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EDITOR

SYED SHAHABUDDIN,
Ex-M.P.

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REPRESENTATIVES OVERSEAS

- U.K. Dr. Roohi H. Majid
7, Woodville Road,
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- U.S.A. Dr. K.A. Mallick
810-73rd Street,
Downer's Grove, ILL 60516
Tel: (708)969-6755
- K.S.A. Syed Shariq Ali
P.O.Box 11447
Jeddah-21491.

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FOR AN INDO-PAKISTAN TREATY OF PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TO MARK 50th ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE

On the eve of the 50th anniversary of the birth of Pakistan and India's Independence, the Pakistan-India People's Forum for Peace and Democracy has proposed that India and Pakistan sign a Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation and thus put 50 years of fruitless hostility and pointless confrontation and conflict behind them and begin a new chapter in their relations.

Though a promising beginning has been made with the resumption of dialogue between the two countries, following the meeting between the Prime Ministers Gujral and Nawaz Sharif in Male in May 1997, no one, not even the most optimistic "dove" in India and Pakistan expects the bilateral problems which have bedevilled the relations between them to evaporate overnight and usher in a new dawn of goodwill. Yet there is an increasing surge of public opinion in both the countries for normalisation of relations, for peaceful coexistence as good and friendly neighbours. A

treaty would not only reflect the common aspirations of the people of the two countries but provide a framework, a vision of the future which can serve to electrify the people of the Sub-continent and accelerate the process of its transformation into a Zone of Peace and to spur even the most hostile minds, to the vision to move with the caravan - forward and not backward.

PARTITION: INTERNATIONALISATION OF HINDU-MUSLIM PROBLEM

Undoubtedly both countries suffer from many complexes as indeed the two major religious communities of the Sub-continent, the Hindus and the Muslims, do. In a way, in their bilateral relations, India and Pakistan have, even at a government to government level, maintained the content, the tone and the style of pre-independence Congress-Muslim League politics. As I have written elsewhere, Partition, far from solving the Communal Problem, as it was called, has only internationalised it! Most Pakistanis continue to believe that India has not accepted Partition and are apprehensive that it will try to undo Partition. Many Indians believe

that the establishment of Pakistan is the first step towards restoration of Muslim rule over India, possibly, with the backing of the Muslim world. The suspicions in the Pakistani mind are fuelled both by the hostile postures of the Hindu Rashtravadis and their ever-continuing emphasis on Akhand Bharat and the unthinking effusions of those who prescribe the immediate formation of an Indo-Pakistan confederation. We in India must be ever conscious of the sensitivities of Pakistan. We must strictly avoid questioning the legitimacy of Partition and

pushing the logic of commonalities to territorial unification. We shall only be reviving Pakistani fears of cultural submergence, of losing its religious identity. We must commit ourselves to the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Pakistan. We must shake hands as good, friendly neighbours, without appearing to bring down the boundary walls or cut down the separating hedge, so long as we can see and speak across such dividing lines.

The suspicions in the Indian mind are strengthened not only by the jingoistic expressions used by the Pakistani establishment but also by the impulsive manifestations of pan-Muslim extremism within the country like the Milli Parliament and the SIMI's Khilafat campaign. Of course, both Indian and Pakistani governments anxiously monitor the fire-power of the armed forces of the other side and the budgetary allocations for defence, explicit and implicit, direct and indirect, even the movement and deployment of their existing defence capacity.

FRIENDSHIP IN MUTUAL INTEREST

People of India and Pakistan need to be reassured of each other's good intentions. Both have to be told that in the world of today, the days of foreign conquest, as also of minority dominance are over. No armed night - external or internal - can prevail against the will of the people. There can be no question of unification of the Sub-continent by force of arms.

In the national interest India and Pakistan need each other as friends; they cannot afford to be enemies; the people of the two countries have paid a high price during

PIPPFD: Proposal for Pakistan-India Peace Treaty

... Talks between the two governments on the range of issues identified at Islamabad should be pursued with tenacity of purpose and in a constructive and cooperative spirit. The eventual goal of peace, friendship and cooperation between the two countries, so earnestly desired by the common people on both sides, should not be lost sight of, at any stage.

It would be a uniquely appropriate gift to the peoples of both countries, and indeed to the peoples of all South Asian countries, if the two governments were to sign a comprehensive peace treaty to mark the golden jubilee of the two countries' independence.

the last 50 years for the policies of hostility in terms of the pace and content of their economic and social development. While the world has been moving forward, they have remained relatively stagnant and, therefore, underdeveloped and backward, deprived of the means to fulfill their minimum human needs. As a result, South Asia has remained one of the poorest and the most deprived regions of the world in term of the percentage of population living between the poverty line, of villages and towns not enjoying the minimum infrastructure like drinking water, primary health service, primary educational facility, communications and road links.

It is not difficult to tote up the enormous resources dissipated in building up and maintaining military establishments and armed forces - largely poised, honestly speaking, against each other or to work out the quantum of economic and social development that the same resources, applied to positive, nation-building endeavours, could have generated. Are they going to continue wasting their scarce resources in the same manner, to the detriment of their people and their future. Shall they continue to justify themselves only on the basis of the continuing dispute over J&K and a possible design of one or the other to "conquer" the other or to give it a black eye!

INTERNATIONAL TRENDS AND KASHMIR PROBLEM

After the Berlin wall has fallen, after the USA and Russia have been forced out of Vietnam and Afghanistan, after Germany and Vietnam have been reunited, after Israel and the PLO have begun negotiating with each other, the world is simply tired of India-Pakistan confrontation over Jammu and Kashmir.

It is indeed time for both to be realistic, cut costs and not mortgage the future of their people to endless struggle for the whole of the State as it existed on 15 August, 1947. Neither India nor Pakistan can achieve this goal by force of arms. Nor can Kashmiris achieve independence against the will of India and Pakistan and against the common interest of all the people of the Sub-continent. Is it impossible to work out an honourable solution which would mean a gain not only for India and Pakistan but for the people of the Valley over the present situation? However, even if such a solution is hammered out it may take time for the two governments to sell the solution to the peoples, particularly the 'hawks' in the political establishment and the mass media. But shouldn't they begin the process? Don't they owe it to their own people?

COMMONALITY OF DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The problems faced by India and Pakistan in the field of development are the same and they can well learn from each other's experience. With hundred years of

uninterrupted British rule, all the people of the Sub-continent have the same political culture, the same social attitudes, the same economic aspirations. Whether it is a question of administering the country, of managing the economy, of running the political system, of building a modern state, of universalising education and health services, of harmonising the relations among the Legislature, the Judiciary and Executive, of patronising the fine arts and culture in all their diversity, of promoting science and technology - no two countries are or can be closer to each other than India or Pakistan. A comprehensive treaty can provide for cooperation and exchange in all conceivable fields of social endeavours at governmental, institutional and individual levels, in order to learn from each other through cross fertilisation and diversion of labour.

It should be possible for the two countries, therefore, to take positive steps without in any way undermining their sovereignty or territorial integrity and without prejudice to their stand over the Kashmir question. Even in the field of defence, they can take a page out of SALT I and II and work out a series of graduated reciprocal steps to build mutual confidence without jeopardising their security at any stage, thus reduce their defence expenditure and plough back the savings in economic and social infrastructure. They can accelerate movement of people, of goods of culture, education and information, of trade and investment. Government and non-governmental institutions can enter into dialogue and cooperation with each other. So can universities, trade unions, political parties, research institutions. Even the Supreme Courts and High Courts and Central and State Legislatures. Both countries can upgrade their performance in the field of human rights and even minorities rights to internationally accepted and recognised levels.

REGIONAL IMPACT IN SOUTH ASIAN PERSONALITY

One fact has been recognised by all political analysts in India and Pakistan. So long South Asia remains a divided house, it shall continue to lose in the current movement towards the evolution of a world order, based on well-defined regions. Only when India, Pakistan and all the other SAARC States speak with one voice in the world forum, they can make themselves heard, felt and taken seriously. And once they do, even the boundaries of South Asia shall extend to include Iran, Afghanistan and the Central Asia Republics. The multi-splendoured mansion of Asian Personality can then be built on the foundation of inter-regional cooperation between West Asia, South Asia and SE Asian and East Asia. Converting the 21st Century into the Asian Century as the 20th was the European.

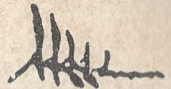
LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVE

Pakistan may well be apprehensive that if this movement gathers momentum and becomes a torrential flow, its very survival as a separate, sovereign state may be jeopardised and its case over Kashmir relegated to the back burner for ever. My answer is that in the short run such apprehension are far fetched. And in the long run, if the people of the Sub-continent voluntarily adopt the European model, why not? However, my own view is that if the Sub-continent is reunited, it shall not be a Federation or Union or Confederation of the existing States, as the existing boundary lines - internal and external - in the Sub-continent will have to be replaced by more rational boundaries which respect the ethnic identities that one sees surging in both India and Pakistan and in other States of South Asia. But this is not the distant future on which we should pass sleepless nights. There are historical movements which take time to gather momentum and which are quite independent of the slow movement of State-to-State relations.

Indo-Pakistan detente, to sum up, makes human, national, regional, continental sense. It also makes sense, in their common struggle against poverty, illiteracy and disease, deprivation and degradation. It makes

economic, social and cultural sense. It makes sense for both majority and minority communities in both countries. It makes strategic and tactical sense even for national defence and security through mutually balanced arms limitation, as distrust gives place to confidence.

National glory does not lie in military hard-ware that we make or purchase but in the quality of life that we provide to our people. So on the 50th anniversary of our birth as independent states, let India and Pakistan reconsider the strategy of nation-building that we have adopted and strike a new course, away from hostility towards amity, from arms race towards political, economic and cultural cooperation, from rivalry towards complementarity, from legitimate competition towards positive cooperation. Let them clear the mental cobwebs of yesteryears and banish the unnamed fears and suspicions and build up mutual trust and confidence.



New Delhi

1 August, 1997

(SYED SHAHABUDDIN)

Muslim India

- * **HAILS THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY - THE GOLDEN JUBILEE OF OUR INDEPENDENCE**
- * **FELICITATES THE PEOPLE ON NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROGRESS, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL & TECHNOLOGICAL**
- * **REDEDICATES ITSELF TO THE CONTINUING STRUGGLE FOR EMPOWERMENT AND PARTICIPATION, FOR EQUALITY, JUSTICE AND FRATERNITY, FOR PEACEFUL AND HARMONIOUS COEXISTENCE, IN PLURALITY & DIVERSITY**
- * **OFFERS PRAYERS FOR FULFILLMENT OF PEOPLE'S LEGITIMATE ASPIRATIONS FOR A LIFE OF DIGNITY**

Welfare Programme for Minorities

Relevant Extracts from Ministry of Welfare's Annual Report, 1996-97

Welfare of Minorities

... Ministry of Welfare set up an apex financial corporation, namely, National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) with an authorised capital of Rs. 500 crores for providing concessional finance to eligible minority beneficiaries for setting up self-employment ventures. Government of India's contribution to the equity capital of NMDFC is restricted to 25% of the paid up share capital. The balance will be held by the State Governments/Corporations and individuals. During VIII Plan Rs. 125 crores have been allocated to the Corporation. By the end of January, 1997 the Corporation disbursed Rs. 51.36 crores as loan which will cover 17893 beneficiaries. ...

Ministry of Welfare has been operating a scheme of Pre-Examination Coaching for weaker sections among minorities and other backward classes to enable them to compete on equal terms with other candidates in competitive examinations for various jobs. The Scheme is being implemented through institutions of repute. Rs. 10.00 crore has been earmarked during VIIIth Five Year Plan for this purpose. Since its inception in 1992-93, the Scheme was covered 173 institutions where 8860 candidates have been coached for various competitive examinations... The details of grants released during 1996-97 are at given below:

S.No.	Voluntary Organisations	Released (Rs. in lakhs)
1.	All India Women's Studies and Development Organisation, Kanpur	1.33
2.	A.P. Study Circle for Backward Classes, Guntur	3.32
3.	Hamdard Study Circle, New Delhi	8.57
4.	L.C. Institute of Social and Applied Sciences, Bhubaneswar	1.44

National Commission for Minorities

... The National Commission for Minorities has been reconstituted w.e.f. 26.11.1996 and Prof. (Dr.) Tahir Mahmood and Professor Bawa Singh have assumed charges as Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Commission, respectively... The Commission has been sanctioned and outlay of Rs. 1.60 crores for 1996-97.

While the erstwhile Minorities Commission has submitted 13 Annual Reports, its 14th Report has been submitted by the statutory commission in February, 1995. The first 11 reports alongwith action taken memorandum have been laid before Parliament so far. The National Commission for Minorities has submitted its 1st and 2nd Reports recently.

Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities

... The Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities submits Annual Report to the President of India. The Commissioner has so far submitted 32 Annual Reports, all of them have been tabled in Parliament.

The organisation of the Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities has its headquarters at Allahabad with Regional Offices at Calcutta, Belgaum and Madras... Dr. Harbhajan Singh Deol has been appointed as Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities on 7.10.1996.

The office of the Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities has been provided a budget allocation of Rs. 40.00 lakhs for 1996-97.

Multi Sector Development Plan

In pursuance of the strategy of area based approach for tackling the problems of minorities, the scheme of multi-sectoral development plans has been launched during 1995-96 in 41 minority concentration districts. Under this scheme, the concerned States are required to undertake surveys and prepared project reports through an expert agency in respect of activities conspicuously perused by the Minorities in these districts with a view to identify the requirements of credit, marketing, training, technological support etc... An amount of Rs. 41 lakhs has already been disbursed during 1995-96 to 11 States. For 1996-97, an amount of Rs. 50.00 lakhs has been allocated for the scheme...

Wakf Administration

... So far 5 State Governments viz., Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Meghalaya, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh have constituted the Wakf Boards under the new law...

Central Wakf Council

With the enforcement of the new Wakf Law, the Central Wakf Council constituted under the provisions of the earlier Wakf Act 1954, stands dissolved. A new Council consisting of 20 Members is being re-constituted...

Development of Urban Wakf Properties

... The budgetary provision for the grant-in-aid to the Central Wakf Council for the year 1996-97 is Rs. 125.00 lakhs. The entire grant has since been released to the council upto 31st December, 1996.

Punjab Wakf Board

... Shri A.A. Siddiqui, an IPS Officer of Punjab Cadre, has been appointed as the new Administrator of the Board with effect from the 18th October, 1996...

Maulana Azad Education Foundation

The Maulana Azad Education Foundation has been set up as a society with the specific purpose of promoting education amongst the educationally backward section of the society in general and minorities in particular. During the year 1992-93 the Foundation was given a grant-in-aid of Rs. 5 crores by the Government ... for building up a "corpus"... The Government ... has released an additional amount of Rs. 25.01 crores as grant-in-aid to the Foundation during 1994-95... Upto January, 1997 the Foundation sanctioned a total grant-in-aid of Rs. 6.02 crores to 51 NGOs out of which Rs. 2.57 crores was released to 49 NGOs for the purpose of establishing residential schools for girls, construction of laboratory buildings, establishment of Computer Centre/Typing Centre for women etc.

Durgah Khwaja Saheb Act, 1955

... The Managing Committee appointed by the Central Government known as "Durgah Committee" ... is assisted by an officer known as Nazim... appointed by the Central Government.

Supreme Court Decisions

On State Minorities Commission

Misbah Alam Shaikh, Appellant v. State of Maharashtra and another, Respondents.

K. RAMASWAMY AND G.T. NANAVATI, JJ.

National Commission for Minorities Act (19 of 1992), Sections 3,9 - State Minorities Commission - Constitution of - No Statutory obligation on State Government - Abolition by State Government of State Minority Commission constituted by it after coming into power of new political party - Cannot be said to be mala fide action in absence of statutory compulsion - Moreso, since each political party may have different perception.

... It may be that perception of political parties differ from one another. But when the Government found, after the political party was voted to power and the decision taken by the Cabinet to abolish the Minority Commission, it cannot be characterised as a mala fide decision. May be the perception may not be correct in the view of another political party. The decision may or may not be right, but it cannot be characterised as a mala fide decision.

Under those circumstances, we cannot hold that the decision to abolish the Minority Commission by the State Government, in the absence of any statutory compulsion, was not in accordance with law. It is now an admitted position that, as stated in the counter-affidavit by the Central Government that they have undertaken to establish the branch of National Commission in Maharashtra at Mumbai to monitor the development of the minorities and the working of the safeguards as provided in the Constitution and in the laws enacted by the Parliament and the State Legislature in relation to the State of Maharashtra.... (Source: AIR 1997 Supreme Court 1409)

On Right to Health

State of Punjab and others, Appellants v. Mohinder Singh Chawla, etc., Respondents.

K. RAMASWAMY AND G.B. PATTANAIK, JJ.

Constitution of India, Article 21 - Right to life - Includes right to health - State Government employee - Medical reimbursement - Approval granted for specialized treatment in hospital outside State - Reimbursement of room rent charges - Cannot be rejected. ...

... It is settled law that right to health is an integral to right to life. Government has constitutional obligation to provide the health facilities. If the Government servant has suffered an ailment which requires treatment at a specialised approved hospital and on reference whereat the Government servant had undergone such treatment

therein, it is but the duty of the State to bear the expenditure incurred by the Government servant. Expenditure, thus, incurred requires to be reimbursed by the State to the employee. Having had the constitutional obligation to bear the expenses for the Government servant while in service or after retirement from service, as per the policy of the Government, the Government is required to fulfil the constitutional obligation. Necessarily, the State has to bear the expenses incurred in that behalf.

(Source: AIR 1997 Supreme Court 1225)

B.R. Ambedkar

On Rights of Minorities

... Rights of minorities should be absolute rights. They should not be subject to any consideration as to what another party may like to do to minorities within its jurisdiction. If we find that certain minorities in which we are interested and which are within the jurisdiction of another State have not got the same rights which we have given to minorities in our territory, it would be open for the State to take up the matter in a diplomatic manner and see that the wrongs are rectified. But no matter what others do, I think we ought to do what is right in our own judgement and personally I think that the rights which are indicated in clause 18 are rights which every minority, irrespective of any other consideration is entitled to claim. The first right that we have given is the right to use their language, their script and their culture. We have stated that "there shall be no discrimination on the ground of religion, language, etc." in the matter of admission into State educational institutions. We have said that "no minority shall be precluded from establishing any educational institution which such minority may wish to establish". It is also stated here that whenever a State decides to provide aid to schools or other educational institutions maintained by the minority, they shall not discriminate in the matter of giving grant on the basis of religion, community or language. Sir, I cannot understand how there can be any objection to these rights which have been indicated in clause 18... Nobody ... has advanced any argument that either these rights are in excess of what a minority ought to have or are such that a minority ought not to have them....

(Participating in Constituent Assembly Debate on Clause 18 of the Draft Constitution)

A.J. Philip on Religious Superstition in Secular India

Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral ... in response to a newsman's query declared that he was a rationalist and would be guided solely by cerebral considerations. In his first address as Prime Minister, he ... committed himself to upholding the values of science. Yet, within a few days, he had to bow to pressure and change the timing of the swearing-in ceremony of his colleagues from the Tamil Maanila Congress... Nobody knows whether the timing they finally chose was auspicious for the nation or for themselves.

... The incident underlines the extent to which superstitious beliefs have taken root in the political life of the country. This despite the Constitution eloquently enjoining upon every citizen "to develop the scientific, humanism and the spirit of enquiry and reform". It is saddening that no leader talks about cultivating a scientific bent of mind among the people.

... When Indira Gandhi started out as Prime Minister, she was as much known for her disdain for religion as her great father. But as she began to consolidate her position, she put a high value on an assortment of religious charlatans, including a modern-day Rasputin, who marked a gun in the name of Lord Shiva. Again, it was during her time that an ascetic who lived on a tree had the satisfaction of putting his foot on the head of such a powerful personage as the then Home Minister...

Rajiv Gandhi ... had such a vacuous faith that he willy-nilly became a tool in the hands of his advisers. Amazingly, he showed readiness even to exploit religion for his political purposes as underscored by the opening of the Ayodhya shrine, the shilanyas he permitted at the disputed site, and the 1989 electoral campaign he launched from the temple town with a fake Ram and Hanuman beside him on the dais...

However, the worst experience the nation had was during P.V. Narasimha Rao's tenure when tantrics and clerics of doubtful integrity had a field day. The ... influence Chandraswamy wielded on him ... needs no recapitulation. But few people realise that the swamy was not the only one of his kind ... allowed to dabble in statecraft. As astrologer from Haryana, who had unlimited access to 7, Race Course Road, overnight became the most sought after practitioner of the occult. Aspirants for ministerial and other positions of power knew that a nod from the astrologer was all that was required to realise their ambition...

Rao's present-day troubles can, in fact, be attributed to the ill-effects of the unholy company he kept.

It is not difficult to understand why those holding high positions tend to be superstitious. The higher one

goes up in life, the higher the risk one faces. When a rickshaw-puller sets out on his work, he just murmurs a prayer whereas a film's muhurat is always an elaborate affair. The first time Deve Gowda became an MLA and was given a modest government accommodation, he would not have made a fuss of any vastshastra. But when he became Prime Minister by a quirk of fate, he did not mind wasting enormous sums of public money on redoing his bungalow in consultation with his spiritual advisers, who were a legion.

Similarly, when tantrics attributed the then Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N.T. Ramarao's political and personal woes to the use of the wrong gate at the State Secretariat ... ordered its demolition and reconstruction... within a few days of the construction ... strictly in accordance with the vastusashtra specifications, NTR found himself on the streets...

It is nobody's contention that those in power should give up their religious beliefs and practices. They have every right to choose any form of worship but it should not be at the cost of the public exchequer. After all, in a secular polity, religion is strictly an affair between man and God and the State has no role in it.

The huge expenditure the nation had to bear for K. Karunakaran's monthly visits to the Guruvayur temple (as) Chief Minister of Kerala and later as Union Minister of Kerala and later Union Minister will never be quantified...

(Source: The Indian Express, 22 May, 1997)

Suresh Pachouri's Bill for Prohibition of Using Images of Gods and Goddesses as Trade Marks

A Bill to provide for the prohibition of using images of Gods and Goddesses or founders of religions who are worshipped by their followers as trade marks particularly in harmful substances such as tobacco, tobacco products and intoxicating substances and for matters connected therewith. ...

Main Clause

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, -

... (b) "images of Gods" include images of Goddesses and founders of various known religions who are worshipped by their followers. ...

3. No person shall, after one year of the commencement of this Act, apply images of gods as trade mark on a package which he intends to sell to any prospective consumer, dealer, or retailer in the market. ...

