islamism), 2) They were once rulers of this country and 3) The Congress or the Janata Dal will protect them.

Pan-Islamism or Islamic brotherhood is a great illusion.. Muslim unity is a mirage; it will ever remain a mirage...

Muslims think that they have ruled this country for some time. That is not true... Turks, Afghans, Iranians and for a long period Mughals were masters in this country. They fought among themselves. The Muslims in India today need to remember that they were converted to Islam by Muslim rulers of yore.

The third illusion of Muslims relates to political parties. No political party in India can extend effective protection to Muslims. Only the Hindu society can provide protective cover to Muslims. Political parties tend to exploit them for their political advantage and subject them to squalid bargaining. Vote-bank politics is extremely dangerous for Muslims.

"... If all the Hindus had been zealots, no law and-order machinery in the world could have prevented the massacre of Muslims who are scattered in villages and towns all across the country". M.J. Akbar, India - The Siege Within (Penguin, UK, 1983 p 24).

Christians too need this type of enlightenment although among them the separatist tendencies are not as pronounced as they are among Muslims. Converted Christians have attraction for Western cultural traits languages, dress and life styles. They are taught to despise and run down Indian culture. Foreign missionaries are enemies of local Christians. They by various intellectual tricks and chicanery, strive to sow the seeds of disloyalty and separation among Christians. There is need to explain this to Christians...

uncertain terms that they should not change their dress form, their language, their cultural traditions and their life styles...

At the cultural level joint programmes need to be organised. Mutual visits to each other's families and households would also be a cementing factor (and) develop common cultural outlook. It would go a long way in bridging the cultural chasms if festivals like Id, Holi, Xmas were celebrated at the cultural level.

Social and humanitarian service is an important means of forging unity... We undertake numerous relief works in calamities and to alleviate social distress. Service to the sick and ailing ... are offered to Christians and Muslims... The structure of a society is shaped by leadership... Among Muslims leadership is either foisted on them or it is produced by circumstances. No farsighted leader in its true sense emerged from among Muslims in this century. Mohammad Ali Jinnah's leadership was the handiwork of the British and the Congress... Efforts will have to be made to produce national leadership among Muslims.

Religious leadership should emerge from among the respective people themselves.

Intellectual leadership must be invested with nationalist thoughts... Barring a few exceptions like Muzaffar Hussein and Wahiuddin Khan there are no nationalist intellectual leader among Muslims.

The responsibility of different organisation in the Parivar is enormous so far as the problems of non-Hindus are concerned... The interpretation that Hindutva means anti-minorityism completely wrong. But we will have to prove this through our actions. Our meaning of Hindutva must be shown through our programmes, and thought by the member institutions in the Sangh parivar. The Sangh work through Shakha is limited to the Hindu society, at least today. At present, there is no plan to accommodate non-Hindus in the Sangh Shakha...

The member institutions in the Parivar have to accept the terminology of their particular fields... The concern of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) is students... Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) concerns itself with the workers... BJP, thinking about the government will look at the people as citizens...

Since every field is recognized separately, the Hindutva ideology has to be expressed in such a way that all the people can be carried with it; that it can protect the common interests of all... Some Sangh workers have been asked to pay special attention to Dalits. Similarly organisations in the parivar should pay special attention to non-Hindus. They must be brought closer with efforts through special contacts.

We will have to exhibit ... Hindutva through our behaviour. Only thoughts do not change anybody's opinions... Hindutva will have to manifest not only through intellectual demands but also contacts, cooperation and cohabitation. (This) will bring about the right psychological transformation....

(Source: Publication No. HVK/17 of Hindu Vivek Kendra)

RSS Defence of Savarkar

... The article under the caption "Far from Heroism: The Tale of Veer Savarkar" written by Dubey and Ramakrishna appeared in the column "Reappraisal" of Frontline dated April 7, 1995.

The article is an attempt to denigrate Savarkar and thereby condemn Hindutva. It, therefore, calls for a rejoinder. ...

The authors have quoted Savarkar's letters to show how unnerved he became, how his spirit was broken and how he made an abject surrender. If this was really the position, revolutionaries themselves would have turned their backs on him. This does not seem to be the case...

... They write, "One warning from the Government, and his concern for the so-called welfare of the Hindus had disappeared into thin air". Yours readers should read the chapter "Social Revolution" from Keer's biography of Savarkar... to find out for themselves what tremendous social transformation he effected in Ratnagiri during his internment there and thereby earned encomiums from several reformers of Maharashtra...

