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حیدرآباد



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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 اظہر من الشمس ہے۔
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Muslim India 1947-1997-II

India is a state of continental dimensions. An average Muslim Indian knows little about Muslims living in other parts of the country, or belonging to other sects or to other baradaris. This is one reason why on the educational, social, economic and cultural plane, Muslim India has not succeeded in building up national organisations. There are many organisation today with the prefix "Kul Hind" or "All India" or even "National" but they are largely local in objective and limited in activity. Muslim India still lacks an apex consultative forum which would bring under its umbrella all Muslim Indians who have their knowledge, experience, influence, resources and contacts to offer for the common cause. The irony lies in that even established institutions and organisations have broken up into two e.g. the IUML, the AIMMM, the JUH, the Dar-ul-Uloom, Deoband, the end-result of clash of ego and conflict of personal interest.

Unfortunately Muslim Indians have also been socially dividing and sub-dividing themselves on the basis of sects and castes. This has widened the fissures within the community, sapped its inner strength and allowed hostile forces to play with one group or another, at the cost of the community.

POLITICAL UNDER-REPRESENTATION

On the political front, Muslim Indians have largely aligned themselves with national and regional secular parties during the last 50 years. The Muslim League is now confined to a few districts in Kerala; the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen is a one city organisation; the All India Muslim Majlis has long been extinct and exists only on paper. These political organisations (along with various caste and sectarian bodies) come to life on the eve of the elections and form Muslim 'Fronts' to bargain with the established parties for a few seats in the legislature or to offer them their "services". The overwhelming majority of the Muslim Indians have invariably voted for the secular parties in elections after elections, particularly in Muslim concentration constituencies. On the other hand, the Muslim masses have felt cheated and frustration with and alienation from the political process are setting in. Every secular party has a social base and wants to attract Muslim votes to its benefit but does not field Muslim candidates in adequate numbers because it is unable to transfer its non-Muslim votes. Inexorably Muslim representation has fallen in the legislatures. This is also due to selective selection of Muslim voters under one pretext or the other and deliberately hostile delimitation of constituencies. Muslims, even in the party structure, or the legislatures, have largely remained on the margin of things, because they dare not offend the party leadership and lose what they have gained for themselves and their immediate hangers-on. What is worse they dare not plead the

legitimate causes of the Muslims for fear of being labelled as "Communal".

Muslim Indians are the victims of the essential weakness is the electoral system - the multiplicity of secular parties and consequential division of the secular votes. Muslim Indians can only become political players if they vote massively and unitedly but selectively, constituency-wise, without committing support, as a community, to any secular party - unless there is a secular alliance - across the country or even across the state. This calls for unity and organisation which do not exist. Alternatively, the Muslim Indians should press the secular parties into a nation-wide Secular Alliance which should field Muslim candidates from Constituencies of promise. Ironically, some secular parties have even encouraging division among the Muslims on the caste lines in order to forge a firm link between their Hindu caste base and at least a section of the Muslims in constituencies of Muslim concentration.

It is not surprising that a band of fanatics have emerged who are not only challenging the democratic and secular order but espousing the establishment of "Islamic State" or "Khilafat" i.e. political dominance of Islam, in a democratic state in which Muslims form a small minority, at a time when they are already targetted for their supposed "malevolent" intentions. All such Islamic hysteria provides welcome grist to the propaganda mills of Hindu chauvinism to claim that the Muslim Indians' real objective is the restoration of Muslim Rule in India.

CONTINUING AGONY OVER KASHMIR

The Muslim community in Kashmir has been caught in the vortex of international politics and lost between the aspiration of self-determination, leading to independence for the Valley or autonomy within India and Pakistan. Though legally the whole of the State as it was on 15.8.1947 is a part of India, nearly 50% of its territory is under occupation of Pakistan and China. Pakistan has in fact integrated the Northern Areas. Even the rest of what India calls Pakistan occupied Kashmir is only nominally Azad. Since 1971, a line of control separates India and Pakistan in Kashmir. Off and on there are suggestions to formalise this line as the international border. Since 1989, frustrated with rigged elections, the Kashmiri youth, inspired, trained and armed by Pakistan, is waging what it calls a war of liberation against the Indian State. Kashmiris have been ground between the mills of insurgency and counter-insurgency and both human rights and fundamental rights have been massively violated by both sides. There is a sense of fatigue and disappointment. The tempo of insurgency has gone down with promise of maximum autonomy and elections to the Parliament and the Assembly but the final political solution which would satisfy the aspirations of the Kashmiris, the territorial ambitions of Pakistan, the long-term interests of the Muslim community in India and of

the Sub-continent still lies in the future. The Muslim Indians condemn violation of human rights and support autonomy but cannot endorse the plea of secession or separation.

THREAT OF RELIGIOUS ASSIMILATION

The Constitution grants every citizen the freedom to profess, practise and propagate his religion. The Ulema had opposed the creation of Pakistan, because they foresaw handicap to promotion of Islam in the rest of India. Muslim Indians have wisely refrained from organised propagation or even criticising Hinduism, except defending, from assimilation and Hinduisation, such sections which were only partially Islamised and practised Hindu rites and customs. They have even more wisely concentrated on making better Muslims and better citizens of themselves. Tabligh and Da'wa have thus been internalised. Indeed, if the Muslim community becomes a Community of Virtue and a Community of Service, it would attract non-Muslims to Islam by sheer force of example.

SOCIAL REFORM

Threat of religious assimilation and consequent erosion of their religious identity is real. This is manifest in anti-Muslim riots, massive anti-Islam propaganda, the content and culture of mass education and, above all, in the unrelenting pressure for changing the Muslim personal law and enforcing a compulsory uniform civil code. Muslim Indians recognise the need for social reform and the codification of their family laws, in order to purge their society of social evils. But, they do not see any logic behind the insistence on urgent introduction of a uniform civil code. Why not first have a uniform tax code, they ask. Happily successive Governments of India, in line with the commitments of the Freedom Movement, have tried to reassure the Muslim community of non-interference in their personal law and against any change without their consent.

Over the last 50 years, social change has been accelerated by education, specially of Muslim women. The incidence of polygamy and triple divorce has come down. Thanks to the Shah Bano case, Muslim divorcees enjoy better rights than the non-Muslim. But such vices as 'Farmaish' and 'dowry-killings' have penetrated the Muslim society.

EDUCATIONAL UPSURGE

One can observe the beginning of an educational upsurge which is not localised like Aligarh, Deoband or Nadwa or dependant on 'royal' patronage as the Osmania or experimental as the Jamia. The upsurge is universal; it covers all sects, all classes, all sections of the community. It covers all forms and levels of education. It has roots in every district, town or Panchayat of Muslim concentration. Despite the handicaps faced in getting official recognition and grant-in-aid for the institution established, the first crop is sprouting. In another decade, one would taste its fruits, if the momentum is kept up and the surplus resources and savings of the community are

invested in education, selectively in areas like Higher Secondary, Technical Training and Residential Hostels, in addition to universalisation and rationalisation of the Maktabs, Madarsas and Jamias, to enable the community to maintain its religious identity and produce religious functionaries. The community is also learning to take advantage of the central and state literacy campaign and educational schemes. The entire educational landscape may change, when universal elementary education upto the age of 14 becomes a reality. However, the community has to ensure that the syllabus and the curriculum, the medium of instruction, the school culture and the textbooks take into account their religious sensitivities and meet the demands of secularism and integration.

The Muslim community continues to nurse a sense of loss over Aligarh Muslim University and the Jamia Millia Islamia. But they have realised that the circle of education is expanding all over the country. A few minority institutions can hardly cater to the rising demand and they must have equitable access to all institutions of higher education in the country. This is one of the reasons for the rising demand for reservation in higher and professional education on ground of educational and economic backwardness. But the battle for the restoration of the minority character of the AMU and the JMI goes on so that they fulfill the avant-garde role in their quest of higher education.

ECONOMIC TAKE-OFF

The Muslim Indians realise that during the 50 years they have not received all that was their due; they have not progressed as much as they could have, under the Constitutional dispensation, the Secular Order and the development regime. Denied due access to higher education, public and private employment and to bank credit short of agricultural land, financial resources and industrial expertise, they have adopted self-employment as the means of livelihood and improvement of traditional skills and acquisition of lowest technology as the immediate objective. The Muslim Indians have on the whole progressed far, immeasurably beyond what the most optimistic observer could have foreseen in the dark aftermath of the Partition. This is a tribute to the will and determination of the community.

Muslim Indians have not sought any special political economic rights or privileges. Today, they only aspire to justice and equality, to a regime based on political non-discrimination and equality of opportunity in matters educational and economic, in which they have yet to attain the national average, not to speak of the highest group average. But both averages are constantly rising in a developing economy. Hence they have to run faster than the speed of the national caravan, if the gap is to be closed in the foreseeable future.

'EMOTIONAL' APPROACH

Muslim Indians have often been accused of wasting most of their collective energy on emotional issues during the last 50 years and thus retarding their progress and

their role in national development. No doubt, they were emotionally touched by the inhuman barbarities in communal violence, by the insult to their religious and historical sentiments, by the loss of their mother tongue and cherished institutions, by the organised and deliberate assault on their places of worship, throughout the country, of which the Babari Masjid became a symbol. No doubt, they had tears in their eyes and prayers on their lips, when the drama of demolition was enacted. No doubt, the wounds on their psyche have not yet healed. But it is a totally erroneous impression to say that they have not been concerned with their economic or educational backwardness, with the contracting opportunities for public and private employment, with decreasing means of livelihood, with the decay of their localities or with their low share in the fruits of development. They face hostile discrimination at every step and yet they persist. Every living community would. This argument is no more than a cover-up for the sordid reality of the gap between the secular precept and the communal practice, between the ideals of the Constitution and the working of the administration.

After 50 years of struggle, there should be no doubt left in the mind of any intellectual that the Muslims, as a community, would agree to a trade-off between identity and development, between Masjid and power. They want dignity and equality, they demand IZZAT and Identity; And they have, throughout the five decades of independence, struggled to maintain and preserve their identity against the historic forces of assimilation, symbolised by the philosophy of Hindutva and the slogan of 'Hindu-Hindi-Hindustan', despite occasional violence and persistent bias. Rooted in the soil of their motherland, Muslim Indians are conscious of their Islamic heritage and of belonging to the Ummah and have identified themselves with the Muslim cause, whether in Palestine, Bosnia or Chechnya, but without allowing themselves to be the camp followers of any Muslim State demagogue.

MUSLIM GOAL IN DEMOCRATIC, SECULAR INDIA

The Muslim goal in India is sharing power and benefits, not rule or even dominance, not separation or secession. Its self-consciousness demands it to be a Model community, God-fearing, law-abiding, hard-working, egalitarian, sharing their income and resources with the disinherited and the deprived among themselves and in the larger national community and struggling alongwith other deprived group for justice for all. Thus only individually and collectively it would be a true witness to the Quran, as the ~Khair-ul-Umma~.



New Delhi,
1 October, 1997

(SYED SHAHABUDDIN)



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Text of Resolution Adopted by Special Commemoration Session of Parliament, 1 September, 1997

We, the members of Lok Sabha, meeting in a specially convened goldenjubilee session of both Houses of Parliament, to commemorate the completion of half a century of freedom.

Having remembered with gratitude the great sacrifices made and the salutary service rendered by our freedom fighters.

Having recalled with deep satisfaction and pride the maturity of our people in vigilantly preserving democracy and safeguarding the unity of the nation and the valour of our soldiers, sailors and airmen, including ex-servicemen, in service to the country.

Having reflected upon the state of the nation with the Preamble to the Constitution as the guide.

Having then, specifically deliberated upon matters concerning our current political life, state of democracy in the country, our economy, infrastructure, science, technology and human development.

Do now solemnly affirm our joint and unanimous commitment to the issues hereinafter mentioned, and we

also do solemnly resolve and direct that they be adopted as minimum tasks, constituting our "agenda for India" on this historic occasion.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: THE RESOLUTION THEN REFORMS TO ELECTORAL REFORM, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN PUBLIC LIFE, CONDUCT OF PARLIAMENTARY BUSINESS, POPULATION CONTROL, UNIVERSALISATION OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION, EFFICIENT AND PRUDENT MANAGEMENT OF NATIONAL ECONOMY, GENERATION OF WEALTH FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR ELIMINATING POVERTY AND SECURITY, SOCIAL JUSTICE, FULFILLMENT OF MINIMUM NEEDS, ESTABLISHMENT OF GENDER JUSTICE, CREATION OF SCIENTIFIC TEMPO AND APPLICATION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR ECONOMIC AND HOUSE DEVELOPMENT AND INCULCATION OF NATIONAL SELF-RELIEANCE - EDITOR]

No Reference to Secularism, Human Rights and Social Justice as Instrument of Social Engineering

Shahabuddin's Statement, 5 September, 1997

The word Secularism does not find any place in the text of the Resolution adopted by the Parliament at the end of the Special Session on 1 September, 1997. It is understood that the earlier version was critical of Communalism but had to be dropped because of objection by the BJP. That is understandable but a negative reference to Communalism could have been substituted by a positive reference to Secularism, which even the BJP upholds in principle.

There is also no reference at all in the Resolution to the national consensus on Social Justice, not as a 'by-product' of generation of wealth, but as an instrument of social engineering. Social Justice implies recognition of the religious, linguistic, cultural, caste, racial and ethnic groups which form minorities at every functional level and due protection of minorities rights, in the broadest sense of the term.

The Resolution does not even touch the question of Human Rights.

The Resolution, therefore, fails to do justice to our national will to strengthen the Secular Order and promote Social Justice and protect Human Rights, including Minority Rights.

VHP's Reservations On President Narayanan

... Shri Narayanan had no knowledge of Indian history and culture. A person who has no knowledge of history and culture of the country should not be allowed to occupy the highest and prestigious post of the nation... (In his) speech, delivered at Thiruvananthapuram at C.H. Mohammed Koya Foundation's meeting about two years ago, 'Shri Narayanan had expressed his opinion that Adi Shankar's Advaita philosophy was inspired by Islam. (He is) totally unfit for the august office of President of India...

Shri Narayanan had no connection with or involvement in any dalit movement in Kerala. Shri Narayanan never took part in any of the nationalist movements during his stay in Kerala. (He) does not truly represent the Harijan community.

... Shri Narayanan had long association with several Christian organisations and ... his wife Smt. Usha who hailed from Myanmar (Burma) was a Christian...

After Shri Narayanan becomes President of India, Rashtrapati Bhavan would become a major centre for Christian activities. Rashtrapati Bhavan should not be allowed to become a clandestine centre for such anti-Hindu and anti-national activities...

(Source: The Organiser, 29 June, 1996)

Neerja Chowdhury

On Congress Prospects in Next Polls

The situation is beginning to favour the Congress today but the party is ill-prepared for elections.

It seems that Sitaram Kesri has decided to give a little more time to the UF Government, now breathing heavily in the oxygen tent, before he pulls out the support systems.

The Congress can hope to gain in spite itself and not because of it... The Congress chief kept on hammering the message that coalitions are not in the interest of the while reiterating the party's support to the Gujral Government in the interest of stability.

The natural beneficiary of the breakup of the Janata Dal is the Congress more than the BJP. It will gain further in Karnataka at the expense of the JD, and is likely to maintain its position on Orissa ... because the JD is not able to get its act together... It has already tied up with the RJD in Bihar.

On the other side, the BJP which was no the upswing ... has plateaued for the moment. The resignation of Madan Lal Khurana as ... power has dimmed its image as a principled and cohesive outfit...

Prolonged bickerings and drift in the UF can work either way. Fed up with uncertainty and non-governance, the middle class can turn towards the tried and tested Congress. Which good bad and indifferent can at least rule. Or alternatively, it can create wave like conditions in favour of the BJP.

The Congress suffers from three disabilities. It has lost its vote base because it does not know what it stands for; it is as much of a house divided as other parties and it lacks a charismatic leader.

The party tried to go back to its old moorings in Calcutta - at least in words...

... The balance shift once again to the north and this will create its own problems within because the Congress is non-existent in the north the south has enjoyed power in recent years.

Kesri's relentless attacks against the Left is an attempt to secure the secular space in the polity (and) to displace the Communists parties from their position of leadership.

The real boost for the Congress worker came with the possibility for that Sonia Gandhi might campaign for the party. ...

But even Sonia Gandhi cannot wield the magic wand for the Congress. She could at best help the party emerge as the single largest entity, and that is all that the Congressmen can hope for today. The Congress will have to forge alliances with the regional parties (even) pre-poll tie-ups...

(Source: The Indian Express, 11 August, 1997)

CPI(M): Congress Policy Assailed

The Congress Party, which is today running state governments in only six out of 25 states, is harping on the non-viability of a coalition government at the centre. The rejection of the coalition government in the present political situation would imply that there can only be government of the BJP or the Congress. Given the weak position of the Congress and the erosion of popular support, the advocacy of a single party government by the Congress will only strengthen the BJP claim.

It will be better for the Congress party to set its own house in order rather than wishing for the unrealisable goal of single party rule by the Congress. The BJP has reached a stage where it is no longer able to sell itself as the only national alternative to the Congress. It has exhibited in the recent period many of the vices affecting the Congress party.

A confirmation of the abandonment of its earlier slogan that it is only alternative is its assiduous wooing of regional parties and groups. Even as the Congress party rails against coalition governments, the BJP finds it prudent to build coalitions in its quest for power. It reiterated its commitment to develop a third alternative based on the unity of the Left democratic and secular forces. In this connection, however, it noted that many of the components of the United Front do not realise the necessity of consolidating and developing such an alternative.

(Source: The People's Democracy, 2 September, 1997)

(Contd. from Page 440)

while Muslims are violent...

The other ploy is to present the wholly unreal scenario of India being the original home of Aryans... This is to sidetrack the question of who is a true Indian and who is not. Since the Muslims are invaders and, therefore, have no allegiance to the motherland, it will not do to say that the Aryan ancestors of the present-day Hindus, too, once came to this country from elsewhere... However, the name of Adivasis ... implies that they are the original inhabitants. But this problem has been solved by renaming them as Vanavasis or forest dwellers.

The right-wing ambiguity on human rights is understandable. Since they are against the rights of minorities ... they have to be cagey about supporting human rights as well. (As for) their opposition to market economy... It seems that they believe that liberalisation by being more open to the outside world, allows a sense of freedom which can undermine the tension in society... So all closed societies-whether led by communists or mullahs or mahants-have to be on guard against an open and globalised economy...

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 1 September, 1997)

Amulya Ganguli on Right-wing Revival

The basic reasons for the growing assertiveness of the parties of the Hindu Right are ... decline of the Disarray among the centrist and leftist parties increasing cynicism and corruption in public life, fading of the inspiring memories of the freedom struggle, economic stagnation, belligerence of Pakistan and the menace of Islamic fundamentalism.

But that is not all. Even if any or all of these factors were absent, the communal and revivalist elements would still, have remained a potential threat. the mistake which their opponents ... made to believe that it was not a force at all. This erroneous impression was further strengthened by the precipitous retreat of the rightists after Gandhi's assassination... The same mistake was made in Europe where it was thought that fascists would never be able to raise their heads after the Holocaust.

What was forgotten was that ideologies, no matter how pernicious, do not simply fade away. If conditions prove i, their proponents simply stage tactical withdrawal and wait for better times to prevail. This is exactly what has happened. By a coincidence, it has taken about four decades for the ultra-right to emerge from the shadows both in India and in Europe, posing a threat again to the pluralistic social and political order.

... The ideology of ultra-right has certain basic features ... extreme nationalism, rejection of pluralism, opposition to market economy, use of violence, targeting of particular groups, ambiguity on human right and dislike of liberalism.

In India, the sangh parivar's emphasis on these aspects is evident enough. Of all these, the trump card is nationalism... Whether ... Germany or ... France or ... Maharashtra, followers of the ultra-right parties have always found it easy to mobilise support by beating the patriotic drum. It has an atavistic appeal which is not easy to resist. In the context of the failure of the other parties, their cry of being the sole patriots holding the fort against traitors seems all the more plausible to the simple-minded. The gullible fail to understand that the extreme right's flaunting of patriotic fervor is inspired less by the love of motherland than by a canny desire to paint its political and ideological opponents in the blackest of colours and provoke hatred against them.

... The threat from the ultra-right is perhaps all the greater here because India has never really experienced any kind of fascism. there is little understanding. therefore, of what this vicious philosophy and its dangerous advocacy of xenophobia represent...

... Guru Golwalkar of the RSS admired the fuehrer for his sternness against anti-nationalists. "German race

pride has now become the topic of the day, "Golwalkar said. "To keep up the purity of the Race and its culture, Germany shocked the world by her purging the country of the Semitic Races-the Jews. Race pride at its highest has been manifested here."

The BJP leaders keep mum about Golwalker these days But only a tactic of deceit. It does not mean that the votaries of Hindutva have disowned their Hitler-loving Guru... They believe that the time is not yet ripe for openly endorsing his ideas. Like the building of the temple in Ayodhya, it has to await the BJP's assumption of power at the Centre...

Tub-thumping patriotism requires an enemy Hitler had his Jews... For the sangh parivar. It is its lifelong obsession with Muslims. Golwalkar's views on Muslims as potential traitors are as clear as his admiration of Hitler: "They not only got two big slices of this land where they live today as complete masters with plans to conquer the rest of our country, but also continue to remain here in sufficient numbers to act as potential fifth column."

... The extreme right is not always looking for mass mobilisation or electoral success. What it is interested in is the "creation of tension, the incitement of hatred and the sapping of the confidence in democratic society." In India, this objective is fulfilled not so much by the BJP which, as the political arm of the RSS, has to ... abide by certain rules as by the latter's other subsidiaries like the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the Bajrang Dal which have no such constraints. Their occasional forays ... at ... Varanasi, Mathura ... are intended solely to create tension, to arouse hatred, while the BJP innocently looks the other way, proclaiming that these are not on its agenda.

None of this play-acting is accidental, It is all part of an elaborate game plan about which only the insiders are aware.... Among the BJP MP's, only Uma Bharati had acknowledged that the Varanasi and Mathura shrines are on her agenda. The godless communists would have taken stern disciplinary action any of their parliamentarians deviating from the party line... But not the "disciplined" BJP. Miss Bharati is too valuable as a rabble rouser to be reprimanded.

Animus against the minorities has to be accompanied by the projection of the majority as overwhelmingly superior. The Third Reich's Germans were pure Aryans. The present-day fascists of Europe project whites as having higher IQ than the black. In India, they take recourse to two ploys... The superiority of Hinduism as a religion is stressed. Hindus are more tolerant, it is argued,

(Contd. on Page 439)

D.R. Goyal on the BJP and the RSS

Is the RSS link a boon or a fetter which prevents the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) from ... capturing power at the Centre?

This dilemma of the BJP leadership remains unresolved, despite Mr. L.K. Advani's assertion that his party's march to supreme power is unstoppable.

The top leadership of the party is also of its ideological-cum-organisational power-house, the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS), are assailed by serious apprehensions about the party's prospects ahead. The BJP is presently causing concern to them on both counts, organisational and ideological. The situation is sought to be set right through organisational restructuring with the introduction of full-time organising secretaries at every tier of the organisation from the RSS.

... The measure is revival of an old practice. ...