**Bihar: Party-wise and Caste-wise
Composition of Assembly, 1995**

Caste	JD	INC	BJP	CPI	Samata	Others including Independents	Total
Adivasi	-	1	-	-	-	2	3
Bania	2	-	6	-	-	1	9
Bhuiyan	1	-	-	-	-	1	2
Bhumihar	5	5	1	5	-	2	18
Brahmin	3	1	4	1	1	2	12
Chamar	5	1	2	2	-	1	11
Dhanuk	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Dhobi	2	-	1	-	-	-	3
Dome	1	-	-	-	-	1	2
Dusadh	17	-	-	2	1	1	21
Gangota	2	-	-	1	-	-	3
Gaud	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Ho	-	-	2	-	-	1	3
Kahar	1	-	1	-	-	-	2
Kayasth	-	1	4	-	-	1	6
Kewat	1	1	-	-	-	1	3
Kewrath	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Kharbar	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Khatri	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Koeri	14	-	2	1	2	6	25
Kurmi	4	2	2	-	3	4	15
Mallah	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Marwari	1	-	1	-	-	-	2
Mehtar	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Munda	-	2	-	-	-	3	5
Mushar	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Muslim	13	5	-	1	-	4	23
Nai	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Nishad	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Nonea	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Oraon	-	2	2	-	-	2	6
Pasi	3	1	-	1	-	1	6
Rajput	14	1	4	-	-	3	22
Rajwanshi	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Rajwar	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Ravidas	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Santhal	-	-	-	-	-	9	9
Sardar	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Sonar	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Sudhi	1	-	2	-	-	1	4
Teli	2	1	1	-	-	-	4
Yadav	63	5	2	10	-	8	88
Total	166	29	41	25	7	56	324

**MP: Muslim Representation in
Panchayati Raj Institutions**

	Total	Muslim	Percentage
Municipal Corporations	18	4	22.2
Municipalities	92	17	18.4
Town Committees	262	29	11.1

**Neerja Chowdhury on BJP's Friendly
Posture Towards Muslims**

... The most important plank of the BJP's poll strategy today is to try and reduce the hostility of the Muslims. In recent weeks, the party has held national and regional-level meetings with the Muslims, including their 'ulema', to underscore the message that it is not anti-Muslim.

At a meeting organised by the Bharatiya Yuva Morcha in New Delhi last month, it was none other than Uma Bharati - who along with Sadhavi Ritambara is remembered for spouting anti-Islamic venom only six years ago - who did not go in for the rendering of Vande Matram lest it should offend the Muslims present.

And she was pulled up by party vice-president Sikander Bakht for assuming that Muslims would object to it! Advani, considered a hawk, too has moderated his position. His statement that the minorities could have differences with the BJP on the abolition of Article 370 or uniform civil code or illegal immigration, but they should not view its stand on these issues taken out of antipathy towards them is significant.

The party is giving contracts to Muslims in many places where it has captured municipal corporations. Its minority cell is planning a massive rally of Muslims in Lucknow next month. ...

There is a realisation in the BJP that it cannot hope to govern India without neutralising the hostility of the Muslims. All this is not to say that the Muslims will fall in the BJP lap.

The party's real target is not the Muslim vote, at least not in the coming electoral round, but the regional parties and the liberal Hindu vote. No regional party was prepared to touch the BJP with a bargepole in May, 1996. Even groups like the TDP and AGP preferred the Congress - their main adversary - to the BJP because they did not want to antagonise their Muslim voters. Once BJP neutralises the hostility of the Muslims, the regional parties would find it easier to shake hands with it.

Making conciliatory gestures to the Muslims is also likely to make the party more acceptable to the liberal Hindus who have been uncomfortable with the BJP rhetoric. For all its pro-Hindu stance, only 25-30% of the country's Hindu population has voted for the BJP. (The Party cornered 20% of the votes in the last elections, and since this is mostly made up of Hindus, it got merely one-fourth of the Hindu vote).

The recent attempt by the Sangh to distance itself from the BJP is another straw in the wind... But (this) seems to be a tactical ploy to give a push to BJP's woo-Muslims campaign. The Muslims see the Sangh as being more inimical to them than the BJP...

(Source: The Indian Express, 14 July, 1997)

CPI: National Council Resolutions, 16 May, 1997

On Redressing the Genuine Grievances of Minorities

The failure of the BJP to win vote of confidence in the Lok Sabha and formation of the United Front Government by the combination of 12 secular national and regional parties generated tremendous enthusiasm and raised hopes that the new government will take speedy measures to redress the genuine grievances of the minorities and new schemes will be launched to ameliorate their lot.

This hope and expectation was not baseless as the previous Congress Governments have made several announcements but nothing concrete was done to redress the grievances of minorities particularly the Muslims. The community continues to be utterly backward in the matter of education and economic uplift.

It must be noted that the Muslim minority has expressed satisfaction over the fact that the formation of the United Front government has reduced the communal tension and there is no major communal flare up, except a few skirmishes in UP after the formation of BSP-BJP government in UP and in Maharashtra where Shiv Sena-BJP combine is in power. But it is also a fact that during the last eleven months the United Front Government has not taken any concrete initiative to meet the aspiration of the minority communities. This naturally leads to heart burning.

The national council of the Communist Party of India feels that the UF government must look into the genuine grievances of the Muslim minority and initiate urgent measures to implement the earlier announced measures like 25-point programme, Gujral Committee Report on Urdu, assistance from minorities finance corporation, from Maulana Azad Foundation for educational upliftment of minorities, creation of composite police force as part of RDPF, measures for providing succour to artisan communities like handloom, powerloom weavers so on and so forth.

The national council of the CPI further feels that apart from reconstituting various councils and committees connected with the welfare measures for the minorities, the UF government must create a central mechanism as suggested by National Integration Council to oversee the implementation of all such schemes and projects announced by the central government.

On L.K. Advani's Rath Yatra

BJP President L.K. Advani is planning to take out a countrywide Rath Yatra from May 18 this year. This Yatra, it is said, would cover 20 states over a period of 55 days.

The BJP, by this Yatra is trying to own the legacy of the freedom struggle, though it or its mother organisation

RSS was never part of the freedom struggle.

The BJP claims that the Yatra is being organised to mark the 50th anniversary of the country's independence, the Yatra will be used by communal-fanatic elements led by RSS and other front organisations of the Sangh Parivar to spread communal disharmony and create disturbances in the country.

It may be recalled that the last Rath Yatra brought out by Advani in 1990 had left a trail of blood and devastation behind. A series of communal riots were witnessed as the Yatra progressed spreading the venom of communalism.

The CPI national council calls upon the people to be vigilant and to ensure that communal-fanatic forces do not take advantage of the Yatra to stoke communal frenzy. It calls on the United Front Government to take all possible measures in view of the proposed Yatra and to see to it that forces inimical to the country's unity and integrity do not use this occasion for any evil design.

Congress & JMM: Support to Rabri Devi

What has made Rabri Devi the Chief Minister is not her nomination by her husband but the endorsement of the choice by the Rashtriya Janata Dal legislators. And what has allowed her to continue in power and to expand her ministry to the largest ever, is the vote of confidence she has been able to secure with the help of the Congress and the Jharkhand Party.

(Contd. from page 359)

the Gangetic plain once again reasserts its eternal impulse of tolerance and accommodation.

... Indian Muslims in the twenty first century will be to a large extent what they work for being, what they really want to be... But they need take concrete steps for eradication of poverty, removal of illiteracy, moral orientation and economic uplift. The road may belong and difficult but one step at a time, which every Muslim in India takes and not only a few activists, can one day make a difference. Work, earn, learn, save, invest in your future by raising healthier, more educated and better behaved children and help your brothers and sisters do the same.

That is the agenda for the individual, every individual. For social organisations the message is to focus, for the time being, on the poorest and the weakest. Attend more to primary education, adult literacy, cleaner neighbours, teaching basic hygiene to every one and providing all with the means for elementary health care... This is not materialism, it is not dunya. Rather it is building the necessary infrastructure for deen. The physical requirements for morally good life are no less important than morality itself...

Milli Parliament: The Muslim Manifesto (Extracts)

We realise ...

- (i) that our last 50 years efforts have been directionless, a deviation from the accepted Islamic norms. We consider this part of our milli history as the Lost Years.
- (ii) that despite identifying ourselves with the ideals of Islam our efforts were directed to establish an alien system in this land...
- (iii) that Maulana Azad's decision to annul the idea of a separate Muslim political party in 1948 Lucknow Convention was a political blunder of unprecedented magnitude which in latter years paved the way for the political supremacy of Kuffar-o-Mushrekeen.
- (iv) that from Shariah point of view, the idea of India's division was never a valid judgement (if) the present day Pakistan is a deviation from our political tradition. Admitting this deviation, today we Muslims, hereby de-recognise Pakistan as a nation state.
- (v) that the Shariah of Allah does not allow us to become upholders or protectors of a system other than Islam. Working as volunteers of secularism, we have committed an unpardonable offence...

We affirm ...

- (i) ... that Islam is not only a message, it is also a methodology which can always find us an effective strategy to combat the situation. ...
- (iii) that ... any ideology other than Islam cannot command our least respect.
- (iv) that being Muslims it is our bounden duty to work for the establishment of a just order. We reaffirm our commitment to establish such a system in this country as well as in the world outside.
- (v) that ... we declare not to have any truck with those pseudo-ulema or the agents of Kufr system who are responsible for deviating the milli caravan from the right path.
- (vi) that we are ... Muslims, just Muslims and nothing else...
- (vii) that like Muslim men, Muslim women have also been assigned to work for the establishment of an Islamic system... We invite the Muslim sisters for an all-out participation in this mission.

The Milli Agenda

We hereby make our intentions known ...

- (i) that the establishment of a world Khilafah, a just system of governance under a rightly guided Imam, is our prime objective. According to the Islamic Shariah a true Islamic life can only be achieved in a Khilafah system... We believe that the Indian

Muslims will play a key-role in any future struggle for the revival of Khilafah.

- (ii) that from Shariah stand point, our status in this country is not that of a minority community, rather we are an ideological party. It is our religious obligation to work for the establishment of a just system in this part of the world. As Muslims, we are also obliged to guide the caravan of this country along Quranic lines. Our religion does not allow us to hold any system other than Islamic in reverence.
- (iii) That the main target of our political manoeuvring should be to establish an Islamic order... Our allegiance ... will be annulled at once if we accept the Kuffar-o-Mushrekeen as our political boss...
- (iv) that we are here not to ask for ourselves any special privilege, nor any participation in the political power can quell our restlessness. No scheme for reservations can satisfy us nor any move for educational or economic uplift can bring us a sense of fulfillment. The Islamic Shariah demands from us continuous struggle till a just system becomes order of the day. This, we believe, is our unfinished agenda.

US: Report on Religious Freedom, 22 July, 1997

India: Current Situation

The State is secular. The constitution provides for religious freedom, and this right is respected in practice. There is no national law to bar proselytizing by Indian Christians, but the Government has refused since the mid-1960s to admit new resident foreign missionaries...

U.S. Government actions: The U.S. Embassy discusses a wide range of issues with the Government of India, including respect for human rights.

JP on Communal Parties

Addressing a meeting of Nationalist Muslims (on 15 July, 1947, J.P.) discussed the future set-up of India with particular reference to the role of political parties.

The parties based on communal lines would be unhealthy, and they would not be able to run the Government smoothly... The parties in future ought to be based on social, economic and agrarian programmes"

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 16 July, 1997)

M.N. Roy's Views on Jinnah's Role in Partition

In the light of recent writings on the partition of the country, a quotation from M.N. Roy on Jinnah written in September 1948 is appropriate:

"Mohammad Ali Jinnah was the most maligned and misunderstood man. That experience made him bitter and it was very largely out of spitefulness that he pursued an object, the attainment of which placed him in the most difficult position. Jinnah was not an idealist in the sense of being a visionary; he was a practical man possessed of great shrewdness as well as of more than average intelligence. Such a man could not be blind to the difficulty which was to follow his highly problematical success. During the latter part of his career, politics was a gamble for him; having played a game of poker with high stakes, he could not pull out. He had to go to the bitter end, so to say. Bitter, because he must have been frightened by the spectre of success when it came within the reach of possibility. But then it was too late to retreat. It was a case of a man getting inextricably entangled in power-politics without having begun with the lust for political power. Few would agree; yet, that is a fact which will win the recognition of impartial and dispassionate historians. ... Jinnah was temperamentally not a professional politician. He began as a liberal for whom politics was a holiday pastime. Being a man of outstanding merit, he could not remain a back-bencher. Unfortunately, his coming to the front rank of politics synchronised with the desecularisation of nationalism, which doubtful development introduced communalism in politics. The responsibility for that fateful turn in the political life of the country must be judged by history. But ever since then, politics became a game of wits for Jinnah. Successful in that game, thanks to his own cleverness, he won the opprobrium of being a henchman of imperialism. The fact, however, is that, if distrust and hatred of the British were the hall-mark of patriotism, Jinnah was always as staunch a patriot as any other Indian. The more that fact was willfully ignored by his opponents and he was maligned and misrepresented deliberately, the more was Jinnah naturally embittered (emphasis added). But even then his ambition was not to gain political power, but avenge the wrong which he believed had been done to him... But he was not the devil of the drama, as he was made out to be. He is no more with us. Let justice be done to his memory... The homeland for the Indian Muslims was a Utopia: any territorial division was bound to leave many millions of them out, in a very delicate position of being regarded as aliens, suspected of disloyalty to the land they must live in. An intelligent man like Jinnah must have foreseen this tragic consequence of what he demanded. Therefore, I for one do not believe that he really wanted partition of the country (emphasis added). Like a gambler, over-confident of his wits, he staked high, believing that the other party would compromise on his terms. That would have been for the best of all concerned. But the latter having taken up the attitude of all or nothing, Jinnah was

driven to the bitter end - of gaining a victory he himself dreaded and which he did not survive" - (editorial in Independent India, September 19, 1948)

R.M. Pal's Views

On the Two-Nation Theory

What led to the "two-nation" theory and who was responsible for the partition of India in 1947 which led to human rights violations of the worst kind caused by communalism? Some young historians like Ayesha Jalal (The Sole Spokesman, Cambridge University Press) and Joya Chatterjee (Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition 1932-47), Cambridge University Press) have, in recent years, shown remarkable objectivity and scientific outlook ... in answering this question, which is not the conventional revisionistic view of history. According to Jalal, Jinnah did not want the partition of the country which conclusion is reinforced by Chatterjee who gives conclusive proof from her research that it is the Bhadrakalok Hindus of Bengal (Congress and Hindu Mahasabha included) who wanted Bengal to be partitioned. Older generation of scholars like H.M. Seervai who hold the Congress responsible for the partition of the country are rare.

... Kuldeep Nayar is ... making valiant efforts to face the truth, through his regular widely published columns on the subject. One of these, "The Two-nation Theory" was published in May, 1997...

Kuldeep Nayar does not give any definitive opinion about Jinnah's role in the partition of the country, or what led to the two nation theory. His only comments are: Both Gandhiji and Jinnah stood poles apart as much in dress as in thoughts. Jinnah was elegantly dressed with a stiff white collar even in hot weather. Gandhiji wore only a doubled-up dhoti. For the one-two nation theory was a knife to cut the Gordian knot of the sub-continent's independence question, for the other the two-nation theory as the perpetuation of the sub-continent's ills...

Note: I had the pleasure and opportunity of working, in an honorary capacity, in a project, Documentary History of Partition of India, in Hamdard Institute of Historical Research in Delhi. The first volume (which, I am told by the editor, is being published soon) covers the period 1937-40 (Lahore Resolution of the Muslim League). A number of documents, hitherto unpublished, are revealing, but I cannot quote from them since that was the understanding between the editor and me. ...

Historians will go on exploring who was responsible for partition of India. Meanwhile, we may take a sane and civilised view and insist on our text book writers and columnists to give up the "hate campaign" against Jinnah... In any case, invectives cannot substitute for logical debate and discussion.

Finally, this distorted view of history involving hatred will always stand in the way of a normal and healthy relationship between the two countries, India and Pakistan.

(Source: The Janata, 13 July, 1997)

Reservation in Legislature for Minorities

Madhav Godbole in the Hindu, 7 June, 1997

A screaming headline in a national newspaper said "Janata Dal seeks 20 per cent seats for Muslims in Houses". Its working president, Mr. Sharad Yadav, has backed the demand of Muslim MPs for a proportional representation in the Legislatures... "Strike now as the iron is hot" was his "wise" advice in the context of the tussle in the United Front on various issues, including the Women's Reservation Bill. This is the first instance since Independence when a leader of a mainstream political party has openly backed the demand for reservation on a communal basis. This demand for a "quota within quota" has large and long-term implications for the very future of the country, and its unity and integrity, and should not be dismissed as one of the usual, mindless outbursts by a leader of a national party.

The question of separate representation for the minorities was fully and carefully gone into by the Constituent Assembly in 1947-48... The Committee on Minorities ... recommended that all elections to the central and provincial legislatures be held on the basis of joint electorates. However, in order that the minorities might not feel apprehensive... it recommended as a general rule that seats for the different recognised minorities be reserved in the various legislatures on the basis of their population...

At further meetings of the Advisory Committee held in December 1948 and May 1949, the committee felt that the conditions had changed vastly since 1947 when the above recommendations were made and it would no longer be appropriate to reserve seats for any religious minorities...

Explaining this important decision to the Assembly on May 25, 1949, Vallabhbhai Patel stated the "vast majority of the minority communities had themselves realised after great reflection the evil effects in the past of such reservation on the minorities themselves". The voting for the abolition of communal reservation was practically unanimous, with only one member of the

committee voting against the proposal.

... Several national parties have always looked at Muslims a vote bank and stooped to any level to ingratiate themselves in the Muslim psyche... One should not therefore, be surprised if other political parties quickly join in the demand for communal reservation.

This would indeed be unfortunate as any such action will land a large cross-section of the secular Hindu electorate in the lap of the BJP...

Reservation of seats in the State Legislatures and Parliament for Muslims will be a major divisive force in the already Mandalised society. ... The other fallout of any such step will be similar demands from all other religious minorities... Yet another highly deleterious influence will be on the population policy which has already been in the doldrums. With Muslims and Christians unwilling to take a forthright stand in favour of family planning ... a large cross-section of Hindus is also being encouraged by some political parties and others not to take to family planning. Fears are being perpetuated that otherwise the percentage of Hindus will get reduced over a period of time. The question of large and continuing influx of migrants from Bangladesh will acquire much more political and social overtones than at present...

It also needs to be considered whether Muslims are a real minority ... can as large a population as that of the Muslims be reasonably called a minority requiring special protection by way of reservation of seats?

More important, providing for reservation on the basis of religion will totally destroy the basic structure of the Constitution...

... To talk of reservation on a religious basis is playing with fire. If you sow the wind, you can only reap the whirlwind. It is sad ... that in this 50th year of Independence, we are trying to lay the foundations for the balkanisation of the country.

(Source: The Hindu, 7 June, 1997)

Shahabuddin's Rejoinder, The Hindu

Mr. Madhav Godbole, the former Home Secretary has, in a signed article, in the Hindu (7 June, 1997) opposed the idea of reservation for Muslims in Legislatures.

No doubt, reservation for Muslim community by far the largest religious minority in the country which accounts for 12% of the national population in the legislature has crept back onto the national agenda because the promise of justice, fairness and generosity by the Hindu majority made on the floor of the Constituent Assembly by Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel, the President of the Advisory Committee on Minorities and Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister, have not been fulfilled. Under the existing electoral system Muslims

have been consistently under-represented and have reached the rock bottom in the 11th Lok Sabha with only 18 members. Everything remaining equal, there should have been 65 Muslim MP's. Their highest figure was 48 in 1980. In State Assemblies the situation is far worse. In every State (with the possible exemption of J&K and Kerala) they are under-represented in relation to their population. But in some they are conspicuous by their absence e.g. Gujarat and MP. It does not matter whether the State Assembly has a majority of the Left Front or of the JD or of the Congress, the same sorry tale is repeated from one state to another.

The Indian society remains a segmented society. Indeed the political, social, economic and educational

disparities not only among religious communities but among sub-communities of the same community have widened. This has necessitated the continuance of reservation in legislature for the SC and the ST (far beyond the 10 years originally contemplated) but to the demand of the OBCs for similar reservation, which lies camouflaged by the insistence on having a separate quota at least for the OBC women, there is no pressure, as the OBC's have improved their representation in the Parliament and in various legislatures through political alignments.

The only major community which 50 years after independence remains under-represented is the Muslim community. This is not healthy for the system nor just to the Muslim masses who have no one to present their case on their behalf to the power structure.

Mr. Godbole raises the ghost of separate electorate. That is a false alarm. This ghost has been laid to rest for ever in 1947. No section of the national community today demands separate electorate which is simply not practical in a system of territorial single-member constituencies.

Mr. Godbole refers to the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly. He tells half the truth. The full truth is that the Advisory Committee on Minorities headed by Sardar Patel had unanimously recommended abolition of separate electorate with reservation in legislature for Muslims, Sikhs, SC's, ST's and anglo Indians. The draft Constitution incorporated the provision. However the question was reopened a year later and the Advisory Committee recommended retention of reservation only for Anglo-Indians, SC's and ST's, a section of the Sikhs were covered as SC's and the Muslims were left out in the cold. At this meeting only 4 Muslim members were present. One proposed abolition of reservation, one opposed it and two were silent. The last two were Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Maulana Hifzur Rahman. Sardar Patel claimed in his speech that the Muslim community had voluntarily renounced reservation. However, there was no consultation with other Muslim members of the Constituent Assembly, or of the Advisory Committee or of the various legislatures or Muslim organizations like the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind. The drama of renunciation was enacted in the Constituent Assembly on 25-26 May, 1949. When most Muslim speakers placed their faith in the sense of justice and fairness of the majority community to ensure adequate representation of the Muslims in the legislature even without reservation. Both Sardar Patel and Pandit Nehru gave assurances of generous treatment.

Fifty years later, the facts of the situation belie the faith of the Muslim members and the assurance of the national leaders. Thus there is a clear case for reconsideration.

Muslim Indians cannot be asked to go on paying the price of Partition and infinitum; continuing insurgency

in J&K or the repeal of TADA or infiltration from Bangladesh or the alleged aversion of Muslims to family planning cannot be valid arguments for virtually disenfranchising a community which forms 1/8 of the population.

Mr. Godbole questions whether the Muslims constitute a real minority. One wonders what he means. Muslims, like all communities, form a variable pattern of majority or minority, at various functional levels (Panchayat, Block, Zila, State and Union). There are many Panchayats and Blocks, several Zilas, at least one State, in which they form a majority but in the Union as a whole and in most places at levels they form a clear minority. In a segmented society all minorities face deprivation; the Muslims face the double jeopardy of being a permanent minority in matters of direct concern, as they are treated as a "historic adversary" and as the divider of the sub-continent. That is why avowedly secular parties fail to deliver the votes of the social base to their Muslim candidates and hence put up few Muslim candidates. Sometimes, in a Muslim concentration constituency, several parties put up Muslim candidate to increase their secular count and they cancel each other out. All this leads to under-representation of the Muslim Indians in state and Union legislatures. That is why their right of representation needs to be protected by reservation.

Mr. Godbole finally delivers the coup de grace by stating that reservation on the basis of religion will totally destroy the basic structure of the Constitution. This argument is absurd. The fathers of the Constitution thought it fit to include a provision to this effect in the Draft Constitution - knew what they were doing, trying to build - a secular democracy in which the legitimate right of religious minorities will be protected. Secondly, if reservation based on caste or gender is not divisive or counter to Article 14 and 15 (which place religion, caste or gender in the same category), how can reservation based on religion be, if persistent under-representation of a religious group is a fact of life?

Mr. Godbole's may well hope for convergence of all religions and in so doing he merely asserts the assimilationist tendencies in Indian history. But in the foreseeable future, the Indian State and the world are going to be multi-religious. A multi-religious society should aim at justice and fairness to all religious groups and not lull their religious minorities into slumber by playing philosophical lullabies or administering moral soporifics or projecting constitutional phantoms. For one day the shall wake up.