The authors write, "What is clear from a study of these documents, many of them available with the National Archives, New Delhi, is that Savarkar sought his release from British prisons not merely by giving an undertaking not to engage in political activity but also by acknowledging that he had had a fair trial and a just sentence..."

Savarkar did not believe in Satyagraha. So jail-going was not an important pall of his political activities. If he was caught, he thought it legitimate to give any undertaking to secure his release. He was a disciple of Shivaji. One should read Shivaji's letter to Aurangzeb. To secure his release, Shivaji made many promises in that letter. But when he escaped these promises evaporated in thin air.

Why judge Savarkar by Gandhian principles...

Your authors have said that Savarkar and his family showed increasing tendency to mollify the British authorities. What was wrong in that? And family would do that. It is natural; moreover, the British Government was not sympathetic, tender and accommodating to Savarkar brothers, as it was with Gandhi and Nehru...

The authors have written about Savarkar's surrender etc... The authors say, "Although Savarkar's conditional release was not much of a secret at the time, when it occurred it was criticised by sections of the press". And yet Bose, Nehru and Roy thought it wise to welcome him...

The authors have stated "... Vinayak Damodar Savarkar ... is considered to be the father of the Anti-Muslim Hindutva ideology..."

... Savarkar's Hindutva says "It may be that at some future time the world Hindu may come to indicate a citizen of Hindusthan and nothing else!" Does this not show that Savarkar visualised that a time would come

(Continued on page 323)

M.D. Nalapat

On Shiv Sena's Control of Public Morality

... Despite their self-affixed 'Hindu' tag, there is nothing in common between the desecrators of Maqbool Fida Husain's Mumbai home, and Sanatana Dharma, which is one of this civilisation's greatest contributions to humanity.

A true sanatani will recognise as a kindred soul any individual (whether called a Muslim, Jain, Sikh, Buddhist or Christian) who adopts the creed of Himsa Dooyathe, or moderation, in his or her life.

An Abdul Kalam or an M.F. Husain (whatever one may think about his paintings) is much, much more a sanatani than the Taliban-like individuals who are trying to convert Mumbai into another Kabul. By adopting an ISI-type view of society, and thus promoting polarisation between the two biggest religious groups in India, Pakistan's plot of dividing India comes closer to realisation.

... Should a community feel itself to be under threat (as happened with the Sikhs after the 1984 Delhi pogrom and the Muslims after the 1992 destruction of the Babari Masjid), its elements will be more easily enticed by the efforts of China and Pakistan to recruit them for insurgency.

Apart from following the Taliban's example in social policy, some 'Hindu' organisations are also emulating its example in economics. Today, there is virtually no difference between the ISI fanatics (who seek to drive away foreign investment from India), the Chinese agents (who seek the same goal) and a section of the Swadeshi brigade, which rants against the "dangers" posed to the Hindu way of life by, say, Coca-Cola or Kentucky Fried Chicken. Such individuals are allied to the eco-fanatics, who have been using legal means to stop new enterprises from being set up in India...

If democratic India is to checkmate (China), it needs to attract at least \$200 billion of foreign investment in the next 10 years. This is not possible if projects get halted on flimsy legal or political grounds, or if foreigners are regarded as unwelcome...

As one of the world's major powers, India need not be afraid of a new East India Company. Provided, of course, that it can confront the Taliban-like enemy within as effectively as it has thus far countered the external threat from Pakistan and China. Today, post-Pokhran II, the emerging threat to India's security comes from the intolerance and bigotry practised by some of the self-appointed defenders of Bharat Mata.

Rathin Das

On Saffronisation of Culture

Within less than a month of the BJP returning to power in the State, the Bajrang Dal and Vishwa Hindu Parishad have been successful in dictating terms for a beauty contest in the city...

Even before the show was to begin at the police stadium here on 30 March, the group received a ... warning from the Bajrang Dal and VHP ... that the beauty contest should be dropped as it "did not conform with the Hindu ideals".

A deal was finally struck between the group and the VHP-Bajrang Dal activists to scrap the swimsuit round and the crowning ceremony for the "Miss Gujarat" and "Man of Gujarat" contests.

Not really satisfied ... assurances the ... activists occupied the front rows in the stadium as the sentinels of Indian cultural heritage.

The saffron sentries of culture as well as the ticket buying audience were denied their voyeuristic pleasures as the models made their appearance only in long evening gowns, and not in swimsuits...

So terrified were the organisers that they profusely thanked Gujarat VHP leader Pravin Togadiya for permitting them to hold the show with minor omissions.