The BJP launch-session in Mumbai in December 1980 was significant in that from it went out the message that it was no old hat Jana Sangh but a brand new outfit. Blessings of M.C. Chagla and high pedestal for the likes of Sikandar Bakht and adoption of nationally popular concepts like socialism and secularism - albeit with addition of innocuous adjectives like Gandhian and positive - were highlighted...

The crowning act of the exercise was to project Atal Bihar Vajpayee as the model leader for India. ('Desh ka Neta Kaisa ho, Atal Behari Jaisa ho' was the new battle cry). There was a reason behind this move. Vajpayee had publicly criticised the RSS poaching into the political arena as also its reluctance to open its doors ... towards non-Hindus. Not only had he written an article to this effect in a multi-edition daily but made it known at the session that the sixth finger (his picturesque description of RSS interference) would not be allowed to interfere...

All this had created consternation among the delegates... The rebels were silenced with the plea that the changes were no more than verbal window-dressing and that too as a necessary measure to avert the threatened isolation in the political arena.

However, the experiment did not yield expected results. Isolation was avoided only partially and the hard core cadre of the party, mostly nurtured in the RSS nursery, could not be fired with enthusiasm. Indeed the RSS itself began to look for an alternative vehicle to carry its ideological baggage. Indira Gandhi saw the opportunity to find compensation for loss of minority support reflected during Emergency and post-Emergency years. The RSS found in Indira-led Congress a better choice than Atal-led BJP. Thus in the attempt to steal the clothes of Congress the BJP lost its own. The upshot was

1984 election results when its strength in Parliament touched an all time low of just two seats, one less than the number of seats the Jana Sangh had won in the very first election it fought after its birth.

So started the backward march to recapture the ideological moorings with tirade against so-called pseudo-secularism and assertion of Hindutva with Ram as symbol. Its culmination was the Babari episode of December 1992.

... (It) emerged as the largest single party in the 11th Lok Sabha. Tantalising possibility of capturing power at the Centre came insight. In an attempt to make it manifest the party tried to form the government with the liberal face of Atal Bihar Vajpayee. The trick did not work. Meanwhile the prospect of wielding power spurred the ambitions of erstwhile self-denying party members which led to a rash of factionalism dramatised by the Vaghela revolt in Gujarat.

Analysis of this entire phenomenon has brought a conviction to ... BJP leaders and its mentors that pursuit of the illusion of becoming an alternative to Congress is rendering the BJP vulnerable to ... the inroads of Congress culture. The RSS top brass started rethinking about the advisability of giving a long rope to the BJP. They have always believed in primacy of discipline, that a loose organisation cannot befit instrument of ideology. (Hence) the decision to take the organisational structure in hand through nominated organising secretaries.

Whether this new stream-lining will lead the party to the envisaged goal of power is yet to be seen.

(Source: The Secular Democracy, July, 1997)

(Contd. from Page 444)

The above analysis clearly reveals that the so-called Third Alternative ... is an artificially created arrangement for the exercise of power and the logic of raw power leads to the break-up of such an Alternative. The Political class has made every effort to decide Indian society to create special social constituencies or winning an election. Hence, Messrs Mulayam Singh Yadav, Laloo Prasad Yadav, and Ms Mayawati are sectional leaders with a limited social base... No stable political arrangement for governance at the Centre is possible in the foreseeable future, because fragmented parties, groups and individuals can win limited electoral victories. They cannot form a cohesive government at the Centre. The only contribution of the anti-Congress Third Alternative is the intensification of the caste wars and communal hatred....

(Source: Pioneer, 9 September, 1997)

Neena Vyas on BJP's Tactical Moves

Hindutva may still be the Bharatiya Janata Party's ideological mascot, but its leadership is increasingly trying hard to bring the party on to the "mainstream" of the other national parties. One could even say the BJP not only wants to occupy the space vacated by the Congress(I), but would also like to "become" what the Congress was 50 years ago - a party representing the interests of people cutting across caste and class lines, with a base in every nook and corner.

There seem to be two major points of focus as the BJP tries to achieve its twin-goals - strengthening the organisation and trying to get out of its isolationist one-point Ram temple politics without of course giving up its Hindutva mascot. ...

... The party is trying to "correct" its image of a rather extremist and anachronistic party harking back to the epic period of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. It is projecting a new image of a modern party making a connection with India's recent secular history, its freedom movement.

The party president, Mr. L.K. Advani, has toured all over the country in his 'yatra' for two months in an effort to annex the heritage of the freedom movement, to try to transfer the charisma of the great leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru on to the BJP, claiming that his party is the "true inheritor" of their ideals. Mr. Advani, in his speeches, dwelt on the achievements of the Nehru era, almost apologising for praising him as the great architect of modern India and for laying the foundations for and strengthening of the democratic parliamentary system. ... his first press concurrence at the end of his "yatra". The clever manner in which the party is trying to do that can be illustrated from the fact that Mr. Advani has almost suggested that the BJP's "cultural nationalism" idea, which he says is the same as Hindutva, is the very same concept that Nehru had of "one country, one people and one culture".

The BJP now wants to be seen as "the nationalist party" which can take the country forward and build a modern India and not as a party that will take it back to the days of Manu. While trying to snatch the Gandhi-Nehru legacy from the Congress(I), the BJP leadership is trying to suggest that Nehru's ideas were no different from the BJP's definition of its own ideology, Hindutva.

To quote from Advani's statement issued on May 27 during his "yatra": "On rare occasions, such as his (Nehru's) address to the students of the Aligarh Muslim University in 1951, or his speech at the Madurai session of the AICC in October 1961, or his final, movingly-crafted will, Nehru revealed his belief in the essential features of cultural nationalism - namely, that all of us in

India are one country, one people and one culture". ...

The BJP's agenda has not changed ... but the emphasis is now different. It is almost as if it wants to disguise its Hindutva agenda and present it as same as Nehru's idea of one country, one people.

The party has perhaps come to realise that if it wants to rule the country it cannot do so on the Hindutva agenda alone, it cannot afford to be seen as an enemy by one-fifth of the population, the religious minorities. Senior leaders have admitted this. During the "yatra", Advani made a special appeal to Muslims that they should not be taken in by the "propaganda" that his party was anti-Muslim. This appeal needs to be seen in the context of the party's efforts to get on to the "mainstream" course of national politics, at least as a ploy to garb power.

Ironically, it was the demolition of the Babari Masjid in December 1992 which rendered the BJP's main plank virtually useless. In their greed for power, the cadre killed the goose that laid the golden eggs in terms of votes - the Masjid, used as a hate symbol for fanning the fanaticism of the majority community, was brought down.

However, after the disastrous 1993 Assembly elections, the party realised that it must move beyond the Ram temple to try and attract the very large secular Indian viewpoint which did not see the Hindu-Muslim conflict as the most important factor in politics...

The Ayodhya card had definitely helped the party jump from two MPs in 1984 to 80 plus in 1989 and 120 in 1991. But how and from where was it to get 150 more seats?

Annexation of the "nationalist" plank and snatching of the Gandhi-Nehru legacy from the Congress are the BJP's answer to that question...

(Source: The Hindu, 27 July, 1997)

B.R. Ambedkar on Nationality

Nationality is a social feeling. It is a feeling of a corporate sentiment of oneness which those who are charged with it feel that they are kith and kin. This national feeling is a double edged feeling. This national feeling of fellowship for one's own kith and kin and an anti-fellowship feeling for those who are not one's own kith and kin. It is a feeling of "consciousness of kind" which on the one hand binds together those who have it, so strongly that it overrides all differences arising out of economic conflicts or social gradations and on the other severs them from those who are not of their kind. It is a longing not to belong to any other group. This is the essence of what is called a nationality and national feeling.

- Ambedkar's Pakistan or the Partition of India)

BJP's Game Plan to Capture State Power

Ashis Chakrabarti in the Secular Democracy, April, 1997

(BJP-BSP Coalition) brings together two parties which had been estranged once before. It was not only the second marriage, but one that had no morals... It was a marriage of convenience... The desperate situation in UP necessitated the desperate remedy.

(In) desperation the two parties came up with the novel time-share arrangement by which Mayawati was to head the coalition government for the first six months and Kalyan Singh for the next half year. After a year, the arrangement is to be reviewed.

BJP leaders recall the Israeli experiment when the Labour Party and the Likud Party successfully practised the prime ministership by rotation. (But) the first such experiment in India had been successfully carried out in the small north-eastern state of Meghalaya (when) the Congress and the All Party Hill Leaders Conference (APHLC) struck a deal by which B.B. Lyngdoh of the latter was to remain chief minister of a coalition government for two years, followed by Captain Williamson Sangma of the Congress for the next two years. ...

The BJP has gone in for alliances all over the country. With Shiv Sena in Maharashtra, the Haryana Vikas Manch of Bansi Lal in Haryana, Akali Dal (Badal) in Punjab, Samata Party in Bihar, the Telugu Desam (Lakshmi Parvathi) in Andhra Pradesh and with the BSP in UP for a second time now. Before the last elections, it tried its luck with all the three major anti-Congress parties - Tamil Maanila Congress, DMK and also Jayalalitha's AIDMK. In Assam, it had tried to rope in the AGP breakaway Natun Asom Gana Parishad...

... The BJP would like to rule in the states and at the Centre on its own. But till that kingdom comes, can the party be for ever in waiting? And, time is vital because coalitions are by nature transitory and demand astute one upmanship. Morals have no place... So what if the Shiv Sena has a bloody (record) in the 1992 riots in Mumbai? So what if Bansi Lal was one of the most hated men of the Emergency... So what if the Akalis were flaunting the Anandpur Sahib resolution and clamouring for secession...

BJP leaders would protest vehemently that the alliance with the Sena has strengthened the Hindutva forces. The partnership with the Akalis, they claim, have not only ended the Hindu-Sikh estrangement but also upheld the cause of national unity. They now claim credit for getting the Akalis to amend their constitution and open its membership to every Indian...

... Analysts have already noted BJP's gains in its new avatar as coalitionist. Take the case of Maharashtra where the alliance has been the most durable. It has benefitted

the BJP more than the Sena. The two parties have jointly contested two Assembly and three Lok Sabha elections so far. In 1995, the BJP won 65 seats and got 12.8 per cent of the vote (up from 10.71 per cent in 1990), against the Sena's 73 seats and 16.39 per cent vote share (marginally higher than the 15.93 polled in 1990). In the 1996 general elections, the allies' vote share went up to 21.8 per cent for the BJP and 16.84 for the Sena. In Punjab, the alliance with the Akalis brought the BJP a record 18 seats.

... The alliance with NTR's widow has kept alive the BJP's hopes. In Bihar, the BJP-Samata tie up gave the Hindutva brigade an advantage in the Assembly by polls in 1995 and the April 1996 parliamentary polls. The party, which had its traditional bases in south Bihar, rode piggy-back on the Samata in north Bihar...

This then is the method in the apparent madness. For analysts have wondered if the saffron brigade would not lay down its idols, Ram and Mandir, by the wayside on its march in the motley crowd. "No", says Vajpayee ... "We have said we will build the temple at Ayodhya only when we form the government at the Centre".

But the party in power does not merely build temples. It also has to provide good governance, fight corruption and address ... economic issues. One can hardly miss the attempt to carefully camouflage the Hindutva agenda behind mainline political talk.

In a country as diverse as India, no single social constituency is large enough to take a party to power. That too, at a time when regional parties ... are getting stronger by the day. Upper caste Hindus, the BJP's traditional votebank, are neither strong nor large enough. So an alliance with the Akalis brings the Sikh minorities in the fold. In Maharashtra, the BJP holds 13 of the 40 Assembly seats reserved for scheduled castes and tribes. It put up nearly 20 Muslim candidates in the recent Zila Parishad elections and two Muslims head municipal councils controlled by the party. In Bihar, the party's Brahmin-Bhumihar-Rajput votebank has been swelled by the Samata's constituency of the backward Kurmis and Koeris.

In the present Lok Sabha, the BJP has 41 SC and ST members... Power in Lucknow in the company of the BSP will give it access to OBC constituencies which are now divided between Mulayam Singh Yadav's Samajwadi Party and the BSP. Once that it taken care of, it would not take the BJP much to dump the Bahujan...

"Aaj panch pradesh, kal sara desh" was the party's slogan until 1993. It still remains at the core of its strategy. In the political chessboard, the party will have allies, but only as pawns....

Academician C.P. Bhambri
On Prospects of Third Alternative

Ram Manohar Lohia ... targeted the downtrodden castes and oppressed peasantry as a social base for the Third Alternative of democratic peasant-based socialist transformation of Indian democracy. Since the Communist party and the Jana Sangh were minor players in post-Independence politics of the 1950s and 1960s, Lohia mobilised all kinds of forces under the banner of anti Congressism and thus the Third Alternative in reality became co-terminus with the goal of defeating the Congress party in the elections. The so-called ideological content of the Third Alternative became a farce and displacement of the Congress from power emerged as the sole and supreme goal of all anti-Congress forces in politics. Such heterogeneous social forces experienced short-lived victories in the state Assembly elections of 1967 and the so-called anti-Congress coalition which emerged in post 1967 Assembly elections collapsed like a house of cards... This story was repeated during experiment of Janata Party of 1977-97, Mr. VP Singh's tryst with power in 1989-91, and the present UF conglomerate has been crisis-ridden from the day of its birth.

Many significant social developments have taken place in India... First the, socialist rhetoric of Lohia and his successors declined with the emergence of very, middle peasantry and upwardly-mobile, backward castes in different parts of India. India witnessed the emergence of peasant and backward caste leaders and political groups in various states. Second ... the backbone of the anti-Congressism, as differentiated from Lohia socialists, was the leadership of the middle peasantry and emerging backward castes. These new socially assertive groups were fanatically anti-Congress because that perceived that the high castes controlled Congress... In many states of India, these new social groups were regional parties in opposition to the Congress, and slowly and gradually, the electoral process started getting "fractured" among many diverse contestants who combined together to form a coalition government for the exercise of power...

Peasantry in India cannot be united on an all-India political platform because the peasant class is region, language and caste-specific. Political mobilisation of the backward caste and middle peasant will bring a fractured and fragmented electoral verdict at the all-India level because of the inherent diversity underlying the different states, regions and sub-regions. How can a so-called Third Alternative emerge in a situation where divided and fragmented caste-based middle peasantry is led by leaders who are important only in their states or regions? ... VF Singh announced on August 7, 1990, the acceptance of

Praful Bidwai
On Retreat from Politics

If politics is the art of the possible, and has a public purpose, it is to define has a public purpose, it is to define social goals-e.g. supplying food to the undernourished, generating employment ... providing rural telecom connectivity etc... The task is not confined to the economic field, but extends to education, healthcare, science and technology, research, resolution of ethnic tensions and defence of secularism. The UF government stands accused of having repeatedly retreated from politics in this sense. Its Common Minimum Programme bears testimony to this. Of the seven occasions on which the term "commitment" is used in it, only one refers to a specific target(four percent fiscal deficit); the others are slogans like "social justice" "federalism," and "clean administration".

The CMP's implementation has been even more embarrassing; witness the many fiascos over the Ayodhya reference, the targeted public distribution system, minimum agricultural wage. Lok Pal Bill and women's reservation. In place of the promised 100 days of employed for each unemployed person, the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana is creating work for less than three days a year for each one of our officially acknowledged poor. In place of a thriving infrastructure, we have a ramshackle network of highways, ports and power plants. Worse, we are now gold-plating their output. As the state goes bankrupt, investment in basic services is being slashed.

The UF has so far been largely story of missed opportunities, whether on secularisation, in the economy (which seems set to lose even its growth momentum), in the environment (where there is no policy to stop degradation ...), on Kashmir (where the window of opportunity may be shut as Mr Gujral sends out contradictory signals), or on Indo-US relations... And yet the UF, at least potentially, had a historical rationale and function, beyond the limited aim of keeping the BJP out and the Congress down. It was to give us more responsible, secular, humane, decentralized governance, and to establish the ground-rules of coalition politics.

Its failure on this last count-should occasion some introspection on the costs of beating a 'retreat from politics'.

(Source: The Times of India, 10 September, 1997)

Mandal Commission recommendations for reservation in public services ... to meet the political challenge of his own colleagues like Devi Lal. The only consequence of the caste reservation policies is the further fragmentation of parties on the basis of caste and sub-castes groups and leaders and its impact has been felt in Utter Pradesh...

(Contd. on page 441)

Vidya Subrahmaniam On BSP vs BJP in UP

... In the September 1996 assembly elections, the BJP-Samata Party combine headed the vote tally with 33.7 per cent closely followed by the Samajwadi Party and its allies with 30.25 per cent and the Congress-BSP with 28.7 per cent.

On their own ... neither the BJP nor the BSP would be a match for Mr. Yadav in a future election, especially should he tie up with the Congress. For the BJP such a scenario would translate into another frustrated attempt at power and for the BSP it will mean the return of a sworn enemy. It makes sense, therefore, that the unlikely allies continue their uneasy liaison... In truth, it is the BJP which exerted till the end to save the alliance and it is the BJP again which has capitulated before the BSP. The BJP (has been) able to pass on the chief ministership to Mr. Kalyan Singh, but it is clear that he will be functioning with his hands tied behind him.

The ministerial portfolios ... are to remain unchanged; Kalyan Singh cannot experiment with policy changes, much less change the Dalit-orientation of his predecessor government; he cannot even reshuffle the bureaucracy. In short, he cannot exercise any of the powers considered the prerogative of a chief minister. The choice before Kalyan Singh is really one of no choice - either he remains a lame duck chief minister and does as Ms. Mayawati bids or asserts his independence and risks being forced out of office.

For the BJP central leadership, the problems have only just begun. So far the alliance had the support of a section of the UP unit which saw it mainly in terms of its potential to deliver the BJP a permanent, nationwide upper caste-Dalit constituency...

If the alliance was capable of sweeping all of North India and catapulting the BJP to power at the Centre, its rupture was likely to leave the BJP totally bereft - with neither Dalit nor OBC support. If this explains why ultimately it was important for the BJP that Kalyan Singh and Mayawati co-existed, the former's removal became virtually impossible after his formal implication in the Babari Masjid demolition. The hero of Ayodhya could not have been dumped without a backlash from the BJP's Ayodhya constituency.

Tightrope Walk

This tightrope walk has not helped the BJP... The upper castes are unhappy as are the OBCs. At the ground level, the party has to contend with anger from both sections on account of the transfer of power being largely notional; Mayawati will be seen as ruling for a second spell even if by proxy. The same syndrome seems likely to affect the ranks with the upper castes resenting Kalyan

M.V. Kamath on Muslim Indian's Place in National Politics

... What then is the answer...? Syed Shahabuddin has his pet answers. For one, he says, Muslim Indians have to invest in education and self-enterprise to overcome the neglect and to function as a player in Indian society and economy. Also, he says, they have to embark on social reforms, not by deviation from Islam, in order to utilise their full potential as human beings and as citizens of a modern state. Furthermore, he asserts, Muslim Indians have also to build channels of communication with the non-Muslim majority in social intercourse through fraternisation, in academic milieu through dialogue, in the mass media through accurate intervention and in the educational system through improvement of textbooks and reform of curricula. All more easily said than done.

Will the mullahs let go of their hold on the faithful? Will more emphasis be laid on the learning of English than on the learning of Urdu or Arabic? Can Muslims change their food habits so that they can invite their vegetarian Hindu friends home for a meal? Are they capable of participating in Hindu festivities to make it easier for Hindu to participate in their celebrations? Primarily, will Muslims accept their Hindu past and Vedic culture and stop denigrating what is commonly described as Hindutva?

These are questions for the Muslims to ask on themselves and not for Hindus to press on them. Syed Shahabuddin has raised some pertinent questions. Muslims in India, several million strong, should learn to make the necessary adjustments and might find that on their part Hindus too would come half way to meet them. Then, and then alone, would it be possible for a Muslim to get elected as a Prime Minister without anyone bothering to know his religious affiliations...

(Source: The Organiser, 13 July, 1997)

Singh's elevation and the OBCs feeling that an injustice has been done to him. Indeed, with Mr. Kalyan Singh at the helm, tensions between the OBCs and the Dalits can only magnify, more so because the former were waiting to settle scores with the latter.

The BSP, on the other hand, is a clear gainer. Ms. Mayawati has extracted the maximum (in) six months ... which means a certain number of assured seats in any election. Since the BSP's ultimate aim is to use its seats as a bargain point for a share in Central power, this will come in handy even if it were to terminate its pact with the BJP and opt for a post-poll alliance with whoever is forming a government in New Delhi. Meanwhile, it does not hurt it to do some backseat-driving for a BJP which is promise-bound to carryout its policies.

(Source: The Times of India, 16 September, 1997)

Kuldip Nayar

On Prosecution of Sangh Parivar on Criminal Charges

The judiciary once again does India proud. In an atmosphere which emits chauvinism and raises a question mark about most Hindu intellectuals, the (order of the special court) is like a breath of fresh air and sustains faith in the country's secular ethos.

... The demolition was a conspiracy to destabilise the country by communalising the polity. These are crimes which should disqualify the guilty from occupying seats in Parliament, assemblies, municipal corporations and other local bodies... The BJP and the Shiv Sena which talk about values ... should not hesitate to ask chargesheeted members to quit elected posts voluntarily. Both will gain prestige and set an example. The reaction should have been that of penance and humility. All the 49 who have been indicted should step down. This is the least they can do to redeem whatever honour they - and the country - have been left with.

But even a liberal such as Atal Behari Vajpayee has put party above principle he says the grounds for the charges are flimsy and that the case is ... politically motivated. What is wrong or motivated about it? The demolition happened in broad daylight and was witnessed by lakhs. Most of those chargesheeted were present and watching. Newspapers carried a picture of Uma Bharati on the shoulders of Murli Manohar Joshi, both gleeful. Some pictures could not appear because the kar sevaks, armed with axes, shovels and ropes, destroyed many cameras and beat up photographers.

That the Masjid was demolished stone by stone, with security forces quietly watching, is an accepted fact. How does the judge spelling out the crime make it politically motivated?

Vajpayee's logic that Thackeray and some others named were not present at the demolition is strange. All conspirators who hatch a plot are not present at the scene of crime. But they are as guilty as those who commit it. The judge says the criminal conspiracy began in 1990 and culminated on December 6, 1992. His pronouncement minces no words while Vajpayee's is equivocal and full of holes.

Worse, the (Order) has made little difference to the BJP's gameplan. Neither party leaders nor ideologues see harm in installing Kalyan Singh, one of the chargesheeted, as UP Chief Minister. Not long ago, the BJP had asked for the dismissal of Laloo Prasad Yadav, then Bihar Chief Minister, because he was chargesheeted in the fodder scam. It was a just demand, which attracted a lot of support. Why should there be a different criterion for Kalyan Singh, whose crime is far more serious? He

gave an undertaking to the country's highest judicial body, the Supreme Court, to protect the Masjid while the fact, as revealed by the special judge, is that he had already hatched a conspiracy to demolish it.

The BJP spokesperson is quite right when he says that the demolition was "part of a political movement,"... When Home Minister Indrajit Gupta elaborated on the Election Commission's statement on the electoral ban on convicts, he had in mind political movements such as strikes, satyagrahs, dharnas. He did not think of the premeditated, calculated crime of destroying a religious place.

The co-conspirator, the VHP, is at least honest. It has admitted that Ram Mandir is a religious issue, not a political one. Were the BJP to say openly that it saw nothing wrong in demolishing the Masjid to clear the site for the Mandir it would be credible and categorical. The party is beating about the bush. Political reasons prompt its contradictory positions.