I must add that I am not against reservation for women in legislatures, on an incremental basis, across the board, within all reserved quotas, whether for SC or ST as at present or in addition for OBCs and Muslims as envisaged.

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Muslim Indians cannot be asked to go on paying the price of Partition and infinitum; continuing insurgency

in J&K or the repeal of TADA or infiltration from Bangladesh or the alleged aversion of Muslims to family planning cannot be valid arguments for virtually disenfranchising a community which forms 1/8 of the population.

Mr. Godbole questions whether the Muslims constitute a real minority. One wonders what he means. Muslims, like all communities, form a variable pattern of majority or minority, at various functional levels (Panchayat, Block, Zila, State and Union). There are many Panchayats and Blocks, several Zilas, at least one State, in which they form a majority but in the Union as a whole and in most places at levels they form a clear minority. In a segmented society all minorities face deprivation; the Muslims face the double jeopardy of being a permanent minority in matters of direct concern, as they are treated as a "historic adversary" and as the divider of the sub-continent. That is why avowedly secular parties fail to deliver the votes of the social base to their Muslim candidates and hence put up few Muslim candidates. Sometimes, in a Muslim concentration constituency, several parties put up Muslim candidate to increase their secular count and they cancel each other out. All this leads to under-representation of the Muslim Indians in state and Union legislatures. That is why their right of representation needs to be protected by reservation.

Mr. Godbole finally delivers the coup de grace by stating that reservation on the basis of religion will totally destroy the basic structure of the Constitution. This argument is absurd. The fathers of the Constitution thought it fit to include a provision to this effect in the Draft Constitution - knew what they were doing, trying to build - a secular democracy in which the legitimate right of religious minorities will be protected. Secondly, if reservation based on caste or gender is not divisive or counter to Article 14 and 15 (which place religion, caste or gender in the same category), how can reservation based on religion be, if persistent under-representation of a religious group is a fact of life?

Mr. Godbole's may well hope for convergence of all religions and in so doing he merely asserts the assimilationist tendencies in Indian history. But in the foreseeable future, the Indian State and the world are going to be multi-religious. A multi-religious society should aim at justice and fairness to all religious groups and not lull their religious minorities into slumber by playing philosophical lullabies or administering moral soporifics or projecting constitutional phantoms. For one day they shall wake up.

I must add that I am not against reservation for women in legislatures, on an incremental basis, across the board, within all reserved quotas, whether for SC or ST as at present or in addition for OBCs and Muslims as envisaged.

Praful Bidwai On Reservation for Women

.. True, reservations are an extreme form of affirmative action, but in a situation of structural, entrenched, generations-old discrimination, there is no substitute for creating improved opportunities, where none exist. The principle was settled in the Constituent Assembly. Secondly, women, with all their disabilities and disadvantages, are a category fit for political reservation, and constitute a homogeneous enough group. The demand for sub-reservations within their quota misses the point that gender discrimination cuts across caste/class categories. Worse, the demand will sabotage the Bill. And OBC sub-quota for women will need constitutional amendments (the Mandal quota only deals with central jobs). And a Muslim sub-quota is a dangerous throwback to separate electorates, so decisively rejected by Republican India.

Shahabuddin's Reply to The Times of India, 12 June, 1997

Apropos Mr. Praful Bidwai's "Just Say Yes" (TOI, 5 June), he argues against reservation for Muslims or even for Muslim women on the ground that it is a dangerous throwback to separate electorates decisively rejected by Republican India. Mr. Bidwai must be aware that while the draft Constitution rejected separate electorate it provided for reservation in legislatures for Muslims in proportion to population, based on joint electorate. It was only a year later that at the "request" of some Muslim members, the question was reopened and reservation for Muslims and Sikhs was dropped (Sikhs being compensated by inclusion of some Sikhs as SC's) while retaining it for SC's, ST's and Anglo-Indians, on the assurance of generosity.

Now Mr. Bidwai favours affirmative action in a situation of structural and entrenched discrimination. Any honest observer of Indian society would know that discrimination against Muslims is both structural and entrenched, reflected in the persistent pattern of under-representation in the Union and State legislatures since 1950, notwithstanding the assurances of Patel and Nehru. There is both a functional and a moral case for reservation in favour of Muslim community.

Women in India do not constitute a separate community. Third class or communal bias shows in times of crisis and they identify with their menfolk. How else can we explain the behaviour of some Hindu women in Surat and Bombay? If Muslim men cannot win general seats, how can Muslim women? This applies equally to SC, ST and OBC. So the reservation for women has to be in the form of a uniform sub-quota within each group quota.

Muslim Intellectual Forum, Bihar: Resolution On Reservation for Women, 22 May, 1997

The Muslim Intellectual Forum, Bihar:

Agreeing with the principle that the deprived sections of Indian society should be duly represented in the Parliament, State Legislatures, Panchayati Raj institutions etc;

Noting the sad fact that certain sections of our society are unfortunately deprived on account of their sex, religion or caste, resulting in gross under-representation of women in general and women belonging to Other Backward Classes, Muslim community and Scheduled Castes and Tribes in particular; and

Welcomes the Women's Reservation Bill with the proviso that there is specific reservation for women belonging to other Deprived sections mentioned above in proportion to their population.

Rajesh Deol On Women in Public Life

If you go to a Haryana village looking for a woman Sarpanch, you are invariably introduced to a man. It may be the husband, the son or even the father-in-law of the Sarpanch, acting as her proxy.

In a travesty of the Panchayati Raj Act, which envisaged greater participation by women in village affairs by providing them 33 per cent reservation, it is the men who are still ruling the roost.

Even two-and-a-half years after their election as a Sarpanch and a member or chairperson of Panchayat Samitis or Zila Parishads, the women have failed to assert themselves in Haryana.

"Most of the women Sarpanches are dummies"... Deputy Commissioner Roshan Lal said.

... The husbands and sons of women Sarpanches go with them to official meetings.

"We have to allow them to do so. Otherwise the village work will suffer", says ... a Block Development and Panchayat Officer.

... Women Sarpanches have been more or less educated to rubber stamps. And sometimes, even this formality is completed by the men. In Haryana's conservative society, women are made to observe purdah and are forbidden from going to the village chaupal. It is not considered proper for them to go to police stations or BDO offices. And are few who are active are looked down upon by the villagers:

... 90 per cent of the women Sarpanches are unlettered and often taken for a ride... (They) are not able to explain the problems of the village...

Academician C.P. Bhambhri On Reservation

... Caste and community leaders... want the casteisation and communalisation of the Legislature...

By abandoning the note of caution (in) the Constitution, the new messiahs of reservations in Legislatures and public services have completely fragmented and factionalised the already divided society. Politics is not just a mirror reflection of social reality. It is equally concerned with changing the inherited social categories and identities. The political class by following a reckless policy of reservations has encouraged social antagonisms based on caste versus caste, sub-caste versus sub-caste and now it is wanting to bring this division among the women in India.

India has inherited a very complex caste system, but the policy of reservations has solidified and institutionalised caste divisions and caste identities. Politics of reservations generates and stimulates caste, community and gender consciousness and every group in India is involved in targeting the other group as villain of the piece. Social deprivations are not attributed to the ... failures of the economic path of development followed by the country. The political class does not want to become a target of the deprived people and by following a policy of reservations, politicians have successfully created a situation where different social groups are targeting each other for their deprivations. The journey of casteism began with Forward Castes versus Backward Castes and it has reached a stage where every sub-caste is against every other sub-caste... Has the policy of reservations brought social justice for the really deprived groups in society? The answer to this question is a Big No.

... All political factions which are masquerading as champions of the Dalits have not undertaken a single real step which can empower people living below the poverty line. The Constitution favoured limited reservations because it was believed that gradually the need for reservations will not be felt because the successful implementation of the programmes of socio-economic development will create new opportunities for the development of the whole of India. Not only has India badly messed up its development agenda, the self-appointed guardians of caste, community and gender reservations do not have any agenda for the social and economic development of the country...

The politics of Forward Caste versus Backward Caste, or Hindu versus Muslim or Male versus Female has succeeded not only in dividing the society, it has legitimised the idea of politics for the sake of power alone. The believers in the policy of reservations slogan... Every political party has become a victim of the aimless politics of reservations... The BJP's Hindutva has no answer to the politics of caste versus caste among the so-called Hindu whom the BJP claims to represent. The growing decline and decay of the Congress can be

(Contd. on page 354)

AP: Four Way Division of SC Quota in Public Employment

On 5 June, 1997 the Chandrababu Naidu Government sub-divided the Scheduled Castes into four broad categories on yardsticks of backwardness...

The Government move in sub-dividing the SCs is aimed at taking care of the perceived distortions that have crept into the reservation, as a result of which one section of the SCs, notably the Malas, received larger chunk of all economic and educational benefits to the exclusion of other sections. As per the new reservation policy, Malas, who had so far cornered majority of the reserved jobs and educational opportunities, would now be relegated to the third position. The deprived communities such as Rellis and Madigas have been placed in the first and second positions respectively....

The Government decision to classify the SCs into four groups follows the recommendations of the Justice Ramachandra Raju Commission, which was appointed last year in the wake of demands for categorisation from some sections of the SCs, particularly Madigas.

The Commission submitted its report to the Government on May 31. Subsequently ... the State Cabinet ... approved the recommendations and decided that the recommendations would come into effect immediately... The commission found truth in the complaint that two sub-groups, "Malas" and "Adi Andhras", received disproportionate benefits compared to the other groups. The commission found that there were 60 listed communities falling under SC category. Since it was impossible to apportion the 15% quota for SCs to such a diverse group, it was decided to place them in four homogeneous groups depending on their economic backwardness.

The Commission found that the "Relli" group, which comprised 1.67% of the SC population, was the most backward. Thus it recommended that they should form the "A" group getting top priority in reservation for jobs and education. The Madiga group of over 37 lakh people which accounted for 47% of the SC population, was given the "B" status. This group is entitled to seven per cent reservation. The committee found that the "Malas", who account for 40% of the SC population ... should be entitled to six per cent of the total reserved jobs and other facilities. Similarly, the committee discovered that the "Adi Andhra" group was receiving benefits wholly disproportionate to its 9% strength of the SC population and held that it should be placed last. Now this group is entitled to one per cent of the reserved jobs and other facilities. (The Government) made it clear that in case of eligible candidates from one group not being available, the post should go to the next group....

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 6 June, 1997)

Seema Mustafa on What Happened in Ayodhya-I

By the first week of December, all sources of information, intelligence reports, police surveillance and political assessment, had a common message for the then Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao: only urgent preemptive action could prevent the demolition of the Babari Masjid on December 6, 1992.

the denouncement had begun a few months earlier, with VHP leader Ashok Singhal's call to start construction of the "Ram mandir" from July 8. This prompted the human resource development Arjun Singh to write two letters urging Mr. Rao to invoke Article 355 and to prevent the demolition through direct intervention.

There was no response from Rao. At a Cabinet meeting the matter was raised by ... M.L. Fotedar who said that inaction ... amounted to an abdication of responsibility. Rao, as usual, remained non-committal but privately used his emissaries to effect a compromise with the BJP and VHP leaders who agreed to postpone the Kar Seva for three months at his request. Godman Chandraswami is believed to have been involved in the discussions with the VHP.

On August 2, Arjun Singh wrote his well published letter to Jitendra Prasad (then political secretary to Rao) in which he outlined the steps he believed were necessary to prevent the expected demolition. The letter went unanswered. In fact, at one stage, Fotedar asked Mr. Singh to refrain from raising the issue in public as it was proving to be counterproductive. In hindsight several ... ministers in Rao's Cabinet told this correspondent that they suspected the former Prime Minister of wanting the mosque to be demolished. But they admitted that no one had ventured to raise such an opinion in the Cabinet meetings.

In November 1992, the Babari Masjid issue became the focus of activity of both Ayodhya and Delhi. At Ayodhya the VHP held district and block level meetings where anti-Muslim slogans were raised and Kar Sevaks were urged to build the "Ram Mandir" come what may. Slogans were painted on walls in Ayodhya. Audio cassettes on the same theme were sold freely and openly in Ayodhya.

The government was in full possession of all the facts... Intelligence reports and local police information with full details were with the Union home ministry, where S.B. Chavan was the home minister. There was definitive evidence from all sources that the mosque was going to be demolished.

At Ayodhya, according to the reports available with the Union government at the time, the Kar Sevaks began gathering from November 24. The BJP and the VHP held

a series of meetings to finalise their plans for the demolition. As the crisis gathered momentum, a strong security contingent, which reached 10,000 central forces personnel, was posted at Faizabad amid reports that Uttar Pradesh chief minister Kalyan Singh had decided that his government would not allow the use of force on the Kar Sevaks.

This ... was (stated) by Kalyan Singh after he had been taken to Delhi by Sharad Pawar for a meeting with Rao. That nothing came of the meeting is evident from Singh's subsequently belligerent posturings.

A meeting of the National Integration Council was called on November 23, 1992... CPI(M) leader Harkishen Singh Surjeet drafted the resolution that was unanimously passed by all present. It authorised Rao unequivocally to take any action he thought fit to protect the mosque.

In their speeches the various leaders of political parties antagonistic to the Congress gave their full support to any action the government might take to protect the mosque.

Outside, the war of statements was hotting up with the BJP-VHP leaders becoming more assertive with each passing day. The number of security personnel at Faizabad had gone upto 29,000 by the end of November.

The BJP was expecting President's Rule to be imposed in the state and said as much at their meetings: the party was not convinced that it would be allowed such freedom of action on December 6. Jyoti Basu and V.P. Singh went on record to state that dismissal of the Kalyan Singh government had become necessary.

On November 25, Surjeet met Rao and was told that there was nothing to worry about as nothing would happen to the mosque. On November 29, a meeting of Cabinet Committee for Political Affairs was held. It had been made clear to the Prime Minister by then that a decision, in one form or the other, was necessary to contain the tension that was mounting at Ayodhya.

For perhaps the first time in months, Rao shed his reticence on this particular issue to state that he was in favour of imposing President's Rule in Uttar Pradesh. He was convinced there was no other way. He asked the home secretary to prepare the necessary documents.

Rao ... said that he would convene another meeting the same evening to finalise the details... But the meeting was not called. An emissary, not a politician, who had been sent to meet RSS chief Balasaheb Deoras at Nagpur had returned with some "good news". Deoras had agreed to issue a statement that would obviate the necessity of imposing President's Rule. Rao believed Deoras. Incidentally, he did not inform his Cabinet colleagues

about this development. They learnt of it later.

Going by the large gathering of Kar Sevaks at Ayodhya, it was fairly obvious that the Babari Masjid would be demolished on December 6. Senior political leaders met ... Rao, during the first five days of December 1992 urging him to acquire the disputed land or impose Central rule in Uttar Pradesh. Mr. Rao's only response was to intensify informal discussions with some BJP-VHP leaders.

Senior journalists Nikhil Chakravarty, R.K. Mishra and Prabhash Joshi took it upon themselves to mediate with RSS leader Rajendra Singh and Bhairon Singh Shekhawat. The proposal put forward by the journalists was that all should wait for the judicial verdict, that until that time Kar Seva could take place outside the disputed territory and that all efforts would be made for the Allahabad high court to expedite its decision. Shekhawat and Nanaji Deshmukh were nominated to meet Rao. On December 2, 1992 Rao informed Nikhil Chakravarty over telephone that the talks had gone well, and that everything was under control. The above conditions had been agreed to by the RSS leaders. However, there was no statement to support this optimism from any BJP-RSS leader.

In fact the speeches at the public meetings at Ayodhya became more and more offensive with over 150,000 Kar Sevaks at the spot on December 5. Muslim homes and graves were attacked by the Kar Sevaks from December 1 onwards and the minorities had started leaving Ayodhya. Intelligence and police information from this date onwards began to speak of the Kar Sevaks determination to destroy the mosque. In fact on December 3, a public announcement was made at Ayodhya that the Kar Seva would begin at 12.15 pm on December 6.

On December 2, Surjeet telephoned Rao from Lisbon asking him if he was going to act. The confident reply from Rao was "this afternoon". Nothing happened.

On December 3, a delegation of senior Opposition leaders led by former Prime Minister V.P. Singh met Rao. He was urged by all the leaders to immediately take over the site. He was also assured full support for the imposition of President's rule in the state. The leaders who met him then recall that Rao seemed completely unperturbed and calm. He insisted that he had everything under control as there was sufficient force on the spot. He had spoken to Rajinder Singh who had assured him that nothing would happen. It was clear to the Opposition delegation that (Rao) was in no mood for a confrontation and hence quite willing to ignore his own official sources of information for the informal assurance from RSS-BJP leaders.

...Chavan went to Lucknow at this time only to

return; with yet another assurance, this time from UP chief minister Kalyan Singh. He made a statement that there was no reason to disbelieve Kalyan Singh who had assured Chavan that no harm would come to the mosque. Kalyan Singh's public statements insisting on the demolition, and the home ministry's own recorded information were ignored in favour of personal conversations.

A Cabinet meeting was held. The Babari Masjid was not on the official agenda but was raised not by Rao, but by M.L. Fotedar who briefly reminded his colleagues about the December 6 deadline.

Rao said there was no need to worry and the was completely seized of the matter. That was all. The entire Cabinet accepted him at his word, as if the issue was a personal matter and only the Prime Minister and not the government was accountable. Rao Cabinet dismissed the issue in seconds on what was virtually the eve of the demolition.

On December 5 the secular opposition, led by V.P. Singh, organised a peace march to Ayodhya. They were arrested en route. At the same time, despite the heavy deployment of security forces, there were no such restrictions on the kar sevaks who reached the spot without any hindrance. VHP chief Ashok Singh and Bajrang Dal leader Vinay Katiyar spent the day at Ayodhya where, at press conference and meetings, they made it clear that they were committed to the decision of demolishing the mosque. There was no reaction from Delhi, despite the detailed intelligence information available to the government from Ayodhya.

On December 6, 1992 ... Rao and his entire Cabinet went underground, surfacing only in the late afternoon after the Babari Masjid was demolished by the Kar Sevaks at Ayodhya. In sharp contrast, the scene at Ayodhya was one of frenetic activity, the day beginning for the kar sevaks and their leaders at 6 am.

... Rao, no matter what his erstwhile Cabinet colleagues might state now, had managed to convince everyone that no damage would come to the mosque. He never gave a reason for this confidence, merely hinting at the successful conclusion of talks with leaders of the Sangh combine. The fact that no preemptive action was taken by the Rao government till the morning of December 6 should have caused more concern than it did in the political camp.

It was as if the government had gone to sleep. Nothing was heard from Mr. Rao till the afternoon, when the attack on the mosque had already begun... Chavan did not make any effort to intervene directly with the result that the massive contingent of security forces posted at and around Ayodhya remained bystanders to the event...

Shahabuddin's Comments On Advani's Statement

In his interview (16 February, 1997) Shri L.K. Advani has stated that the RSS chief wanted the Allahabad High Court to rule on the constitutionality of the acquisition of land surrounding the Babari Masjid proper before December 6, 1992, so that, if it was not upheld, a formal Kar Seva could begin on the plots which belonged to the VHP.

He has not spelt out whether, in case the acquisition was upheld, the Kalyan Singh Government would have allowed Kar Seva on what would be government land.

It is an oft-repeated thesis of the Sangh parivar that the Kar Sevaks were provoked in to the demolition because of the delay in the High Court's ruling. This stand glosses over the fact that the Kar Seva was related to the construction of the proposed Mandir and the Mandir's site plan covered the site of the Masjid and the land in dispute appurtenant to it (about 6.5 acres).

This site plan was per se illegal because it included land in dispute and, therefore, the proposed construction would not be approved by municipal authorities. Thus any constructional activity, beginning from the Shilanyas in November 1989 to the massive excavation in front of the Masjid and the construction of concrete platform in 1991-92 to serve as the base for a part of the temple, were all unlawful activities.

I recall the November 1992 formula of Advani that the construction of the Mandir should begin but that the VHP would graciously leave the Masjid untouched till its title was legally determined.

We rejected as unlawful this "incremental" scheme, as it would have virtually choked the Babari Masjid, even if the title suit was decided in favour of the Muslim community.

So this was not a few factor but was fairly well known to the Government when Rajju Bhairya spoke to the then Prime Minister.

Incidentally, several other persons including Chandraswami and Kalpnath Rao told me later that they had personally warned the then Prime Minister that all arrangements had been made for demolishing the Masjid. I am certain that as and when the intelligence reports are in the public domain, they would also conform that the Prime Minister definitely know what was going to happen.

If he turned a blind eye and took no action to protect the Babari Masjid and thus the sanctity of the Constitution and the rule of law, he must have had a definite purpose. My conclusion is that P.V. Narasimha Rao wanted the Masjid to be demolished but the blame to fall on Kalyan Singh.

Views of K. Rahman Khan, Congress(I) MP

Along with the BJP, the Central Government is equally responsible for the demolition of the Babari Masjid. Narasimha Rao personally is responsible. In fact the Muslims had placed their trust in the Congress at that time, because they saw it clearly that since the Government of UP was in the hands of the BJP, it will not protect the Masjid. But PM Rao did not live up to their trust. He did not even try to keep faith with them. If he had tried and not succeeded, nobody would blame him. But since he made no effort at all how could he be considered innocent? Today the Congress is ashamed of this incident because there is a feeling in the Party that if this incident occurred because of the negligence of the Centre, the whole party was not to be blamed but some members headed by PM Rao. Because of these members the Party as a whole had got a bad name and lost its character. If Narasimha Rao and his supporters are thrown out of the Party, the Congress would stand purified.

(Source: Nayi Duniya, 3-9 June, 1997)

(Contd. from page 355)

to take necessary action in the light of what happened at Ayodhya on 6 December, 1992.

Secondly, Namaz is performed in the Masjid 5 times a day. On Friday prayers there is a larger congregation but on the two Ids and on the last Friday of Ramazan even the roof of the Masjid is open. Two problems were mentioned. (i) Even those performing Namaz regularly in the Masjid are checked and re-checked. Strangers have to be checked but those who are regular users of the Masjid can be identified, if necessary, with the cooperation of the Imam and the Muezzin and need not be subjected to personal checking. (ii) On the 3 occasions mentioned above, the door of the stair case on north-western corner of the Masjid should be made accessible. Finally, the underground cellars of the Masjid which have been locked should be brick-walled.

We request you to consider these suggestions.

(Contd. from page 351)

attributed to its failure to respond to sectarian politics ... of reservations. Since the 1990s the Central Government has become weak, unstable and vulnerable to domestic and foreign pressures because the electoral verdict is fragmented. The upshot is that the policies of reservations are mere rhetoric because the real flesh and blood of empowerment and social justice is conspicuous by its absence in the agenda of the champions of reservations. This policy is socially disastrous because it has generated the feelings of social distancing. The political parties which emerged as champions of reservations have failed to provide stable governments because the electoral verdict has been fragmented as a result of sectional reservations. There is no evidence that political empowerment of Dalits has brought any change in the life of the Dalits.