(Source: The Hindustan Times, March 31, 1998)

K.R. Sundar Rajan

On Husain's Apology

M.F. Husain may have saved his and Madhuri Dixit's film, Gajgadini, from the Shiv Sena's wrath by tendering an apology for the controversial painting of Sita and Hanuman, but neither he nor the intellectual community which had backed him vociferously has emerged creditably from the episode.

For almost two years the country was rocked by the controversy over the nude painting which was hailed by Husain's admirers as being of high artistic taste. There were protests and counter-protests. Mumbai witnessed violence by Sena supporters. Many people really believed that the distinguished painter was the victim of a smear campaign.

Now, all of a sudden, Husain has apologised to the Sena for hurting Hindu sentiments... Why did he keep silent for such a long time? Had he made the clarification when the controversy first erupted, it would not have gathered momentum. ...The pro-Husain intellectuals are equally guilty of whipping up communal feelings. As for the painter, he has emerged as a moral coward whatever

Surjit Mansingh's Summary Of Huntington Thesis

IIC, New Delhi, 17 January, 1998

(During his visit to India in January, 1998) Prof. Samuel P. Huntington of Harvard University, Director of the Olin Institute for Strategic Studies...reaffirmed some of the points elaborated in his latest book, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (1996).

Prof. Huntington said that though people some stress globalisation and the universality of the human condition in the post-Cold War world, most people are increasingly preoccupied with crisis of identity, and define themselves in terms of kinship, language, religion and culture, and not only by the nation-state to which they belong. Though inter-state politics are still shaped by the competition for power and wealth, people and governments perceive threats from cultures different to their own. Global politics is now civilisational, and local politics are ethnic. He drew five implications from his findings.

First, Western civilisation expanded over four hundred years until it controlled and influenced every other civilisation by the early twentieth century. Western withdrawal was signalled first by the independence of India and now by the return of Hong Kong to China. The post Cold-War world consists not of two, or three blocs, but of six or seven 'civilisations'. Core civilisations have replaced super-powers in importance.

Secondly, the West is still the dominant power and will remain so, but its relative power has been affected by the economic dynamism of Asia - now accounting for about 40 per cent of the global economy as compared to 20 per cent in 1920 and 60 per cent in 1820 and the demographic explosion of Islam.

Thirdly, inter-civilisation relations are likely to be cold. A West versus the Rest situation can arise because of unsuccessful attempts by the West to impose itself on the rest. Conflicts will most likely develop along the 'fault lines' where civilisations meet, in particular between the West and Islam, and between the West and China, because both power and status is involved. China wishes to establish hegemony in Asia and the US opposes it. Therefore, relations between China and the US are central to world peace, and in this context India, Japan and Russia are important as 'swing' civilisations.

Fourthly, ethnic conflicts are likely to increase and those across 'fault lines' will be the most dangerous. These are likely to involve what Huntington termed "the bloody borders of Islam" because there was no core Islamic state to impose discipline on the others, and because of Islam's high fertility rate and 'youth bulge' of males between the ages of 15 and 25...

Fifthly, cultural differences divide states while cultural affinities breed trust and reinforce regional associations, especially obvious in Europe. International order based on cooperation between civilisations would be the surest safeguard against world war and clash of civilisations.



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Minor's Marriage with CM's Blessings

Child marriage is an offence ... committed with impunity in several villages in Madhya Pradesh. But not often with the Chief Minister as one of the baratis...

C.M. Digvijay Singh flew in from Bhopal to participate in the wedding of Govind Singh, 15 with Shivkumari .. on May 10...

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 16 May, 1998)

No Horse for Dalit Groom

... A Dalit groom was forbidden to ride a horse in his marriage procession in Sawaliya village of Jaipur district on 9 May. He was finally allowed after the intervention of the District Collector and Superintendent of Police. The family of the bridegroom, Hari Narain Bairwa, was intent on hosting a traditional marriage...

However, the upper caste villagers were vehemently opposed to the groom riding a horse in view of their lowly status in the caste hierarchy. ...

An additional police force was deployed in the village as a precautionary measure...

(Source: The Pioneer, 11 May, 1998)

Policeman Flouts Law to Marry sixth time

... He is now going to tie the knot for the sixth time... Ganesh Prasad Sah, an ASI (Police) at Hajipur in Vaishali district (has) married five times since 1975...

Sah married for the second time in 1989. His third wife is the younger sister of the first. And his fourth is Bengali... He has over a dozen children from his five marriages... Sah's first two wives get Rs.10,000 per month as 'compensation' for them. Other three fend for themselves.