There is a familiar ring to the BJP's statements on the mosques ... in Varanasi and Mathura. The party never said the Babri Masjid would be demolished. Nor did it say the destruction was on its agenda. Still its cadre did it. In their statements on Varanasi and Mathura, Advani and Vajpayee have said many a time that the two mosques are not on the party's agenda. However, they create doubts when they add the words "at present" or "not yet". Why not categorically say the two mosques will not be touched?.... Many in the Sangh Parivar continue to talk about 3,000 mosques. What are Muslims supposed to make of this?

Some people fear that the court judgment may revive the passion which the Babri Masjid used to arouse before demolition. Vajpayee had no compunction in saying that the day-to-day hearing of the case would have an effect on elections. I have no doubt that the Sangh Parivar will try its best to foul the atmosphere. They may even foment trouble. Experience tells us so. Yet, a democratic and secular polity has to take such risks because the alternative is to surrender to fundamentalists. No country believing in the rule of law can... The nation has to assert itself. It is not fraught with greater dangers. Ultimately, the people will have to decide dispassionately. By preferring not to fight the onslaught of communalism ... in the interest of "peace", they may help create a Frankenstein which will one day devour the country's heritage and civilisation...

(Source: The Indian Express, 15 September, 1997)

Charges in Babari Masjid Demolition Case

Section	Offence	Punishment
147	Rioting	Imprisonment for two years or both.
153 (a)	Promoting enmity between classes in places of worship, etc.	Imprisonment for 5 years & fine, or both
153 (b)	If committed a place of public worship, etc.	Imprisonment for 5 years and fine.
295	Destroying, damaging or or defiling a place of worship or sacred object with intent to insult the religion of any class of persons.	Imprisonment for 2 years or fine or both.
295 (a)	Maliciously insulting the religion or the religious beliefs of any class.	Imprisonment for 3 years, or fine or both.
505	False statement, rumour, etc, circulated with intent to cause mutiny or offence against public peace.	Imprisonment for 3 years or fine or both.
	False statement, rumour, etc, with intent to create enmity, hatred or ill-will between different classes.	Punishment as above.
	False statement, rumour, etc. made in place of worship etc. with intent to create enmity, hatred or ill will.	Imprisonment for 5 years and fine.
120 (b)	Criminal conspiracy to commit an offence punishable with rigorous imprisonment of two years of upwards.	Same punishment as for abetment of the offence which is the object of the conspiracy.
	Any other criminal conspiracy	Imprisonment for six months or fine, or both.

**Shahabuddin's letter to Home Minister
24 September, 1997**

According to the Hindustan Times, 24 September, 1997 during the visit of Chief Minister Kaylan Singh the district administration allowed entry into the make-shift temple which is a violation of the directive of the Supreme Court which allows darshan of the idol from a particular point and distance.

The Babari Masjid Movement Coordination (BMMCC) Committee protests against this violation and requests you to instruct the Commissioner of Faizabad to follow the directive of the Supreme Court strictly and make no exceptions.

**WITH BEST
COMPLIMENTS**

FROM

**KALEEM
KAWAJA**

**THE ASSOCIATION
OF INDIAN
MUSLIMS OF
AMERICA**

**THE ORGANIZATION
FOR UNIVERSAL
COMMUNAL
HARMONY**

**WASHINGTON DC
USA**

Smita Gupta

On the Prosecution of BJP/VHP Leaders

The decision of the Special ... Court hearing the Babari Masjid demolition case to frame charges against leaders of the VHP, Shiv Sena and BJP could not have come at a worse moment for the BJP. Engaged as the party is in a battle to nerves with the BSP to ensure a smooth "transfer of power" ... in UP, the court decision can only add to its woes. This is particularly so as those the court has decided to frame charges against ... chief minister-designate Kalyan Singh and his chief backer ... BJP, President L.K. Advani. If convicted, the two men, along with the 47 other accused, could be liable for a minimum sentence of three years rigorous imprisonment and a fine. In a general sense, the involvement of two of the seniormost BJP leaders in a case of "criminal conspiracy" can only damage the party further at a time when Parliament and the government have proclaimed their decision to take a firm line on removing criminals from politics, and the BJP - in anticipation of taking over the reins of power in UP - has been talking about "law and order" being at the top of its agenda.

Indeed, it is for this reason that BJP spokesperson Yashwant Sinha was quick to say, "Since the entire case arises out of a political movement, no disability in any manner attaches to any leader mentioned in the chargesheet". And BJP leader Atal Behari Vajpayee sought to deflect attention from the import of the court decision by stressing that the timing was "politically motivated" and that it was a "strange coincidence the chargesheet issue has come when the political situation in UP is in a flux and there are problems over the transfer of power between the BSP and the BJP". ...

The proposed framing of charges against Kalyan Singh, therefore, places a question mark against his name for CM. And not just because the BSP has been gunning for him; it is also because the Brahmin lobby in the BJP has been none too keen to see him succeed to the chief minister's job....

The decision of the designated court also focuses attention on the Ram Janmabhoomi issue, a double-edged weapon as far as the BJP is concerned: The Ayodhya issue may have effectively encapsulated the party's *raison d'être*, and the movement ... it may have successfully blended politics with a heady mixture of nationalism and religion and thus contributed, in a large measure, to the electoral breakthrough it had never dreamt of till 1989.

But today - and for some time now - the BJP leadership has realised Ayodhya has virtually yielded all it could and any further enhancement of the party's political base can only come from acquiring new political allies. Unfortunately for the BJP, most of these allies - current as well as potential - barring the Shiv Sena are allergic to the saffron family's obsession with Ramjanmabhoomi. Its tactical effort has, therefore, been to push the temple issue and Hindutva to the background, but the court order has pushed it willy-nilly to the

Mushirul Hasan's
Warning to BJP

... The Chief Minister of UP, Kalyan Singh (has) commitment to the rebuilding of the Ram temple at Ayodhya. Was the CM speaking out of turn? Or did he have the BJP's mandate to announce his plan?...

Whatever his political complaints Kalyan Singh should not be allowed to disturb the status quo in Ayodhya. Somebody should remind him of the people's verdict in November 1993.

That was when the BJP fresh from its 'victory' in Ayodhya, suffered major electoral reverses in his home state and in Himachal Pradesh and MP. He had stated that if his party got even one seat less than the 221 it held in Uttar Pradesh, it would be tantamount to a rejection of the mandir movement. In the event, the party lost 44 seats. Consider your priorities, Mr. Singh. Turn to your own state and address yourself to those millions of poverty-stricken people who have yet to receive a fair deal...

You preside over the destiny of a state that was once the symbol of composite and syncretic living. Although its political landscape change with the rise of 'Muslim nationalism' and Hindu militancy, different communities continue to live in amity and share the values of pluralism and multiculturalism. An inspiring legitimization of the more mundane expressions of peaceful coexistence come daily in the sounds of Muslim shehnai mingling in the party of Hindu temple of Banaras, including that of the sacred Vishwanath temple. Why then introduce a discordant note with the mandir issue? Why rake up divisive issues that lay dormant for decades? Why create a cleavage amongst your own people? Is it not possible to cite historical precedents to unite people around symbols of unity and mutual cooperation? Instead of reminding your audience of what Babar of Aurangzeb did why not talk of Amir Khusro, Malik Mohammad Jaisi, Rahim Raskhan and Dara Shikoh? ...

As a general rule, we must not destroy or vandalise places of worship. India has been the home of many religions. The country has been partitioned once before owing to the nefarious role of the British administrators and the miscalculation of our political leaders. So please don't become a crusader and start targeting mosques, gurudwaras, churches and synagogues. Enough is enough.

(Source: The Indian Express, 4 October, 1997)

foreground again...

... The BJP's ... game plan was twofold: to fracture the OBC-minorities-dalit coalition of the SP and the BSP; and to try and rid itself of its image of being an upper caste party with an antipathy for the dalits by trying to create a Brahmin-dalit combination...

... The BJP had ... succeeded in achieving its first aim. This time ... it hoped to achieve its second aim. But the court decision could well once again throw a spanner in the BJP works.

(Source: The Times of India, 11 September, 1997)

Neerja Chowdhury On Babari Masjid Dispute

The party expressed regrets for its inability to protect the Babri Masjid in an attempt to assuage the hurt feeling of the Muslims. The language might have been stronger but for the fact, which Narasimha Rao pointed out to Pranab Mukherji, that the criticism would be a reflection on all senior leaders, including Kesri, who were in the Cabinet at the time. And that it would give a stick to the BJP and others to beat the Congress with in the elections.

By harking back only to the Babri Masjid, the party showed an inability to come out of an old mindset. It revealed a lack of awareness about the aspirations of a new generation of Muslims. They want a share in the economic cake as much as any other community, and are fed up that parties try and satisfy them only with religious slogans.

(Source: The Indian Express, 11 August, 1997)

Praful Garodia

On Fear Psychosis and the Demolition

It is not widely acknowledged that deep down, the entire Hindu psyche, including the Dalits, is in dread of the Muslim. The Muslim, it is true might not be to blame for this. The manifestation of this dread ranges from anti-Muslim attitude to one that is so "secular" as to sound anti-Hindu. That Ayodhya brought disapprobation to the BJP was largely wishful thinking on the part of secularists. The fact is that the opening of the lock and the despatch of Ramsheela bricks were followed by the 1989 Lok Sabha election in which the party won 89 seats. The demolition was followed by the 1996 results which made the BJP the single largest party. What this record indicates is that each development has helped the common Hindu to feel more and more self-confident than before and less and less afraid to vote for the BJP.

(Source: Letter in The Pioneer, 16 Sept., 1997)

No trial for Demolition!

Editorial in the RSS Weekly Organiser

... Ayodhya remained unresolved for centuries. The Hindu society's claim to the temple on the birth place of Maryada Purushottam Ram was relegated to the forgotten pages of history until the Hindus organised themselves to register their protest. The demolition of the dilapidated structure on 6.12.1992 brought in its wake ... woes for the BJP... Now the demolition case is said to be heading towards the trial stage. For a Govt. which thrives on communalism and playing the minority card, such a move may seem to bring rich electoral dividends. But they will be in a fool's paradise if they think they can hoodwink the Hindu society. It was the politicization of the Ramjanmabhoomi movement by the Congress and its allied forces that was at the root of all troubles. Any attempt to rekindle the Ayodhya issue will only rub the Hindu society on the wrong side...

Mushirul Hasan On Proposed Referendum on Babari Masjid

The idea of a referendum on the Babri Masjid ... welcomed by some BJP leaders, must be promptly rejected. Such an emotive issue, which has been so highly politicised by the Hindu and Muslim firebrands, cannot be resolved through a popular vote. Second there is no precedent of a referendum having taken place in India. One wonders why the Congress did not press for a referendum on the Pakistan issue? Had they done so, the Partition...

The Constitution, too, makes no provision for a referendum makes sense in countries with a literate and relatively homogeneous population, but not in a country of our size and diversity. Finally has anybody considered that a referendum on the Babri Masjid fraught with serious consequences? What if the BJP demands one on a uniform civil code? ... Let Mr Salman Khurshid answer.

(Source: The Indian Express, 4 October, 1997)

On Trial of BJP/VHP leaders

Editorial, The Times of India, 11 Sept., 1997

... While the legal implications must await the due process... The court order has placed the BJP in a unique dilemma. It can neither own up to the demolition nor disown it. Though the party expressed regret in the aftermath, its leaders subsequently justified the demolition and some even said they were proud of it. Mr. Kalyan Singh was one of them... For the BJP to now deny its role in the incident would be difficult, not least because its core belief is still very much Hindutva, though sold in the name of cultural nationalism. Indeed, an early BJP reaction to the Special Court order was that it may well help the party at a time when it was perceived to have lost its distinctive identity... Hindutva is a double-edged weapon. It can attract as well as repel. It may help clear the ideological confusion (in) the rank and file, but equally it could put off the moderates who were seriously considering the BJP as an alternative... A return to Hindutva, unplanned though it may have been, could offset these gains.

At long last, some action has been taken to bring to book those involved in the crime of the century (Babari Masjid demolition).

- V.N. Gadgil, Congress(I) Spokesman

Crime such as the demolition of Babari Masjid deserve punishment from thenation as a whole... It would be in the larger interest of the country as a whole if the judicial process is allowed to proceed without the injection of communalised politics.

Editorial, The Hindustan Times, 11 September, 1997

JKLF: Amanullah Khan's Open Letter to PMs of India and Pakistan

... Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), which started the present phase of the Kashmiris' freedom struggle, ... is dedicated to an equitable, honourable, peaceful, democratic and permanent solution to the Kashmir issue...

... The Kashmir issue is the main hurdle in the way of Indo-Pak amity... Kashmir can become a bridge of friendship between the two countries beginning a new era of peace and prosperity for over a billion people of the region and to future generations.

1. Both India and Pakistan to ask the UN Security Council to help them solve the issue...

2. The Government of India ... the Government of Pakistan ... and Kashmiri political and militant organisations on both sides ... agree to and cease fire in Kashmir on a fixed date.

3. After the cease-fire, all Indian and Pakistani armed forces and civil personnel be withdrawn from Jammu and Kashmir state and all i.e. pro-independence, pro-Pakistan and pro-India militants be disarmed...

... The state be reunited and an interim administration established under UN personnel.

After, say, about six months, a government comprising notables from all regions, religions and political schools of thought of the state be established. India, Pakistan and China to undertake not to violate the geographical integrity of the state or abet any kind of disturbances therein. Trade between the state and India, Pakistan and China and through them with other countries to continue unabated.

5. At the end of say five years ... let the people of the entire state determine, through real democratic process (French system of elections), under UN supervision and without any kind of external pressure or influence, whether the whole state should emerge as fully independent and sovereign country or become part of India or of Pakistan. This ... verdict be accepted... and implemented immediately.

In case the popular verdict is in favour of complete independence, it may be ensured that Kashmir becomes a neutral country like Switzerland, Austria and Sweden... I hope (you will) set the ball rolling at the earliest taking into confidence all the major political parties in your country.

I appeal to the political establishments and the media in both countries and I also call upon Kashmiri political parties... and militant organisations to act as Kashmiris and not as puppets or mercenaries of others and contribute positively towards Kashmiris' national emancipation...

(Source: The Communalism Combat, September, 1997)

CPI on Firing Arms LOC

The National Council (NC) of the CPI expresses serious concern over recent exchange of fire on the Line of Control in J&K.

The CPI has fully supported the initiatives taken by the prime minister Gujral to promote peace between India and Pakistan. "But hawks in the military establishment of Pajustab and the ISI have used every opportunity to sabotage the bilateral negotiations and attempted to internationalise the so-called Kashmir issue. The current hostilities on the LOC is part of the same attempt. During last one year, the US state department has attempted to fish in the troubled waters by pressurising India to accept mediation to solve Indo-Pak problems. It is heartening that India has rejected third party mediation. Still the state department continues to meddle in the affairs of the sub continent. The USA has pressurised the GOI to advance the dates of Indian prime minister's visits to USA to coincide with Nawaz Sharif's visit to USA. "It is good that the US Govt. has frustrated such moves so far. But the situation demands doubling of vigilance". The NC urges upon the Government of India to stand up against mischief by the USA and frustrated the attempts to spoil the conducive atmosphere for growing bilateralism between India and Pakistan. The Council calls upon the people of the two countries to support the current moves for improving the bilateral relations between the countries to usher in an era of peace in the subcontinent in the 50th year of Independence of both India and Pakistan.

Chanchal Sarkar

On Indo-Pakistan Rapprochement

Pakistan is not a spectre like Hamlet's father walking the ramparts of Elsinore Castle. It is a flesh-and-blood country with flesh-and-blood people... There is more to Pakistanis than their anger over Kashmir... I was made conscious ... that I was not Indian, Hindu, Bengali or anything like that, but part of a giant subcontinent with widespread and celebrated centres of art as my heritage...

I was keen, this visit, not to take my information ... from taxi-drivers, politicians and other journalists. So I purposely spread the net wider to encounter artists ... doctors, lawyers, businessmen, actors, producers, people in women's organisations, people working in population control, human rights workers, literary figures and so on.

It became my groundswell for better relations with India and soon - despite, though never forgetting, Kashmir... For 50 years the people of the two countries have been told "Make no concessions, not a grain, not an iota". They have been told so by politicians, bureaucrats, and the military. Now if there was some give and some concessions people would probably say, "Concessions have been made but the roof has not fallen in, the walls are still standing". And the "demonstration effect" would start working.

(Source: The Pioneer, 10 June, 1997)

Punjab Wakf Board

Achievements during 1996-97

During 1996-97 the Punjab Wakf Board ... has made a record revenue collection of Rs. 7.17 crore which higher by 1.13 crore over 1995-96 by 18.70%.

The Board has spent a large amount on various social welfare programme for the benefit of Muslim community and backward classes.

The Board has various schemes for providing monthly aid to mosques (where Board's Imams are not posted), madrasas, schools, colleges and vocational training centres.

... During 1996-97, 424 Masjid/dini makhtabs and madrasas were given monthly aid. A sum of Rs. 46.09 lac was spent on this head.

The Board provided monthly pension to 1609 Muslim widows, orphans and aged at the rate of Rs. 100/- to 300/- per month... A sum of Rs. 20.66 lac has been spent under the scheme...

The Board also provided merit-cum-means scholarships to 416 Muslim students...

Grant-in-aid amounting to Rs. 21.79 lac was granted to large number of mosques, shrines, madarsas, schools and colleges and graveyards...

In addition Rs. 6.58 lac was disbursed for maintenance of mosques and repair of wakf properties.

During 1996-97 the Board has paid a sum of Rs.56.38 lac to its Imams posted in mosques under its direct management...

Charitable Activities:

The Board spent Rs. 0.75 lac on flood-relief to people in Mewat...

The Imams of the Board participated in the pulse polio drive...

Urs and Festivals:

The Board organised the celebration on the occasion of Annual Urs of some famous sufi saints e.g. Hzt. Boo Ali Shah Qalandar, Hzt. Shamsuddin Turk, Hzt. Sheikh Jalaluddin Kabirul Aulia (Panipat), Sheikh Jalaluddin Thanesari (Kurukshetra), Hzt. Sain Tawakkal Shah, Hzt. Tajuddin Lakhhi Shah (Ambala City), Hzt. Miraji Bhik, Thaska (Kurukshetra), Hzt. Imam Nasiruddin Jalandhar and Haji Rattan Bathinda. The Board organised Id Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH) at different places and to celebrate Board's Foundation Day and hold Iftar etc. Rs.3.28 lac was spent on this account.

Educational Activities:

... Presently 12 schools, 1 ITI, 13 Wakf Tailoring

Training Centre and 5 Computer Centres are being run under the direct management of the Board. Secondly, (Board granted) monthly financial assistance to 32 schools and 6 vocational training centres run by Muslims. On education the Board spent Rs. 47.45 lac.

... The Board has undertaken a survey of the schools, computer centres and vocational training centres under its direct management as well as aided institutions.

... The schools under direct control (were) further strengthened by providing qualified and trained teaching staff and untrained staff are retrenched. But the latter were given opportunity to get training (B.Ed.).

First time, a concrete plan of action was drawn up by the Board for securing the recognition of schools and vocational training centres by the authorities concerned...

Establishment of Library:

During 1996-97 Hali Oriental Library has been established by the Board near his Mazar at the premises of Dargah Hzt. Boo Ali Shah Qalandar at Panipat...

Construction Activities:

... Development schemes including shopping complex at Amritsar and Wakf Youth Complex at Chandigarh are under way.

In Branch offices at Gurgaon and Shimla Guest Rooms have been constructed...

The Board has also undertaken construction of new mosques at village Ramoowalia and Nangal Township in Punjab and Panchkula in Haryana.

The Board has also decided to fence all the active graveyards. During 1996-97 Rs.59.55 lac has been spent.

Restoration of Mosques:

(Many) mosques continue to be occupied under licence but the licences ... are being cancelled and legal steps under "Place of Worship (Special Provision) Act, 1991" for the vacation are being taken.

(Source: PWB's Report)

Population of Assam and Mizoram (1961-91)

	1961	1991	% Change
Total	11,103,392	23,104,076	208%
Hindu	7,744,476	15,082,081	195%
Muslim	2,742,490	6,377,642	232%
Christian	493,641	1,365,709	276%
Buddhist	35,502	118,032	333%

Report of Central Wakf Council On Deserted Mosques and Graveyards, 1 July, 1968

1. Deserted mosques whether dilapidated or intact which are no longer in use have got to be preserved. If there is no mosque left except its site, that site must be preserved. They can neither be transferred nor utilised for any other purpose.
- a) If any parts of the above said mosques have fallen down such as doors, windows, bricks, stones etc., they can be utilised for the benefit of other mosques.
- b) There can, however, be room for exchange or transfer of the land appurtenant to such mosques (except the land occupied by the real mosque). Houses and hujras attached to them could also similarly be exchanged, transferred or they could be used for some other suitable purpose.
2. In the same manner, the Imambaras and Ashoor Khanas have also got to be preserved under all circumstances and they cannot be transferred. But if the circumstances so demand, they can be utilised for accommodating religious schools (Madrasas).
3. The parts of the deserted graveyards which contain graves have got to be preserved as graveyards. Surplus land lying vacant in those graveyards where burial of dead bodies is now prohibited, or which are no longer in use on account of there being no Muslim population can be utilised gainfully.

The party of a graveyard which is free of graves can be sold and the sale proceeds utilised for establishing new graveyards in other places. It can also be used for constructing shops and houses to be leased out on rent, and the Wakf Board can buy land for graveyards in other places from the income accruing from rent.

As regards those graveyards which are now within inhabited areas and in which the burial of the dead is now prohibited, constructions can be raised on pillars, so that the graves are protected on the ground below while houses constructed above are given on rent. The income from such houses shall, however, be spent in the first place on the maintenance of that graveyard or other graveyards in dead of such maintenance. If there is no such need, the income can then be used for other charitable purpose also.

... "But they can be utilised if so required for accommodating religious schools" be deleted. ...

"If the building of a mosque has fallen down and its material such as bricks, doors and windows etc. are no longer in their original condition, the material should, as far as possible, be utilised for the purposes of the mosque, but if this is not found possible, it can be sold for a Sharai purpose and the sale proceeds thereof can then be utilised for similar other purposes."

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Eminent Jurist Rajeev Dhavan

On Judicial Activism, Secularism and Religious Minorities-I

The lack of a strong judicial activism in the areas of communal mayhem and spiteful hate speech invokes anxiety. The simple and hopelessly unjustified surmise that the judges themselves are communal is unwarranted. But judgements have to be scrutinised and subjected to the respectful and responsible criticism of ordinary men and women, says the author, a senior Supreme Court advocate.

The victims of communal hate have insufficient faith in the judiciary. Secularists, howsoever misguided and untutored in the law, are wary about the judiciary.

The mercilessly massacred Sikhs of Delhi in 1984 have still to receive complete justice...

Sahmat's truthful depiction of the Ramayana legend led to a forfeiture of their posters in Delhi. After years, the is still pending. Malevolent propaganda in the fundamentalist magazine, Saamna, has gone scot free. Even after the government virtually admitted a strong case, the Bombay High Court did not mandate the government to sanction prosecution. The Supreme Court's reticence is not overturning the High Court's decision astounded distinguished jurists rather than elicited acclaim.