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 23 May, 1997)

AIMMM: Delegation to Mathura and Varanasi

Shahabuddin's Letters to Home Minister Indrajit Gupta

The All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat (AIMMM) recently sent separate delegations to Mathura and Varanasi to take stock of the situation prevailing over there including the security arrangements at Shahi Masjid Idgah in Mathura and Gyanvapi Masjid in Varanasi. On the return of the delegations the AIMMM Vice-president Syed Shahabuddin wrote letters to the Union Home Minister, Mr. Inderjit Gupta informing him of the situation and suggesting some changes in the arrangements in order to avoid Babari Masjid-like incidents in the future.

I-On Shahi Masjid Idgah, 16 June, 1997

On 13th June 1997 a 4 member delegation of the All India Muslim Majlis e Mushawarat (AIMMM) headed by myself quietly visited Mathura to take stock of the present situation, specially in relation to the security arrangements for the protection of the Shahi Masjid Idgah. As you are aware, the VHP has launched a nationwide movement for the "liberation" of Shahi Masjid Idgah on the ground that it stands on the birthsite of Lord Krishna, notwithstanding the fact that Shri Krishna Janmasthan Mandir stands just to the west of the SM Idgah and was built in the wake of 1968-69 agreement between the Hindu and Muslim communities of Mathura under which the Muslim community ceded all rights to the land lying to the west, north and south of the structure.

The delegation was glad to note that despite constant mobilisation by the VHP in the rural areas of Mathura and neighbouring districts, the life in the city was flowing in its normal rhythm. We were told that neither the Hindus nor the Muslims of Mathura want any trouble on this score and that it were the only th outsiders who were vitiating such an atmosphere.

The delegation was also glad to note the arrangements made by the Central Government for the security of the structure. Congregational Namaz was being performed 5 times a day, apart from Friday and Eid congregations.

However, on behalf of the delegation, I would like to make the following suggestions for your kind consideration:-

1. The security perimeters are manned by the Central Security and Intelligence personnel but the entire security system is under the command of the local SSP. In view of the noteworthy behaviour of the then SSP, Faizabad on 6. December 1992 when Babari Masjid was demolished, there is a general demand that security arrangements for the SM Idgah, Mathura should be in the hands of a senior officer directly responsible to the Central Government.
2. An over-bridge should be urgently constructed to provide an easy and secure access to the Masjid from the east over the Metre Gauge track that runs in front of it. This will help save the SM Idgah against mischievous intrusion.
3. The SM Idgah Trust should be permitted to put up two boards - one at the point where the access road meets the main road and the other at the entrance to the Masjid

indicating the timings of the congregational prayers, and that the structure is open for Namaz and to bona fide visitors. This is to obviate the occasional complaints that the security personnel on duty interfere with the freedom to enter and pray in the Masjid.

4. There is a general suspicion that while building the Shri Krishna Janmasthan Mandir on the west of the Masjid the western foundations of the Masjid have been undermined. This is confirmed by a tap on the floor of the Masjid at the point where the Imam leads the Namaz. This has also a security implication. It is, therefore, suggested that a team consisting of a representative of SM Idgah Trust, the Krishna Janmasthan Trust and the Central Government should examine the site and if there is burrowing under the Masjid on a sub-sidence or any construction to the east of the vertical wall mazar, it may be corrected to the satisfaction of all concerned in the light of the inter-community agreement of 1968-69.

5. The access road from the main Delhi Mathura road to the Masjid should be widened and aligned in line with the central gate of the Masjid so that there is unrestricted view and the access to the Masjid, across the Railway over bridge, when it is constructed.

The Mushawarat would be grateful if you kindly consider these suggestions.

II-On Gyanvapi Masjid, Varanasi, 27 June, 1997

The All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat deputed a 3-men delegation to Varanasi to familiarise itself with the security arrangements for the protection of the Gyanvapi Masjid and to assess the local mood.

I am glad to inform you that life in Varanasi is moving happily with its normal rhythm. It was crystal clear that no one in Varanasi would like to see trouble in which life would be paralysed and business would suffer. However, in the month of shrawan the VHP is likely to re-enact the drama of Jal Abhishek and try to mobilise the people for this purpose.

The Police officials on duty expressed confidence that they would be able to tackle the problem. However, we would like to make the following suggestions for your consideration:-

1. Presently the forces on duty consists of UP police, the PAC and the CRPF. It is suggested that, if possible, under the command of a senior officer directly responsible to the DG in Delhi. This should not be considered as an aspersion on the UP police but one has

(Contd. on page 354)

The Population Control Bill, 1996 by Bachi Singh Rawat, M.P.

A Bill to provide for measures to control population in the country and for matters connected therewith. ...

Main Provisions:

4. After section 8A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, the following shall be inserted, namely:-

"8B. (I) A person shall be disqualified if he procreates more than two living children....

5. Any person who is in Government service, if violates the provisions of Section 3, he shall not be given any further increment or promotion during his service.

6. Any person who is running his own company, firm, society or corporation, if violates the provisions of section 3, then -

(a) he shall not be allowed to avail of any loan or facility of any kind from any Government company or financial institution;

(b) he shall not be entitled to undertake any contract with any financial institution, Government company or the Central Government; and

(c) he shall not be entitled to have facilities of drawing ration from public distribution system and cooking gas from a Government company.

7. (1) Any person who procreates only one child and gives an undertaking that he shall not procreate another child, he shall be -

(a) given preference in Government services;

(b) Provided with a house by the Central Government at subsidised cost....

(2) Any person, who has been given benefit under sub-section (1), if procreates another child, the benefits given to him shall be withdrawn immediately.

The Compulsory Maintenance and Care of Spouse, Children and Old Parents Bill, 1997 by Saroj Khaparde

A Bill to provide for compulsory maintenance of spouse, minor and physically handicapped children, old parents and for the payment of monthly maintenance allowance and debar from succession in case of refusal to take care of old parents and for matters connected therewith. ...

Main Clause

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, - a.

(d) "spouse" includes a woman who has been divorced by her husband or who has obtained divorce from her husband, and has not remarried or any woman who has been living with the person as his wife in the same household or separately.

3. Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law for the time being in force, no person shall neglect or refuse to maintain his spouse, minor children, child who has though attained majority but is physically or mentally handicapped or his old father or mother unable to maintain himself or herself, as the case may be. ...

Hamdard

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It helps you :

- Overcome fatigue ● Resists infection
- Increases stamina ● Improves mental performance
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So, for you and your family's year round good health and happiness, go for Cinkara.



Two spoonfuls. Twice daily.

GET MORE OUT OF LIFE - WITH CINKARA

Urdu Newspapers: DAVP Advertisement Outlay, 1996-97

State	Total Number	No. of Dailies	No. of those receiving Over Rs. Lakh	Names	Amount in lakhs
A.P.	70	42	5	Siyasat	6.62
				Rehnuma-e-Deccan	2.61
				Angarey	1.71
				Maheshwar	1.46
				Soz-e-Deccan	1.09
Bihar	47	27	11	Qaumi	3.63
				Tanzeem	2.71
				Halat-e-Bihar	2.68
				Farooqui	2.38
				Tanzeem	2.31
				Desh Bidesh	1.30
				Nawaid Subah	1.28
				In Dinoh	1.26
				Azimabad Mail	1.24
				Garam Hawa	1.07
				Aap Tak	1.04
				Bhavishya Wak	—
				Pindar	—
Haryana J&K	1 35	- 20	- 6	Taskeen	5.37
				Sandesh	3.01
				Wullar	2.08
				Mother-e-Hind	1.58
				Imarat	1.25
				Sharada	1.20
				(All Jammu except Wullur)	—
Karnataka	8	5	3	Pasban	5.14
				Salar	1.44
				Khubsoorath	1.06
M.P.	4	3	2	Nadeem	1.22
				Urdu Action	1.18
Maharashtra	20	12	2	Inquilab	2.48
				Urdu Times	1.62
Punjab	9	7	1	Hind Samachar	3.34
Rajasthan	6	3	-	—	—
Tamilnadu	2	2	1	Musalman	2.37
U.P.	226	50	11	Qaumi Awaz	3.80
				In Dinoh	2.64
				Qaumi Morcha	2.03
				Siasat Jadid	1.81
				Apna Dost	1.72
				Mashriqi Awaz	1.62
				Awaz-e-Mulk	1.46
				Qaumi Jung	1.41
				Anwar-e-Qaum	1.36
				Safeer-e-Nav	1.32
				Garaj	1.16
W. Bengal	11	7	4	Akkas	4.34
				Nawa-e-Haal	1.33
				Azad Hind	1.14
				Aabshaar	1.07
Delhi	57	17	12	Milap	6.71
				Qaumi Awaz	6.62
				Pratap	5.16
				Awam	3.71
				Mashriqi Awaz	1.97
				Sada-e-Watan	—
				Jadid	1.83
				Jadeed Faisha	1.67
				Faisal Jadid	1.66

Karnataka HC's Order on Use of Mother Tongue as Medium of Primary Education

General Secretary, Linguistic Minorities Protection
Committee vs. State of Karnataka

**RAMA JOIS, BALAKRISHA AND RAJENDRA
BABU, JJ.**

Language: its importance - Kannada: its primary and pride of place to reign supreme - Children to have primary education only in mother-tongue even as enjoined by Article 350A of Constitution of India - Children whose mother-tongue regional/official language of State and children whose mother-tongue different dissimilarly situate - Any act of Government to compel them all to study Kannada and imposing additional burden of studying regional/official language as additional language at primary level discriminatory irrational and arbitrary: deprivation of useful periods for development of personality towards this, hostile discrimination; likelihood of increased drop-outs- Violative of Article 14 of Constitution of India - Study of Kannada alone as Ist language in high schools bears no rational nexus to Kannada being official language - Not permissible to impose such condition - Choice of study of language and as first or principal language depends on aptitude, desire and aspiration of individual - No rational basis to restrict choice of first language: such restriction arbitrary, discriminatory, violative of Article 14 of Constitution - Injurious to feeling of fraternity and inconsistent with one citizenship and one people under Constitution - Para III of Order irrational - Order inconsistent with and infringement of rights under Articles 29 and 30 of Constitution - State can prescribe Kannada as one of the compulsory subjects - Regulations to be of general pattern with uniform applicability prescribing study of Kannada as second language where junior primary education had in any other language and study of Kannada as one of the three languages in secondary school; but not as first language in case of permanent residents - Linguistic minorities coming for temporary stay to get primary/secondary education without requirement to study Kannada - Impugned order leads to tension, destroys feeling of fraternity and injurious to integrity of nation which is paramount - Order paradoxical inconsistent with nationalistic and liberal tradition of Karnataka.

(Source: ILR 1989 Kar 457)

Usman Ki
Awaz 1.24
Kainat Jadid 1.22
Magadh Exp. 1.05

(Source: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting's Annual Report, 1996-97, Volume II)

Urdu: Worker-Poets of Ahmedabad

One an autorickshaw driver, the other a welder, ... two anonymous members of Ahmedabad's teeming working-class, Kafeel Ahmedabad (real name: Abdulrazak Memon) and Annu Shaikh are much more than that: they are shayars of repute. Sitting in his autorickshaw between rides, Kafeel jots down in his diary lines of poetry that have been sung by Pankaj Udhas and Talat Aziz. Not far off, close friend Annu writes on the back of bus tickets poetry that has made him a rage in Pakistan and also been sung by Kumar Sanu. These are working-class heroes of a different measure.

... Annu left the local municipal school at age 12 when he was in the fifth standard, while Kafeel studied only up to the third standard - both aspired to bigger things in life. It was not easy. When Annu took up welding, he could not even write his name in Hindi or Gujarati, leave alone shayaris in Urdu. And says Kafeel: "Being a Memon from Gujarat, my mother-tongue was Memoni, a mix of Gujarati and Sindhi. Urdu never even passed my way".

But they persevered and today, from such humble founts has arisen poetry that is the toast of the ghazal world. It was the Pakistani poet, Parvez Ahmed, who brought Kafeel to the notice of the local shayars at a poet's gathering in Mumbai in 1986. Ghazal singer Pamela Singh, who heard him render Kafeel's Mizaz uska abhi samjha hai, woh badal hai magar abhi barsa nahin hai was so impressed that she got Kafeel's consent to sing the same song in her album Shukriya in 1986. Her second album alfaaz had three more Kafeel ghazals. Then began the procession: first came Pankaj Udhas who chose Kafeel's ghazals for four of his albums - Best of Pankaj Udhas, Shagufta, Nakush and Beparda; then came Talat Aziz, and finally even Ustad Moinuddin Khan, a great exponent of the Jaipur gharana. Kafeel was everywhere.

Annu took a different route. He began with Meri Wafaein and Ataulla Khan Ko Jawab, in which he saucily parodied the songs of the famous Pakistani singer, Ataullah Khan. It worked: Meri Wafaein, brought out by Time Audio, sold a record 16 lakh copies, many of which found their way to Pakistan. Annu ... got a city financier to help him record Meri Wafaein in Ahmedabad with a local singer, Chandra Chaudhary, at the mike. He then sold the cassette to Time Audio. He again teamed up with Chaudhary for his second album Zakhmi Yadein. Soon after, his Tu bewafa nahin jaane jaan was sung by Kumar Sanu and Kavita Krishnamurthy in their album Juhi.

Kafeel and Annu, naturally, are stars in their Kalupur-Dariapur locality... But for all this adulation, they have not much to show in terms of wealth. Both live in dingy, one-room houses...

Says Habib Shaikh, an Ahmedabad-based journalist

Rakshat Puri's Proposal on Hindi in Persian and Devnagari Scripts

Pakistani poet, editor and columnist Azhar Javed was in Delhi... Among other things, he participated in the monthly meeting of "Dialogue" at the Academy of Fine Arts and Literature...

At the "Dialogue" meeting ... Javed not only read his poems. He also said a few relevant words on the relationship between Hindi and Urdu. He indicated that although certain words used in Hindi were much too difficult for him to understand, the general drift of what was said in Hindi did come across. He didn't venture further into the subject. But he did suggest that Hindi might be written in the Persian script and that he would welcome Hindi contributions so written for inclusion in Takhleeq... The "trunk" language for both Urdu and Hindi is what has traditionally been described as Hindustani, or Khari Boli, native to the region around Delhi. It is not for nothing that the makers of the Indian Constitution were constrained to direct in Article 351 that Hindi be enriched by assimilating "the forms, style and expressions used in Hindustani" in addition to other languages. Whereas in Hindi the refinement of Hindustani has tended in the main to take inspiration from Sanskrit vocabulary, in Urdu it has turned mostly to Persian words and phrases for expressiveness. The difference is essentially in vocabulary, hardly in syntax. Experts are said to estimate that Khari Boli has borrowed little more than some twenty to thirty per cent words from outside for refinement towards Hindi and Urdu.

... Azhar Javed was implicitly hinting ... at the need to keep abreast, language-wise, of the development and consolidation of SAARC. As nation-states tend more and more to wither away ... and as their place is steadily taken by culturo-economic regions, it would be prudent to expect the consolidation of SAARC induce course and to take some long-term measures now.

It would, for example, be gainful to seek amendment of Article 343 of the Constitution and say that "the official language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagari and Persian scripts". Simultaneously, Urdu writers might effectively be encouraged to use Devanagari for Urdu. Eventually, circumstances - technological and other - may dictate also the inclusion of the "Roman script". But the powers that be in Delhi might for the present do well to have both Persian and Devanagari scripts for Hindi and Urdu...

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 9 July, 1997)

... "It's the duty of the audio companies and the singers who have used their lyrics to ensure that those who provide food for their profession are not exploited". True, but ... Kafeel sighs, "They extract the juice and leave the leftovers for people like us"...

(Source: The India Today, 7 July, 1997)

Mohammad Nejatullah Siddiqi

On Indian Muslims in the Twenty First Century-II

What Kind of Education?

Education now seems to be on top of the agenda of every activist and every group working for the uplift of Indian Muslims...

Two facts should determine the nature of education and the priorities. Firstly, the overwhelming majority of Muslims in India are illiterate and very poor. Secondly, in future most jobs will be the private sector where skill and potential productivity will decide who gets which job... Most of our efforts and resources should be directed towards educating the poorest of the poor and the illiterate. Next comes skill generating programmes which can enable people to get a job or launch their own small business. The primary school and the vocational/Technical institute must come before universities, colleges and other costly affairs. People should be made to pay for higher education and social subsidies should be reserved for the institutions serving people without means...

More important than the form is the content... Our kindergarten and primary education should encourage free enquiry, explorations, experiments and creativity. ...

Testing shariah compatibility is an aid no doubt. But past experience shows it is not as simple a job as it appears, and many who dare do so many not be really qualified for the job.

Patience, perseverance and an open mind are, in the long run, better guarantees of accumulating new shariah compatible truths... It is not going to help if we reject every thing new at the very first impression of its incongruence with what we understand to be the shariah...

... On open-minded approach to knowledge and arriving at new truths would open the door for differences of opinion and diversity in policies. Eventually sounder opinions will weed out the rootless ones...

... Economic uplift, hundred percent literacy and knowledge imparting education ... we need to enter the race, not to win it. The race in the twenty first century is for a balanced approach to life...

Mankind has lost its balance, and the quest for balance between the material and spiritual-moral is going to dominate the coming century, both at the intellectual as well as at the policy level.

India will be no exception... Indian Muslims have something to contribute ... but not before we have solved the problems... The poor and the illiterate can not teach balanced living to Indians. A prosperous, educated, well-behaved Muslim community can be a force working for sanity, stability and balanced living in the India of the future.

In the international arena, this quest for balance may lead, instead of 'clash of civilization' to dialogue,

compromises, and cooperation between civilizations... A 'clash' if it does take place would more likely be provoked by the hegemonistic attitude of erstwhile super powers...

... India is seen as a likely partisan against the Judaeo-Christian - western civilization. Indian Muslims should have no problem in handling such a situation... (India) does have enough resilience to boost secular trends in the face of the rising tide of Hindutva. The same resilience is likely to serve India as a force against any potential clash of civilizations. Should this role be thrust upon it, standing as it does between a rising China and a not so strong West, Muslims of India can make significant contributions to its success. They belong to the East, but they have enough contacts with the West to feel its pulse and respond to its impulses.

One useful lesson an uplifted and regenerated Indian Muslims community can teach is that it is possible to live a free and culturally satisfying life without dominating anybody provided you too are not being dominated by anybody. To be able to do so they will first have to build an India where no community desires to subjugate any other community as all agree to coexist in a secular plural democracy that affords maximum cultural autonomy to its ethnic, linguistic and religious constituents... Muslims of India should have no problem endorsing that ... as it alone, among possible alternatives, affords the maximum leeway to Islam i.e. freedom to live Islamically and preach Islam to a people who fear no persecution... It is only in a democracy that Indian Muslims have the best chance to promoting their model of economy including interest free finance. Secularism, with its special meaning in India, democracy as enshrined in the Constitution of India, and globalisation which is inevitably being adopted by entire humanity in the wake of the revolution in information and communication, vastly improve the chances of Indian Muslims... A model of Islamic living amongst ... an overwhelmingly non-Muslim majority. Such also is the situation of Muslims in the world at large...

(There) is the need to get rid of our obsession with the West and find time to look East also... We do not know much about what is happening east of India, what we can get out of it and whether there is some possibility of our contributing something to the felicity of eastern humanity... The softer, lighter religiosity of the East (not necessarily less genuine in its spirituality or morality) would serve as a needed antidote to some of the harsher overtones of the recent Islamic Movements... that would be better suited to India if and when sanity is restored as the Hindutva wave ebbs out and the friendly climate of

(Contd. on page 345)

JMI: Statement of Former Acting Vice-Chancellor Mushirul Hasan, 20 June, 1997

"I have lied through harrowing times, although my family, friends and colleagues have shared my pain and trauma. But the silver lining is that our stand is vindicated. We made no concessions to our detractors. We made no deals with politicians or political parties. So that our adversaries, including self-seeking politicians, obscurantists and land grabbers, are isolated in the university. The liberal and secular elements, on the other hand, have tasted victory after five years".

"The weight of orthodox reaction could not stifle my basic and fundamental right - the essence of university life - to express my views, which were in the context of Jamia, purposefully distorted and torn out of context.

I was not in the running for any office, though I was absolutely determined to assert my right to enter the campus. Now that I have done so, this is an appropriate moment to make it known to all concerned that I am not interested in holding any administrative office in Jamia now or until my superannuation.

I thank my friends and colleagues in Jamia, whose courage and tenacity was a source of strength for him. All these years the media understood my position and rallied around me. The University Grants Commission and the HRD Ministry expressed their solidarity in several different ways. Their understanding enabled me to do a few useful things in Jamia."

**Kerala High Court
On Ramazan Holidays**

Parent-Teachers' Association, Government Lower Primary School, Appellant v. Chalil Kunhimu 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.

**Gandhiji's Testimony on Foundation of
Jamia Millia Islamia**

**Letter to Nawab Hamidullah Khan of
Bhopal, 16 December, 1940**

Here is a pathetic letter from Zaheer. You will not mind my approaching you for the assistance. From a tiny thing, Jamia has become a big institution. You know that it was the joint creation of the Ali Brothers, Hakim Sultan and Dr. Ansari. Dr. Zakir was Mohammad Ali's choice. And he has, so far as I know, come up to the highest expectation. He has able and self-sacrificing assistant. I know you have hage cells on your purse. But this should not be a strain on your purse. I leave the case in your hands.

(Ref: Collection Works, Vol. 73, Page 237-238)

**Dr. Zakir Hussain
On Education for Muslims**

**An extract from Convocation Address to
Kashi Vidyapeeth**

'I fully trust that if our educational experts work out an educational system for India, they will accept the request of Muslims to base their education on the foundations of their culture. Both education and politics endorse this demand. Please forgive me if I say that what alienates the Muslims from united nationalism is not just the personal selfishness or imbalance of an individual or his deviation from the right approach towards the country but this apprehension that under the national government the Muslims will lose their identity. Muslims are not prepared to pay this price. As a Muslim also, I am happy that the Muslims are not prepared to pay this price because this would not only harm the Muslims but viciously affect the Indian culture.'

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)

Let the Kashmiris Decide : Ayub Khan

"Let the Kashmiris decide. Let them vote on (a referendum)... if they (Kashmiris) wanted to join with India let them and if they want to join Pakistan, let them."

(Source: The Hindu, March 23, 1997)

Ajit Bhattacharjea on J&K's Accession to India

... Jammu and Kashmir posed the most difficult problem ... involving as it did the competing ideologies of India and Pakistan: secularism and religious nationalism. It had the best claim to independence as the biggest princely state in the subcontinent. Its location intensified conflict. The state would abut both new Dominions. Other countries were involved, too. The state bordered Tibet and the Chinese province of Sinkiang. And only the narrow Wakhan corridor of Afghanistan separated it from Soviet Territory.

Most people of Jammu and Kashmir were Muslims; the ruler was Hindu. Its transport links were mainly with the area that would become Pakistan; the rivers which transported its timber flowed in the same direction. On the basis on which British India was to be divided, the case to include it in Pakistan was hard to rebut, except that Jinnah had earlier endorsed the right of the rulers to decide. He was thinking of Hyderabad, Bhopal, Junagadh and other states with Muslim rulers and Hindu subjects.

But the history of Kashmir was very different from that of the rest of the subcontinent. Islam entered the Valley by persuasion, not by conquest. Its torch-bearers were the gentle, tolerant, eclectic Sufi divines. Its tallest leader, Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, had established the secular National Conference and worked closely with the Congress. He was in prison for leading a popular agitation against Maharaja Hari Singh's rule. The previous June, Nehru was detained by the Maharaja for entering the Valley to defend his friend. Earlier, Abdullah had rejected Jinnah's overtures. He had become a symbol of Congress' secular ideal.