(Source: The Indian Express, 15 May, 1998)

Nirupama Dutta

On Female Foeticide in Punjab

... Female foeticide is assuming alarming proportions in Punjab ... with a pronounced feudal culture. Census figures for nearly a century showed Punjab's overall sex ratio as always less than 900 females per 1,000 males, due to female infanticide and female mortality... The 1991 census shows 888 women per 1,000 men. In comparison, the overall sex ratio of the country is 929 women per 1,000 men. According to the 1991 census, 3 of the 4 Indian districts with the lowest female child ratio are from Punjab. The female sex ratio is 861 in Amritsar ... 863 in Faridkot and 865 in Bathinda...

Gender bias is not determined by the prevalent economic status of a region. In a state like Kerala the sex ratio is favourable to women (1032) while in Punjab, one of the country's most affluent states, it is even below the national average (888).

Zeenat Aman Beaten up by Her In-laws

... Fourteen years after Zeenat Aman gave up her ... career for second husband Mazhar Khan, she (has been) badly bruised, beaten up ... by Mazhar Khan's relatives on Saturday. Mazhar Khan's mother Hamida Ghulam Khan (59), his sister Niloufer (38), his brother-in-law Tajdar Kamal Amrohi (52), nephews Mazhoor (16) and Bilal (14) and surprisingly even her son Azaan (12) barged into her residence ... and assaulted her. She was with her cousin, Zaheer Aslam at that time.

A case was registered against all of them... They ransacked her house...

According to the police, Zeenat Aman has strained relations with the Khan family after she divorced Mazhar in March this year. Though the divorce was not contested by either matters went out of hand when Zeenat's elder son Azaan preferred to stay with his father while the younger opted for mother... Just to attend her ailing husband she gave up her personal life...

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 11 May, 1998)

Husband, In-laws Burn 19-year-old Woman

Tahira Khattun, a 19-year-old woman, was allegedly burnt by her husband and in-laws in the Jama Masjid area on Sunday, 7 June, 1998... Tahira sustained 80 per cent burns and her condition is said to be critical...

However, the police denied that Tahira was burnt. No case has been registered and the Duty Officer at the Jama Masjid police station said: "Tahira's clothes caught fire while she was preparing food on a stove".

... Her sister ... Sabra said: "After her marriage, Tahira's husband Mohammed Yunus used constantly to harass her for dowry"... Since Yunus was unemployed, he threatened and abused Tahira to bring money from her parents.. Yunus's family ... did not care to inform her family even though the incident took place at 9 am.

Tahira, a resident of Ghaziabad was married to Yunus in 1997.

(Source: The Pioneer, 9 June, 1998)

Regulation Bill was introduced in Parliament in 1991 and passed in 1994...

The Central Act was enforced in Punjab with effect from January 1, 1996, making the Punjab Act of 1994 redundant. According to the Central Act the appropriate authority was to be appointed by the state for effective implementation of the Central Act. But this was done only in December, 1997 when the Director Health Services and Family Welfare, Punjab was appointed the authority.

Yet hoardings proclaiming the X-Y separation stare at you on the highways and in the cities. Advertisements of clinics continue to scream from the newspapers...

Chronology of the Month

(16 May - 15 June, 1998)

NATIONAL POLITICS

***Congress** urges BJP allies to withdraw support and work for alternative government to save country from chaos and mismanagement (6 June). But decides not to take initiative to form national front of all secular parties to force down Vajpayee government.

BJP President Thakre rules out mid-term poll (16 May).

AIADMK Minister Kumar resigns from government to signal Jayalalitha's displeasure (22 May). Accuses BJP of secret deal with DMK, presses for immediate dismissal of DMK Government.

TDP reiterates issue-based support to Vajpayee Government (27 May).

***Trinamul Congress** suspends support to Vajpayee Government (28 May) and later lifts it.

Samata Party in Bihar attacks national leadership for delaying dismissal of State Government.

Parliamentary and Assembly Bye-elections: do not show any increase in base support to BJP, despite initial euphoria on nuclear test (6 June).

Nuclear Test: *India dismisses Chinese allegation of hegemonic design (16 May). Offers dialogue to China as well to other neighbours and to adhere selectively to CTBT.

*Changing its line Congress questions timing and need for test, sees political motive in anticipation of mid-term poll (16 May). *Shahabuddin criticises nuclear tests as erosion of moral leadership for de-nuclearisation.