An unconditional apology from Bal Thackeray led to Justice Verma of the Supreme Court dropping contempt notices against him even though aspersions were cast by him against the judges.

Kalyan Singh went to prison in contempt for a day; but showed contempt even in his incarceration compliance. The contempt case against Mr. Narasimha Rao for a similar subversion of court orders had tangled in a procedural objection raised by the judges.

Serious inquiry into excesses by the police in Bombay (as it, then was) led to long-drawn proceedings till justice Jeevan Reddy in the Supreme Court put aspects of the inquiries, which need to be made, back on the rails. In 1996, a magistrate in Delhi acquitted Ms. Rithambara, chastised the prosecution for bringing up the case and pronounced the even if she had exhorted Hindus to shed their blood for Ayodhya, these utterances were not directed at another community and not criminally inflammatory. The official organs of the Shiv Sena and their cohorts spout propaganda with impunity...

There are many other instances of discriminatory ... and forbearances by legal authorities, as also communal propaganda and the mayhem and social terrorism that such propaganda inspires...

A great nation is in the grip of an extra-constitutionalism that is subversive of the rule of law.

When a committee was ready to launch prosecution in the Delhi riots case, Justice Kripal, then in the Delhi High Court, stopped that initiative on the ground that the government could not abdicate its functions to a committee. But had it? The trauma of non-prosecution and lack of investigation inspires little confidence among secular activists.

The High Court in Sikkim refused to stop a hydel power project on the holiest spot of Sikkimese Buddhism, permitting unscrupulous persons interested in obtaining wealth from power projects to have their sway... Communalists have got away with non-prosecutions, small fines and one day imprisonments!

The secularist and minorities are anguished that judicial activism has passed them by.

The judicial intuition that seeks to explain the forbearance of the judges should not be taken lightly even if it is inapplicable in all cases. Both during the hearing in Babri Masjid case and in other cases involving mosques the judiciary has asked for calm so that the judges are not drawn into exacerbating a tense situation further.

Both statesmanship and pragmatic understanding animate this intuition. But the reticence that this intuition inspires can easily into restraint, and the restraint into a near total forbearance. Nelson was surely right to turn his blind eye to the warning to retreat; but, the battle went on. In this case, the battle is for the rule of law and secularism.

... Deaths and disappearances of various other kinds have rightly attracted the attention of the courts. Communal deaths are surely worse, and, when discharged malevolently, fall within that rarest of race categories which require strong investigative and, if need be, judicial response. ...

In the President's Rule case, the Supreme Court rightly took the view that secularism was part of the basic structure even if the principles it laid down were wrongly applied to the imposition of President's Rule in Himachal Pradesh. The lack of strong judicial activism in the areas of communal mayhem and spiteful hate speech invokes anxiety.

The ... unjustified surmise that the judges themselves are communal is unwarranted. We need to have faith in the judiciary; and, cannot make irresponsible allegations that judges belonging to a particular community favour their own faiths. But judgements have to be scrutinised; and subjected to the respectful and responsible criticism...

Underlying our present discomfiture is the dangerous fact that the real (paradigmatic) basis of India's law and

policy towards communal strife is not very different-but, in fact and, in respect of its implementation, worse-than that of the British. The British imposed administrative exploited these differences to their own advantage and treated all issues connected with religious tension (often inspired by the British state) as "law and order" issues.

Having enacted the Indian Penal Code in 1860, further provisions were added in the form of sedition (1870), promoting enmity between classes (1898) and religious faiths (1927). Some of these provisions were straightened after the Rangeela Rasul case from Lahore in 1925. Since their object was to maintain law and order in society, the British were reasonably indiscriminate as regards publications from all groups.

In independent India, the sedition provisions were softened by Supreme Court interpretation in 1962, but the rest of the provisions remained as strong as ever except those permitting forfeiture of printed materials, which (have been) disciplined ... so that politically motivated outcries would not terrorise free speech into silence.

While post-independence Indian courts took the view that these British provisions against communal have speech should continue, they had little reason to suspect that these anti-communal provisions would be discriminatingly applied and abused. If Muslims sought to protect an Idgah or mosque, they were opposed by various methods and law suits. By contrast and this is the latest trend-certain political followers to attack minorities, especially Muslims. All too often the forces of State stood idly by.

In the main, the seemingly neutral provisions of the law have been used against minorities-especially the Muslims. The dreaded Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act (TADA) is one example of this.

The failure to prosecute self-evident self-confessed, malicious propaganda directed against the Muslims is yet another example of the mischief-prone British model being distorted by our governments in favour of Manufacturers of communal venom.

What makes such perversions of mal-discretion seem ever more astounding is the fact that these old imperial provisions have to be enforced under the dispensation of our constitution which guarantees free speech, freedom of religion, anti-arbitrariness and equality. Free speech has never meant the right to threaten, terrorise and intimidate. Provocative speech may offend. Mere offensiveness is not illegal or unconstitutional. But the continuance of propaganda machines preaching hate and provoking violence against minorities is simply unacceptable. Failing to stop this kind of propaganda not only subverts the constitution but also civilized principled of togetherness in civil society.

The reason for this differential and, indeed,

differential, treatment of communal forces is because the latter are social terrorists who have taken over and threaten the state and authorities who have become either collaborators of been pressurised into a pusillanimous and cowardly inability to be fair. When fear rules, the rule of law sinks; when such fear is accompanied by communal hate, the entire constitutional enterprise is put in jeopardy.

A constitutional problem of considerable significance lies in the failure of Indian jurisprudence to fully explain the meaning of secularism in the Indian Constitution...

The Constitution struck the right balance. Since everyone knew that the constitution created a dispensation in which the right to religious beliefs and practices would be extensively protected and people and institutions (including minority educational institutions) would not be discriminated against because of their faith, the meaning of secularism was well understood and did not have to be explicated.

The lack of specificity caused academics, with misplaced constitutional spectacles, to take the view that Indian secularism was not really secular because it did not compare favourably with its Americans (doctrine of) separation of church and state! Party for electoral reasons and party for genuine reasons of constitutional ideology, the Preamble of the Indian Constitution was amended in 1976 to include the words "secularism" and "secularism".

Unfortunately, the good, healthy, common sense view of religious tolerance and independence which the early Supreme Court had taken in the fifties was soon washed away to create problems that persist till today.

In the early fifties, especially in Justice B.K. Mukherjea's trilogy of judgements in 1954, a nice balance was struck so that religious institutions would breathe from their own religious inspiration rather than become appendages of the state. When the Attorney General in the Srirur math case (1954) tried to push the court into allowing the state to take over all supposedly non-essential religious practices, the Court firmly refused to endorse such excessive state empowerment.

The general approach was that the State would only ensure financial and constitutional accountability on the part of religious institutions and generally desist from taking them over.

This delicate balance can also be seen in Justice S.R. Das's judgement in the Kerala Education Bill, 1959, in respect of minority ... schools and colleges. It is a tribute to Justice Mukerjea's approach and Justice Das's interpretation of the Constitution that even vexed issues like cow slaughter were dealt with in a manner which elicited consensus all round.

But this balanced approach was short lived.

(To be Concluded)

Shahabuddin's Letter to Chandra Shekhar On Parliamentary Recess for Namaz-i-Juma, 19 September, 1997

I am indeed shocked and surprised at the objection to the traditional adjournment of the Houses for Friday prayer, which you voiced in your speech during the Special Session. Even more surprisingly you linked it with a possible demand by the VHP for adjournment for Archana on Tuesdays and to the meaning of secularism!

Can a new invention which has no scriptural sanction be compared with a traditional facility for worship mandated by the scriptures?

Secondly, the Muslim MP's have never demanded breaks for congregational prayers at mid-day (Zohar) or in the afternoon (Asar) on other working days because these can be performed individually, while the Friday prayer must be performed in a congregation.

Thirdly, the Muslim MP's have never asked for a longer break than the usual lunch hour but only that the House keep to its normal schedule so that they can perform Juma Namaz whose timing falls within the lunch hour. Some members of the Muslim community do adopt a fundamentalist approach in some matters, which leads to conflict between religion and state but you have chosen to illustrate your views by reference to a religious practice which forms an essential core of Islam.

Fourthly, years after the establishment of a Secular State we are still asking for the meaning of secularism in the Indian context. I am quite clear that the motive of those who seek such questions is nothing less than the substitution of the Secular State by a Hindu State. Otherwise, the meaning scope stands fully adumbrated in the Resolutions of the Congress before Independence and the statements of national leaders since then.

Secularisation or Hinduisation

One of the most remarkable features of the current political situation in India is the close alignment between those secularists of this country who are out to "secularise" the Indian Muslims and those Hindu rashtravadis who are after "Indianising" them. Whatever might be the differences between these two groups, they invariably become a single solid block vis-a-vis the Muslim of this country, whom both of them insist on calling separatists, communalists and obscurantists.

That is why, the Muslim secularists are played up as much, if not more, by the Hindu rashtravadi press as by the so-called National press of our country. The Hindu rashtravadis never allow any differences between them and the secularists to come in the way of the latter's efforts through them. They give full publicity to all efforts aimed at "secularising" the Indian Muslims, notwithstanding the fact that these efforts have the official patronage of the ruling Congress, the inveterate enemy of the Hindu rashtravadi. It is obvious that, as far as the rashtravadis are concerned, there is hardly any difference for them between 'secularisation' and 'Indianisation.' (Source: Radiance Viewsweekly, 23 July, 1972)

Gandhiji's Letter to Mountbatten, 27 June, 1947

... If I understood you correctly, you said that Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah and the League members were equally in the right with the Congress members and that possibly Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah was more so. I suggested that this is not humanly possible. One must be wholly right in the comparative sense. You have to make your choice at this very critical stage in the history of this country. If you think that Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah is, on the whole, more correct and more reasonable than the Congress, you should choose the League as your advisers and in all matters be frankly and openly guided by them.

You threw out a hint that Qaid-e-Azam might not be able to let you quit even by 15th August especially if the Congress members did not adopt a helpful attitude... I pointed the initial mistake of the British being party to splitting India into two. It is not possible to undo the mistake. But I hold that it is quite possible and necessary not to put a premium upon the mistake.... You stated me again by telling me that if the partition had not been made during British occupation, the Hindus being the major party would have never allowed partition and held the Muslims by force under subjection. I told you that this was a grave mistake. The question of numbers was wholly untenable in this connection. I cited the classic example of less than one hundred thousand British soldiers holding India under utter subjection. You saw no analogy between the two instances. I suggested the difference was only one of degree.

I place the following for your consideration:

- The Congress has solemnly declared that it would not hold by force any Province within the Union.
- It is physically impossible for millions of caste-ridden Hindus to hold well-knit though fewer millions of Muslims under subjection by force.
- It must not be forgotten that Muslim dynasties have progressively subjugated India by exactly the same means as the English conquerors later did.
- Already there has been a movement to win over to the Muslim side the so-called scheduled classes and the so-called aboriginal races.
- The caste Hindus who are the bugbear are, it can be shown conclusively, a hopeless minority. Of these the armed Rajputs are not yet nationalists as a class. The Brahmins and the Banias are still untrained in the use of arms. Their supremacy where it exists is purely moral. The Sudras count, I am sorry, more as scheduled class than anything else. That such Hindu society by reason of its mere superiority in numbers can crush millions of Muslims is an astounding myth..

I have not shown this to any of my friends. ...

Mountbatten's Reply, 28 June, 1997

I am glad that you have not shown your letter to others, since I should be very sorry that views should be attributed to me which I did not, in fact, express....

(Source: The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi)

Marxist Ideologue E.M.S. Namboodripad

On the Call and the Warning of Mappila Revolt

On the occasion of 25th anniversary of the 1921 Malabar revolt, "called"

the Communist Party issued in 1946 a manifesto under the title *The Call and the warning*. The call signified the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal mass-upsurge of 1921 while the warning showed that the national revolt had been transformed into a sectarian revolt of the Malabar Muslims called the Mappilas. ...

The characterisation of the 1921 revolt as "the call and the warning" was thus appropriate to the 1946 when the post-war revolutionary upsurge began and when mass mobilisation behind the disruptive slogan of division on a communal basis reached the highest phase. What was common to Malabar of 1921 and the India of 1946 was the combination of a national revolt and communal disruption.

... Freedom movement in India began with peasant struggles led by feudal rulers which culminated in the mutiny and national revolt of 1857.

Similar development took place in Kerala as well: the Pazhassi Raja of North Malabar, the Paliathachan of Cochin and the Veluthampi Dalawa of Travancore were the leaders of the first phase of struggle against the British rule-feudal rulers who rallied the rural masses in the struggle against British imperialism. As in the rest of the country, in Kerala too they were suppressed.

The next phase of the freedom struggle was led by the emerging bourgeoisie which, through a series of socio-cultural movements, led by the Indian National Congress formed in 1885. It was out of that movement that the radical forces led by the well-known Lal-Bal-Pal (Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Chandra Pal) and subsequently by Mahatma Gandhi arose. In the latest of these, too, was an element of feudal leadership indicated by the Khilafat movement which brought the leadership of the national movement.

In Malabar ... after the first phase of the feudal led revolt against the British was suppressed, there took place a series of anti-British and anti-Jenmi revolts in ... Malabar (with) individual and group attacks on the British officers and the Jenmis (by) the Mappila peasants... It was to meet this situation that the British ... enacted the Mappila Outrages Act and resorted to measures of severe repression against the Mappilas.

The combination of the Non-Cooperation and Khilafat movements led by Mahatma Gandhi, on the basis of his alliance with the Muslim divines, naturally brought the Mappila peasants and agricultural labourers of south Malabar into the common movement... Thus the anti-imperialist movement was combined with the

agitation for a tenancy act. This made possible for the Muslim majority areas of Malabar to have an alliance of Muslim divines and Hindu Congressmen (who) hoped that Mahatma Gandhi's insistence on non-violence would keep the militancy of the Mappila peasantry in check.

This, of course, was contested by a section of the Congress and Khilafat leaders themselves... The advice ... was, however, rejected; the Mappila peasants were called upon to fight the "Satanic" rule of the British.

But when the Mappila peasants actually revolted, the influential Congress leaders left them to their fate ... and their militancy was denounced as stark violence.

While the Congress leaders should, therefore, share responsibility for what happened in the latter phase of the revolt, one should also note the role played by the Muslim divines to alienate the militant Mappilas from their Hindu counterparts. The revolt which was originally begun as a common movement, was thus transformed into the Mappila revolt.

The biggest sufferers ... were the Mappila peasants... Tens of thousands of them were arrested, sent to the Andamans, put in ... jail; a number of them were shot dead and their women and children orphaned. To cap all these was the notorious "Wagon Tragedy" - hundreds of Mappila peasants were put in a closed railway goods wagon and suffocated to death.

The RSS and other Hindutva politicians shed no tears for these sufferings of the Mappila men, women and children, while they were eloquent on a few incidents in which Hindus were done to death by the Mappilas.

Who, then, were responsible...?

Firstly, the Muslim divines and their political patrons who used the Gandhi-led Non-Cooperation and Khilafat movement to lead their fellowmen along narrow sectarian lines ... away from the common mass movement;

Secondly, the Congress leaders from Mahatma Gandhi downwards; ...

Thirdly, the Congress leaders in Malabar ... itself who refused to raise a little finger against the atrocities committed by the British controlled army and police.

The result ... was that for a full decade, all political activities ceased in the Muslim majority taluks of Malabar. When Mahatma Gandhi launched his Salt Satyagraha movement in 1930 ... required great pressure from ... Congressmen, led by a Gandhian as Kelappan ... to start the ... satyagraha in Malabar as well.

Even then, it was only a small group of nationalist Muslims and left-wing Congressmen who were active in the Mappila majority areas. That (is) how the Left movement emerged in that area in the '30s.

(Source: *The People's Democracy*, 31 August, 1997)

The Garhwali Soldier who Refused to Fire on the Pathans

Chandra Singh Bhandari of the Royal Garhwal Rifles dared to defy the British army in Peshawar on 23 April 1930 to become a national hero. ...

In April 1930, Abdul Ghaffar Khan's Red Shirts began their mass protest marches and held regular meeting to show solidarity... The Patriots had marked 23 April 1930 as a day of total hartal in NWFP. The Central Congress Committee decided to send a high power delegation to provide moral support to the Pathans, but it was stopped on its way by the British following this, British establishments were stoned in Peshawar and some government offices were set on fire. The Army was called in and the Royal Garhwal Rifles was assigned to control the situation.

On 23 April, the city's entire population poured out into the streets, taking out protest marches. A large meeting was held in Shahi Bagh and the crowd was visibly in a rebellious mood. Most of the city was in the hands of the local people who set up their own administration booths and watch-and-ward squads. The second battalion of the Royal Garhwal Regiment led by a Captain Rickett with 72 soldiers under his command, began operation mop-up on the streets while 36 men, including Chandra Singh, were left behind in the barracks for other duties.

When Chandra Singh heard of the regiment's duty orders, he was alarmed. Somehow, we managed to sneak out and reached the city on foot just in time to hear Captain Rickett asking the crowds to disperse. People on rooftops, balconies and streets were screaming anti-British slogans and waving the Indian tricolour.

The young captain saw this surging tide of humanity and panicked. He shouted out orders to the battalion to stand guard. Soldiers, trained to obey commands, followed... Captain Rickett warned the public for the last time to disperse and go home.

There was no room to stand on the streets of the Kissa Kahani Bazar in Peshawar. Everyone was out on the streets. The Red Shirts were marching in the front, holding banners and tricolours. No one paid attention to Captain Rickett's orders. Left with no option, he ordered the soldiers to load arms. Suddenly there was a hush, no one moved. The Captain warned again, "I warn you all for the last time... If you do not disperse I shall order my men to fire... I'll count to ten".

The deadly hush continued. The countdown began: "10...9...8...7... but again no one moved. Captain Rickett barked, "Garhwali! Three rounds fire." The soldiers unlocked their safety bolts. Another order echoed from a

side street, "Garhwali! Cease fire." The soldiers stopped and looked around. Suddenly Chandra Singh walked out of his hiding place. Captain Rickett was furious. He screamed again, "Garhwali! Fire." Chandra Singh roared back with the same authority, "Garhwali! Lower arms." Fuming, Captain Rickett aimed his service revolver at Chandra Singh. Suddenly, like an ocean wave, the crowds pushed forward and roared, "Inquilab Zindabad! Inquilab Zindabad!"

Undaunted, Chandra Singh undid the buttons of his shirt to bare his chest, daring the Captain to shoot him: "You can shoot all of us in this platoon, but we can't shoot our own brethren. "Hearing this the Garhwali soldiers lowered their arms.

Just at that moment, a large contingent of British and Indian soldiers arrived. The Garhwalis were overpowered and taken prisoner. Then the massacre started. The new arrivals began firing to disperse the crowd... Tricolours were torn down, 50-odd people were shot dead and hundreds injured, but the city remained in the control of the people.

The next day all the battalions of Royal Garhwal Rifles refused to obey the orders of their British officers. The situation in barracks and the city became grave and continued to be so till 5 May when more white regiments were brought in and the Royal Air Force bombed the rebel controlled parts of Peshawar and recaptured it. Censorship was clamped down so the rest of the country would not know of the Garhwali rebellion.

The court martial proceedings began in Abbotabad to punish the rebels. Chandra Singh and the other 72 soldiers were prosecuted. Seven turned state witnesses but 66 were found guilty. Chandra Singh Bhandari got a life term. Others were awarded from one to 15 years of internment with hard labour. Chandra Singh was cashiered publicly on the parade grounds. His cap was removed, his war medals snatched away and finally his uniform torn off his body. He was sent to jail... Many top leaders including Subhash Chandra Bose and Jawaharlal Nehru visited Chandra Singh in ... Jail. Gandhiji announced that if there four more soldiers like him: he would free India from the British in no time.

In 1941, Chandra Singh's life sentence was commuted to 12 years and he was released. He was welcomed by the nation as a hero and lived to a ripe age of 88. (He passed away in 1979).

(source: Thakur Ranvir Singh's Report on the Pioneer, 31 August, 1997)

Patrick French on Jinnah, the Founder of Pakistan

... The truth about Mohammad Ali Jinnah is that his political ideology developed and matured in a gradual and complex way over fifty years, and that the founder of the homeland for Indian Muslims remained a secularist of sorts to the end. In Pakistan itself he has been an uncomfortable father of the nation, and it was not until 1993 the first volume of his papers was published... Yet his achievement, however flawed it may be, was phenomenal.

While a student in England, he enjoyed strolling around the streets of London, visiting the British Museum, and developed an interest in politics, going to the House of Commons to listen to the maiden speech by Britain's first Asian member of Parliament, Dadabhai Naoroji. Unlike Gandhi, who undertook a remarkably similar voyage into London life, (he) does not seem subsequently to have been troubled by shedding the outward trappings of his cultural heritage. Before long he had forsaken his Sindhi tunic and turban for smart hand-tailored suits, starched collars, two-tone shoes, spats and a monocle, apparently in emulation of Joseph Chamberlain. In later life he owned over three hundred exquisite suits, and was said never to wear the same silk tie twice to court.

Back in India success came quickly, one colleague remembering him as omnipotent as soon as he came into a courtroom, partially because people were afraid of his precise, powerful, aloof manner. He combed his jet-black hair, grew a tentative moustache, and was said to scrub his hands scrupulously throughout the day. Jinnah attended a meeting of ... the Indian National Congress, in Bombay in 1904 and was immediately marked out as a promising newcomer. Two years later he travelled to Congress session in Calcutta, acting as secretary to the ageing and respected Dadabhai Naoroji. Before long he gained a reputation as an uncompromising but resolutely non-communal politician. He must have realised that if he were to succeed in Congress like Naoroji and Gokhale ... it would not be by virtue of his Muslim origins, but through a secular appeal.

In 1913 he decided to join ... the Muslim League, while insisting that such action did not "imply even the shadow of disloyalty to the larger national cause". As the Congress activist Motilal Nehru told his friends, "unlike most Muslims (Jinnah is) as keen a nationalist as any of us. He is showing the community the way to Hindu-Muslim unity." Jinnah became well known in the years leading up to the First World War as a promoter of religious unity, insisting that Hindus and Muslims should battle together for and an end to colonial rule.

He remained a Congress stalwart, and in 1913 sailed

to Liverpool with Gokhale for an official meeting with Lord Islington, the Under-Secretary of State for India. On return, he put forward a sensible proposal that the India Office should be funded by the British exchequer, rather than from India. He was also adamant that Indians should be allowed to become officers in the Indian army... His political method was to campaign on small but important constitutional issues of this kind. The nations of revolutionary terrorism or a mass popular uprising were anathema to him.

... The fatally antagonistic tenor of Gandhi-Jinnah relationship was set at their very first meeting. It took place in January 1915 at a garden party organised by the Gurjar Sabha (Gujarat Society) of Bombay to celebrate Gandhi's return from South Africa. Jinnah was the chairman of the Society, and in response to his speech of welcome, Gandhi said he was "glad to find a Mohamedan not only belonging to his own region's Sabha, but chairing it". ...

During the first World War (Jinnah) had begun wooing Ratanbai, or 'Ruttie', Petit, the young daughter of one of Bombay's richest Parsi merchants. They courted in Darjeeling ... although her father, Sir Dinshaw Petit, was adamantly opposed to the marriage... She had converted to Islam a few days before (marriage) and taken the name of Mariam.... All links with her family were severed until her separation from Jinnah less than a decade later. Their first and only child, a daughter called Dina, was born on ... August 14, 1919.