Under opposing pressures from the Congress and Muslim League, Hari Singh prevaricated. Mountbatten belatedly realised that unless he decided in favour of joining India or Pakistan before August 15, the consequences could be serious. He flew to Srinagar and spent five days there, from June 18 to 23. But he did not anticipate Hari Singh's wiles.

The Maharaja pleaded colic and calculating that the viceroy would welcome a respite from Delhi's heat, sent him trout fishing. Mountbatten had to be content with discussions with his crusty prime minister, Ramachandra Kak, known for his advocacy of independence. According to the official record of the conversation, he advised Kak to decide soon between joining India or Pakistan. He said Nehru felt strongly about Kashmir and after August 15, he would no longer be able to offer viceregal protection to the Maharaja.

Nehru had written a lengthy letter to Mountbatten before he visited Kashmir. Among the points he made

were: "There is every element present there for rapid and peaceful cooperation with India. Communalism has not vitiated the atmosphere as in other parts of India. Abdullah was by far the most outstanding leader. The National Conference has stood for and still stands for Kashmir joining the Constituent Assembly of India". However, when Mountbatten left Srinagar on June 23, all he had to show for his mission was the sunburn he got... Hari Singh was steering a course for independence....

(Source: The Outlook, 9 July, 1997)

Gandhiji on Kashmir Question,

29 July, 1947

"I am not going to suggest to the Maharaja to accede to India, and not to Pakistan. The real sovereigns of the State are the people. The ruler is a servant of the people. If he is not so, he is not the ruler. This is my belief, and that is why I became a rebel against the British - because the British claimed to be the rulers of India, and I refused to recognise them as such. In Kashmir too, the power belongs to the public. Let them do as they want... I do not want to do anything in public when I am in Kashmir. I do not even want a public prayer; though I may have it, as prayer is part of my life.

7 August, 1947

... On August 15 legally the State of Kashmir and Jammu would be independent. I am, however, sure that the State would not remain in that condition for long. It had to join either the Union of India or of Pakistan.

(I have) no hesitation in saying that the will of the Kashmiris was the supreme law in Kashmir and Jammu. I am glad to say that the Maharaja and Maharani of Kashmir readily acknowledged the fact.

The Treaty of Amritsar ... was in reality a deed of sale. It would be dead on August 15. The question when the Treaty ends would the State revert to the British or to India; if to India, to which party? Without going into the intricacies of law, I hold that commonsense dictated that the will of the Kashmiris should decide the fate of Kashmir and Jammu. The sooner it is done the better.

... I hope the question would be decided between the two Dominions, the Maharaja of Kashmir and the Kashmiris. If they could come to a joint decision, much trouble would be saved...

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 7 August, 1997)

Ramesh Vinayak on the Impact of Farooq Abdullah Government

... The crowds outside the barricaded civil secretariat building in Srinagar are swelling. The crowds, the Farooq Abdullah Government feels, is an unmistakably positive sign of the changed mood in the Valley. But the fact that hardly anyone returns home with a smiling face shows how little things have really changed. Nine months since the war-weary Kashmiris elected the Government, the grievances-redressal machinery remains what it was - unresponsive and in total disarray.

When Farooq Abdullah took over in October, 1996 ... amidst soaring expectations, the minimum he was supposed to do in right earnest was rejuvenate and reinvigorate the grievance-redressal process at the grass-roots levels. This could have acted as a catalyst towards re-establishing the writ of the Government and creating a new mindset among the violence-weary Kashmiris. There is little evidence, however, to show any forward movement, be it on the employment front, the reconstruction of damaged infrastructure or the MLAs just lending a sympathetic ear. Farooq's report card; hardly makes for promising reading. It, in fact, speaks of a widening gap...

Far from being seen as a deft administrator, Farooq appears to be floundering, finding most of his well-meaning promises caught in the cobweb of bureaucratic delays... However, Farooq has none to blame but himself for lackadaisical responses. Take, for instance, the recruitment to government posts in a state which has more than 2 lakh registered as unemployed. The much-vaunted scheme to fill up 26,000 vacancies by March has been a non-starter. It took more than three months to identify the posts and eight months to recast the Subordinate Services Selection Board.

Farooq did resist ministerial pressure to disband the board, but rumours of a flourishing tout system abound... Farooq call ill-afford to be oblivious to the perils of ... slip-ups, given that his government desperately needs to establish its credibility to wean the Kashmiris from the secessionists' spell.

Any goodwill that the Govt. could have earned is getting stuck in red tape. For example, selection lists for 400-odd teachers, interviewed during President's rule, were out in March. But the inordinate delay in police verification has scuttled the appointments for the last four months... Even 2,400 compassionate appointments for the kin of militant's victims, sanctioned three months ago, are bogged down in similar delay... Efforts at reviving the redressal machinery would have won Farooq instant points and made immediate impact, but rural Kashmir still resembles a ravaged war zone with damaged roads and gutted schools and bridges. Though the budget was passed in early April, half of the available six working months in the Valley have gone by, without any development work taking off. In Anantnag, one of the worst-affected districts, with 136 burnt school buildings and 74 destroyed bridges, the first meeting of the district

development board was held on June 18. All this, despite a liberal flow of funds from the Centre, which hiked the state's plan size by 24% to an unprecedented Rs. 10,000 crore... Development works apart, Farooq and his 27 ministers, most of whom are credited with lacklustre performance, have done precious little to make their presence felt in rural Kashmir, where the heart of the problem lies. Since the durbar shifted on May 15, Farooq has but once ventured out of Srinagar. And with development plans still in the pipeline, and the autonomy issue on the backburner, Farooq has little to crow about.

... Most of the National Conference MLAs are ensconced in the safe environs of Srinagar. As a result, the political activity at the grass-roots level is non-existent. With the ministers and MLAs playing truant, the people have little option but to chase them in Srinagar. "Sorting out the people's problems at the ground level could be a political antidote to militancy", says Srinagar-based senior Congress leader Rafiq Sadiq...

Even as the Pakistan-backed militants - estimated to be around 4,000 - are on the run because of the heat mounted by security forces, the surrendered militants continue to be an unending nightmare for the Farooq regime. His strategy to dole out power crumbs to two renegade leaders - Javed Shah and Babar Badar - by appointing them as MLCs has led to others too demanding a share in the power cake.

Farooq is clearly lucky because the people seem firm about giving peace a chance. With the Hurriyat Conference unable to act as the opposition party - due to the common man's disinterest in hartals and processions - the Valley, in fact, is awash with growing signs of normalcy. What Farooq has to do, is put Kashmir on the road to recovery... His government owes its existence to the popular disenchantment with violence and militancy. It's disenchantment that Farooq needs to worry about.

(Source: The India Today, 7 July, 1997)

(Contd. from page 366)

But he added, that was his party's ideology, and he believed in it, no matter whom it offended...

In Ghatkopar, Manji Bhanushali roamed freely with the police and led maha artis, though named as an accused in a case of arson and attack on a Muslim home; he was arrested after the riots under the NSA. It was in Dharavi that the BJP showed its true colours. The largest slum in Asia saw frenzied Ayodhya campaign and about 40 BJP workers were arrested for riot-related offences there. Pratap Arekar and Govardhan Chavan were charged with instigating a Hindu mob to protest against the relaxation of curfew for namaz, and against A.A. Khan, on January 8. The mob performed a "ghanta naad" and while dispersing, looted Muslim establishments. VHP/BJP/RSS members were among the 31 arrested in Dharavi from a 700-strong slogan-shouting mob which stoned to death three Muslims during curfew relaxation on January 11.

Arun Joshi on Fear and Hope in the Valley

Hopes compete with fears in today's Kashmir ... after seven long years of Central rule until the beginning of October, 1996.

What gives hope is a yearning for peace among the people. Play-grounds are full of football and cricket playing children. There are many parents, who have allowed their children for the first time in eight years to venture out of the confines of their homes.

The children playing has encouraged their entertainment-starved elders to revive their love for picnicking. They make it to the Mughal Gardens in Srinagar on Sundays. With stereos playing the latest Hindi movie numbers and an occasional dance by the children, while love-birds coo under the shade of the mighty Chinar tree... the spirit of seeking a revival of the mood of the 80s in Kashmir is visibly apparent.

It is also revived the business of the photographers, who capture on film the visitors in Kashmiri dresses. The tourists move with less fear in the gardens than ever before, allowing themselves to be wooed. There is always the omnipresent gardener with a flower in his hand looking for bakhshish from the tourists. The domestic tourists are back in a large number...

The educational institutions have returned to their regular routines and as the markets remain open until late in the evening, the visitors too feel the visible change. For them, the re-appearance of crowds at the Boulevard was a pleasant surprise.... For Kashmir observers, it is a matter of intense debate whether this change .. visible on the streets of Srinagar, was the result of the situation that has emerged after the elections in September last year, or was it following its natural course. There are few who believe that the elections in itself were a hope generating phenomenon...

... The fatigue that had dawned on the people due to the cult of violence and the passage of time were two "major inputs that have brought about the change in the urban areas", observed... a bank employee. "If elections were to bring a change, that should have been universal throughout the Valley and not restricted to a few urban areas, particularly Srinagar, he asks.

There is also a third view on the changing scenario. "It is the over-deployment of security forces and frequent crackdowns that have brought to a halt the acts of violence"... All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) leader Abdul Ghani Lone gives credence to such thinking and expressions: "The commonman in Kashmir is mortally scared of the men in uniform".

(Atrocities) still recur in the countryside. In many cases these go unreported. A signal by the man in

uniform is the ultimate for the villagers, who have been hapless against the foreign militants or local militants or local militants as well...

There is yet another category of oppressors in the countryside. They are the surrendered militants or pro-government or friendlies or counter-insurgents. "We are being pressed from all sides and no one listens to us", Sonallah, a Government employee ... disclosed. This is no change. We weather crackdowns, militants take food and stay in our homes and surrendered militants extort money", he said.

The fears are persisting. The Valley is changing. Diametrically opposite views are expressed. Life, however, continues amidst these contradictions.

Kashmir offers a classic study of a tussle between the politicians and the bureaucracy. More often than not both sides are seen and heard running down each other.... Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah asked his Ministers to "learn to ride horse and take work from the bureaucracy or quit otherwise".

... The tug of war between politicians and bureaucrats has been going on... This war of attrition is not confined to the complaints by political leaders alone. The bureaucrats too have their tale of woe to narrate. "There is so much of political interference that merit becomes a casualty. If we object, they charge us with disobeying them", a head of the department told The Hindustan Times...

(In) this war of words ... the public alone suffers which often makes observers to comment that the administration was "non-functional and the political leadership was without a will or capacity to deliver"... The Chief Minister pleaded with his officers and later with the Press to "save future of our children. Let there be a zero per cent result but I wouldn't allow copying in the examination centres".

There was resentment and street demonstrations when the police assisted invigilators in curbing the practice of copying which had become a common phenomenon in the past few years owing to the turbulent situation in the Valley...

The absence of perceptions on Kashmir coupled with prejudices and the tendency to check facts by a section of media, the Minister said "have done more harm". "If all political leaders are not angles, there are rogues in the bureaucracy too. That is present every where. But in Kashmir, certain things twisted mischievously, can spell disaster, that is what many outside the State do not realise", the Minister observed.

There are other Ministers ... who feel that the things

were "moving"...

One of the charges against the National Conference government is that it has restricted its political activities to the civil secretariat after it shifted to its summer capital on May 12 last.

In the first week, the Government was faced with the problem of strike by its employees in response to the call by All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) and its constituents.

Adopting an unconventional method of "talk and act tough", the Farooq Abdullah Government succeeded in ensuring the attendance of employees in the office despite the strike call, the very next week. This was yet another reflection of "results coming forth if there is a seriousness of purpose", said observers...

The political observers feel that the genuine political activity alone could set in motion; the political precess initiated with the conduct of Assembly elections...

The Public meetings by junior leaders prompted the seniors to move around faster. Dr. Sheikh Mustafa Kamal, Health and Medical Education Minister, who has earned for himself the reputation of being an able administrator, maintained his links with his constituency Tangmarg in Baramullah district and spends his weekends there...

However, these political activities were still at a very low ebb...

Mufti Sayeed has stolen the show, when he held a series of Congress worker's convention in the Kashmir Valley. He moved ... in almost all parts of the Valley. Although he repeatedly asserted that the "job of governance was not a bed of roses for Farooq Abdullah", yet he would not hesitate to list the failures of the government. "Human rights excesses are on rise, the unemployed are frustrated and the people disillusioned", he would count on his fingers while addressing the workers' convention.

... The Janata Dal did not stay behind. It launched its own political activities. Farooq Andrabi one of the few political leaders who stayed on here during all these years of turmoil, held village-level meetings and then took Union Minister of State for Home Mohd. Maqbool Dar and other visiting leaders of the party to several places in the Valley. CPI-M leader Mohammad Yusuf Tarigani also stayed in touch with his people...

While the pro-India political groups continued to organise rallies, the APHC focus remained on congregations in the mosque. It attempted to come out and hold rally in Iqbal Park. But this did not go beyond wordy duel between Hurriyat leadership and the Government...

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 1-3 July, 1997)

J&K: TADA Detentions

None of the nearly 32,000 persons, picked up by the security forces and other government agencies for their alleged involvement in militant activities during the last seven years in Jammu and Kashmir, has so far been convicted under the provisions of the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act.

... Instead, majority of those have been released from custody either by the state government or by the courts. At present, there are about 1,600 persons lodged in various jails under TADA within and outside the state.

... 4 senior official said that of the persons picked up in militancy related activities in the past seven years, 17,000 were released after preliminary inquiries. The state government's screening committee reviewed the cases of about 18,000 persons and released 4,500 of them during the period. The courts granted bail to nearly 1,700 persons and nearly 3,000 were also released on parole.

Pointing out that there were 1,300 cases pending disposal before the two designed courts under the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act ... most of the accused in these cases were already enlarged on bail due to the failure of police to present challans against them within the stipulated period of 180 days...

... The prosecution has sought extension of judicial remand in only one or two per cent of the TADA cases so far... Most of the accused have managed to seek bail on ground of non-filing of the challan within the stipulated period of 180 days.

Significantly, none of the militants held for the killing of important political personalities has been punished so far. Of the 17 militants arrested in connection with the killing of VIPs in the valley, seven have been released on bail. Of the remaining 10, nine are in judicial custody in the state and one in the Tihar jail.

Sources said that some of these militants were allegedly involved in the killing of Mirwaiz Molvi Farooq ... Maulana Masoodi, Qazi Nissar, a prominent Kashmir leader and Mir Mustafa, former MLA ... Mushirul Haq, HMT's H.L. Khera, BJP's Tikka Lal Taploo, Srinagar Doordarshan's Lassa Koul.

(Source: The Indian Express, 25 May, 1997)

(Contd. from page 371)

an army of imaginative people who know exactly how the media organs work. In short, they have to accept the western approach to information, discarding its social irresponsibility.

This is the sum total of the concept of modernism that the ... Muslim modernists talks about... Their aim is not to ape the West, but to help the Muslims profit from what is good there and live in today's world respectably, with their heads held high.

(Source: The Nation and the World)

OIC: Special Islamic Summit: Special Declaration on J&K, 23 March, 1997

We, the Sovereigns, Heads of States and Governments of the Member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, gathered in Islamabad, Islamic Republic of Pakistan for the Extra-ordinary Session of the Islamic Summit Conference on 14 Dhul Qi'dah 1417H (23 March, 1997).

Deeply concerned over the situation in Jammu and Kashmir, especially the suffering of the Kashmiri people and the consequent tensions in the region.

Reaffirming all OIC Summit and Ministerial resolutions on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute.

Declare:

1. Our commitment to promote a just and peaceful solution to the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with the United Nations resolutions;
2. Our support to the fundamental human rights of the Kashmiri people including their right of self-determination;
3. Our condemnation of the oppression and massive violations of the human rights of the Kashmiri people;
4. Our support for the efforts of the government of Pakistan to resolve through a substantive and meaningful dialogue the Jammu and Kashmir dispute which is the basic cause of the tensions between India and Pakistan.

(Contd. from page 376)

counterparts in other religions suffer. The fact that change of religion has not changed the socio-economic and educational status of the Dalit Christians has been proved by the number of Commissions, appointed by the Government and by the Judiciary. ...

... Now to deal with them positively ... some concrete suggestions follow for the consideration of the National Commission for Minorities:

First, to recommend the appropriate changes and amendments to the Christian Personal Laws after consulting and inviting the views of the Christian Community. The process for this ... should begin by inviting the representatives of Catholic Bishops Conference of India (CBCI) and the National Council of Churches in India (NCCI) (and) from some major Christian ... organisations which ... not part of either CBCI or NCCI.

Second, to recommend the amendment to the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order 1950 in order to restore constitutional/fundamental rights of the Christians of Scheduled origin (Dalit Christians) specially the discrimination ... In fact, ... recommendation should be made for the removal of the third paragraph from the Presidential Order 1950...

APHC: Letter to Secretary General, United Nations, 12 May, 1997 (Extracts)

... The human rights issue is directly and inescapably linked with the dispute on Jammu and Kashmir; and that unless the core issue is addressed, the situation may not improve substantially. However, the situation assuming, as it does, monstrous dimensions in regard to violence against mothers, sisters and daughters, the All Parties Hurriyat Conference decided ... to launch a sustained campaign against the heinous violations of human rights in Jammu and Kashmir. The fast (hunger strike) for an indefinite period of time undertaken by (the) Hurriyat leader Mr. Mohammad Yasin Malik should be viewed in a perspective... (Our) demands, among other things, include:-

- a. that the Government of India make a categorical statement to the effect that violence against women, genocide, custodial killings and blasting of houses is stopped forthwith;
- b. that the officers and men involved in such crimes ... be tried as war criminals. ...

We are the victims of the State terrorism (which) requires an immediate UN intervention... The flagrant violation of Human Rights Commission's declaration, the Geneva Convention and the principles of justice by the Indian forces deployed in extra-ordinary bulk through out ... Jammu and Kashmir, may not only endanger peace and South Asia but also result in the extinction of a whole generation of youngmen. We, therefore, seek your intervention in the larger interests of peace and justice...

Joint Statement on Yaseen Malik's Fast

The fast unto death undertaken by Yaseen Malik of the All Party Hurriyat Conference is cause for great concern and distress, especially in view of his medical history. His allegation of 167 custodial killings by Indian security forces between October 1996 and April 1997 is a matter of great concern. In addition, he and the All Party Hurriyat Conference allege that there have been several instances of rape and torture in recent months by the armed forces in Kashmir. If reports of these atrocities are true, as citizens committed to a democratic polity, we find them condemnable and unacceptable.

We think it vital that these charges be investigated and verified by an independent and impartial committee of concerned citizens. We ... commit ourselves to sending an enquiry team to Kashmir for this purpose... We urge Mr. Yaseen Malik and APHC to provide us with the full particulars of these alleged atrocities (and) to end his fast on the basis of our assurance that if these allegations are found to be substantially correct .. we will apply all (possible) pressure ... on the government to demand that all such atrocities end, and that the guilty are brought to trail.

Rajendra Sachar
Nithya Ramakrishnan

Rajni Kothari
Madhu Kishwar and others

BJP's Role in Mumbai Riots
Jyoti Punwani in Mid Day, Mumbai,
26 May, 1997

... It has been the BJP-Shiv Sena stand that the "Hindu masses", angered at the delay in settling the legal dispute over the site, demolished the Babari Masjid on December 6, 1992.

Throughout the proceedings of the Srikrishna Commission inquiring into the December 1992-January, 1993 riots in Mumbai, Sena-BJP lawyers have referred to the Babari Masjid as the "disputed structure".

significantly, so have Mumbai's top police officers.

"Tel lagao Dabur ka, naam mitdo Babar ka" was among the cruder slogans of the Ayodhya campaign.

Will the Babari Masjid now simply be called Ram-janmasthan? It is unlikely that even doing that will erase the memory of the fact that for 400 years, a mosque stood there, the demolition of which on December 6, 1992 by hordes mobilised by the BJP, resulted in the worst bloodshed Mumbai has ever seen.

So blindingly have the headlights been focussed on the Shiv Sena during the Mumbai riots, that the BJP's role has remained in the dark. But the Srikrishna Commission has shown that it was the BJP president's rath yatra in 1990 which began the communal tension in the country that culminated in the demolition of the mosque two years later. The inflammatory slogans that resounded all over the country at in those years were coined by the BJP.

"Is desh mein rahna hoga, to Hindu banke rahna hoga; yeh desh Hinduon ka, nahin kisike baap ka; jisko chahiya Pakistan, usko bhejo kabrastan" - all illustrations of what Advani describes as "cultural nationalism".

The maha artis were the brainchild of the RSS. The list of BJP luminaries whose names feature in the commission's records starts with Deputy Chief Minister Gopinath Munde... Then there is Member of Parliament Ram Naik, who led a morcha during curfew to Jogeshwari police station to demand the release of "innocent" Hindus and condemn the "atrocities" of Addl. Commissioner of Police A.A. Khan, and local activists.

In the worst-hit area during the riots, it was a BJP activist's home and shop that were among the first targets of attack by Muslims on December 6, 1992. Rajaram Gundeti had been active in organising the Ayodhya campaign in Deonar all through October-November 1992, and on December 5, 1992, had held four chowk "sabhas" on the busiest roads of this Muslim-majority, wretchedly poor-suburb. On December 6, he had organised the "ghanta naad" (ringing of bells to coincide with the real thing in Ayodhya).

Under cross-examination, Gundeti admitted that the slogans and speeches during these meetings could have hurt the feelings of Deonar's Muslims, and that he was in fact worried about their effect on his relationship with his Muslim neighbours.

(Contd. on page 361)

V. Shankar Aiyer
On Sharad Pawar's Testimony

... The commission headed by Justice B.N. Srikrishna was set up in January 1993 by Pawar himself after he took over as the Chief Minister from Sudhakarrao Naik. In March, its scope was enlarged to include the serial bomb blasts that followed the communal clashes... Mumbai was among the last of the 502 witnesses ... before it wound up hearings last week. Its report is expected in September...

... Naik ... had listed three reasons for the orgy of violence in the city: Muslim retaliation to the demolition; his government's drive against illegal structures; and the action taken against politicians with a clear nexus with the underworld... The last reason given by Naik was seen as an attempt to hold Pawar at least partly responsible... Naik had also hinted at a conspiracy behind the delay in the deployment of the army, clearly another barb directed at Pawar who was then the Union defence minister.

Pawar was expected to counter these allegations at the hearing and lead the charge against the Shiv Sena, widely seen as instigators of the riots. And in doing so, many felt he would reveal hitherto unknown facts. He was, after all, the man who succeeded Naik as chief minister and instituted the commission. But in typical fashion, Pawar failed to deliver. He merely produced a letter from Naik to then prime minister P.V. Narasimha Rao which lauded the army's efforts. He also clarified that, according to the law, it is not the defence minister but the state Government that has to request the nearest army outpost for help. Pawar's other contribution to the commission's quest for the truth was that statements by Bal Thackeray and other Sena leaders had inflamed passions, hardly a revelation. And he nimbly tried to parry the charge that the running feud between him and Naik was the reason why the riots, after subsiding in December '92, erupted in a violent second round in January, '93. Few, however, would give him a clean chit on this count. It is well-known that dissident Congressmen have often used, or at least benefitted, from communal clashes in their quest for a change in leadership. Chief ministers of Congress-ruled states have in the past been ousted on grounds of a breakdown in law and order following communal riots instigated by their own partymen...