*Pakistan carries out nuclear tests to even account with India (18 May). *Pakistan accuses India of nuclear blackmail on Kashmir (23 May).

*PM Vajpayee reiterates India's commitment to complete and universal disarmament and offers no-first use agreement to Pakistan (27 May) and expresses readiness to probe No-war pact with Pakistan (29 May).

*Government announces moratorium (21 May). Former PM Gujral asks Vajpayee to advise Ministers to exercise moderation in public statements.

*PM reiterates offer of bilateral talks with Pakistan including Kashmir (4 June). *Pakistan makes counter-offer for resumption of suspended Secretary level talks.

*In Parliament, Government fails to develop national consensus on weaponisation (27 May).

*UN Security Council Permanent Members meeting in Geneva express alarm rising tension in South Asia, effectively internationalise Kashmir issue.

*US rules out amendments in the NPT and CTBT to recognise India and Pakistan as nuclear weapons states. China accuses India of targetting it (3 June).

*India rejects outside involvement any dialogue with Pakistan (5 June).

*UN Security Council asks India and Pakistan to halt weaponisation (6 June). India rejects UN Resolution as being outside its jurisdiction.

Sangh Parivar: *Intensifies its role as 'moral authority'.

*St Mary's School in Ahmedabad attacked because Sanskrit is not taught (29 May). *Miss Saurashtra

Contest attacked as 'vulgar imitation of American culture' (31 May). Truck-loads of Pepsi Cola, Coco Cola damaged first in Ahmedabad (21 May) and near Surat to demand, total ban on their sale (29 May). *Sets fire to American Ice cream Parlour in Ahmedabad (25 May). *Gujarat Chief Minister Patil describes violence as inspired by Swadeshi movement.

*BJP President Thakre justifies RSS/Shiv Sena attack on MF Hussain for derogatory paintings (16 May). Painters and academics submit memorandum to President Narayanan expressing concern and urging intervention against cultural regimentation and censorship (21 May).

*M.F. Husain apologies for hurting Hindu sentiments.

Situation in Bihar: *Bihar Governor SS Bhandari apprises Home Minister Advani of 'gravi' law and order situation Bihar. RJD leader Laloo Yadav criticises Governor for his adverse remarks.

*Central Government resists pressure from Samata Party to place Bihar under President's Rule.

*BJP sponsored bandh in Patna is total.

*Congress also launches stir against State Government (21 May). *Several JD MLA's including former spokesman join RJD (5 June).

Criminalisation of politics: *Eminent Jurist Ram Jethmalani, now Union Minister, favours voluntary resignation of 'charge-sheeted Ministers', but leaves Advani, Joshi and Uma Bharati to their conscience.

Electoral Reform: All parties meeting agrees in principle to several proposals including state funding of elections, lowering age limit of candidates and deferring delimitation of constituencies (22 May).

Terrorism: Bomb blasts by BODO militants snap rail and road links with Assam.

BABARI MASJID QUESTION:

Criminal Case: *Allahabad High Court reserves Order on review petition by defendants. Special Judge defers hearing to frame charges to August.

Clandestine Construction: *Newspapers reports stone-carving for Ram Temple in Rajasthan and Ayodhya on war-footing. (16 May).

*BMMCC Convener Shahabuddin demands ban on transportation of pillars and stones, impounding of stones already in Ayodhya, demolition of concrete platform illegally constructed in 1992 and prosecution of VHP for incitement and contempt of judiciary. Appeals to political parties to expose Sangh Parivar conspiracy (8 June).

*Congress strongly criticises Sangh Parivar for clandestine activity (25 May). Government denies any construction at the disputed site. VHP Working President Singhal confirms stone carving programme (7 June). Congress President Sonia Gandhi writes to PM. In reply, PM reiterates commitment to judicial process and constitutional mandate (7 June).

*The Question raised in Rajya Sabha (3 June). Home Minister Advani admits stone carving in Ayodhya but denies construction on disputed site. PM calls upon Sangh Parivar to change outlook and adopt balanced

CHRONOLOGY

approach. Advani meets Singhal to advise restraint. VHP brushes off advice and demands early and favourable judicial verdict. *Congress demands endorsement of PM's commitment by RSS and BJP (11 June) *BJP President Thakre calls on VHP to defer construction until Supreme Court verdict.

*BJP Vice-President K.L. Sharma commits BJP to legislation in case of adverse verdict to nullify it in order to facilitate construction of temple on Babari masjid site. (15 June).