... At a dinner given by the Governor of Bombay, Lord Willingdon, Ruttie wore a low-cut Parisian evening dress, and Lady Willingdon promptly ordered a servant to bring her a 'wrap' on the grounds that she might feel cold. Jinnah was so insulted that the couple left at once, and never saw the Willingdon again socially.

When a public leaving party was held for Willingdon by some eminent Bombay Parsis, Jinnah organised a disruptive boycott. ... Jinnah and his supporters were hustled out by the police, and he became rather to his surprise, a hero on the streets of Bombay. A memorial hall was built in his honour following spontaneous fund-raising and named People's Jinnah Hall.... This was the only time that Jinnah ever became physically involved in direct action to make a political point.

When Gandhi had first proposed the concept of Satyagraha, Jinnah was doubtful. He abhorred the notion of abandoning his elegant legal chambers and European clothes. Despite the similarity of their social origin, the two men offered diametrically opposed prototypes of leadership. Jinnah was a constitutionalist and a social

(Contd. on Page 460)

Eminent Educationist Amrik Singh

On Partition Seen as Withdrawal of Islam from India

... The basic questions which then need to be asked ... are:

- a) Has Pakistan helped to resolve the Hindi-Muslim confrontation?
- b) Has the establishment of Pakistan helped the cause of Islam and Muslims...

... In the wake of the British conquest of India ... the (Hindu-Muslim) situation ... became more and more a civilizational conflict between Hinduism and Islam. Two factors which had a direct bearing on it may be re-emphasised. One was the failure of Islam to have more than 25 per cent of Indians as its adherents. The second was the introduction of the one man, one vote system which put the Muslim community in a state of permanent disadvantage.

... With the gradual weakening of the Mughal empire and the consolidation of the British power in India the immediate reaction of the Hindu society was to breathe more freely than it had done for some time. For several hundred years, the Hindu society had been subjugated by Muslim rulers. While a few of the rulers had been motivated by religious considerations, most often their guiding principle was political control and pillage and plunder... At this point of time Muslim society was completely fossilised. This was not true of Hindu society beyond a point. The rediscovery of its glorious past filled Hindu society with a new sense of awareness and assertion. Coupled with this was the fact that, in sociological terms, the Hindu society was much less fossilised and decidedly more dynamic. Certain professional classes in the Hindu society took avidly to the Western ways and, within a few decades, began to play the role of juniors to the British rulers with singular success.

It took the British some time to understand the dynamics of this situation. Once they did so, things started changing rapidly... The issue for Muslim leadership to decide was wherein lay the future of Indian Islam. Did it lie in that trajectory of developments which led to the establishment of Pakistan or did it lie in following a different course of development? Sad to say, the Muslim leadership, and this includes Jinnah, did not understand what was in the interest of the Muslims.

No one was better qualified than Jinnah to get to the root of the problem. He had the necessary intellectual acumen to understand the basic issue. What is more, he had also the character to provide the right kind of leadership... (But) under Jinnah's leadership, Muslim opinion worked itself into a state of mind where it wanted

a separate homeland for itself and nothing short of that.

Faced with this prospect, the Congress party preferred partition and did not choose to accept Jinnah's insistence upon ... parity... This amounted to a change of gears on the part of the Congress. It also meant paying a particularly high price for getting the British off their chest... But, by then, he had become a prisoner of his own past and there was no going back for him.

Muslim public opinion, and Jinnah had played the most decisive role in shaping it, had convinced itself by that time that there was no alternative except to have a separate homeland for the Muslims. Nobody stopped to ask the question: at what price?

... In personal terms, Jinnah's achievement is beyond compare. In historical terms, however, nothing could have been more disastrous for the Muslims than what happened. ... What Jinnah ... lacked, if it may be said, was vision, the ability to foresee what would happen if what he advocated did eventually come to pass. In specific terms he focussed all his energy and ability upon securing for the Muslim society what would suit it in the short run. Whether it would be equally advantageous in the long run was something that eluded him completely. It was a signal failure on his part not to foresee what would happen a century or so hence. In any case, it was a misreading of the history of Islam both in India and the rest of the world... The establishment of Pakistan caused a grievous setback to Islam in the sub-continent. The overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of Pakistan had been living there for several centuries...

Before 1947, both in Pakistan and Bangladesh, the Muslims presence was substantial through not overwhelming. For all practical purposes, they were the senior partners in whatever government came to power. To put it bluntly, the inhabitants of those countries did not gain anything significantly because Pakistan got established... A sovereign state does make a qualitative difference... But to what end and at what cost?...

What about those Muslims who stayed on in India? Not more than a few millions chose to migrate...

... Jinnah did win a victory but it was not from a reluctant antagonist. Could there have been a partition unless the Congress party had also wanted it? Whatever differences might have existed between them or developed at a subsequent stage, Nehru and Patel acted in concert with each other in this matter. Gandhi and Maulana Azad were unhappy about it but they chose to live with their unhappiness... The drive for power on the part of those who shaped Congress policies was so compelling that, in the ultimate reckoning, they decided

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to call Jinnah's bluff, if one may use this (phrase).

It was apparent to the Congress party that Jinnah was playing for high stakes. It was a game of brinkmanship and he knew how to play it with consummate dexterity...

The only party which suffered an irreparable loss was the Indian Muslims. This is precisely what Maulana Azad had warned against... The decision to partition the country and concentrate Muslim population in two different parts of the sub-continent ... amounted to an act of withdrawal of Islam from India? A monumental blunder, if one may add!

This is said on the assumption, and not an unfounded one, that had the country not been partitioned, the Muslim presence in India would have continued to be an important factor. Political developments would have taken a sharply different turn and all kinds of other consequences would have followed...

... As if all this is not tragic enough, the Hindu majority in India is still not convinced that, after a thousand years of uninterrupted subjugation, first at the hands of Muslim rulers and then the British, the Hindus (if it may be put that way) now have a state of their own, so to speak, and that this has happened for the first time in recent history has its own significance...

... Sooner or later, Pakistan will have to come to terms with the historical fact that (the Prophet's) followers in India let him down. Their first failure was not to have spread his message. Their second failure was to have split themselves into two (and later three parts) and marginalised themselves politically to that extent (in India and the region)....

(Contd. from Page 458)

elitist, who did not wish to soil his carefully scrubbed hands by consorting with the masses. As he told Gandhi, a non-cooperative strategy would in his view appeal mainly to the young, the ignorant and the illiterate. He was right of course, but it was precisely this spread of the freedom movement authorities on the back foot.

At Christmas 1920, with Gandhi's radical tactics in the ascendant, there was a meeting of Congress at Nagpur. Membership was rising fast, and a new type of activist was emerging. Not only was Gandhi generating huge excitement among Hindus, but he was also gaining Muslim support through his backing of the Khilafat movement. For the first time, a nationalist leader had successfully appealed to workers and peasants from both communities. A resolution at Nagpur endorsing Gandhi's strategy was greeted by deafening prolonged cheers and applause', and seconded by the once-deported Congress hero Lala Lajpat Rai. Jinnah, resolute as ever in his opinions, opposed the mood of the meeting, determined to state that he believed such radicalism would be

Shahabuddin's Reply to Amrik Singh, 20 September, 1997

I have gone through your paper "Beyond the Partition" which you kindly sent me. I broadly agree with your analysis of the factors that led to Partition. I think it is impossible to distribute blame (or credit), through at the end of it all, the Muslim community, under the spell of the AIML and its leader Jinnah, became the decisive factor. But I feel that there was a historic and demographic basis for Pakistan, as it finally emerged, even without the support of the Muslim community in Muslim-minority provinces.

I do not share your view that the Partition is to be seen as an 'Act of withdrawal of Islam from India'. Because Islam is an inseparable element in the Indian culture, in the ethos of all its people, not to speak of the millions who continue to profess Islam in our country. Islam is and shall be a living reality in this land. To my mind Islam is not synonymous with power or with Pakistan or with the Muslim-majority states. Muslim Indians, today, are still the biggest religious group and cannot be marginalised permanently unless India became a Hindu State or Hindu majoritarianism holds sway.

Partition was, however, foreseen, by our Ulema as a historic set-back to the propagation of Islam in the Sub-continent. In a practical sense they were right for in reaction to the Partition, an anti-Islamic and anti-Muslim environment has been created in India, which will take generations to be corrected. Similarly, for the same reason, the foundation of the Secular State in India remains fragile, particularly because of the lingering folk memory which has been hardened and broadened by persistent propaganda which focusses on the negative aspects of the encounter to the total exclusion of the positive.

I also feel that the Muslim rule in India was not Islamic rule. For one thing, hardly any Muslim ruler recognised the authority of the Khalifa or governed in accordance with the Shariat. Of course, all of them exploited Islam for political and personal purposes.

counterproductive. His feelings towards Gandhi ... had never been warm, but the fanaticism with which Gandhi was now being hailed must have made things worse...

Jinnah thought Gandhi's tactics were turning a political campaign into an essentially spiritual movement. As he stalked up to the platform he was howled down with cries of 'Shame, shame', and berated for referring to his opponent as 'Mr. Gandhi'. It is notable that there is no report of the Mahatma rebuking his disciples. So it was that the proponent of Hindu-Muslim unity and author of the Lucknow Pact was hounded from the Congress...

(Source: The Outlook, 6 September, 1997)

Narendra Singh Sarila on the Inevitability of Partition

That Indian Independence and unity were irreconcilable and neither the Indians nor the British are to blame for the partition of India, is the view taken by several commentators in the soul-searching that has gone on during India's 50th anniversary celebrations. Since in democracies, various sections of the population have to settle their political differences among themselves, the hidden fissures in society - as here between Muslims and Hindus - come to the surface, as the election processes advance.

Nevertheless one may wonder whether unity could not have been preserved if, only if:

- * In 1934 the British had not decreed the Communal Award giving extraordinary weightage to Muslim voters in elections and later Churchill's government had not so doggedly supported to Mr. Jinnah's separatist demands, ("Hindoostan, Muslimstan and Princesstan", as Churchill used to say).
- * In 1939 the Congress Party governments that then held power in eight of the eleven British Indian provinces had not resigned, thereby reducing the British need to depend on the Congress Party's help to mobilise Indian resources for the war and in return pay heed to its demands.
- * In 1942 Mahatma Gandhi had not launched the Quit India movement which was taken in Britain as a stab in the back at the moment of their direct peril and turned them decisively against Mr. Gandhi and towards Mr. Jinnah, who was quick to promise that he would try to ensure the loyalty of Muslim troops - nearly 40% of the British-Indian Army - in the war;
- * In the post-war negotiations for Independence, the Congress Party had on the one hand given a clear indication to a weakened and insecure British that their government of a free India would cooperate on issues of British's vital interests in the world e.g. in the Middle East and remain in the Commonwealth provided they abandoned ideas of partition; and to threaten them with a general revolt which Britain had neither the resources nor the will to suppress, if they did not; and refused to enter the Viceroy's Executive Council till the matter was clarified; and
- * By 1946 the Congress Party had abandoned the creed of passive resistance and prepared the masses to resist partition...

The problem of Muslim separatism was not the result of economic factors or capable of being solved by socialism or secularism; it had to be tackled politically in the run-up to independence, not least with the help of the third party, Britain. After all, this was the track finally

adopted in 1947 with Mountbatten. And it was through British cooperation that four-fifths of India was saved as one unit and the Indian princely states brought in.

It is a mistaken view expressed by some commentators that any policy of 'give and take' with Britain during the period 1939 to 1946 would have alienated the people from the Congress Party, because the masses trusted Mahatma Gandhi and would have followed him. After all the Congress did not fracture when finally in 1947 a policy of compromise with Britain and even partition and membership of the Commonwealth were agreed to.

The problem was our leaders' sensitiveness that compromise with the colonial power would be demeaning to India's so called "self respect" and their impatience to start remoulding India economically and socially.

It is also not correct that the acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan, because it denied Pakistan, would have ensured Indian unity. Under this plan there was a built-in option for the whole of Punjab, Sindh, the NWFP and Baluchistan on the one side and the whole of Bengal and Assam on the other, which were then under Muslim League governments, to secede after British withdrawal. ...

I am convinced that if these two groups of provinces had broken away ... the Congress Party, at the Centre would have shunned to suppress the secession for fear of a civil war...

(Source: The Times of India, 10 September, 1997)

Jinnah and the Two Nation Theory

Jinnah was influenced by the liberal Balkrishnan Gokhale and defended Lokmanya Tilak when the British made him stand on the dock. There were few who could match his secularism. He refused to call Gandhi Mahatma. He opposed Gandhi for supporting the Khilafat movement and told him not to encourage the Maulanas and avoid the use of religion in politics. He ate ... consumed ... and his sister Fatima, who mostly accompanied him, did not observe purdah. He offered namaz more as a political weapon than for his own spiritual needs. ...

..From a secular position in the earlier phase of his political career, Jinnah used religion in a negative way for the creation of Pakistan. He was representative of the weak Muslim business classes who could not see their future in a united India as the Hindu business class was comparatively strong.

The day he won Pakistan he threw away the two nation theory like a used...

(Lajpat Rai in The New Age, 31 August - 6 September, 1997)

Shahid Choudhury on Iqbal and the Concept of Pakistan

On the death anniversary of the poet Muhammad Iqbal in April 1942 Muhammad Ali Jinnah issued a statement: "He (Iqbal) was one of the first to conceive of the feasibility of the division of India on national lines as the only solution to India's political problem". Since then Iqbal has been widely credited, particularly by Pakistani thinkers, as being one of the architects of Pakistan. In support of their argument they quote his presidential address delivered at the annual session of the Muslim League at Allahabad in 1930 wherein he expressed his "personal wish" that "the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim state appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of North-West India."

... Iqbal never advocated the partition of India, or the creation of an independent and sovereign state of Pakistan. He was an ardent proponent of federalism. He desired a consolidated Muslim majority autonomous state within the Indian federation. In his speech at Allahabad on December 29, 1930 he unambiguously stated: "Muslims demand federation because it is pre-eminently a solution to India's most difficult problem, i.e. the communal problem... I would never advise Muslims of India to agree to a system, whether of British or Indian origin, which virtually negates the principle of true federation or fails to recognise them as a distinct political entity."

Iqbal had no prejudice against any community or nation. All he desired was to see that Islam returns to its pristine simplicity. In an interview with *The Bombay Chronicle*, on the eve of his departure for London to attend the Second Round Table Conference in 1931, he said: "I wish to see Indians living in peace and I am convinced that such a thing is possible even while every community retains its culture and individuality". Iqbal endorsed the federal system because he was convinced that it gave a community maximum freedom and fair play to realise its potentialities and thereby retain its culture and individuality. While presiding over a session of the Muslim Conference in 1932 he said: "Our ideal is well defined. It is to win in the coming Constitution a position for Islam which may bring her opportunities to fulfil in this country."

... Iqbal could not have asked for the creation of a separate Muslim state because he was opposed to territorial nationalism... This is well-expressed in his poem *Wataniyat* (Nationalism):

The rivalry of people is due to this,
The subjugation through commerce is due to this.
If politics is devoid of truth, it is because of this
If the home of the weak is ruined, it is because of this,
It is this which divides the creatures of God.

Be that as it may, Iqbal never got confused between nationalism and patriotism. For him they were two entirely different concepts.

He said: "I am opposed to nationalism as it is understood in Europe, not because if it is allowed to develop in India it is likely to bring less material gain to Muslims. I am opposed to it because I see in it the germs of atheistic materialism which I look upon the greatest danger to modern humanity. Patriotism is a perfectly natural virtue and has a place in the moral life of man. Yet that which really matters is a man's faith, his culture, his historical tradition. These are the things which in my eyes are worth living for and dying for, and not the piece of earth with which the spirit of man happens to be temporarily associated." The same thoughts are reflected in his following couplet:

Attachment to a piece of land leads to ruin,
Live in the ocean, free from local attachments like a fish

"Iqbal's opposition to nationalism was more than mere emotional reaction against a passing phase of history. It was an outcome of his dynamic view of life", says the author of *Social Philosophy* of Sir Muhammad Iqbal, Dr. A.A. Helal. Iqbal believed in international humanism. He advocated that the world belongs to God and therefore all human beings are citizens of the world and not of a particular nation.

Iqbal, however, tolerated boundaries between countries for facilities of reference, or out of consideration for administrative convenience, or out of deference to the inherent diversity found in human nature which has to be respected as a reality; and not for restricting the mental horizon of its denizens. To overcome the problems caused by natural distinctions Iqbal advocated the formation of a League of Human Beings instead of the League of Nations. As such the ultimate goal of his federal system was international humanism.

Iqbal's advocacy of a federal system and his philosophy of international humanism (go against the view) that he ... fathered the Pakistan idea. Edward Thompson, a close friend of the poet, confirms this conclusion in his book *Enlist India for Freedom*. He writes: "In *The Observer* I once said he (Iqbal) supported the Pakistan plan. Iqbal was a friend, and he set my misconception right. After speaking of his despondency as the chaos he saw coming 'on my vast undisciplined and starving land...' he went on to say that he thought the Pakistan plan would be disastrous to the British government, disastrous to the Hindu community, disastrous to the Moslem community".

(Source: *The Nation and the World*, 1 September, 1997)

Madras High Court on Revision of Electoral Roll

C. Lakshmi Narain, Petitioner v. The Chief Election Commissioner, Nirvachan Sadan, New Delhi and others, Respondents.

S.S. SUBRAMANI AND JAGADEESAN, JJ.

Representation of the People Act (43 of 1950), Sections 21, 23, 24 - Electoral roll - Preparation and publication according to law - A person alleging omission of his name and of many others - Not availing of remedy under the Act - Public interest litigation challenging non-inclusion of names - Not maintainable.

When the Act has provided due machineries for the relief, the petitioner claiming that his name and of many others is not included in the voters list, having failed to seek the statutory remedies, cannot be given any relief under the Extraordinary Original Jurisdiction under Section 225 of the Constitution of India. The petitioner has alleged that the omission of his name and the omission of the names of thousands of others is the dereliction of duty on the part of the persons entrusted with the Registration. It is a matter for evidence, since by way of an affidavit the High Court may not be in a position to decide this issue. The plea that omission of the name in the electoral roll is a fraud and with mala fide intention cannot be entertained in the absence of any material to show that the persons entrusted with the electoral registration work has got any personal animosity against the petitioner or the persons, whose name have been left out in the electoral rolls or the authorities belong to any particular political party. In case of defective preparation of the electoral rolls, there is a duty cast upon the persons whose names have been omitted or whose rights have been affected to make representation to the Electoral Registration Officer as per Section 23 of the Representation of the People Act. Having failed to discharge their duties, the petitioner at this belated stage cannot be permitted to plead that he had lost his fundamental right of voting.

If the relief of inclusion of names of petitioner etc. in voters' list granted, it will mean that the petitioner and his family members must be permitted to vote even though their names are not on the electoral rolls. Such a writ of mandamus cannot be issued, since it is opposed to law. Section 62(1) is a bar for granting such a relief and it will be against the mandate of sub-section (3) of Section 23 and thus would be illegal.

If a person chooses not to avail himself or herself of the procedure prescribed by the Act to get himself registered as a voter, then he loses the right to vote conferred by Section 62, Representation of the People Act, 1951. The right to vote and the right to get the name included in the electoral roll are only statutory rights and not common law right. Before seeking for the issue of a writ of mandamus or any other writ, the person coming to

Court has to show that he has got a legal right and that in view of the act or omission of the respondent, he could not exercise that legal right. The legal right claimed by the petitioner is that, being citizen, he has got a right to vote. The right to vote pre-supposes that the names of the petitioners and his family members are included in the electoral roll. The petitioner will get the legal right to vote only if they are voters and their names are included in the rolls prepared. If that legal right is absent, the petitioner has to no locus standi to maintain the writ petition.

It is settled law that election has to be held on the basis of electoral rolls in force on the last date of making nominations. Granting the relief of inclusion of names in electoral roll will amount to an interference with the electoral process which has already commenced. Once the election process has begun, the powers under Article 226 of the Constitution cannot be invoked.

(Source: AIR 1997 Madras 125)

Kerala High Court On Ramazan Vacation

Parent-Teachers' Association, Government Lower Primary School, Appellant v. Chalil Kunhimmu Haji and others, Respondents.

U.P. SINGH, C.J. AND S. SANKARASUBBAN, J.

Constitution of India, Articles 25, 26 and 51A - Secularism - Granting of concession by State - To avail of Ramzan holidays by schools where Muslim students are in majority and allowing them to work during midsummer holidays - Does not affect secular nature of State - It is also not violative of Rule 5(4) of Kerala Education Rules.

Granting a concession by the State to avail of the Ramzan holidays by the schools where Muslim students are the majority and allowing them to work during the midsummer holidays does not calculate the sabotage secularism and does not affect the secular nature of the State such a concession would not also be violative of Articles 15, 16, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30 and 51-A of the Constitution.

Allowing the citizens to discharge their religious functions is not against the secular interest of the State. Article 25 not only protects the freedom of religious opinion, but it also protects acts done in pursuance of a religion, which is obvious by the expression 'practice of religion' in Article 25. The religious practices should be regarded as a matter of religion within the meaning of Article 26(b) of the Constitution. The protection under Articles 25 and 26 of the Constitution also extends to the acts done in pursuance of religion and, therefore, contain a guarantee for rituals and observances, ceremonies and modes of worship, which are integral parts of religion.

(Source: AIR 1997 Kerala 97)

NCERT Texts and Nationalism

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) textbooks are engaged in the mission of construction of Indianness and often follow a prescriptive approach ... but these very often present no imaginative oppositional images. And more often than not, the construction of Indianness, especially in Hindi textbooks equated with the Hindu culture and heritage.

This is the conclusion of research scholar from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), Ms. Kavita Krishnan, in a survey of text-books produced by the NCERT since Independence with special focus on Hindi textbooks...

The text-books try to be an amalgamation of concerned nationalism and modern outlook and the principals required for an enduring culture do find reflection... "The modern outlook, however, is yet to develop," she added.

Hindi is perceived as a Sanskriti bhasha (the language of culture) and it is supposed to promote good values and Indian culture as a mother-tongue and in its function as a national language, it is supposed to inculcate nationalism, Ms. Krishnan said, "Many times, the chapters in the NCERT Hindi text-books turn out to be typical examples of official culture and nationalism"...

In some cases, cultural nationalism is sought to be projected from a secular perspective also as in a chapter written by Sheila Dhar... Bharatiyata is defined as that remarkable quality which has given cultural continuity to the nation and tolerance towards the Videshi emerges as its fundamental element, she observed...

In an essay on Ibrahim Gandhi in one of the Hindi textbooks, says Ms. Krishnan, the word patriot is used for Gandhi, the word invader is used for Abdali and the word traitor is used for Shuja-ud-Daullah. Muslim figures in such narratives are presented in a poor light as is evident from the statement "Shuja-ud-Daullah supports Abdali out of religious solidarity. "Most chapters on Deshprem have a cultural nationalism that trumpets the Hindu view-point, she felt.

"The problem herein," says, Ms. Krishnan, "lies in the "historical construction of secular nationalism," Standard Hindi often becomes an equivalent of Sanskritised Hindi... There are some texts which are derived from the progressive tradition, no doubt, like Premchand's shortstories but the selection is a simple view-point which represents the state as the saviour ignoring ... as people's struggle.