Pawar told the commission that, following the serial bomb blasts which shattered the city's fragile peace in March, 1993, he deliberately lied to the public. He said that in a bid to avert another round of Hindu-Muslim rioting, he had dubbed the blasts as the handiwork of the LTTE. The morality of the statement can be debated endlessly, but the fact remains that he misled the public. And he could not explain either way, after having said that the utterances of the Sena leaders and the maha aartis had compounded the conflict, he had not taken action against the guilty.

(Contd. on page 369)

Saeed Naqvi on Shia-Sunni Conflict in Lucknow

... Old Lucknow without (Azadari) procession is a bit of Pune without Ganapati, Puri without Jagannath and Calcutta with Durga Puja - with the exception that Azadari processions are solemn, not festive.

Azadari, in fact, is congregational mourning and remembrance of the tragedy of Karbala where Prophet Mohammad's grandson, Imam Hussain, suffered martyrdom with his family and 72 followers 1,400 years ago on the banks of the Euphrates in Iraq. Hussain was the younger son of Hazrat Ali and Fatima, the Prophet's daughter. Shias or the partisans of Ali believe that Ali should have been the first Caliph upon the death of the Prophet. Sunnis accept Abu Bakr, Omar, Usman and Ali as caliphs in that chronological order. This is the basic fault line between Shia and Sunni Islam...

... When Avadh came under the rule of the Shia Nawabs with headquarters first in Faizabad then in Lucknow, the faith blended easily with the cultural colours of Avadh.

This was at the heart of what came to be known as composite culture - a young faith engaged in cross fertilisation with a rich civilisation with its classical and folk traditions. Participating in each others festivals and observances became common.

Thus Azadari was not confined to the Shias alone. Hindus and Sunnis had their own Imambaras or centres of Azadari. Imambaras of Tikait Ram and Jhau Lal are to this day symbols of that togetherness. In Moharram the recitation of Soz and Salaam composed by contemporary poets like Mathur Lucknavi and Krishna Behari Noor, are an integral part of the solemnities.

Along with Azadari confined to the Imambaras and homes, (Lucknow) developed a more demonstrative tradition of taking out Azadari processions. All communities participated in these too but these processions were always prone to accidental or contrived tension. If there were cases of Shia-Sunni riots as early as 1828 when feudal control and discipline were absolute, such incidents should surprise no one in a turbulent and communalised democracy. According to the latest official figures there are as many 953 Azadari processions in Lucknow, more than anywhere else in the world. The period of mourning too expanded from the ten days of Moharram to the 40th day of Hussain's martyrdom or Chehlum and eventually to over two and a half months.

No harmony was ever absolute. Over the decades, some Azadari processions, while passing through predominantly Sunni areas, have heaped abuse on the first three caliphs inviting retaliatory processions by Sunnis praising "the Prophet's Companions". With communalised politics, this has become something of a deadlock.

In 1977 a procession led to a Shia-Sunni riot in which 50 people were killed. Ram Naresh Yadav was the Chief Minister. He clamped a ban on Azadari processions. This year happens to be the tenth year of this ban. ...

... When the agitation for a lifting of the ban on Azadari began, Mayawati suspected Mulayam's hand behind the disturbances. Her reasoning was fairly straightforward: since the Shia leadership supports Mulayam, why did they not seek a lifting of the ban when Mulayam was Chief Minister?

Meanwhile, Lalji Tandon, the BJP ... Minister in the Mayawati Cabinet and an MLA from the affected areas ... gave an assurance to the Shia leaders that they would be able to take out their processions.

Abdullah Bukhari, spotting an opportunity to settle scores with Kanshi Ram, aggravated the law and order situation by entering UP to support the Azadari procession. His arrest caused the Shias to violate the curfew and unprecedented violence followed. The PAC and the Rapid Action Force found this an opportunity to target the Muslims...

(Source: The Pioneer, 6 July, 1997)

AHMADIYA QUESTION

Shahabuddin's Letter to The Times of India, 4 July, 1997

Apropos Mr. Sultan Shahin's article on Ahmediya question (30 June), I am struck by the utter meaninglessness of his question whether in a Hindu Rashtra Muslims shall demand to be declared a non-Indian community. Even in a Hindu State Muslim Indians shall remain Muslim and Indian as they are now. The Ahmediya question is a question not of political or national identity but of religious identity. The State cannot determine religious identity. Perhaps what Shahin has in mind is whether the Hindu State may declare Muslims as "Mohammadi Hindus", as proposed by Murli Manohar Joshi? If the Indian State accepts JUH's demand it will set a bad precedent.

The Ahmediya question is an internal problem of the Muslim community. JUH should concentrate on the Muslim community and not look for Stat support.

One Religion as National Bond

One lesson we must learn from the ethnic and sectarian conflict in Pakistan is that religion cannot become a common bond for nation-building. Those who are talking of a Hindu Rashtra also should deeply reflect on this.

-A.A. Engineer the Hindu, 15 July, 1997

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-A.A. Engineer the Hidu. 15 July, 1997

Pyare Lal on RSS's Interaction with Gandhiji

... The head of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh also called upon Gandhiji. It was common knowledge that the RSS, as it was called for short, had been behind the bulk of the killings in the city as also in various other parts of India. This these friends denied. Their organisation was for protecting Hinduism - not for killing Muslims. It was not hostile to anyone. It stood for peace.

This was laying on a bit thick. But Gandhiji, with his boundless faith in human nature and in the redemptive power of truth, felt he must give everybody a chance to make good his bona fides. It was something that they did not glory in wrong doing. They should issue a public statement, he told them, repudiating the allegations against them and openly condemn the killing and harassment of the Muslims that had taken place and that still was going on in the city. They said Gandhi could do that himself on their behalf on the strength of what they had told him. Gandhiji answered that he would certainly do that but if what they were saying was sincerely meant, it was better that the public should have it from their own lips. A member of Gandhiji's party interjected that the RSS people had done a fine job of work at Wah refugee camp. They had shown discipline, courage and capacity for hard work. "But don't forget," answered Gandhiji, "even so had Hitler's Nazis and the Fascists under Mussolini". He characterised the RSS as a "communal body with a totalitarian outlook".

A few days later, the RSS leaders took Gandhiji to attend one of the rallies they were holding at the sweepers' colony. He had seen some of their literature. The theory propounded therein was that the Hindus were the original inhabitants of India. The late Lokamanya Tilak was wrong in his thesis that the Arctic circle was the original home of the Vedas and the Aryans had migrated from there into India through the north-west. It was not the Aryans, they asserted, who had come in from outside. It was the Arctic that had shifted from India where it was originally situated when the Vedas were composed! "Quite long ago it (North Pole) was in the part of the world... called Bihar and Orissa at present". India, therefore, belonged to the Hindus and all those who had not assimilated or been assimilated by Hindu religion and culture were aliens and could only claim the rights of minorities. Under the pernicious influence of the Congress "the idea was spread... for the first time... (that) the Nation... was composed of all those who happened to reside therein... We began to class ourselves with our old invaders and foes under the outlandish name - India - and tried to win them over to join hands with us in our struggle... (and) completely lost sight of our true Hindu Nationhood in our wild goose chase after the

phantom of founding a "really" democratic 'State'".

In welcoming Gandhiji to their rally, the RSS leader described him as "a great man that Hinduism has produced". Gandhiji replying observed that while he was certainly proud of being a Hindu, his Hinduism was neither intolerant nor exclusive. The beauty of Hinduism as he understood it was that it absorbed the best that was in all faiths. If Hindus believed that in India there was no place for non-Hindus on equal and honourable terms and Muslims, if they wanted to live in India, must be content with an inferior status, or if the Muslims thought that in Pakistan Hindus could live only as a subject race on the sufferance of the Muslims, it would mean an eclipse of Hinduism and an eclipse of Islam. He was glad, therefore, he said, to have their assurance that their policy was not of antagonism towards Islam. He warned them that if the charge against them that their organisation was behind the killing of the Muslims was correct, it would come to a bad end.

In the course of questions and answers that followed Gandhiji was asked whether Hinduism did not permit the killing of evil-doers. If not, how did he explain the exhortation by Lord Krishna in the second chapter of the Gita to destroy the Kauravas?

The reply to the first question, said Gandhiji, was both 'yes' and 'no'. One had to be an infallible judge as to who was the evil-doer before the question of killing could arise. In other words one had to be completely faultless before such a right could accrue to one. How could a sinner claim the right to judge or execute another sinner? As for the second question, granting that the right to punish the evil-doer was recognised by the Gita, it could be exercised properly by the constituted Government only. "Both the Sardar and Pandit Nehru will be rendered powerless if you become judge and executioner in one. They are tried servants of the nation. Give them a chance to serve you. Do not sabotage their efforts by taking the law into your own hands". ...

(Source: Pyare Lal: Gandhi - the Last Phase)

Hindu Community In Houston Reaction to Statement on Krishna

A Muslim scholar's remarks on a popular Pakistani radio programme in Houston suggesting that Lord Krishna was not exactly 'role model' material for youth has upset the Hindu community there.

They have written to the Federal Communications Commission to see if the producers of the show, "Young Tarang", had violated any of the agency's regulations.

(Source: The Organiser, 7 April, 1997)

RSS: ABKS's Resolution

On National Situation, July, 1997

... The occasion also demands impartial self-introspection ... to how far we have succeeded or failed in turning into reality the golden dreams of Akhand Swatantra Bharat...

Have we, for example, succeeded in establishing a united, harmonious national life on the enduring historic basis of "One country, One people, One Culture", at least after paying the terrible price of partition of our Motherland? The Karyakari Mandal (KM) notes with deep dismay that the same pernicious divisive policy of pampering the "minorities" is being perpetuated as evident from the granting of special rights to them through Article 30, continuation of the divisive Article 370 for J&K State, creation to tiny, non-viable states in the sensitive border areas of the north-east, tolerating and settling down millions of Bangladeshi infiltrators and saboteurs in the country, growth of terrorism etc.

To what a dangerous extent the minority-complex has been aggravated ... is shockingly evident from the recent demand by the Muslim Federation for "proportional representation" of 20% for Muslims in the legislatures and jobs, constitution of a separate Muslim regiment in the army etc... The pre-independence policy of Muslim appeasement which led to Partition is being repeated step by step in post-independence Bharat also.

... Nation's freedom demands that effective measures be initiated forthwith for putting an end to all such disruptive constitutional provisions and political policies... The KM also notes with hope and confidence the fast emerging trends ... of genuine national awareness in the popular mind. The massive response that the various campaigns and Rath yatras (launched for rousing the spark of devotion in the people's heart towards our ancient symbols of national faith and culture like Sri Rama, Bharat Mata, Gowmata, Kashmir etc.) have received throughout the entire stretch of the country is a clear testimony to this fact.... The KM urges the Swayamsevaks to carry on a massive campaign for any convenient 7-days between August 15, 1997 and January 26, 1998 for carrying "the message of the freedom struggle" in its true and authentic light to the people...

(Source: The Organiser, 20 July, 1997)

(Contd. from page 366)

Pawar chose to adopt such a non-committal stance... His own long-term plans could have constrained him from forcing the issue with Naik; with Antulay on his side, Naik out and his nominee as MPCC chief, he has hopes of rebuilding his political image ... after his disastrous effort to challenge Sitaram Kesri. But the fact remains that by allowing Naik's statement to go un rebutted, Pawar has done neither himself nor the office of the chief minister any good.

(Source: The India Today, 14 July, 1997)

Arvind Kala

On Vegetarian Fundamentalism

Thanks to Hindu and Jain vegetarian tradition, abattoirs get targeted by protesters in places as far apart as Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Punjab and West Bengal. The irony is that 80 per cent of Hindus do eat meat, according to Peoples of India, compiled by the Anthropological Survey of India. But our society hears protests from only the vegetarian minority, which comes from the upper castes.

Vegetarian Hindus who consider meat-eating cruel should remember that Hitler was a vegetarian while Mother Teresa eats meat. Hindus should also remember that the meat-eating tradition in other religions comes down from centuries-old belief that the survival of one species requires the death of another. And anyway, if God had considered meat-eating cruel, would He have produced lions and tigers who can only survive on flesh.

Eighty two per cent of Indian consist of Hindus and Maneka's vegetarian fundamentalism poses the question... Can a vegetarian majority impose its food prejudices on meat-eating minorities?... Three years ago Gujarat banned buffalo slaughter in the State, unmindful of the fact that buffalo meat was basic to the diet of lakhs of Gujarati Muslims and ... Christians. Hindus tend to think that Muslims eat buffalo meat to spite them. This is nonsense. Buffalo meat is (taken) only because it costs one-third as much as mutton or chicken.

The irony of Maneka's vegetarian fundamentalism is that India exports meat and meat products worth Rs. 500 crore a year, most of it buffalo meat. What is the logic of allowing this meat to be eaten by the Arabs or the Iranians but not by Gujarati Muslims.

India is overrun by useless, unproductive livestock that we cannot feed and that we don't eat. And we have millions of underfed people who have to ... go without the protein-rich food these ... cattle could provide...

(Source: The Indian Express, 16 May, 1997)

Anti-Islamic Propaganda

... A prosecution (was) launched against the Hindu Raksha Dal for publishing a poster, in which 24 ayats of the Quran were cited under the caption - **Why do riots take place in the country?** - *Shri Z.S. Lohat, Metropolitan Magistrate, Delhi, discharged the two accused saying: "With due regard to the holy book of Quran Majid, a close perusal of the ayats shows that the same are harmful and teach hatred and are likely to create differences between Mohammedans on the one hand and the remaining communities on the other". (Emphasis added).* But the "believers" will not allow a high-level impartial assessment whether there is any truth in the allegation of incitement against other religions in the concept of jihad and other tenets of Islam...

Note: The Magistrate's view stands cancelled by the Calcutta High Court's Judgment in Chopra case.- Editor

An American Travel

Advisory for Visitors to India

... **Don't hit the cows.** In addition to the moving traffic, you have a number of stationary targets, er, obstacles, including cows, beggars, street repair crews, double-parked cars and trucks and elephants and camels. **You are in the right as long as you don't hit the cows.** All traffic flows around the cows. Other animals or people are not so lucky...

(Source: The Indian Express, 27 July, 1997)

Government Statement on Cow Protection

The Central Government (do not) intend to enact a uniform law in the country regarding the cow protection. The preservation of cattle is a matter on which the State Legislatures have exclusive power to legislate.

(Source: LSUQ No. 2649/10.12.96 -R. Verma, C. Patel & V. Kathiria)

Justice M.L. Kaul on Cow Protection

... In mid-February 1996 the Punjab and Haryana High Court observed that the penalty for cow slaughter must be enhanced. In an order the court said that cow slaughter was a serious offence in the Indian context and any person convicted for it should be dealt with severely under the law. This observation was made by Justice M.L. Kaul while hearing a bail application filed by Ashraf Ali and Alif of Hardwar district who were arrested by the Yamunanagar police under section 8 of the Prohibition of Cow Slaughter Act. Justice Kaul maintained that mere five-year imprisonment for this offence is quite inadequate as cow slaughter has been treated on par with murder under Ranbir Penal Code of Jammu and Kashmir which provided a punishment of 14 years for cow slaughter. This is despite the fact that Jammu and Kashmir is predominantly a Muslim state.

(Source: A.A.Engineer in The Economic & Political Weekly, 15/2/97)

RSS Weekly Organiser on Cow in Hinduism

"Come and accept our adorations, O Gomata blessed Mother Cow, We welcome Thee with the calf. All the devas reside in Thee, and so do all that is sacred to humanity. Thou art the mother of God (Twaan Matasarva Devanam) and thou art the mean of all our holy rites". hails the ancient sage. The Vedic Rishi regarded cow as the Mother and bull as the Father. He worshipped God every day for the good of the cow and the Brahmin - Namō Brahmanya Devaya Go-Brahmana Hitayacha.

Nanda Gopal is adored as our God, the God who protects cows. Scriptures say:

"Cow and Gayatri are two saviours of humanity", says the Rishi. Cow saves the body and Gayatri the soul.

"Cow fosters man. If it dies who lives, if it lives who dies"

The Bhagawat says that the earth took the shape of a

Cow Protection in Nepal

The slaughter and exportation of cows is a crime in the Hindu nation of Nepal, with sentences ranging from a 50,000 rupee fine to six years imprisonment. However, for lack of law enforcement, over 200,000 cows a year are smuggled out for slaughter in Bangladesh and India. Bulls, now in short supply, have doubled in price and must be imported from India to meet the demand for ploughing oxen. Hindus cite ... lack of organization ... and low awareness among farmers who sell off cattle they cannot maintain. But last year a government official's public statement, "It is a violation of non-Hindus' human rights to disallow their beef eating", stoked ... demonstrations and attacks on smuggler's trucks. Activists ... have founded the Cow Welfare Association ... to restore Nepal as a place where cows are never killed.

(Source: The Hindustan Today, December, 1996)

U.C. Panigrahi

On Vegetarianism and Cow Slaughter

... The human of stone age, who had been non-vegetarian became agrarian and vegetarian through millennia of evolution, which the author proposes to reverse. Not killing other creatures for food is a superior form of human nature... Why should the foreigner, who pays good money, be satisfied with the meat of useless, unproductive and old cattle... The abattoirs are provided healthy and young cattle for slaughter to provide tasty beef for foreign palates.

(Source: The Indian Express, 9 June, 1997)

Shahabuddin's Letter to The Indian Express, 10 June, 1997

It is unscientific to regard vegetarianism a higher stage of evolution, because adoption of vegetarianism has not lead to any genetic mutation.

However, I see more logic in total vegetarianism than in selective non-vegetarianism because all animal life can be treated as equally sacrosanct. But what about the plant life, which also lives, breathes and dies as Sir J.C. Bose demonstrated.

Shri Panigrahi has alleged that the abattoirs slaughter healthy and young cattle for export. If they did, they would price themselves out of the market, both external and internal. If there is a violation of the existing laws for certification of age and utility before slaughter, it is an administrative and management problem. Mr. Panigrahi should encourage like-minded and committed youth to join the cadre of inspectors to prevent cheating.

cow and wept before gods the misery of mankind at the hands of ruthless asuras.

(Source: The Organiser, 17 November, 1966)

Muhammad Ikhlās

On Communal Tendencies in Mass Media

... In the fight against communal forces, journalists can play a major role. They can keep their readers and the Government informed about the activities of communal forces and by impartial and just reporting can help in dousing communal flames. But if we analyse the role of the press, we find that a big majority of journalists are aligned with the communal forces and are helping them by spreading lies, half-truths and totally baseless and unfounded stories.

The role of the press has come under scrutiny many a time and the Press Council of India has censured newspapers for printing baseless and unfounded news about communal riots.

The role of the Hindi press in particular on the firing at kar sevaks in October 1990, is still fresh in the nation's memory. The highly exaggerated toll in the police firing at Ayodhya, the character assassination of then Chief Minister of UP, Mulayam Singh Yadav and the baseless reports about the killing of Hindus in Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College of Aligarh Muslim University, are just a few examples of the role journalists play nowadays.

The venom of communalism is spreading unfortunately very fast in the journalist community. In the past it was the Hindi Press or the regional language press, which was afflicted with the communal poison. But during the last 20 years the English press has also slowly gone communal.

These days English newspapers are publishing news and views, which some years back were unimaginable... It is not that the whole press has gone communal... There are journalists who are truly secular in thought and expression. They are fighting against ... communalism. But these are very few and their tribe is vanishing fast!... (Source: The Radiance Viewsweekly, 13- July, 97)

Mohammad Tariq Ghazi

On Muslims and Mass Media

... Muslim reaction is spontaneous, never a calculated response. More than 30 years ago K.M. Munshi, an Indian National Congress leader, and one of the pioneers of Hindu revivalist movement, published Religious Leaders with unacceptable language for the Prophet of Islam (PBUH). Muslims of India came out in streets and were greeted with bullets, several of them dying.

The book was subsequently banned but did not stop others in India and elsewhere from indulging in similar pseudo-intellectual activity. This is already resulting in a new fatigue. And that seems to be ultimate media goal - make something bad acceptable as 'unavoidable', even if evil. The deluge is so great that Muslims practically can not monitor every worthless piece of paper or celluloid or magnetic tape to cry foul. Some persons and organisations are engaged in monitoring this on a small

Mahendra Ved's Views

On the Film Border

... As a people while we pay lip service to ... the 1971 war, we are almost apologetic and even fearful. The silver jubilee celebrations last year were virtually extracted from the government after an outcry by the press and pressures from the armed forces...

This squeamishness has surfaced again over Border, a film centring around the battle of Longewala, but claiming no authenticity. It is being panned for being jingoistic, communal and anti-people in that it could reopen wounds that are supposed to have healed. It is said to be perpetuating ... male chauvinism in soldiers' ... neglect (of) their women back at home for the sake of the mythical Bharatmata. ...

Some retired officers, who were part of the action, feel that the film has ignored the role of the Indian Air Force and that the Army has run away with all the glory. The film has been accused of distorting truth and attempting to rewrite history.

It is true that at Longewala, where Major (now retired brigadier) Kuldip Singh Chandpuri and his men were besieged by a massive Pakistani force, the decisive role was played by the IAF. The Hunters flying from Jaisalmer reduced a tank regiment of Pakistani army to rubble and smoke after sending them scurrying in circles ... (making it) the biggest graveyard for tanks since the battle of Al Alamein in the World War II....

The IAF is the Vijeta at Longewala. But how can that take away the credit from Chandpuri and his men, just 120 of them, against 55 tanks and 2000 infantrymen? They had won in an entirely unequal confrontation.

Longewala is important because it was won... Border movie a good quarter of a century later ... at a time when India and Pakistan are in a conciliatory mood. As we move towards the end of the century, it is time to determine our own borders, our own parameters as a people.

The world elsewhere is integrating and political barriers are coming down, at a pace faster than we can match. If only we South Asian, carrying our multi-ethnic, multi-cultural baggage over the centuries, could skip this evolutionary process and catch up with the world?

(Source: The Times of India, 7 July, 1997)

scale, but due to lack of resources as well as vision, they don't go beyond sharing their photocopied clippings with a few others. It doesn't help.

(They need) a comprehensive media policy... (This) requires a modernistic attitude that must decide the approach to the problem. ...

That is where the role of their own media emerges. However, the success depends on accepting the fact that their media will need both a degree of independence and

(Contd. on page 364)

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(Contd. on page 364)

Report on Bibi Ka Maqbara, Aurangabad PTI, 8 June, 1997

"Bibi Ka Maqbara", a replica of the Taj Mahal and the sole example of Mughal architecture ... in the Deccan Plateau, is in danger as toxic fumes and smokes emanating from brick-kilns situated near the mausoleum, are damaging the exquisite monument ... of white stone and marble ... built in 1679 by Emperor Aurangzeb's son Prince Azam Shah in memory of his mother, Rubia Durrani.

As a consequence, the snow white structure is getting blackened even as its smooth surface is corroding due of the chemical reaction of sulphur dioxide with marble.

When contacted, district collector Sanjay Kumar said the Maharashtra Government had recently asked the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to assess the impact of the fumes on the Maqbara and submit a report.