*Left parties express concern; raise issue in Parliament. Team confirms construction activity and pre-fabrication of pillars in Ayodhya (14 June).

*JD leader and ex-PM Deve Gowda wants PM to warn VHP of its evil designs.

KASHMIR SITUATION

Insurgency: *Valley shows signs of normalisation with focus on militancy shifting to Doda and Poonch districts of Jammu region.

Political Development: *Hurriyat leader A.G. Lone released after 6 months of imprisonment on medical grounds (27 May). *On eve of informal meeting of Permanent Members of Security Council in Geneva. Hurriyat calls for general strike which paralyses normal life (4 June). *Muslim Conference leader S.S. Gilani resigns from Hurriyat (14 June).

National Conference: Reiterates support to BJP-led Government. Wins Parliamentary seat of Ladakh. *Saifuddin Soz, ex-Minister re-affirms faith in leadership of Farooq Abdullah.

International Development: *Nuclear tests by India and Pakistan revive international interest in and pressure for solution of Kashmir dispute through bilateral discussions but internationally monitored.

*India rejects mediation by UN or any third party.

OTHER MATTERS OF CONCERN

Reservation for Women in Legislative Bodies:

*Government assures women organisations of introduction of relevant constitutional amendment during Budget Session (27 May).

*Committee for Empowerment of Muslim Women organises Seminar to demand separate proportionate quota for Muslim women in order to protect level of Muslim representation in legislative bodies (31 May).

*Republican Party of India proposes comprehensive legislation on implementation of reservation policy (24 May).

Communal Riots: Minorities Commission urges ex-gratia payment to victims of communal riots on par with victims of Anti-Sikh riots 1984.

Liberhan Commission: further examines Mulayam Singh Yadav and former Home Secretary Godbole (13 June).

Communal Violence: Normalcy restored in Moradabad (17 May). Minorities Commission urges immediate payment of suitable compensation to victims.

*Communal violence ignited in Hyderabad by defamatory literature against which Police fails to take action.

1,000 Muslims including MLAs. Congress demands CBI inquiry (10 June). *Home Minister makes statement in Parliament on situation in Hyderabad (17 June).

*Tamil Nadu decides to make ex-gratia payment of Rs 200,000 to the next-of-kin of victims of communal violence.

TADA: *IUML demands release of all TADA detainees. Banatwala introduces Private Bill to stop all proceedings under TADA.

Urdu: *Former PM Gujral wants Urdu speaking people to change their mentality and strive for modern education. *Maulana Azad National Urdu University forms Advisory Committee and plans for campus teaching at graduate level and distance education programmes in 1998-99.

Education: *Government reconstitutes Indian Council for Historical Research with pro-RSS historians.

*Maulana Azad Educational Foundation decides to institute international award in name of Maulana Azad (20 May).

AMU: *AMU Students Union and Teacher's Association protest against article linking Sir Syed Ahmed Khan with Freemasonry (19 May).

Wakf: *Delhi Wakf Board demands restoration of 123 wakf properties, identified by Burney Committee, by the Government (5 June).

*Reconstituted Council meets. Welfare Minister Maneka Gandhi asks all States to notify 1995 Wakf Act.

Shia-Sunni Relations: *Muharram procession taken out peacefully in Lucknow under tripartite agreement. CM Kalyan Singh claims credit.

Human Rights: *National Human Rights Commission appoints an advisory committee under by former Chief Justice AM Ahmadi to recommend amendments in Act to make it more effective.

*NHRC finds Bombay police guilty of killing Javed Fawda in Bombay in cold blood in a fake encounter.

Census: *Home Minister Advani rules out caste based census (14 June).

Linguistic Minorities: Mithila Sabha, Bombay demands establishment of Mithilanchal State in Bihar.

Other Minorities: *Christians converges at Wagha to protest against Pakistan's anti-blasphemy laws and demand physical security of religious minorities in Pakistan.

Muslim Organisations: All India Milli Council denounces BJP-led Government for implementing secret agenda of RSS on Babari Masjid-issue. **AIMMM:** Shaharanpur Court dismisses criminal case against AIMMM leaders and office bearers including Maulana Hasan Ali Nadvi.

Islamic World: International Seminar on Palestine held in New Delhi demands vacation of occupied territories and establishment of state of Palestine.

Obituary: *Hakim Habibullah, Chairman, Legislative Council, Jammu & Kashmir, 70 passes away on 30 May.

*Dr. Ziaul Hoda former Ameer of JMI, Bihar passes away in Patna (12 June).