Thus, Ms. Krishnan's conclusion is that the construction of Indianness is the pre-dominant theme of the NCERT textbooks written in Hindi...

(Source: The Hindu, 13 September, 1997)

Shahabuddin's Letter to Minister of Human Resource Development, On Mid-Day Meal Scheme to Maktabas, Madarsas and Pathshalas, 6 August, 1997

The Mid-Day Meal Scheme has proved to be an effective incentive for elementary education and has served to raise the attendance level and reduce the drop-out rate.

However, it does not cover students of Maktabas, Madarsas and Pathshalas. I request that at least those Maktabas, Madarsas and Pathshalas which are recognised by the State authorities and/or receive grants-in-aid from the State Governments should be included. Similarly educational facilities provided by other religious groups may also be brought under the purview of the Scheme.

Reply of Human Resource Development, Government of India

I have received your letter dated 6.8.1997 regarding extension of Mid-Day Meal scheme to the Maktabas, Madarsas and Pathshalas.

I am having the matter looked into.

(Source: Letter No. HRM/7540/C dated 13 August, 1997 to S. Shahabuddin)

Government Statements On Minority Status to Jamia Millia Islamia

There was an agitation in Jamia Millia Islamia following a judgement of Delhi High Court striking down certain reservations in Admissions. The demands raised was to bring about certain amendments in Jamia Millia Islamia Act to emphasize its distinctive historical character. The National Commission on Minorities has also endorsed these demands. As the questions relating to grant of minority status to educational institutions, including Universities, are currently subjudice before an 11 Judge Bench of the Supreme Court, a decision on these issues by the Government would not be possible at this stage.

The Jamia Millia Islamia University authorities have already filed an appeal against the orders; they are also in the process of evolving an interim admission policy catering to particular interests of the Jamia community within the framework of the orders of the Court.

Normalcy has now been restored on the campus; examinations and other academic activities are proceeding smoothly.

(Source: LSUQ No. 810/28.7.1997 by G.M. Banatwalla and V. Goel)

Mushirul Hasan on Murder of Urdu: A Corpse Awaiting Burial

... It is frequently argued that the vocal protagonists of Hindi have, through their insularity and conservatism, reinforced their image of being 'Hindu' in orientation, aggressive in approach and intolerant towards other languages. (But) Hindi's future rests with the Hindi-wallahs and their willingness to distance, if not delink, their language from its exclusive 'Hindu' specificity. Slogans like Hind, Hindu, Hindi - yeh tin hamare liye ek hain (Hindi, or India, Hindu and the Hindi language - are the same for us)... can hardly serve the cause of Hindi. It is important to accept ... the richness and variety of other literary and cultural traditions. The present signs are not encouraging.

Consider the anti-Urdu campaigns spearheaded by the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan before and after Independence. Its leaders were instinctively hostile to any trace of Muslim/Islamic inheritance, and hence Hindustani, which they saw as a mask for Urdu, was anathema to them. They depicted Urdu as a Muslim language, which it was not, identified it with the Pakistan Movement and claimed that its style was distinctly 'unnational', if not anti-national. The position of Hindi was assured after the Constituent Assembly declared it as the national language. Urdu was not its rival. Yet, active and aggressive campaigns were mounted to suppress the language of Mir and Ghalib, spoken by millions of people of all religious creeds and a vital and graceful aspect of a vibrant composite tradition in the Indo-Gangetic belt.

Not much has changed over the last five decades. The establishment-oriented Urdu speakers boast of numerous Urdu Akademis and Translation Bureaus, housed in elegant buildings with plenty of funds to dole out to friends and admirers. Some take pride in Urdu being the language of Bollywood; others draw satisfaction from awards and scholarships given to literary figures in the glittering halls of the Raj Bhavans and the Rashtrapati Bhavan. Some derive comfort from the mere fact that mushairas, where sections of the audience pronounce Ghalib as Galib and applaud poor quality romantic 'poetry', attract larger audiences than the Kavi Sammelans.

In reality, Urdu has been marginalised in the country as a whole. Even the democratic and secular forces have not shown much inclination to defend a language that symbolises our composite heritage. In Uttar Pradesh, the then Chief Minister V.P. Singh, after failing to act on repeated promises, finally issued an ordinance in 1982 granting Urdu the status of a 'second language' (not second official language). His government did not convert the ordinance into legislation. Five years later, when the Vidhan Sabha adopted the Official Language

(Amendment) Bill in 1989 amid unruly scenes, the BJP MLAs stormed into the well and raised slogans like Urdu Bill Murdabad (Death to the Urdu Bill) and Ek Rajya, ek Bhasha, nahi chahiye dusri Bhasha (One state, one language, a second language not required).

Urdu survives lazily in the alleys and by-lanes of Muslim localities. It has lost its position in Osmania University, Hyderabad, Delhi's Jamia Millia Islamia and the Aligarh Muslim University. An Urdu 'University' languishes in Aligarh; another one is in the making at Hyderabad. Except for some districts in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, Urdu has ceased to be the language of administration, the judiciary and the police. Even symbolic attempts to promote Urdu have led to a violent backlash. Thus, riots were triggered off when the Uttar Pradesh Government decided to make Urdu the state's second official language in 1989. A ten-minute Urdu television news bulletin in Bangalore led to riots in October 1994, leaving 30 dead.

Urdu poetry? How can there be Urdu poetry when there is no Urdu language left? If is dead, finished. The defeat of the Moghuls by the British threw a noose over its head, and the defeat of the British by the Hindi-wallahs tightened it. So now ... its corpse is lying here, waiting to be buried. This is not just the anguish of a living Urdu poet in Anita Desai's novel, but a summation of the grievance of Urdu-speakers all over the country. The story of a weak, gasping poet in In Custody is, indeed, the story of Urdu language and poetry.

The learning of Urdu is necessary to promote multiculturalism. Its creative potential must be encouraged and stifled in the interest of a nationwide literary and cultural Renaissance and the flowering of our languages. The Indian state should, in this 50th year of Independence, take tangible steps to establish Urdu schools and colleges and train Urdu teachers who are in short supply...

(Source: The Indian Express, 20 September, 1997)

The Organiser On Use of Urdu Words by DD

The news in Hindi on DD includes a large number of unfamiliar Urdu words for which Hindi words of common usage are available ... (e.g. alawa, hissa, Vajah, zarurat, Istifa, swal, taraf, ummeed, mulakat, garmjoshi etc). Even the word khabar is often used instead of samachar.

On the other hand, the DD News in Urdu does not allow any Hindi words to creep in. At times even an English word is used but not Hindi. If the policy is to guard the purity of Urdu and Arabic and turn DD's Hindi into "Hindustani", the Government ... should say so and change the title from Hindi Samachar to "Hindustan"

(Source: The Organiser, 20 July, 1997)

Shahabuddin's Letter to Chief Minister of M.P. on Urdu, 3 September, 1997

The Urdu-speaking minority in M.P. is facing several handicaps and I request you to consider the following suggestions for removing their handicaps:-

Teaching of Urdu:

1. Urdu should be taught as used as medium of instruction at the primary stage for all children whose parents declare Urdu as their Mother Tongue.
2. Urdu should be taught as a compulsory Mother Tongue at the middle level.
3. Urdu, as Mother Tongue should be the First Language at the high school level and for such students, Hindi should be compulsory as Second Language.
4. For this requisite number of additional posts of Urdu Language and Urdu-medium teachers of other subjects should be created and all Urdu language and Urdu medium school teachers posts should be filled during the current year.

Use of Urdu in Administration:

5. In the offices of all government departments from the State to the Panchayat level in all districts, Blocks, and Panchayats where the Urdu-speaking population forms 10% or more of the total population, Urdu translators should be appointed so that petitions and application received in Urdu receive due and proper attention. In such places, all public places and government offices should have sign boards and nameplates in Urdu as well.
6. All official announcements and advertisements particularly these relating to government programmes of general and minorities welfare should be issued in Urdu also.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Chairman, M.P. Minorities Commission for consideration.

Shahabuddin's Letter to V.N. Gadgil On Compulsory Teaching of Sanskrit in School, 3 September, 1997

As it is our school children have to carry a heavy load of languages - Mother Tongue Hindi or any other MIL and English.

The ideal arrangement is to begin with Mother Tongue at primary school stage, add Hindi or any other MIL at the middle school stage and add English at the high school stage.

In some states the children who have Hindi as Mother Tongue enjoy the option of taking Sanskrit as Second Language. Some states includes Sanskrit as an optional language alongwith English as the Third Language.

For non-Hindi linguistic minorities in non-Hindi

Urdu: Abdus Samad Khan's Collection in Hyderabad

... Mohammed Abdus Samad Khan a mechanic-turned-connoisseur ... of books ... collected rarest of rare Urdu books, magazines, newspapers and manuscripts.

The collection which over 50 years grew into one of the biggest collection of Urdu books in the world, has one been taken over ... by the Urdu Research Library Consortium, floated by a number of American universities and libraries at the initiative of Chicago University. It is now working with a group of Hyderabadis to make this beautiful collection of books accessible to American book lovers and students of Urdu literature through internet...

After the completion of the project of preservation and access in the next seven years, the consortium will transfer the ownership of this collection to the sundraiah Vignana Kendra, a private trust...

Samad Khan, who skipped many his meals to purchase these books, said he decided to hand over this collection to the American consortium for two reasons. One he had no place or resources to maintain this collection and the books were getting destroyed and secondly there was no one to look after them after him.

... (On any) subject be it history, religion, philosophy travelogue and cooking. (The collection) has the largest number of books in Urdu language. There are also rare Urdu books in engineering, medicine and other sciences. Some of these books formed part of the textbooks when science and engineering was taught in Urdu in Osmania University of Hyderabad... There are 2,000 titles on history 12,000 titles on development of the Urdu language, 2,500 volumes on Urdu poetry, 2,000 biographies and bibliographies and 4,000 titles on religion, including Hinduism and Jainism. There are hundreds of books on women, humour, theatre, drama and art... There are old magazines which are perhaps not available anywhere in the world. There (are many) old manuscripts...

The collection reveals that the Urdu has the highest number of translation of Hindu religious text like Ramayana, Mahabharat and Gita...

States, a 4th language becomes essential M.T., Principal Language of the State, Hindi and English.

Your Bill would add a 4th language in the Hindi-speaking States and a 5th language in the non-Hindi speaking States for many students. Would this be fair and academically proper?

I request you, therefore, to reconsider your suggestion and seek inclusion of Sanskrit within the Hindi syllabus or as an optional language as the Third Language, where it is not.

Muslim Directors of Private Sector

S.No.	Company	Total	Muslim
1.	Cimmco Birla	14	NIL
2.	TN Newsprint and Papers	8	NIL
3.	Hindustan Times	8	NIL
4.	BPL Refrigeration	8	NIL
5.	Gulshan Sugars and Chemicals	6	NIL
6.	Oriental Hotels	12	1
	(S.H. Syed Yusuff)		
7.	Shriram Bearings	12	NIL
8.	SIV Industries	15	NIL
9.	Sakthi Sugars	17	1
	(M. Mohamed Hamsa)		
10.	Mefcom Agro Industries	8	NIL
11.	Dabur India	13	NIL
12.	Samtel Color	6	NIL
13.	Punjab Chemicals & Pharma.	12	NIL
14.	EID - Parry (India)	8	NIL
15.	India Cements	12	1
	(V.M. Mohd. Meeran)		
16.	Goodlass Nerolac Paints	13	NIL
17.	Gujarat Synthwood	9	NIL
18.	Vam Organic Chemicals	10	NIL
19.	Tata Chemicals	17	1
	(Saleem Shervani)		
20.	Ashok Leyland	15	NIL
21.	S.I. Petrochemicals	18	NIL
22.	Tractors and Farm Equipment	9	NIL
23.	S.R.P. Tools	6	1
	(K.M. Kader Mohideen)		
24.	The Paper Products	9	1
	(Abdul Jabbar)		
25.	Bombay Dyeing & Manuf.	16	NIL
26.	Zee Telefilms	5	NIL
27.	Udaipur Phosphates & Fertilisers	8	NIL
28.	GKW	13	NIL
29.	Wheels India	6	NIL
30.	Radhika Spinning Mills	9	NIL
31.	Apollo Hospitals Enterprise	12	2
	(Habibullah Badsha)		
	(Rafeeqe Ahamed)		
32.	Bharat Explosives	10	NIL
33.	DCM Shriram Consolidated	11	1
	(H. Ansari)		
34.	East India Syntex	9	NIL
35.	JCT Electronics	9	NIL
36.	HUDCO	9	NIL
37.	Daurala Organics	9	NIL
38.	Wilwayfort India	5	NIL
39.	Chettinad Cement Corporation	11	NIL
40.	Sir Shadi Lal Enterprises	11	NIL
41.	The KCP	9	NIL
42.	Shreyans Industries	9	NIL

- * **ALI SARDAR JAFRI** awarded Saint Dhyaneswar Award, 1997.
- * **MAULANA HABIBUR RAHMAN NOMANI** elected President of All India Momin Conference. New Delhi, 23 June, 1997.
- * **TANVEER USMAN MANIYAR** topped the Maharashtra Secondary School Certificate Examination, 1997. Mumbai, 28 June, 1997.
- * **MOHAMMAD MASADUR RAHMAN BAIDYA** congratulated for his superhuman feat of crossing the English Channel.
- * **MEHMOODUR RAHMAN, VC, AMU** conferred honorary Degree of D. Litt. by Banaras Hindu University. New Delhi, 2 July, 1997.
- * **USTAD AMJAD ALI KHAN** honoured by University of York with honorary degree of doctorate. London, 12 July, 1997.
- * **DILIP KUMAR** awarded Pakistan's highest civil medal. New Delhi, 14 August, 1997.
- * **S. ATHAR SHER, RIAZUR RAHMAN SHERWANI, SYED MOHD. WAZE H RASHEED NADVI** for Arabic and **MOHAMMAD SHAMOON ISRAILI & DR. SYED NAIYER MASUD RIZVI** for Persian awarded Certificate of Honour. New Delhi, 16 August, 1997.
- * **GHULAM MAHMOOD BANATWALLA** awarded Fazl-e-Haq Khairabadi Award. New Delhi, 27 August, 1997.
- * **OBAIDULLAH AZMI, C.M. IBRAHIM AND WASEEM AHMED** appointed Vice-President, Treasurer and All India General Secretary respectively of Janata Dal. New Delhi, 27 August, 1997.
- * **SHABANA AZMI** nominated to the Rajya Sabha. New Delhi, 27 August, 1997.
- * **S. BASHEERUDDIN** selected for Bharat Excellence Award. Hyderabad, 27 August, 1997.
- * **ZAMEER AHMAD KHAN** appointed President, AMU Students Union. Aligarh, 31 August, 1997.
- * **AIR MARSHAL S.S. HUSSAIN NAQVI** appointed Deputy Chief of Air Staff. New Delhi, 9 Sept., 1997.
- * **MOHD. OSMAN** appointed as National General Secretary of the Samajwadi Party. New Delhi, 20 September, 1997.
- * **USTAD ALI AKBAR KHAN** honoured America's prestigious National Heritage Award. Washington, 23 September, 1997.
- * **SYED MOHD. YASEEN NADEEM** nominated member of Municipal Corporation of Delhi.
- * **HAFIZ MOHD. YAHYA** and **MAULANA ABDUS SALAM RAHMANI** elected Ameer and Naib Ameer respectively of Jamiat-ul-Hadees Hind.
- * **JUSTICE MOHAMED ANWAR** appointed Judge of Karnataka High Court.

UP: Government Encroachment on Idgah

Syed Yusuf on Tension & Violence in Shaheednagar, Ghaziabad

The Shaheednagar Idgah dispute (Loni Tq. Ghaziabad, UP) presents a case study of how (low hostile communal forces can stoop... Grant of permission to utilise a site as Idgah and then its unilateral rescinding by an unauthorised official after about fifteen years - employing in the meantime different ploys to deprive the Muslims of their duly registered wakf land and even attempting to deploy communal and criminal elements - can be described as nothing but utter disregard for the law of the land...

Formal Permission

Local Muslims claim that Khasra Nos. 1276 and 1277 of Pasonda village falling within Sahibabad Police Station has been in use as an Idgah (open space for offering Id prayers) for the past over two decades. The senior Superintendent of Police, Ghaziabad says in his report dated 27.2.1997 to the Chief Judicial Magistrate, District Court, Ghaziabad (No. ST/LLP-99-97) that the date of construction of the Idgah's (western) wall shows 1980. He also admits that Shri Uday Veer Singh Tomar, Pargana Magistrate, in his letter No. 10045/AST/MIS Shahaheednagar/81 dated 6th October 1981, had permitted Muslims to offer Id prayers in a part of Khasra Nos. 1276 and 1277 "D" Block, Pasonda village, Sahibabad Thana, Ghaziabad District... There is also a Wakf Survey Proforma bearing No. 256/85 dated 20th July 1985 showing Khasra Nos. 1276 and 1277 of Pasonda village (Ghaziabad) as wakf lands for Idgah, Shaheednagar. A Government order was issued on 1.7.1989 and necessary changes in the revenue records showing the said land as wakf property instead of banjar (barren land) were effected by virtue of Wakf Commissioner's orders dated 25.6.1993.

(Idgah) was formally registered as a Sunni Wakf with the UP Central Board of Wakfs Lucknow on 21.1.1995 under Registration No. 2513 showing Khasra Nos. 1276 and 1277 as Wakf Idgah, Shaheednagar, with one Qari Naimuddin as Secretary and one Abdur Rasheed as President of the Wakf Committee.

The Survey Commissioner's report dated 20.7.1995 confirms that the said property is a wakf property.

The District Magistrate Ghaziabad, Dr. B.O. Nasal Ratan, in his letter dated 23.1.1996 to the Managing Director, UP Wakf Development Corporation Lucknow confirms on the basis of ... the Tahsildar, Ghaziabad's Report that Wakf Registration No. 2513 of Shaheednagar Idgah comprising Khasra Nos. 1276 and 1277 is an undisputed wakf property. There is a Notification dated 22.3.1996 by the Survey Commissioner also showing the aforesaid property as wakf property. The Collector, Ghaziabad in his capacity as Additional Wakf Commissioner has ... addressed a letter to the Chairman GDA on 26.7.1995 in connection with the permission for construction on the Idgah land.

Origin of Dispute

During 1994 (some persons) piled firewood in a corner of the Idgah land and burnt holi dholika in collaboration with the police and the administration, the protests of the Wakf Committee and local Muslims notwithstanding. The report of the Senior Superintendent of Police, Ghaziabad Shri P.K. Sidhari to the District Magistrate dated 26.2.1996 (vide Ref No. ST-SSP-5/96) confirms this fact. As this carried wrong signals, the Shaheednagar Wakf Committee sought permission of the Ghaziabad Development Authority (GDA) to Construct a five feet boundary wall around the Idgah ... but the Asst Engineer, Master Plan, GDA turned down the request on the plea that the land falls under an unauthorised colony area where no development work is allowed (vide his reference No. 137/1497 HA/95-96 dated 6.3.1995). Thereafter the Wakf Committee approached the UP Sunni Central Wakf Board, Lucknow for formal permission to construct a boundary wall. On being permitted by the Wakf Board through its letter No. 591/2513-GZB dated 8.5.1996, the Committee again approached the GDA on 20.5.1996 to permit the raising of a five feet boundary wall for the proper safeguard of the wakf land...

The Committee also approached the Allahabad High Court through W.P. No. 36841 of 1996 which was disposed of on 19.11.1996 by a division bench directing the respondents to dispose of the petitioner's application dated 20.5.1996 by a speaking order preferably within a period of four weeks after giving an opportunity of hearing to the petitioner. As the GDA failed to pass any order, the petitioner again approached the Allahabad High Court for contempt of court against the DM, Ghaziabad and the GDA officials (contempt No. 101 of 1997). On 17.1.1997 Hon'ble Justice Mr. O.P. Jain ordered notice to two of the respondent's and listed the case on 4.3.1997.

... The Vice-Chairman, GDA rejected the request for construction of boundary wall on 28.1.1997, against which an appeal is pending before the Chairman, GDA under Section 15(5) of the UP Urban Planning and Development Act, 1973. The Wakf Committee through its Secretary Qari Naimuddin approached the Chief Judicial Magistrate, District Court, Ghaziabad who called for an enquiry report on 20.2.1997 from the SSP Ghaziabad. The latter's report No. ST/LLP-99/97 dated 27.2.1997 is indeed revealing. He says that through letters No. 553/ST-AV/96 dated 19.4.1996 and No. 4496/ST-AV dated 14.5.1996 to the Managing Director, UP Wakf Development Corporation, Lucknow he has asked to keep further proceedings in the matter pending, treating the No Objection Certificate of the revenue authorities dated 6.10.1981 as cancelled as according to him it is a disputed property. What a nadir!

The property admittedly in use as an Idgah for at

least fifteen years, declared undisputed wakf land by none other than the District Collector and DM, Ghaziabad only on 23.1.1996 as also duly registered as a wakf land with the State Wakf Board is suddenly ... declared to be disputed by the SSP, Ghaziabad... Has the SSP the authority for passing a unilateral dictum?

Reason

... The BJP Mayor of Ghaziabad Shri Dinesh Chander Garg had written to the District Magistrate, Ghaziabad on 19.2.1997 alleging that the said site belongs to the Corporation (sic) where a school was running before (sic) and suggesting that a girls school be built there (on the so-called disputed land)... This is thus a clear case of collision between the political Mayor and the bureaucrat SSP... Shri A.K. Shukla, DM and Dy. Survey Commissioner, Wakf Ghaziabad furnishes the necessary information to the Senior District Collector, Ghaziabad through his letter No. 445 dated 12.3.1997 on the basis of relevant records sent to him by the UP Sunni Central Board of Wakfs through its letter No. 2963/2513 dated 11.3.1997... Secretary of the Wakf Committee files an appeal to the District Collector on 4.3.1997, addresses a detailed complaint to the Director General of Police, UP, Lucknow on 13.3.1997, to the Secretary, Wakf/ Minorities Commission, UP Lucknow on March 13, 1997 and to the Secretary, Urban Development and Chairman, GDA, Ghaziabad on 14.3.1997, but to no avail.

Probably all this provoked the authorities - police as well as civil, instead of prompting them to address his genuine grievances. On the morning of April 5, 1997 (Saturday), a large number of workers under police protection began excavation work in the Idgah land and commenced constructing a boundary wall on the so-called "disputed" wakf land. The local Muslims were shocked but did not take law into their hands... The Wakf Committee rushed to Ghaziabad and Meerut and gave written complaints to the Inspector General of Police, Meerut and the Commissioner, Meerut Division who in turn directed on April 5 itself, the SSP Ghaziabad respectively to maintain status quo and to desist from any demolition or construction work till the case is settled by the competent court. These orders were immediately served upon the concerned officers.

The irony is that when the Wakf Committee sought permission to construct a boundary wall for safeguarding the wakf property it was turned down saying that no such construction activity could be permitted in an unauthorised colony but these very officials commenced an illegal activity without proper authority and proper sanction!