The study, conducted by ASI with the help of the State Pollution Control Board, had indicated that air pollution in the area around the world heritage site was more than the permissible level, Kumar said.

... The state Government has taken a decision to close down the kilns in the vicinity of the monument, the collector said... Six kiln owners have gone to court, demanding protection from eviction...

Though the mausoleum here lacks the shine and brilliance which the Taj exudes, visiting tourists find striking resemblance between the two...

The tomb stands within an enclosed area, 500 years long and 300 yards broad, surrounded by high wall. The Cambridge History of India describes this mausoleum as a "frank copy of the Taj Mahal but poorer in quality".

Shahabuddin's Letter to HRD Minister, 9 June, 1997

I request you to ask the ASI to take effective action urgently for the preservation of this protected monument with the cooperation of the Government of Maharashtra.

Sanjay Suri

On Indian Art Treasures in UK

... Indian artefacts forms one of the largest foreign collections in British museums. But unlike governments of several other countries, India has made no move to claim any of its treasures.

Questions over the return of objects taken by the British are becoming current again after the return of the Stone of Destiny of Edinburgh by the British Government. The Stone has been in Westminster Abbey since the 13th century and kings and queens of England have been crowned on it since.

The Stone has been returned to Edinburgh... The Scots have now launched a campaign to demand the return of several other objects.

Leader of Scottish National Party Alex Salmond has

Meetu Jain

On Spoilation of Qutub Minar Environs

The get-rich-quick brigade that is cashing in on the city's heritage may yet get away with their shops and boutiques, thanks to the grey areas of the law of the land and the laxity of the enforcing authorities.

For instance, socialite Bina Ramani is putting together a shopping complex within a stone's throw from the nearly 700-year-old Qutab Minar world heritage site. This is against the rules laid down by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)... The ASI has ... file a complaint against her...

... Th Mehrauli police ... inform the Municipal Corporation of Delhi. And there stands the issue, with little likelihood of Ramani being stopped in her tracks.

Conservationists fear that with Ramani coming in, others will follow suit and the historic, if decrepit, havelis here will soon be turned into a huge bazaar. "The fallout of the takeover of the havelis is that the Qutab Minar will soon be ticked off the UN's list of world heritage sites", says Ratish Nanda of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage.

The ASI says the haveli is away from Mehrauli village and not part of the Lal Dora land. As such, the laws of the Delhi Development Authority apply here. And lands says the enforcement laws, that are designated "residential" cannot be changed to commercial.

But, as DDA sources point out, "till today, no one has been prosecuted for violating enforcement laws." ...

... However, M.N. Khullar, DDA Chief Architect says, "If the law is being flouted, we will certainly take action. But we have not done anything in this case as yet". With government officials getting entangled down by legal webs, it comes as no surprise that voluntary organisations can't do much either.... President of the Conservation Society of Delhi, Nalini Thakur says:

"In 1991, we submitted plan and guidelines for how the heritage zone should come up. The DDA had a long meeting on it. That was the last that was heard of it. We have also suggested a 130-acre archaeological park for the heritage zone. It will keep encroachments at bay as well as save the unprotected monuments here".

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 6 December, 1996)

now asked for the return of the Book of Deir, a Latin and Gaelic text written in Scotland between the ninth and the 12th centuries (and) of the 1,000-year-old Uig Chessmen made of walrus ivory....

The Greek Government has for years been demanding the return of the Elgin Marbles, taken away by the British from Athens. Former Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock had publicly supported the Greek demand...

The new Labour government has disowned Mr. Kinnock's pledge.

Khushwant Singh On Religion and Fanaticism

The worst enemy of every religion is the fanatic who professes to follow it and tries to impose views of his faith on others. All religions have had, and have today bigots who give founders of their religion and their teachings a bad name.

People do not judge religion by what their prophets were like or what they preached but by the way their followers put them in practice. Christians had their inquisitors who burnt innocent men and women at the stake as heretics.

Muslims have their Islamic fraternities whose leaders pronounce fatwahs condemning people to death, ordering women to shroud themselves ... and imposing draconian rules of behaviour on the community. Sikhs had their Bhindranwale who forbade men to dye or roll up their beards, women to wear saris or jeans, put bindis on their foreheads and said nasty things about dhotian-topian waaley - those who wear dhotis and caps i.e. the Hindus...

Hindus produced their own fanatics who condemn Christianity and Islam as alien religions and while mouthing platitudes about being the most tolerant religion on earth, hound Christian missionaries and target Muslim places of worship for destruction. In the name of Shri Rama, they demolished the Babari Masjid in Ayodhya.

At the same time there are good people and good scholars in all religious communities who wage a losing battle to inform people of the true nature of their faiths...

Of all the world's religions the most misunderstood and maligned is Islam. Since it challenged Christian hegemony over other religions, Christians were disposed to find fault with everything it stood for. Resurgent Muslim fundamentalism gave them all the ammunition they needed to castigate it. Retrograde laws ... on women, interpreting the Shariah to behead murderers, maim and stone to death women caught in adultery.

Today Islam is judged not by the teachings of the Quran or the sayings of Prophet Mohammed but by the doings of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Muslim fundamentalists in other countries.

... Unfortunately ... Muslims will continue to be judged by the acts of groups like the Taliban and the Mujahideens who wage unending wars against the non-Muslims - the same as Hinduism will be judged by the utterances of women like Uma Bharati and Sadhvi Rithambara and the doings of Bal Thackeray's Shiv Sainiks, Vishwa Hindu Parishad's and Bajrang Dal's followers. It is a great pity that fanaticism always wins the battle against true faith.

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 24 May, 1997)

Islamic Resurgence in Kerala Report in the Week

Riding the tide of what seems to be a religious revival, at least in the south, Islamic preachers are drawing substantial crowds of believers to public meetings. Kanthapuram A.P. Aboobacker Musliar alias Sheikh Aboobacker Ahmad, 62, leader of the Sunni Muslims in Kerala, carries on a Talibanesque campaign ... to prevent women from entering mosques and going to colleges.

"It is un-Islamic for women to appear in public places and be seen among men. All those liberals are spiritually corrupt", he said at an overflowing Sunni youth convention in Thiruvananthapuram last month.

Aboobacker, who makes covert political speeches too, runs 18 Islamic institutions in Kozhikode alone, with an average monthly expenditure of Rs.3 crore, and uses his power of oratory to win support for his organisation. A fatwa inspired by him and his followers resulted in the closure of 200 video studios in the Muslim-dominated Malappuram district...

Reason: Videographing Muslim women during weddings. In the past two years, 50 cinema halls were closed down in Malappuram.

Other Muslim clerics like the liberal Abukhader Maulvi - who allowed women to enter mosques for the first time - and Aboobacker followers like K.P. Hamsa Musliar, A. Hydrose Musliar and Nizamuddin Thangal are all popular in their own right and are attracting crowds of believers.

... The tomb of a Muslim divine C.M. Valiyullahi, who died seven years ago in Kozhikode, has suddenly become a pilgrimage centre where talismans, miracle oils and ever water which are all believed to have the powers to heal are sold. The authorities have now built a huge mansion around the dargah. It also has an Arabic college and recently bought two acres of surrounding land. Funds and crowds are growing and the oratory of the Muslim preachers is bristling with new vigour.

Muslim Tantrik Accused of Raping Girl for 8 Years for Treatment

A tantrik was arrested today .. after an FIR was registered...

Prem Kumar ... told the police that he has taken his daughter, Manju, then 14-year-old and possessed by evil spirits for treatment to the tantrik Mohammad Hussain in 1989. ...

Three days back, Manju ... informed her parents that she was being raped. She had three children during this period, it was reported.

UK: Action Committee on Islam Affairs On British Muslims and Elections, 1997

The forthcoming General Elections will see a significant number of Muslims eligible to vote, including, for various demographic reasons, a greater than average proportion of young Muslim voters. The UK Action Committee on Islamic Affairs (UKACIA), representing Muslim organisations and mosques throughout Britain, strongly supports the full participation of British Muslims in the electoral process. ...

There are about two million Muslims in Britain, mainly in the large metropolitan conurbations of London, Birmingham, Bradford, Manchester and Glasgow. The majority are British-born with family origins in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. There are significant numbers of Arab, African, Cypriot and Turkish Muslims, together with more recently settled refugees from Afghanistan, Iran, Bosnia, Somalia and Albania. There are also Muslims of Afro-Caribbean and European origin.

... We welcome the decision by the Office for National Statistics to include a question on religious identity in the 2001 trial census to be carried out in selected regions of Britain... It is still uncertain whether the question will be retained in the final version of the census form. ...

Muslims are the second largest religious community in the UK but have no representation in either the Lower or the Upper House... Some positive steps to redress this situation need to be taken.

The Muslim community has a very large proportion of young people... The proportion of children in the 5 to 9 year age group is twice the national average. Muslims have justifiably been concerned with issues of school ethos and curricula content...

British Muslims' educational requirements should be addressed from a religious, not a racial perspective... The This needs to be reflected in the educational system at every level.

Sensitivity towards religious requirements is essential, especially when planning important school events so that special days and festivals are avoided...

State funding for Muslim schools on the same afforded to Christian and Jewish schools is an issue which exposes double-standard...

There is no law in Great Britain that makes discrimination on grounds of religion unlawful. In Northern Ireland there is such a law. Why not introduce a similar law in Great Britain. ...

Under international conventions and treaties, the United Kingdom is required to have laws that protect people from discrimination on the grounds of religion.

At home, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Runnymede Trust are among bodies that recognize the urgent need for either adjustments to the present legal framework or the passing of new legislation to make discrimination on grounds of religion unlawful...

The Muslim community strongly feels that the need for effective legislation in this regard is now intense and pressing.

Muslims have no protection against having their faith reviled and ridiculed in a scurrilous and contemptuous fashion... We strongly feel that there is an urgent and pressing need for legislation to deal with abuse and vilification of religious sanctities, group defamation and incitement to religious hatred.

Muslims seek equality of treatment ... by not having a law on incitement to religious hatred, the United Kingdom is in breach of its international obligations...

... The unemployment rate amongst the Pakistani and Bangladeshi sections of the Muslim community is approaching the 40% mark (four times that of the white population); they are overwhelmingly concentrated in poor housing; their children go to schools that lag behind most in the schools' league tables... The non-white British Muslims are the most deprived community in modern Britain.

Thousands of youths are growing up in these conditions and feel alienated and disenchanted. Community organisations are doing their bit, but it is for political leadership to ... come up with ... practical remedies in the areas of housing, schooling, jobs and the quality of life. ...

In initiating and stirring up Islamophobia, the media have envenomed community relations in Britain by their knee-jerk responses (common) man ... but politicians who ought to know better...

The climate of hate and prejudice which is constantly being generated does no good either to the abuser or the abused... Taints the attitude of policy makers and blights the possible introduction of positive and sensible remedies.

As a positive remedy, British Muslims would like to see the adoption of a code of practice that will make the expression of anti-Muslim sentiment as obnoxious as anti-Semitism.

... In many respects ... Britain's foreign policy, especially in relation to the Muslim world and even Islamic issues, seems still to be informed by the advice of its orientalist and its old-school experts.

This has serious implications for Britain's long-term interests. In Bosnia and Cyprus, Palestine and Kashmir and Sudan and Algeria, to name only a few, British policy lacks transparency and credibility.

We do not of course believe in the narrow nationalist dictum "Muslims right or wrong", but in the instances mentioned above, it is not difficult to see a general disregard of the principles of the United Nations Charter and the accepted norms of international law...

There is therefore a pressing case for re-examining the premises of British relations with the Muslim world...

Muslims in Uganda

The Grand Sheikh of Uganda, Mufti Ahmed Mosaka in an interview to 'Al-Arab', London declared that Muslims constitute a third of the population in Uganda and are spread all over the country. He said most of Muslims work in agriculture and animal herding, though some who live in urban areas are involved in commerce and other professional work... The OIC has set up an Islamic International University in Uganda and hopefully plans to expand its outreach.

(Source: The Muslim World, 31 May, 1997)

Burma: Repression of Muslim Arakanis

The Burma Arakani Party which operates near the forests in the Chin Hills called for condemnation of the ... curbs on travel imposed upon the Rohingyas of Northern Rakhaing (Arakan) and also on other Arakanese (Rakhaing) Muslims living in central and lower Arakan (they calls "RAKHAING" by the Burmese authority regime, apart from other restrictions... Muslims cannot get a job, cannot engage in trade or agriculture, cannot receive letters from post offices. They have no place in the power structure, they do not participate in sports and education, they have no place in administration. They are not issued National identity cards... Muslim-owned lands and fish prawn ponds are confiscated and handed over to the Chakma and Magh Buddhists brought in from Bangladesh. The Burma Arakani Party support the Democracy Movement of the People of Burma and ... desire to have a "Rohingya" or Arakani Autonomous region" in northern Rakhine State...

(Source: The Muslim World, 31 May, 1997)

Barma: Confiscation of Graveyards

The Government of Myanmar is forcibly acquiring Muslim graveyards in Rangoon for construction and development of the city. The Muslims ... have been voicing their indignation at the plan and demanding the revocation of notices served on them for transfer of land. A similar attempt was made by Government of Myanmar on the Jewish Cemetery but the stiff opposition from the powerful Jewish lobbies national and international, forced the Government to call off their plan. The (Muslims) opposition ... has not (yet) deterred the Government from proceeding with the proposed acquisition of their graveyards.

(Source: IOS Newsletter, July, 1997)

Views of Abu Bakar Ansari, President of UP Bunkar Committee

The reservation for OBCs announced by the Government of UP covers 23 Muslim baradaris which are, in fact, among the most backward. If the Muslims get a proportionate quota out of the 27%, that is enough. No additional reservation is necessary.

China: Edgy about Islam

Religious and national awareness has been gathering momentum among China's Muslims, known as the Hui, who live in widely scattered communities all over the country, but are particularly concentrated in north-western and northern regions, including Xinjiang, Ningxia and Gansu. In Xinjiang Muslim Uighurs have been engaged in something approaching national liberation war. The authorities in Beijing are particularly concerned lest Islam... should ... undermine the Marxist-Leninist ideology on which the present regime continues to rest. The counter-offensive against Islam is a two pronged one. According to a recent instruction from Beijing to regional authorities ... of China, the number of people making pilgrimage to Makkah must be reduced and the number of children and adults attending Islamic classes should be cut.

... The Chinese State Nationalities Affairs Commission has now called on local authorities concerned to dissuade people from going on pilgrimage.

The authorities have been asked to vet applications for pilgrimage more rigorously. The relevant instruction added pointedly: "A Chinese imam should preserve Chinese customs rather than dress like an Arab imam after returning from Makkah"

In the case of Islamic schools too the authorities will now see ... (that) clerics and teachers must exhort their congregations to submit not only to God but also to communist party and government. Religious schools should publicise laws and encourage patriotism and socialism...

At the same time publication of books and tracts is increasingly employed in anti-religious and particularly anti-Islamic propaganda. But some recent books, bearing such titles as Sexual Customs, Strange Sexual Customs, disparaging Islam, have been met with widespread resistance and demonstrations by ... Muslim communities all over China.

(Source: The Impact International)

USA: Donna Abu-Nasr

On Islamic Council's Victory on Logo

Nike Inc will recall shoes carrying a logo that offended Muslims because it resembled the word Allah in the Arabic script...

Under the written agreement between Nike and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), Nike will apologise to Muslims and recall shoes with the logo. In exchange, the Council will urge Muslims worldwide not to boycott Nike products....

"We wanted to reinstate confidence in our community that whenever they see something offensive, there could be something done about it... Nihad Awad, the Islamic Council's Executive Director.

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

James Massey, Member National Commission On Minorities on Indian Christians

... The Indian Christians as a minority is the second largest, numbering according to 1981 Census 15,165,447 (2.487%) ... divided in number of denomination. The two broader divisions based upon their theological differences are: One, Roman Catholics and two, various Protestant and Orthodox Christian traditions. The Roman Catholic membership stands between 55 to 60% of the total Christian population, and the other Christians traditions are between 40 to 45%. The smaller groups, which include the different Pentecostal and Evangelical groups are part of the second division. The Roman Catholics in India are governed by their highest body, the Catholic Bishops Conference of India (CBCI) with their headquarters in New Delhi and on the Protestants side the largest umbrella body is the National Council of Churches in India (NCCI) with a membership of 29 Indian Churches representing major traditions of Protestant and Orthodox. The headquarter of NCCI is in Nagpur... Today the number of Indian Christians stands about 25 million...

Besides the denominational divisions, the Indian Christians are also divided on the basis of their social, cultural and racial origins. There are four very distinct groups, which can be named: (a) The Anglo-Indian Christians, who came into existence basically with the mixture of European blood, (b) the Christian of Scheduled Caste origin (Dalit Christians), (c) the Christians of Scheduled Tribes origin, which further can be divided into two groups of Central India and North East India ... according to their racial origin, and (d) the Christians of Upper ... origin.

The Indian Christians are distributed almost in all the States and Union Territories of our countries... But ... 65% of the ... total population live in the four Southern states and Union Territories of India ... and 14% ... live in North East India 2,219,159; and the remaining 21% live in North India... Leaving out a few pockets, they do not face only social, economic and religious problems, they are also politically almost powerless... Neither they are well educated in quality, nor they are educated percentage-wise... In 1981, the survey conducted by the Diocese of Chandigarh (Church of North India) showed among the Christians of Gurdaspur District (where 50% Punjabi Christians live) only 15% men were literate and among women only between 5 to 2% were literate. A more recent survey conducted jointly by the Christian Institute of Religious Studies, Batala and Ditt Memorial Centre, Amritsar, that the sub-region of Punjab, which includes Amritsar and Gurdaspur district, though reveals an improved situation, yet according to it there are only 31% Christians who are literate as against the Punjab

literacy rate of 57.14% and the national literacy rate of 52.11% (Census 1991). Economically this survey also has shown that 5.36% Christians of this are having some agricultural level, the rest all 94.64% are landless labourers...

... Two of the most important (problems) have constitutional implications... First issue is concerning the Christians Personal Law which includes: (a) the Indian Christian Marriage Act, 1872; (b) the Indian Divorce Act, 1869 and (c) the Indian Succession Act, 1925... All these were ... enacted under the British rule, which had implications of the context of their time and also their contents are mostly ... British... Some parts of these Acts have direct relationship with the English law... For example Section 8 of the Indian Divorce Act, 1869 says if there is something what is not covered by this Act, in that case the Indian courts will follow the English Courts. The same way the Christian Marriage Act, 1872 has at number of places references to the Churches of England and Scotland. The Indian Succession Act, 1925 also has a number of weaknesses, including restrictions on widow's rights to property. All these need the immediate attention of both the ... Christians as well as of the Government in order to introduce suitable amendments in these Acts.

The second issue ... is related to the Christians of Scheduled Caste origin, who form more than 75% of the population of Christians. Here with regard to these Christians, there are four main points, which need our attention... The Dalit Christians not getting protection of life and personal liberty as, the various Government Acts and Rules passed by the Parliament to give special protection to the Scheduled Castes, are not applicable to the... These Acts and Rules include Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955; Protection of Civil Rights Rule, 1977 and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989...

The third paragraph of the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order 1950 ...

"Notwithstanding anything contained in paragraph 2, no person who professs a religion different from Hindu, shall be deemed to be a member of a "Scheduled Caste"

... On the basis of that criterion all other people professing Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism, Christianity and others were left out. But in 1956 and 1990 the third paragraph of the Presidential Order 1950 was amended by the Parliament to extend the ... benefits to "Sikh" and "Buddhist" along with "Hindu" respectively...

Christians of Schedule Caste Origin suffer the same social, educational and economic disabilities, which their

(Contd. on page 365)

Patna High Court on Jain Sects Rights On Parasnath Hill (Extracts)

After the abolition of zamindari the hill stands vested in the State of Bihar under the Bihar Land Reforms Act. However, the tonks (sites of the 24 Jain tirthankaras) and temples being religious institutions, they will continue to be in the possession and management of the Jain community as a whole.

The High Court held that the whole of Parasnath Hill, except for the half-mile radius on the top containing the shrine and its ancillary structures, was under the authority of the Bihar Government.

"But on that areas also, all the devotees of the Jain community have got access and there cannot be any particular sect who can debar others in their free exercise of power of worship in the religious institution".

"When vesting is there, then every particle of the hill had been vested and there cannot remain any right either of the management or control of any of the sects of the Jain community over the lands at Parasnath Hill, save and except the area as mentioned above which are used as a part of the religious institution at the top of the hill itself," the judge ruled.

"There is no divesting of power by the State Government either to Swetambary or to Digambary and as such there is practically no right existing over the land of Parasnath Hill either in favour of Digambary or in favour of Swetambary which can be enforceable by law. The agreement with the Swetambary which is in question has got no enforceability under the law and as such no ancillary relief can flow from such agreement as the contract itself is void...

The Court dismissed the claims of exclusive ownership and management laid by the Ahmedabad-based Seth Anandji Kalyani Trust representing the Swetambars Murtipujak Sect. The Court held as "null and void" the agreement of February 5, 1965 executed between the Trust and the Bihar Government.

"It is my feeling that until and unless a proper scheme is made for the proper management of the religious institution and the facilities of the devotees, there would be no end to the litigations between different sects of the Jain community because of their narrow and sectarian views and the way the cases are being fought, it could be found that such fighting is not for religious faith but for ego of one against the other...

The State Government (should) form a committee comprising representatives of the Jain community for the shrine's uplift and provision of better amenities for the pilgrims who visit the hill shrine every year.

The Bihar Government was "duty-bound" to provide rest houses and other facilities for the Digambar pilgrims, who were facing many troubles as the dharamshalas run by the Swetambar sect were not open to them.

Khushwant Singh On Sikh's Self-Image

All religious communities suffer from narcissism. They look into mirrors of their own making and dismiss criticism as biased. Thus Hindus remain convinced that their's is the most tolerant religion in the world and suffer from selective amnesia when confronted with practising untouchability, breaking mosques and persecuting Christian missionaries.

Muslims are convinced that Islam is the most perfect, peace-loving faith in the world and an example of equality among the faithful. They conveniently overlook its idol-breaking past, forcible conversions and the extensive prevalence of slavery in Islamic States. Christians are also convinced that they have always stood for peace (Crusades and the colonial wars notwithstanding) and are more ethical than any other. Sikhs have their own self-image as the sword arm of India, Sant-Sipahis who saved the country from being forced into accepting Islam and but for the treachery of their leaders who were bribed by the British would have spread their empire over the continent. They ascribe their present sorry state to wily Brahmins who are for ever conspiring their downfall.

Such self-images should not be dismissed out of hand because they do give us an insight into the mindsets of the communities concerned. If we understand their psyches, we will be better able to deal with them.

This long introduction brings me to Dr. Sangat Singh's 564-page *The Sikhs in History* (Uncommon Books)... His reading of Sikh history is that it has been a continuing battle for survival against evil designs of Brahminical Hinduism.

... The second half deals with the fate of the community after independence... Sangat Singh does not blame Sikh leaders for recent setbacks in the fortunes of the community except for letting themselves be outwitted and hoodwinked by scheming Hindus of the Arya Samaj, Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. Nevertheless, his thesis needs to be taken serious because this is how a majority of educated Sikhs explain their present predicament. It is a good example of the self-image of a community....