Black Sunday

On 6.4.1997 the residents of Shaheednagar expected stoppage of work in compliance with the directions of the Divisional Commissioner and the IGP. But (the) work continued unabated. By 11.30 a.m. a large number of the residents gathered while their leaders pleaded with the authorities to immediately stop work in pursuance of the orders of their superiors. Even while arguments were

going on, the policemen complained (of) brickbattering and in a state of ... fury and vengeance they resorted to harsh lathi-charge, bursting of teargas shells and indiscriminate firing. The usual story fabricated later was... They did not stop there, took to lanes and bylanes, forced their entry into closed-door houses, smashed valuable articles, looted cash and jewellery, molested the women and beat up mercilessly the menfolk, damaged the Madarsa Anwarul Uloom and the adjoining mosque... they forced their entry into the Students' Hostel on the first floor but beat about 50 of them, threw down on the ground floor the cook thereby fracturing his limbs and even kidnapped some students... They killed at least ... two, critically injured fourteen... And to add insult to injury, these men-in-uniform booked forty nine Muslims under various charges including attempt to murder (Section 307 IPC) and sent them to jail!

Guilty Policemen

some of the names of the policemen reportedly involved in this cold blooded day light murder, loot, molestation, kidnapping and firing are: Messrs Ashok Kumar, C.O., R.D. Pathak, SHO, D.K. Sharma, SHO, R.P. Sharma, S.B. Choidhari, SHO Kabirnagar and Mahendra Kumar of the SB, City Magistrate Vaid Prakash, SP City Shanker and other officers were also present directing the operation.

The question agitating the minds of peace-loving and law-abiding citizens is whether these law-breakers "official" will go scot-free by virtue of their positions and status or the law would be allowed to take its own course? ... (Source: The Radiance Viewsweekly, 20-26 April, 1997)

Supreme Court

On Confession of Co-accused under TADA

Baba Peer Paras Nath and another, Appellants v. State of Haryana, Respondent. WITH Kashmir Singh and another, Appellants v. State of Haryana, Respondent.

G.N. RAY AND B.L. HANSARIA, JJ.

Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (28 of 1987), Section 15 - Scope - Confession by co-accused - Not admissible in evidence when accused is not being tried for any offence under the Act.

The confessional statement recorded under Section 15 of the TADA is admissible against the co-accused or abettor or conspirator provided an accused is tried with other co-accused, abettor or conspirator in same trial in respect of offence under TADA. Such confessional statement of the co-accused or by the co-accused is not admissible against the accused if he is not tried for any offence under TADA.

In the instant case two of the accused persons were charged under Section 307 read with Section 34 and Section 109 of the Penal Code. Held that in the absence of any other evidence they could not be convicted on the basis of retracted confessional statement of the co-accused made under Section 15 of the Act, as they were not being tried for any offence under the Act. ...

(Source: AIR 1996, Supreme Court 2818)

Devdasis and Yellamma Worship

Around 100 half-naked women today attempted to worship Yellamma Devi at Itaga village in Jewargi taluk.... Women were covered with one neem leaves...

However, the police persuaded some of the women and provided clothing, Superintendent of Police Raghavendra Auradkar said.

State Women Commission President Prabhavathi, Secretary Muktaba and member Bhagirathi Nayak ... spot expressed displeasure over this age-old practice. Dalit Sangharsha Samithi leaders also visited the spot and tried to persuade the worshippers....

Voluntary organisations, engaged in the eradication of the devadasi system, also confirmed that no girl was dedicated to the goddess yesterday, the Muttai Day, considered to be the auspicious day for such dedication. ...Over four lakh devotees, according to eye-witness accounts, from different parts of Karnataka and Maharashtra participated in the fair....

Dr. I.S. Giladas, Secretary-general of the Indian Health Organisation (IHO) has criticised Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda for visiting the Yellamma temple on January 12. He said that the Prime Minister's visit had created confusion, as he had so far not made clear his and his party's stand on the devadasi system.

(Source: The Indian Skeptic, August, 1997)

Unholy Acts in Holy Chitrakoot

... Chitrakoot where Lord Rama is said to have spent a major portion of his exile is no longer holy. It does not symbolise religious sanctity anymore. Today it is better known for its high incidence of rape, exploitation of women and the dominance of Dadoos, the (local) landlords... According to statistics received by the National Commission for Women (NCW) at least women are raped everyday in Chitrakoot...

The Dadoos are believed to be primarily responsible for the frequent incidence of rape in the village of Chitrakoot. They allegedly abandon the woman after they have borne their illegitimate children.

The practice of keeping more than one woman is very common among the Dadoos. The women, devoid of any marital status or social respectability, are forced to live with the Dadoo at his will and mercy. There is no permanent bond between the two even after she bears his children. As age descends, she is thrown out of the house along with the children to fend for themselves. This leaves no option for her but to work as bonded labour on a land which has perhaps been bought from a loan taken on her name. She works all day in the land for "five-pav of grain" to feed her children and, if possible, herself. ...

Generally ... women from the Patha Kol and Sapera (snake charmers) community ... are exploited by the Dadoos.

Village Silent on Rape of Muslim Minor

Naina (not her real name) is just seven years old. The youngest child of a Muslim family, teetering on the verge of starvation in Jandhera village, Rampur... In April 1997 carefree world in sugarcane and ... in the harvesting season ...found employment as a daily wage worker, asked her to run home and get her some roti and water... A 20-year-year truck driver, Raja, a Dalit from the same village, caught her and raped her. When she regained consciousness, she hurried home... She was taken to a doctor... Naina's mother, accompanied by two policemen, took the traumatised girl to a hospital in Meerut. Her tiny uterus had been so badly ruptured that to save her life, the doctors removed it. Little Naina has to undergo another surgery of her private parts. She suffered from high blood pressure and puss in her urinary tract. She was ... hospitalised in Saharanpur ... till May 12.

... Naina was able to name the rapist and he was arrested. But he is out on bail and has been boasting that in a state where the Dalits reign supreme no one can touch him. He has been taunting Naina's mother... The village has neither beat up the rapist nor throw him out...

A relative of Naina, Ali Sher, brought the case to the notice of a women's organisation - Disha. The National Commission for Women, which intervened in the case, had said that no bail should be given to Raja. The district magistrate had assured that a home would be given to Naina's homeless family. But the assurance remained on paper... But the women's groups have rallied around the little girl...

(Source: Usha Rai in The Hindustan Times, 19 September, 1997)

Scientific Temper in Rashtrapati Bhawan

In the 50 years we had heard of Brahmins, priests, astrologers, soothsayers, and mullahs having had access to Rashtrapati Bhavan and engage in rituals and ceremonies... One Vice-President once sought alteration in his official residence seeking construction of a shed for housing his cow to which a window from his bedroom would open because his Brahminic faith called for the tail of the cow being the first thing to be seen on waking up, and no saviors of secularism called it making the House a bastion of Hinduism.

- P.N. Duda's Letter, Indian Express, 30 June, 1997

Daughter-in-Law Burnt

Afsari, 25, was reportedly set on fire by her mother-in-law and sister-in-laws on 18 September, 1997 in Seelampur... She was removed to GTB hospital and later referred to Safdarjung hospital. She succumbed to her injuries, while the SDM concerned was recording her statement... She had been married for five years and is survived by three children. The police have registered a case of murder.

DKV's vs Thevars: Caste War or Struggle for Identity

In Tamil Nadu's present population of about 70 million, Thevars' strength is about 5 million. Devendra Kula Vellalars (DKV) (Mallars or Pallars) are spread over about 24 districts of TN's 29 districts. But the Thevars are found in about 10 districts. Devendra Kula Vellalars are included in the Scheduled Caste list while the Thevars under Backward Castes.

DKV's were erstwhile rulers of Tamil country deposed by Vadugars some 500 years ago. The Thevars (divided into Kallar, Maravar and Agamudiar) helped the Vadugars in deposing the DKV's. The Thevars got some Palayapattus as reward... Both the Vadugar rulers and their subordinate Palayapattus took away the lands, temples and properties of DKV's, harassed them, suppressed them and prevented them from getting education.

During the British rule, the Palayapattus in Tamil country were converted into zamindars with the help of some Vadugars (Telugars) and Thevars were made collectors of land revenue which gave them power... They continued to suppress and oppress DKVs who were not Untouchables then.

... DKVs were not included in the Untouchables list then but ... in the Depressed Castes list...

Once they were included in the SC list, as most of the castes included in the SCs were Untouchables, others ... started treating all the castes in the SC list as Untouchables including DKVs.

... The presentday rulers (Dravidian parties, mostly non-Tamils) ... wanted to destroy the identity of the erstwhile Tamil kings, their history and culture. They translated the words "Scheduled Castes" in Tamil as Harijan, Adi-Dravidar, belonging to low castes, or Dalit to ridicule and to instill a sense of inferiority complex into the minds of these people. "Adi-Dravidar" is the name of a specific caste denoting the Paraiyahs in Tamil Nadu, listed as number 2 in the SC list. But the TN Government ordered that all SC castes in the list be called Adi-Dravidas which the DKVs feel is an attempt by the rulers to destroy the identity of the descendants of the Chera, Chola and Pandiya dynasties of the Tamil kingdoms, their history and culture.

DKVs were the people living in the Marudham lands (fertile plains) and were agriculturists and warriors who ruled the Tamil country for ages until the 16th century. The Thevars lived in Palai lands (land where nothing grows) and their profession was stealing and robbing the travellers, and were known as "criminal tribes" until 1950....

DKVs have at last come to know their strength, history and culture. They will no longer tolerate the hegemony and aggression of the Vadugars and Thevars.

In this war of the oppressed DKVs, the presentday

rulers, as their predecessors, were with the aggressive Thevars...

It must be noted that no other caste in the SC or BC in Tamil Nadu came to the rescue of DKVs and in fact the other SCs, particularly the Paraiyahs, were ridiculing the uprising of the DKVs against the aggressive Thevars.

The meaning of the current caste war raging in Southern TN is the recovery of the lost identity and self-respect of the DKVs...

What DKVs want: DKVs want:

1. Their glorious history, culture and way of life must be written in school texts and regular history books and taught to students. Their leadership in all walks of life ... must be recognised and brought out in those school textbooks and history books so that others should know them.
2. All the sub-castes now called by the imposed name Pallar (Pannaadi, Devendra Kulathan, Kudumban, Kaladi) must be called by their old historical name: Mallar alias Devendra Kula Vellalars and the government must pass orders accordingly.
3. The SC Welfare Department, now christened as Adi-Dravidar Welfare Department ... must be renamed as SC Welfare Department as before.
4. The SC list must be divided into two or three groups as; in the case of Backward castes which is now divided as Backward Class and Most Backward Class in TN and Scheduled Castes, 2 to 4 groups as in Andhra Pradesh and Punjab. DKVs must be grouped together and called Tamil Moovendar Marabinar (descendants of the three Tamil kings: Chera, Chola and Pandiya) and a separate department must be created to take care of their welfare and development.
5. DKVs should not be called as Harijan, Adi-Dravidar, Thalthapattavar (low castes) or Dalit. They should be called ... Mallar alias Devendra Kula Vellalars...
... The original definition for Dalit, which included all Bahujans (SC/ST/BC, Christians, Muslims, Buddhists and all religious minorities) must be restored. As long as it denotes SC only there is no need for it.
6. DKVs' demand their rightful share proportionate to their population in all elected posts for the governance of the country at all levels, from top to bottom, in the properties of the state, in owning educational institutions, industries, trading houses, agricultural lands and in the administration of economic activities in the country, banking...

The current caste war is not just for naming a ... state transport corporation after a Devendra Kula Vellalar leader or against any particular castes. It is for ... jati identity, recognition and respect.

(Source: The Dalit Voice, 16-31 July, 1997)

Tapti Roy

On True History of Siraj-ud-Daula

... When a new history of the nation was being written, the Battle of Plassey and Siraj-ud-Daullah served well as starting point. Biharilal Sarkar wrote essays in contemporary journals, Nikhilnath Ray wrote two books on Murshidabad and another on Jagat Seth and Akshay Kumar Maitra wrote essays on Siraj which he later collated into a book.

Maitra was a lawyer by profession and pleaded at the court of Rajshahi, in what was then East Bengal. But biographers introduce him as an objective historian, who was largely instrumental in dispelling prevailing fictions about Siraj's character. In a Dictionary of Biography which was published in 1936, Sashibhushan Vidyalkar wrote that by proving that the Block Hole incident was fallacious, Akshay Maitra demonstrated his patriotism and his competence. Writing history in short had early been enlisted in the agenda of nationalism...

He was not bound by the strictures of modern scholarship to have long footnotes or extended bibliography nor was he furnished with information preserved in the yellowed pages of archival documents. But he read existing historical accounts to good purposes and anticipating the discipline in the future, questioned the context in which they were written before deciding their worth.

The first chapter is a long essay on present conditions and the past. There is some hesitation in admitting that Muslim rule had been better than the English one, for the Hindu empire was far too long gone to allow comparison. He begins writing on the subject by quoting from a monograph called *Travels of a Hindu*.

The objective was to establish one fundamental point. Whatever was written on Siraj so far had been an outcome of a certain mindset which was hopelessly dictated by the British. Maitra knew well how to question history.

The Hindu on visiting Siraj's grave writes: "Near him (Alivardi) lies his pet Siraj-a-Dawla who ripped open pregnant women to see how the child lay in the womb; who ordered to fill boats with men and drown them, while he sat in his palace to enjoy the sight of their dying struggles; who revenged the adulteries of his mother by violating the chastity of every woman"...

Akshay Maitra analyses that the above slander lingered in popular memory to be passed off as popular history. The man who felt no qualms about writing such expletives about a vanquished king ... was none other than a modern western educated Bengali...

Having debunked the existing historiographical accounts, sponsored by British and accepted hook, line and sinker by the young Bengalis, he explored other accounts to test out the veracity of such derogatory assessments. Maitra uses a lot of 18th century Urdu and Persian histories, all of which he read in translations. He refers frequently to *Siyer-ul-Mutakharin*, *Riyaz-us-Salat* and *Tarikh-i-Mansuri*.

He also uses contemporary Bengali literary works like *Palashir Yudhyakavya* by Nabin Chandra Sen to expose how bias the educated middle class were against the Muslims and how their attitude was largely conditioned by their complete surrender to British intellect. He mentions, in his respect, literary critic Suresh Chandra Samajapati's comment that Nabin Sen's ballad which made a hero of Siraj, as not history but fiction. Akshay Maitra took up the task of recovering history in earnest for serving the cause of the nascent nation...

This is best demonstrated in his account of the Block Hole. Holwell, one of the survivors described the room as measuring 18 X 18 feet in which 146 people were forced to take shelter. This Maitra calculates, was physically impossible and to substantiate his point he quotes Bholanath Chunder who also observed that: "Geometry contradicting arithmetic gives a lie to the story. It is little better than a bogey against which was raised an uproar of pity"....

He ends the book by making an irresistible jibe at the Bengalis for having collaborated with the British all the way. "Our efforts, our strength, our cooperation, helped the British merchants establish an empire in this country". But the comment didn't go unqualified. However, critical he may have been of the British rule, he had to admit that there was a silver lining. If they hadn't collaborated, the Bengalis would have been deprived of modern education and the foundation of modern India may well have not been laid. The dilemma of the Bengali gentleman died hard...

One most productive result of this new history was the rise of another kind of literary composition, historical plays written to stir the spirit of nationalism. Girish Ghosh was a trend setter in this respect and his famous play *Siraj-ud-daulah* was largely inspired by the painstaking research done by men like Akshay Maitra. Myths had so far largely overshadowed history; history was now coming down.

(Source: The Azad Academy Journal, 1-30 September, 1997)

USA: President Clinton On Religion in the Work-place

... Our devotion to religious freedom has shaped our identity from the beginning...

Thomas Jefferson wrote, "We have solved the great and interesting question whether freedom of religion is compatible with order in government and obedience to the laws. And we have experienced the quiet, as well as the comfort which results from leaving everyone to profess freely and openly those principles of religion which are the inductions of his own reason and the serious convictions of his own inquiries."

The founders understood that religious freedom is a two-sided coin and, therefore, our Constitution protects the free exercise of religion while, at the same time, prohibiting the establishment of religion by the state. This careful balance is ... the enduring genius of the First Amendment.

... Americans worship deeply and in very great numbers. Throughout out history, men and women have come to America to escape religious persecution elsewhere and secure religious freedom here.

... More and more people of many different faiths have been able to put down roots and pursue their beliefs freely here. And the churches, the synagogues, the mosques, the other institutions of worship they have built not only have been their own houses of worship, they have also quite frequently become centers of service, compassion, and community life; and in so doing have made our entire nation stronger.

Our experience ... has led the United States to become a leader in promoting religious rights throughout the world ... as well as our willingness to press for religious freedom at the United Nations and in our bilateral relations with other countries across the globe.

... Our commitment to religious liberty is, therefore, and it must remain, a key part of America's human rights policy and an important focus of our democracy.

... In 1993 I was proud to sign the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. I was disappointed that the Supreme Court struck down parts of the Act in June, but pleased that its provisions still apply to federal agencies, entities and institutions... In '95 ... we issued the guidelines reaffirming that our young people did not have to leave their religious beliefs at the schoolhouse door. And we clarified the limits of religious expression permitted in our schools.

... Today ... we issue these guidelines to clarify and reinforce the right of religious expression in the federal workplace. These guidelines will ensure that federal employees and employers will respect the rights of those

who engage in religious speech as well as those who do not...

First, they clarify that federal employees may engage in personal religious expression to the greatest extent possible, consistent with workplace efficiency and the requirements of law. Second, they clarify that federal employers may not discriminate in employment on the basis of religion. Third, and finally, they clarify that an agency must reasonably accommodate employees' religious practices.

... We expect all employees to follow them carefully...

My own faith ... calls those us who share it to a life-long effort not only to deepen the understanding of the soul, but to bring our actions, thoughts and feelings into harmony with God's will. On that journey ... I have been immeasurably enriched by the power of the Torah, the beauty of the Koran, the piercing insights of the religions of East and South Asia and of our own Native Americans, the joyful energy that I have felt in black and Pentecostal churches and, yet, even the probing questions of the skeptics. That is America at its best.

My great hope is that we can enter this new century and this new millennium as the most successful multiracial, multiethnic, multireligious democracy the world has ever known. We will ... respect and celebrate our differences while uniting around the ideals that bind us together, more importantly, as one America. Religious freedom is at the heart of what it means to be an American, and at the heart of our journey to become truly one America. Let us pledge ... to make these guidelines the source of harmony and strength as we guarantee to all of our people our precious liberty.

MUSLIM INDIA BOUND VOLUMES 1983 - 1996

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NOTE: Life Subscribers are entitled to 50% discount on Bound Volumes for 1983 to 1996.

Zafar Agha on Prospects of Indo-Pakistan Reconciliation

The outcome of the talks would be "linked to the core issue" of Kashmir, many think.

What does this mean?... There are, in fact, extreme views... "The Pakistani establishment cannot afford to improve ties with India," says Kalim Bahadur Pakistan expert in Jawaharlal Nehru University...

Despite two rounds of foreign secretary level talks, no one is still willing to stick his neck out on prospects of Indo-Pak ties. Optimists, at best, point out that talks are on, despite recent reverses and this in itself is no mean achievement for the two countries. Pessimists feel that since Pakistan can never bend on its anti-India stance, there would be no major breakthrough between the two neighbours despite talks. The Indian hawks point and the Pakistan Army establishment coupled with bureaucracy and fundamentalist lobby can never concede to "Hindu India." Points out Kalim Bahadur: "After all it is the ideological question for Pakistan. How can it concede to us?" Natwar Singh concurs with Bahadur and points out: "Pakistan only has the Kashmir card to play against us and it will not be like to give it up easily."

So where do we move from these talks? "The only way out for both the parties is to forget the past and begin with a clean slate," suggests a peace activist. It is much more simple to suggest such a course rather than practice it. Because for India it means forgetting for wars that Pakistan forced on us. For Pakistan it means giving up its claim on Kashmir...

Nations do not easily forget their past. But sometimes compulsions bring about a dramatic turn around even between two warring countries...

But what has really made Nawaz Sharif change? Is it only a Punjabi Pakistani Prime Minister's emotional response to his Punjabi counterpart in India? Definitely not. Because hard politics is never conducted on sheer emotions. Improving ties with India is now Sharif's domestic compulsion rather than his personal desire to keep talks going between the two countries.

... Sharif's domestic priority in his second term was to clip Pakistan Army's wings. His move to repeal the Eighth Amendment, Empowering the Pakistan President to dismiss an elected government, was not just aimed at curtailing the Pakistan President's powers... (It) was a move to cut the Army to size.

... The new Pakistan elite led by the entrepreneurial Nawaz Sharif now has vested interest in keeping temperatures low on the borders just to keep the Army on a leash... The establishment in Pakistan is still powerful enough, enjoying the backing of the Army, bureaucracy and feudal landlords - anti-India hawks who have kept the Pakistan domestic agenda on a high anti-Indian rhetoric for the past 50 years.

But there have been some major shifts in Pakistan's domestic politics... First, the hate India agenda has lost its unique selling point in the past one year. Benazir Bhutto's desperate attempts to hard sell the Kashmir issue

in the last elections had no takers in Pakistan elections. Instead, Sharif's ... campaign against Benazir's domestic mis-management earned him rich dividends...

Sharif has sensed the shift in public mood and is using it cleverly to keep negotiations going with India despite the setback...

Secondly, the United States too, is a key player in Pakistan's domestic affairs. Even Americans are no more keen to play the Kashmir card between India and Pakistan. President Clinton is in fact, keen to play the role of a peace broker between India and Pakistan. Naturally, the shift in American stance ... will have a sobering effect on the conservative Pakistan establishment.

But Sharif does not want to rush head on into peace talks as he is not too sure both about his own strength and the establishment's weakness. He is now testing waters both within and outside Pakistan.

Sharif does not want to give the impression to the Pakistani establishment that he is giving too much in too little time to India. Therefore, the second round of talks could not make much headway. The two sides failed to decide the modalities of further discussions. As usual the stumbling block was Kashmir. But both referred the matter to their respective Prime Ministers hoping that talks will continue.

Clearly the sparring will continue before any breakthrough is made between the two suspicious neighbours. "It is going to be a long haul before any substantial gains for both sides," cautions Mani Dixit.

(Source: The Times of India, 21 September, 1997)

Hindustan Morcha's

Vow to Unfurl Hindu Flag in Lahore

On the night of August 14, 1997, thousands of patriots ... gathered at Hindu Maha Sabha Bhavan in New Delhi and pledged (themselves) for the recreation of Akhand Bharat... (They vowed) not to rest and sit in peace till the religious fundamentalism which gave birth to the two nation theory, is totally eliminated and the Mother land is reunited...

Former MP Bhai Mahavir said that the day was not far off when our flag would be unfurled at Lahore and the goal of Akhand Bharat would be achieved...

After the function former MP and convenor of Akhand Hindustan Morcha B.L. Sharma 'Prem' led the audience to Shahidi Smarak, Delhi Gate, to pay their homage to the martyrs of 1911-21 Hardinge Bomb case...

The messages of Prime Minister I.K. Gujral, former Prime Minister, A.B. Vajpayee, Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Sikandar Bakht, working President of VHP Ashok Singhal were read out... Shri Hardyal Devgun, former MP, Mahant Avaidyanath, MP also participated in the function...

(Source: The Organiser, 31 August, 1997)

Afghanistan: Pakistan Stake in Taliban Victory

Turkey's has more influence with Uzbeks in Central Asia. While the Iranians favour an Islamic dispensation led by Shiite forces, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are identified with Taliban Dostum ... wants Turkish help in effecting a reconciliation with Malik ... his former colleague.

... It is a defensive manoeuvre intended to preserve the northern areas from the (Taliban) regime rather than trying to takeover the whole country. ...

Some (strategists) think that the US would be only to glad to see northern Afghanistan become a new buffer, if the rest of Afghanistan can not remain so. That would seem to accord with the wishes of Russians, who are ... displeased with the Taliban and fear their presence on the Amu River or their hobnobbing with either Turkmenistan or Tajikistan. The Americans would surely want to concede such a Russian and Central Asian wish, if they can help ensure it. That would permanently divide Afghanistan.

... Prof. Gangkocsky, the former director of Moscow's Oriental Institute ... insisted that an Islamic regime in Kabul would run totally counter to all the assumptions and objectives of great power policies regarding the region that wanted to keep Afghanistan a neutral buffer. This is vital for Moscow even after the collapse of Soviet Union...

The recent development in Afghanistan have proved one point-Pakistan is now stuck with Taliban. Their defeat will have devastating effect and will undo all that Pakistan has so far endeavoured to accomplish. But the economic costs of having to ensure the survival of Taliban will be phenomenal.

Most of Afghan population will have to be kept supplied with essential goods even if the payment for them may be available from the foreign aid received by Taliban... The effort to support the Taliban is likely to put strain on the resources of the country, not to mention its diplomatic cost.

... Taliban in origin were a Pakistani phenomenon... They were, and to an extent remain, under the Pakistani political tutelage. The political forces that had willed them into being and becoming what they are, in the pursuit of their power aims, retrain the Taliban guns on Islamabad itself... The diplomatic and political costs for Pakistan, which went broke during the last two years in Afghanistan or so, include serious rifts in its relationship with some of its long-term allies. They have protested. The Chinese take a dim view of Taliban. Iran has been more or less alienated from Pakistan. Turkey is distinctly cool and distant. The unhappiness of India with Taliban is also a known factor.

But playing for higher stakes, Islamabad seems to have felt justified in ignoring Indian wishes because, should its strategy succeed, it will effect a sea change in Afghanistan and everyone else would have to adjust to the new situation.

... The hardliners in Islamabad have calculated that the happiness in Riyadh will be a compensation enough for all the other costs. The position of the United States has been peculiar and far more flexible than many people had expected because of their loudly-expressed displeasure with Islamic fundamentalism.

... There is a concrete US interest: ... proposed oil and gas pipelines from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan and Pakistan to India ... are to be built by UNOCOL, an American oil giant. Many in Islamabad seem to have calculated that this would counter the US displeasure. But what Islamabad did not seem to have reckoned (is) that the Americans would in deference to a lot of factors concerning Russia and Central Asia, happily countenance an autonomous or independent northern Afghanistan ... while the test of Afghanistan might come under the sway of Taliban. But ... a serious setback to Taliban in the north can have incalculable consequences....

(Source: The Business Times)

Egypt: Symposium on Islam and the West

An international symposium in late April 1997 on the subject "Development of Relations between Islam and West" was organised at Kadhay Ayadh University in Marakesh ... by the National Council of Arab Culture, North-South Dialogue Institute of Geneva and the University. Held in the light of views, concepts and background of current events, it recommended creating permanent mechanisms to encourage dialogue between Islam and the West ... not only to rebuild relations but also to expand the (dimension of) dialogue. This symposium was attended by ... scholars from the Muslim world and Europe, who presented 22 papers...

Egypt: International Conference On Islam and the West

An International Conference on Islam and the West was held at Cairo on 13-16 July, 1997. The 4-day conference, "Islam and West: the past, present and future" was organised by the Egyptian, Ministry of Awqaf and ... the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs. The Conference was attended by about 180 scholars and officials from over 80 countries... In his ... message, President Hosni Mubarak urged closer ties between the Muslim and Western worlds, decrying the view of some Westerners that after the fall of Communism, Islam (constituted a threat to) and become the new enemy of the Western culture.

Egypt's Minister of Religious Endowments Mahmoud Hamdi Zaqqouq said that the conference's aim was to prove wrong the thesis that a clash was inevitable between the two cultures... A leading Egyptian Islamic scholar, the Sheikh of Al-Azhar, Sheikh Muhammad Sayed Tantawi, warned that Muslims would respond with animosity if... they were treated as enemies.

(Source: The Muslim World, 26 July, 1997)

Chronology of the Month

(16 August - 15 September, 1997)

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Parliament: *Special Commemorative Session, inaugurated by Speaker P.A. Sangma adopts (21 Aug) Resolution after marathon debate which focuses on national priorities (1 Sept). Omission of 'defence of secularism' criticised by Shahabuddin (9 Sept) (See Texts).

50th Anniversary of Independence:

*Observed with fanfare on national scale.

*Muslim leaders of Freedom Movement including Abul Kalam Azad, Ajmal Khan, M.A. Ansari largely ignored in official programmes.

Vice-Presidency: *UF-Cong(I) candidate Krishna Kant elected against BJP-supported S.S. Barnala by 168 votes (16 Aug). Sworn in (21 Aug).

Political Alliances: *V.P. Singh and Kesri discuss possibility of Cong-UF tactical alliance in BJP dominated States (25 Aug). UF Convener and AP CM Naidu sees merit in 'grand alliance' with Congress, if latter agrees to be junior partner (22 Aug). SP leader and Defence Minister Mulayam Singh sees possibility of alliance with Congress (23 Aug). JD leadership remains silent and indifferent. CPI(M) acknowledges BJP as more dangerous than Congress but rejects V.P. Singh's suggestion (2 Sept).

*BJP President Advani defends tie-up with regional parties and does not rule out similar alliances in general election (24 Aug).

*BSP President Kanshi Ram rules out nation-wide alliance with BJP in general election (17 Aug) without break of present arrangement in UP.

*Informal talks between JD and Samata Party fail to detach latter from BJP's embrace (2 Sept).

*RJD President Ranjan Yadav sees alignment with Congress in general election (2 Sept).

Central Government: ... air of uncertainty about life of Gujral Government, Congress reportedly examines various alternatives - joining UF Government with Gujral, or staking claim for Congress-led Government or toppling Gujral government and going for general election. Political observers predict election by March, 1998.

Congress: *President Kesri nominates A.K. Antony and Manmohan Singh to CWC (16 Aug). Appoints 5-member Committee of Senior Leaders, headed by Pranab Mukherjee to prepare Programme of Action to revive organisation (19 Aug). Opening speech in Parliament's Special Session by M. Scindia sounds like election manifesto (26 Aug). Congress holds Seminar on Role of Minorities in Freedom Movement (30 Aug). Kesri visits Sabarmati Ashram; warns Gujarat CM Vaghela; criticises UF; supports Gujral. Kesri addresses State level Worker's Conference in Patna; indicates electoral alliance with Laloo Pd. Yadav's RJD (9 Sept).

BJP: *BJP faces crisis over BSP's claim to Speakership as condition for transfer of power to BJP (3 Sept). Speaker refuses to quit (7 Sept). BJP's CM-designate supports Speaker, BJP-BSP hold talks.

*BJP organises 4-day Retreat for senior leaders and MPs on RSS model at Jhinhola; ideological, political and organisational issues discussed with reference to next general election (30 Aug - 2 Sept). *Former CM Delhi M.L. Khurana resigns from Vice-presidency (24 Aug).

*BJP demands ban on 'Christian missionaries and Muslim fundamentalists' in NE (28 Aug).

BSP: *Mayawati sets record in transferring officers, initiating political prosecutions, laying foundation stones, creating districts and tehsils during her last month as CM.

*Mayawati's denigration of Martyr Chandrashekhar Azad as a mere terrorist criticised widely.

*BSP MLA Mukhtar Ansari suspended from legislature party for criminal charges (23 Aug).

JD: *PM defends government in National Executive; Deve Gowda sounds critical note on 14-point action plan (11 Sept). Attacks Congress in Mass Rally while PM Gujral targets BJP and communal forces (12 Sept).

RJD: *Signature campaign for Laloo Pd. release flops (20 Aug).

*Takes initiative for dialogue with BSP and indicates alignment with Congress and JMM.

*JNU dons demand annulment of membership of Lok Sabha of RJD MP Shahabuddin of Siwan (1 Sept).

Left Parties: *CPI(M) criticises UF Govt. for deviation from agreed Common Minimum Programme (23 Aug). S.G. Surjeet finds Gujral inadequate (6 Sept).

*CPI & CPI(M) react strongly to Congress version of freedom movement as presented in Calcutta session (24 Aug).

Shiv Sena: *Thackeray eschews communal orientation in independence day speech (15 Aug).

Electoral Reform: *CEC M.S. Gill proposes debarring convicted persons from electoral contest (18 Aug). PM Gujral supports EC proposal (22 Aug). EC issues order (28 Aug). Home Minister finds EC Order legally defective. Proposes commitment by all parties not to give tickets to persons with criminal background (30 Aug). EC suggests urgent legislation to bar persons with criminal record (31 Aug). Shahabuddin supports EC's Order (31 Aug). Speakers finds EC's Order unenforceable without changes in law (3 Sept). CEC calls for urgent amendment (4 Sept).

Corruption: AH Scam: *Patna H.C. asks Director CBI to explain slow pace of progress (29 Aug). Warns CBI against action against J.D. Biswas. CBI seeks Governor's sanction for prosecute ex-CM Laloo Pd. in another related case (30 Aug). Laloo's remand extended upto 19 September. Bihar Government blames A.G. for not noticing excessive withdrawals from treasuries in time.

Bitumen Scam: *CBI unable to procure relevant documents from Bihar Government for 5 months (22 Aug).

Dhoti-Saree Scam: *Bihar Government cancels contract and decides to hand over investigation to CBI (26 Aug).

Liquor Scam: *Karnataka H.C. issues notice to ex-CM Deve Gowda and present CM Patel (21 Aug).

Crane Scam: *Railway Minister Paswan accused of flouting procedure in awarding contract to non-existent company (28 Aug).

Petrol Pump Scam: *Delhi H.C. cancels 70-odd allotments of petrol pumps etc. by ex-Minister Satish Sharma.

Hawala Case: *Special Court orders framing of charges against ex-Speaker Jhakar (3 Sept).

JMM Case: *Delhi H.C. upholds CBI Court's order to frame charges against ex-PM Narasimha Rao and others (12 Sept).

Tanwar Case: *Delhi H.C. asks police SIT to file status report on investigations in murder case, including probe in Kesri's arrest (17-21 Aug).

Bofors Case: *Central Government scrutinising Bofors papers crosses 60 day deadline in according permission to prosecute

Committee Bill and promises to enact it by Ordinance (29 Aug). Advisory Committee headed by M.O. Farooq, MP submits the revised draft (17 Sept).

*Shahabuddin objects to high subsidy of 92 crores for 1997 Haj, because Air India has charged normal IATA fare, instead of special charter fare.

Wakf: *Central Wakf Council, formed under Wakf Act 1995, meets in Delhi (11 Sept). Wakf Minister Ramoowalia discloses that most States are yet to notify 1995 Act.

Masjids: *Delhi HC orders DDA and MCD to submit affidavits regarding unauthorised construction of Wuzukhana by Imam Jama Masjid on government land (2 Sept).

*Muslims reconstruct Masjid in Sela Ghat in Aurangabad, Maharashtra, demolished by Forest Dept.

Personal Law: *National Minorities Commission has asked the Government to accord permission to Muslims in civil or military service to keep beard (28 Aug).

*Supreme Court orders maintenance of children by father, even if living with their divorced mother (28 Aug).

*S.C. upholds right of divorcee to her jewellery and other property gifted to her during marriage (10 Sept).

Social Reform: *Shahabuddin criticises Tehrik Muslim Shaban, Hyderabad's campaign to stop Burqa-clad women from entering cinema halls and asks it to apply instead its energies for eradication of social evils (18 Aug).

*Shia women perform Namaz in Imambara Asifuddaula (29 Aug).

*Controversy rages over participation of Muslim women in congregational Namaz in Masjids. Orthodox Sunni Ulama oppose women's demand. Shia and Ahl-e-Hadith support it. Shahabuddin criticised for supporting it (9 Sept).

*Shahabuddin criticised by some Sunni Ulama for calling Triple Divorce un-Islamic (10 Sept).

Objectionable Writing: *West Bengal bars "Galpo, Noy, Satti" prescribed for middle schools for imaginary depiction of Holy Prophet.

*Muslims attack Christian school in Hyderabad for blasphemy against Holy Prophet in old School textbook (26 Aug). Christian Schools observe protest strike (27 Aug). School withdraws book (27 Aug). Communal amity restored (30 Aug).

*Delhi H.C. expunges remarks against Ahmed Bukhari by trial court (10 Sept).

Electoral Roll: *BJP President Advani claims 5 million bogus voters in W. Bengal (25 Aug).

Indo-Pakistan Relations: *Pakistan opposes India's claim to permanent seat on Security Council (26 Aug).

*P.M. Nawaz Sharif claims advance in nuclear development programme (7 Sept).

*Former Army Chief Aslam Beg suggests downsizing of both armies (3 Sept).

*Pakistan writer Muneer Ahmad quotes former President G. Ishaq Khan on Pakistan ISI's involvement in Bombay bomb blasts (3 Sept).

Conversion: *RSS, VHP and Hindu Sants announces plan for mass conversion of Muslims to Hinduism (28 Aug).

Hindu Chauvinism: *VHP plans 23-day Ganga Yatra from 16 October (3 Sept).

*Hindu Munnani, Tamilnadu, accepts change of route for Vinayak Chaturthi procession to bypass Muslim localities (6 Sept).

Education: *NMC appoints Committee for look into non-availability of Urdu school textbooks (28 Aug).

*A.P. HC restricts admission to professional courses by minority institutions to merit list, based on competitive examination (29

Aug).

*SC upholds MCI's restriction on intake of medical colleges in Karnataka (30 Aug).

*Non-Karnataka applicants appeal to S.C. against Karnataka Rule to give priority to local candidates for professional courses (2 Sept). *Students leader Hasib Anwar's petition against expulsion by JMI admitted by Delhi H.C. (9 Sept).

Urdu: *Rich tribute paid to Firaq Gorakhpuri at Seminar in New Delhi organised by Alami Urdu Conference (28 Aug).

*National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language and State Urdu Akademis meet in Chandigarh to draw up action plan (14-15 Sept).

Employment: *Bombay H.C. directs against public slaughter of animal or display of meat (29 Aug). Butcher's Association protests.

*Varanasi powerloom industry represents to central government for adequate supply of foreign silk (27 Aug).

*Saudi Arabia lifts religious restriction on immigration for employment (28 Aug).

*PM assures retention of Arabic and Persian among Main subjects for Civil Services Examination.

Partition: *Historian Mushirul Hasan calls Partition a great tragedy (22 Aug). Shahabuddin describes Partition as 'disaster for Muslims of Sub-continent' (6 Sept).

Communal Violence: *Minor communal clashes reported from Agra (25 Aug) between Muslims and Dalits, Meerut (25 Aug) over burial in Qabristan, Dadri over murder of a Muslim (31 Aug), Dhar, MP - 1 killed - during Shiva procession (2 Sept).

*In Coimbatore 2 more killed in continuing sporadic clashes (3 Sept).

*Clash between Muslims and municipal authorities over Idgah land in Bangalore led to police firing and took communal turn with 4 dead, many injured and much property destroyed (9 Sept).

*Union Cabinet decides to write off loans upto 50,000 and interest thereon to November 1984 anti-Sikh Riot Victims (10 Sept).

Heritage: *SC orders UP Government to recover stolen Kalash of Dargah Saleem Chishti in Fatehpur Sikri within 4 weeks or hand over case to CBI (28 Aug).

Muslim Organisations: *A.I. Momin Conference (Rauf Ansari) decides to contest election (24 Aug).

Other Minorities: *SGPC asks PM to include Amritsar in British Queen's programme. Some Sikh leaders demand return of Kohinoor and apology for Jalianwala Massacre (19 Aug).

Muslim World: *Turkish National Assembly legislates to restrict religious education (17 Aug).

*Iran President nominates a lady as one of 5 Vice-Presidents (24 Aug).

*Pakistan contradicts report about recognition of Israel (29 Aug).

*Saifuddin Soz, Minister of Environment, asks OIC not to ignore Muslim Indians.

*Abdullah Bukhari condemns ill-treatment of visa applicants by Pakistan H.C. in New Delhi (26 Aug).

Commemoration: *Government releases commemorative stamp on Swami Prabhupada, founder of ISKCON (6 Sept).

*90th birthday of Hakim Abdul Hameed, founder of Jamia Hamdard, observed in Delhi (14 Sept).

Obituary: *Eminent scholar and divine Siddiq Ahmed Banwai, passes away in Lucknow. Rich tribute paid by MJUH, AIMC, AIO and at Darul Uloom Deoband (28 Aug).

*Freedom Fighter and CPI leader M. Farooqui, 77, passes away in Delhi (3 Sept). President, PM and political leaders pay tribute.

*K. Moideen Kutty Haji, ex-Speaker, Kerala Assembly, 79, passes away in Delhi (12 Sept).

retired senior official G.K. Arora and S.K. Bhatnagar.

* Director CBI goes to Switzerland for second set of Bofors documents.

Criminalisation: *S.C. orders Union to file progress report on follow-up action in Vohra Report (21 Aug).

Terrorism: *Jain Commission submits interim report on Rajiv Gandhi's assassination (28 Aug). Congress asks government to call Special Session of Parliament to table report.

*MCC-CPI(ML) clash in Bihar leads to massacre; government unable to intervene (7 Sept).

Reservation: *Madras H.C. rules against reservation in Class I posts for SC/ST (21 Aug).

*SC upholds reservation for Uttarakhand people in State employment and education (21 Aug).

*NCM recommends deletion of religious qualification in reservation for SC/ST.

*NC for SC/ST issues show-cause notice to IIT's for non-reservation in admission (30 Aug).

*Mulayam Singh supports reservation for Muslims (1 Sept).

National Symbols: *Shahabuddin supports singing of Vande Mataram but without coercion or condition by anti-Muslim forces (13 Sept).

Language Policy: *HRD Minister Bommai calls for measures to strengthen teaching of Sanskrit (18 Aug).

*Hindi Day observed with Dharna and protest rally, several leaders court arrest against compulsory use of English in day-to-day life (14 Sept).

Human Rights: *SC Judge A.S. Anand calls upon courts to protect and enforce human rights (25 Aug).

Small States: *Telengana leaders submit memorandum to President, PM and major parties (22 Aug).

Nuclear Policy: *PM Gujral reiterates keeping nuclear option open (8 Sept).

Muslim Politics: *Muslim MP's and ex-MP's plan Meet to review status of Muslims and suggest action plan. Sponsors include MP's of all parties as well as ex-MP's Shahabuddin, S.A. Hashmi and M. Afzal (7 Sept).

*IUML and AIMIM and AIMM form United Muslim Front; oppose installation of Kalyan Singh as CM UP and reiterate common demands.

KASHMIR SITUATION

Political Developments: *C.M. Abdullah expresses concern at persistent violation of human rights by security forces (21 Aug) and suggests constitution of a Committee to devise effective mechanism. *CM accuses elements in MHA of destabilising his government (28 Aug). *CM decides not to recruit ex-militants into State police (28 Aug).

*Army insists on continued special powers for anti-insurgency operations (1 Sept).

*CM addresses public on Sheikh Abdullah's death anniversary and reiterates demand for autonomy, short of secession. APMC's call for Hartal receives partial response (8 Sept).

*APHC leaders stage dharna against human rights violation; arrested (11 Sept).

*CBI probes into FCRA cases against top APMC leaders (14 Sept). APMC Chairman Farooq admits receipt of funds from OIC.

*Farooq expresses readiness for unconditional talks with Centre, promises initiative for return of Pandits at right time (15 Sept).

Insurgency: *Continues in a low key throughout the period. *Holy mace reaches Amarnath without any incident (18 Aug).

Indo-Pakistan Clash: *Exchange of fire across LOC in Uri sector (24 Aug). India claims Pakistani toll at 80. Defence Minister Yadav warns Pakistan of fitting reply (25 Aug).

Pakistan lodges protest with UN observers (28 Aug). India rejects US offer of good offices (28 Aug).

*President Leghari accuses India of ignoring Pakistan's constructive proposals and denies desire for confrontation (19 Aug).

*Pakistan rejects India's claim of sovereignty over state (21 Aug).

*Pakistan Commerce Minister rejects free trade with or power supply to India till Kashmir dispute is resolved (28 Aug).

*Third round of Indo-Pakistan Talks at Foreign Secretaries' level begins. Differences over constituting Joint Working Group on Kashmir casts ominous shadow (15 Sept). India denies backtracking.

*Pakistan reported floats new political forum J&K Solidarity Front to replace APMC to whip up anti-Indian sentiments in Valley.

Developments in Pakistan: *Lathi charge on pro-independence demonstrators in POK (20 Aug).

*Former PM Benazir Bhutto's plea of independence for Kashmir criticised as treason by Pakistan Minister Hashmi (23 Aug).

*Asghar Khan of Tehrik-e-Istiqal calls on Pakistan to disengage itself and leave problem to Kashmiris (23 Aug).

*Pakistan questions Supreme Court jurisdiction over Northern Areas (4 Sept).

International Developments: USA: *India rejects US move on Camp David type talks between India and Pakistan (18 Aug). US Embassy denies any proposal for trilateral meeting (19 Aug). C.M. Abdullah rejects US mediation (20 Aug). Pakistan seeks clarification (31 Aug). US denies mediatory role (6 Sept). Cong(I) advises P.M. Gujral against making Kashmir trilateral issue during visit to USA (14 Sept).

UN: *UN SG omits Kashmir issue in Annual Report to UNGA (12 Sept).

Amnesty International: *Appeals to 'armed' opposition groups' to respect human rights.

UK: *Home rule for Scotland with parliament described in India as short of autonomy enjoyed by States in Indian Union (12 Sept).

China: *Dalai Lama sees autonomy for Tibet as best solution (12 Sept).

BABARI MASJID

*BJP leader Uma Bharti warns political parties of demolition of Idgah at Mathura and Masjid at Varanasi, if they intervene (16 Aug).

*Congress leader M. Scindia considers Narasimha Rao Government and not Congress to blame for demolition and asks Congress leaders then in Government to apologise (20 Aug).

*Congress leader Arjun Singh holds Narasimha Rao Government responsible because it did not dismiss Kalyan Singh Government before 6 December (31 Aug).

*Special CBI Court orders framing of charges against 27 accused in the Demolition Case filed by CBI, including Advani, Kalyan Singh, Joshi, Katiyar, Thackeray and Singhal on finding evidence on record adequate to substantiate charges under IPC Section 120(B); 147, 153A, 153B, 295, 295A, 505 (9 Sept). JD Left parties, BMMCC, AIMMAC, AIMC, JUH and AHO hail order. RSS sees link between Order and Election Commission's decision to bar persons accused of criminal offences (11 Sept).

OTHER ISSUES OF CONCERN

Haj: *Shahabuddin asks Government not to extend further term of present Haj Committee in view of serious charges against it and its chairman and reconstitute the Committee, pending enactment of proposed Haj Committee Act. *Government forms an Advisory Committee of MP's and ex-MP's to review draft Haj

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