(Source: The Hindustan Times, 18 January, 1997)

(Contd. from page 378)

wants to do her A levels and aims to go to Oxford...

The researchers, from the Institute of Education in London, conclude that advances made by Indians and other Asian Groups are not being matched by other ethnic groups particularly by Afro Caribbeans. The report warns that widening gaps in achievement are "of immediate concern" and asked that schools and local authorities should ensure that poor achievers are identified and helped. ...

(Source: The Indian Muslims, London, Sept-Nov, 1996)

USA: Supreme Court's Ruling On Legal Protection of Religious Practices

In a significant judgement that will affect religious minorities in this country, the US Supreme Court has declared unconstitutional a federal law that protects religious practices from Government interference.

By a vote of six to three, the court said the ... law that had envisaged personal expressions on faith and allowed orthodox Sikhs to wear their turbans and kirpans and Muslim women to wear the hijab (head covering) had usurped the apex court's power.

The majority judgement held that it was the court's prerogative to define constitutional protection of religion and not Congress, and argued that the legislation intruded into the business of the states.

The majority opinion, written by Justice Anthony Kennedy, drew on a historic mandate that courts alone have "the duty to say what the law is" and that by passing the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) in 1993, Congress had overreached its constitutional authority. ...

But Justice Sandra O'Connor, reading passages of here dissent from the bench in defence from the bench in defence of religious tolerance, said, "Given the centrality of freedom of speech and religion to the American concept of personal liberty, it is reasonable to conclude that both should be treated with the highest degree of respect". The RFRA was passed with broad partisan support that brought together a coalition of groups ranging from Sikh and Jewish groups to Baptist and Muslim organisations as well as the American Civil Liberties Union. The law, which said Governments can infringe on religious practices only if they have a health, safety or other "compelling interest" in doing so, had the enthusiastic backing of President Bill Clinton and was originally adopted to address complaints by religious groups that some general state and local laws discriminated against practitioners.

The RFRA was invoked by Sikh groups for members of their faith to be allowed to wear the turban and kirpan in their workplaces, including the military...

The American Muslim Council, which comprises members from several South Asian countries including India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, also used the RFRA to fight cases where Muslim women had been suspended or fired for refusing to remove the hijab (head covering) or where children in school were not given time off to say their mid-day prayers or excused from activity during the month of Ramadan.

... The congressional and religious leaders (have) vowed to fight the decision... But there was also an acknowledgement by some lawmakers that they saw no obvious solutions on the horizon.

UK: Ethnic Monitoring of Royal Household

... The Independent has discovered that neither the Royal household, which employs 550 people, nor St. James's Palace, Prince Charles's office, carry out the full policy of ethnic monitoring recommended for the past 20 years by the Commission for Racial Equality. The CRE code was adopted by Parliament in 1984, under the terms of the Race Relations Act 1976.

A spokesman for the CRE refused to single out the Queen or the Prince of Wales for criticism, but he did say: "We would like all employers to follow equal opportunity practices, and ethnic monitoring is part of the code of practice.

"We issue statements about this fairly frequently but we usually do so in a general way, without picking out anyone, because plenty of other people are guilty of the problem." ... (Anthony Bevins on the Independent, London)

UK: Asian Minorities Outclasses all other Groups in Minority Education

Indian pupils are the most highly qualified students in British Schools and Colleges, according to a government study published recently that will warn of a growing gulf between the country's best and worst-performing ethnic groups.

The study published by Ofsted, the school inspectorate, shows that Indians are more likely to stay on in education after the age of 16, are better behaved and are achieving better examination results than their white classmates. This new study, the most comprehensive into ethnic minority achievement in last ten years, analysed data from cities across Britain and found that Indians were achieving results "consistently in excess" of their white counterparts in many areas.

In one of London boroughs, the average GCSE point score rose from 30 to 38 between 1991 and 1993. By contrast white pupils increased their performance from 26.9 to 32.3 in the same period. The picture is the same all over the country. In Birmingham, more than 40% Indian GCSE entrants achieved five or more A to C grades last year, compared with about 35% of whites and 22% of Afro-Caribbeans.

Educationalists believe that among Asians the cultural commitment to education and family support helps them to shine. The study recognises that Asian pupils feel they have got to be better qualified to succeed than their white counterparts. There have also been changes in attitudes among Asian families about girls education. Now the girls are as ambitious as the boys. A Muslim girl from Birmingham who achieved 9 GCSEs, including two starred A grades, five As and two Bs, (Contd. on page 377)

Foreign Secretary Level Talks, Islamabad Joint Statement, 23 June, 1997

The Foreign Secretaries of Pakistan and India, Mr. Shamshad Ahmad and Shri Salman Haider met in Islamabad on 19-23 June, 1997. ...

As decided at their meeting in New Delhi in March, 1997 and as directed by their respective Prime Ministers, the Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan continued wide-ranging and comprehensive dialogue on all outstanding issues between the two countries with each side elaborating its respective position. The discussions were held in a cordial and constructive atmosphere. It was also agreed that both sides would take all possible steps to prevent hostile propaganda and provocative action against each other.

With the objective of promoting a friendly and harmonious relationship between Pakistan and India the Foreign Secretaries have agreed as follows:-

- (i) to address outstanding issues of concern to both sides including inter alia:
 - (a) Peace and security, including CBMs
 - (b) Jammu and Kashmir
 - (c) Siachen
 - (d) Wullar Barrage Project/Tulbul Navigation Project
 - (e) Sir Creek
 - (f) Terrorism and drug trafficking
 - (g) Economic and Commercial Cooperation
 - (h) Promotion of friendly exchanges in various fields
- (ii) to set up a mechanism including working groups at appropriate levels, to address all these issues in an integrated manner. The issues at (a) and (b) above will be dealt with at the level of Foreign Secretaries and no will also coordinate and monitor the progress of work of all the working groups.

The two Foreign Secretaries also had a preliminary exchange of views on the composition of the working groups and their methodology. It was decided to continue the consideration of this matter through diplomatic channels.

The next round of Foreign Secretary-level talks will take place in New Delhi in September, 1997.

Statement of Pakistan Foreign Secretary

... The two sides have agreed to address all outstanding issues with a view to achieving the goal of good neighbourly and cooperative relations.

We hope that the mechanism on which we have agreed will initiate progress towards the settlement of all outstanding issues listed in the joint statement. On our part, we will continue the dialogue with sincerity and serious purpose.

We have no illusions about the complexity of the work ahead of us. It is important for both sides now to take steps to create conditions conducive to make the process purposeful and result-oriented.

Government Statements On Reported Deployment of Prithvi Missiles, 14 June, 1997

... Government have already categorically stated that Prithvi missiles have not been deployed.. It is Government's clear policy that decisions regarding Prithvi or other such matters will be taken in the light of our independent foreign policy and on the basis of our security perceptions. It has been pointed out that there is no imminent threat, and thus no reason for deployment.

On Exchange of Detained Fishermen, 23 June, 1997

...Exchange (of) fishing boats and crew presently in the custody of either side ... was discussed ... during the Foreign Secretary level talks. The two sides have now verified 26 Pakistani boats and 195 crew and 25 Indian boats and 194 crew. It has been decided to release them by July 15, 1997. It has also been decided that other boats and crew will be released as and when identified.

On India: facilities for Pakistan's Visit

In keeping with its policy to facilitate and promote people-to-people contacts between India and Pakistan, the Government of India has taken the following unilateral steps to liberalise the visa procedure in respect of Pakistani nationals desirous of visiting India.

- a) The maximum number of cities that Pakistani nationals can go to during a visit to India has been increased from 8 to 12. In the case of senior citizens an even greater number of cities can be visited.
- b) Bonafide Pakistani businessmen, recommended by the SAARC Chamber of Commerce, are being granted one year - triple entry visas, if necessitated by the nature of business. Different check points for entry into and exist from India are being allowed in their case, wherever required.
- c) The international airport at Chennai is being opened up for arrival and departure of Pakistani nationals in addition to the existing check points of Delhi and Mumbai airports as also the Attari rail head.
- d) Non police reporting visas will be granted as far as is possible to artistes, journalists, students, poets, writers, businessmen recommended by the SAARC Chamber of Commerce, senior citizens and children.
- e) Gratis visas would be accorded to senior citizens, artistes, poets, writers, students and journalists.
- f) Reputed artistes from Pakistan, such as actors and musicians etc. who have sufficient documentary evidence establishing their desire to visit India and giving commercial performances, would be granted a visa with permission to give such performances.

Statement of Indian Foreign Secretary

The Joint Statement ... provides the basis for comprehensive constructive and sustained dialogue between India and Pakistan... It is our purpose that the dialogue leads to establishment of trust, friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

Samit Ghosh's Appeal for Indo-Pakistan Reconciliation

... Kashmir is a contentious issue without solution in sight. So is Taiwan for China. When Mao Zedong met Kissinger, he reportedly told him, "We will have differences over Taiwan for the next hundred years. Let's set it aside and see what we can do together". Today China is one of America's largest trading partners and Taiwan's businessmen are among China's biggest investors. Jerusalem is the Middle East's Kashmir. After fifty years of war, the Palestinians are rebuilding their homeland, while discussing Jerusalem with Israelis. Can we not sit across the table and discuss Kashmir, while we get on with other areas which impact our lives?

... As a first step, we must remove all travel barriers and make travelling across borders easy. We, in India, can take the first step to make this happen.

The next logical step is tourism... If we move the travel restrictions, it will expand the tourism market in all the countries tremendously. Allow artists, poets, musicians to perform freely... Allow sports persons from the SAARC countries to compete freely in domestic tournaments...

We can also cooperate in the area of education and medical facilities. Students could go across borders to study. In India, the IITs, IIMs, Medical Colleges, Film Institute, etc. are of great interest. Lahore University of Management Studies (LUMS) is a fine business school... The added bonus for our future is the friendship and ties which will develop among our younger generation...

Business and travel among neighbours is natural and benefits everyone. Political boundaries are irritants to this flow - one reason why smuggling thrives... Let's start by removing trade and tariff barriers... The economic reality of the future is that, it will get increasingly difficult for individual nations to compete and succeed. The more economically powerful countries are banding together. We have to do it too, we have no choice.

Imagine not having to waste money on military expenditure and policing our borders. We will have more funds for our infrastructure and support for the needy. "Imagine" all those divided families getting together. Imagine driving from Calcutta to Dhaka for a week-end. Imagine visiting all those places our parents and grandparents spoke so fondly of. "Imagine" visiting Mohenjodaro and Harappa. "Imagine" as a businessmen, a market as large as the subcontinent. "Imagine" as a student, the choice to study anywhere in this area. "Imagine" the expansion of medical facilities. "Imagine" our strength together. Conjure in your mind, the cricket team comprising players from Sri Lanka, Pakistan and India. Who could beat us? We cannot turn back the clock of history. For the last fifty years we artificially created barriers, differences, quarrels and wars. In the next fifty

Rakshat Puri On South Asian Identity

... China is strengthening defence ties with Pakistan and providing it with missiles, nuclear equipment, and technology and manpower for indigenous missile and other programmes with the obvious intention of keeping South Asia divided. A united South Asia could rival China's world-power status. Equally obviously, the way to frustrate this design is to wean Pakistan away.

There seems a realisation in both Islamabad and Delhi - perhaps more emphatically now in Islamabad - that for adequate and uninterrupted development there is no alternative to socio-economic ties for making South Asia a viable and prevailing entity. The phrase "core issue" does of course continue to be misused. The Pakistani side continues to misapply this phrase to the issue of J-K, signifying in essence that India ought to withdraw from the State and allow its Muslim population to join Muslim Pakistan.

The argument is spurious. Otherwise the Pakistan Government would have begun by bringing back the Pakistanis left in Bangladesh and waiting to return to their country. Also, what about Muslims in other parts of India who number more than the entire population of Pakistan? The Indian establishment means by "core issue" the return by Pakistan to India of the parts of J-K which it was enabled to take in the war of 1947-48...

The real "core issue" has been detailed in a ... UN-funded report by a former Pakistani Finance Minister and economist Mahabub-ul-Haq, who is founder of the Human Development Centre in Pakistan...

Hunger, deprivation, extreme poverty, disease and ill-health, insecurity, despair, corruption, lawlessness and illiteracy are rampant while tainted governments mislead people and spend progressively more on weaponry than on basic social ... needs. In the circumstances ... the new cordiality is welcome.

If India and Pakistan could together find their way to liberalised trade, free economic ties, open cultural exchange and unstinting measures to enable unfettered visits and stay for people in each other's countries - in the way that the people of India and Nepal can visit and work in each other's countries ... problems such as J-K would simply vanish.

Pakistan's need to hand on to the coat-tails of Beijing ... would also vanish. Delhi would not then feel the need to keeping appeasing Beijing...

Many might dismiss all this as impracticable and utopian. But in our fast-paced times changes come quick and (are) often unpredictable and unreckoned...

(source : The Hindustan Times, 16 April, 1997)

years of existence, let's give ourselves freedom from these obstacles. Peace, harmony and prosperity will follow.

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

Russia: TASS Report

On Russia-Chechnya Treaty

Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed a ... peace treaty with Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov in the Kremlin on 12 May hailed by both leaders as a move to end centuries of conflict between their two nations.

The treaty, on "peace and the principles of relations between Russia and Ichkeria," was aimed at building on the cease-fire ... in August, 1996, which halted the 21-month war between Chechen freedom-fighters and Russian forces. "Ichkeria" is the Chechens' name for their mainly Muslim republic in the North Caucasus...

The war, triggered by a massive Russian military intervention in December 1994 aimed at crushing the Chechen's independence movement, killed an estimated 50,000 people, most of them Chechen civilians.

The treaty went into effect immediately and had legal force. After signing the document, President Yeltsin, who was meeting Maskhadov for the first time, said: "We have signed a peace treaty destined to have historic importance, inasmuch as it put an end, to 400 years (of conflict)... Mashkadov, who masterminded the Chechen resistance during the war, said: "... We have ended 400 years of military confrontation". Maskhadov later signed a social and economic cooperation agreement with Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin.

The heads of the Russian and Chechen central banks also signed a cooperation agreement, report ITAR-TASS.

Al-Azhar Recommends

Confiscation of Three Books

Al-Azhar, Egypt's religious authority, has recommended the confiscation of three Arabic books recently published in Egypt because they "criticise the prophets" and undermine Islam, officials said on 29 May 1997 at Cairo. Two... books written by Khalil Abdel Karim, member of the Egyptian Opposition Taggamu Party, and deal with relations between men and women in early Islamic society and the relations between the Prophet Mohummud (PBUH) and his followers.

The other book by Professor Ahmad Sobhi Mansur of Al-Azhar deals with "hisba", Muslims' right to take to court anyone they believe is violating Islamic law. ...

The recommendations was made to the censorship board which in turn will refer to the judicial system which will decide whether or not to seize the books. ...

A Cairo court on 25 May 1997 sentenced Egyptian author Alaa Hamed to one year in prison and seized three of his books, accusing him of attacking religion and publishing pornographic material. In July, 1996 a Cairo prosecutor unilaterally ordered the seizure of another book which also dealt with a religious theme.

(Source: The Muslim World)

Patrick Cockburn

On Israel's Colonisation in Arab Palestine

Israel plans to hand over only 40 per cent of the West Bank to the Palestinians instead of the 90 per cent they expected under the Oslo Peace Accords of 1995.

Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, showed the map, prepared by the Israeli army, to President Bill Clinton ... as a guide to the territory Israel would like to retain on the West Bank which it captured in the 1967 war...

The map, published in the daily Haaretz, shows Palestinian control limited to two cantons north and south of Jerusalem, centred on Nablus and Hebron, but with no territorial link between the two. The paper says: "Prime Minister Netanyahu's secret map, which he intend to offer the PA (Palestinian Authority) during the permanent status negotiations, allows them less than 40 per cent of the territory. ...

The map shows Israel retaining sovereignty over all the Jewish settlements on the West Bank, the Jordan Valley, the hills east of Jerusalem and heavily settled Israel. This does not leave much for the 1.1 million Palestinians on the West Bank. Surrounded by Israeli territory their economic future will entirely depend on Israel. Palestinians in and around Jerusalem, will be isolated from the autonomous Palestinian entities...

Some aspects of the plan are already being implemented. Traffic between Jerusalem and Tel Avid is increasingly using a new road which runs through the West Bank. An elaborate tunnel system links Jewish settlers ... near Hebron, to Jerusalem and bypasses the Palestinian towns of Hebron and Bethlehem. The Council for Jewish Settlements in Judea, Samaria and Gaza estimates that there now 160,000 settlers in 144 settlements.

The map also shows the West Bank as further bisected by "corridors" by which Israelis and Palestinians would pass through each other's territory...

(Source: The Times of India, 9 June, 1997)

Indonesia: Giant Vishnu Statue in Bali

Work has begun on the construction of a 140-metre-high statue of Vishnu on the vacation island of Bali...

Nyoman Nuarta, creator of the proposed "Garuda Wisnu Kencana" monument, said it would rival New York's Statue of Liberty and Italy's Leaning Tower of Pisa as a tourist attraction.

The mainly privately-funded statue will depict Vishnu guarding the world as a rides a garuda, which is also Indonesia's national symbol...

Bali is Indonesia's main international vacation island. Most of its people follow the Hindu faith, in contrast to the rest of the country, which is overwhelming Muslims.

Chronology of the Month (16 June - 15 July, 1997)

NATIONAL POLITICS

Presidency: *Congress and UF sponsor V.P. K.R. Narayanan as joint nominee for Presidentship (11 June).

*President Sharma calls upon press to unmask communal forces and terrorism (28 June).

Bihar A.H. Scam - Legal Developments: *Bihar Governor Kidwai allows CM Laloo Pd. Yadav's prosecution (17 June). **Corruption:** *State Government suspends 3 IAS Officers under detention (17 June). CBI raids CM's ancestral house and house of his in-laws (21 June). CBI chargesheets Laloo Pd. Yadav and 55 others; arrest stayed by CBI court till disposal of anticipatory bail application (23 June). Laloo refuses to quit (23 June). Bail plea rejected (25 June). IB anticipates law and order problem in CM's arrest (25 June). Patna H.C. grants anticipatory bail to ex-CM J.N. Mishra (27 June). H.C. charges central government with stalling arrest of top politicians and state administration with permitting unlawful demonstration (30 June). CBI volunteers not to arrest CM and other politicians until 21 July (30 June). *Anticipatory bail application of CM rejected in another A.H. Scam Case. Central Government permits prosecution of 2 out of 5 indicted senior officials (12 July). *CBI Director Joginder Singh removed (30 June).

Political Developments: *Laloo Yadav launches tirade against PM Gujral (19 June). Gujral asks indicted MOS C.P. Verma to resign from central government (20 June). Gujral asks Laloo to quit (23 June). BJP calls for PM's resignation (1 July). Gujral reiterates call (9 July). PM decides to keep 3 RJD Minister (9 July). PM declines to apply Article 356 to Bihar, predicates Laloo's dismissal to arrest (12 July). RJD recognised by Speaker. Laloo wins vote of confidence (15 July).

Hawala Case: *CBI files SLP in Supreme Court in Hawala Case against HC's Order on admissibility of Jain diaries as evidence (18 June). SC issues notice to the accused who were earlier discharged without staying HC order (11 July).

Bofors Case: Government delays approval of CBI chargesheet till receipt of further documents (22 June).

Bahujan Foundation Charitable Trust Case: IT Deptt. reopens exemption case (22 June).

Kesri Cases: *Delhi HC issue notice on application seeking expedition of CBI probe on disproportionate assets charge (11 July). *H.C. asks Govt. of Delhi to file detailed affidavit in Tomar murder case (9 July).

Public Ledger Account Case: *W. Bengal Assembly faces uproar on diversion of central development funds by State Government (29 June - 1 July). No Confidence Motion rejected (3 July).

Political Parties - Congress: *President Kesri appoints Jitendra Prasada of UP as Vice-President. *Congress National Minorities Cell meets; proposes reservation for Muslims (16 June). *Kesri reiterates continuance of support to UF Government (3 July).

BJP: *BJP urges key role of RSS in organisation (28 June). Advani Rath Yatra gets positive response in W. Bengal (28 June). Exposes Hindutva face and invokes Ram in Ayodhya (3 July). Ends with rapturous welcome in Delhi (15 July). *BJP Minorities Front sees Muslims as coming closer (12 July).

*Samata seeks Laloo's arrest (17 June). Criticises Gujral for softness towards Laloo (19 June). Fernandes accuses him to surrender to anti-social elements (3 July). Samata proposes joint action by all political parties against Laloo (13 July).

Left Alliance: *Left Front seeks Laloo's resignation (17 June). CPI(M) asks JD leadership to ensure it (23 June). Left parties ask all those charge-sheeted to step down and call upon PM to intervene, criticise Kesri for anti-Left posture (4 July).

Janata Dal: *All formulae for patch-up between Laloo Yadav and Sharad Yadav fail; Supreme Court asks Dandavate to conduct elections (19 June). Laloo group decides to boycott election and split party (28 June). Election held (3 July). Laloo forms Rashtriya Janata Dal with himself as President (5 July). Sharad Yadav elected President.

UF: *Convener Naidu denies backing Laloo (16 June), urges him to quit (18 June).

SP: *SP charge BSP-BJP Government in UP of harassing and killing its workers (20 June). *SP expels Rashid Masood (24 June).

*Mulayam Singh indicates possibility of tie-up with Congress (9 July).

*DMK threatens to quit UF Government (14 July).

*UF divided on entry of RJD (9 July).

*Shahabuddin pleads for continuance of Gujral Government, if possible, with participation of Congress and CPI(M) (8 July).

Muslim Leadership: *Delhi H.C. discharges Ahmed Bukhari of sedition charges (15 July).

Small States: *BJP leader Advani suggest Second State Reorganisation Commission to create small States (18 June). *A.I. Muslim Federation proposes reorganisation of UP and creation of Urdu Pradesh in Western UP.

KASHMIR SITUATION

Insurgency: *Killings and militancy and counter-insurgency continue.

*Army Jawan kills Col (16 June).

*BSF raises battalion of ex-militants (28 June).

*Explosion in MLA's hotel kills 4 (29 June).

*Al-Burq chief A.R. Lone arrested (3 July).

Government: *HM Indrajit Gupta reacts sharply to Governor Krishna Rao's charge of interference (19 June).

*Central Minister Soz demands payment of full compensation to people of Charar-e-Sharif (20 June).

*Journalists assaulted by police in Srinagar, decide to boycott government functions (27 June).

Political: *JKLF President Yasin Malik favours return of Hindu emigrants to Valley (16 June). *Hurriyat leaders charge government with repression; arrested and released; arrest condemned (25 June). *Lone and Malik arrested for submission of Memorandum to the UNMOG. Life crippled in Valley by general strike called by APHC (27 June). *J&K Democratic Forum President Bazaz urges Government to enter into dialogue with militants (21 June). *BJP urges PM to convene all-party meet on Kashmir (28 June).

*APHC leader Shabbir Shah calls Amarnath Yatra a symbol of composite Kashmir culture (4 July). *NC observes Martyrs Day (13 July). APHC calls it Black Day and gives hartal call. *Lone refutes charge of benami receipt of foreign donation (14 July).

Foreign Reaction: *US Ambassador Wisner sees no mediatory role for US (17 June).

*Pakistan seeks Russian help in talks with India (8 July).

RELIGIOUS RIGHTS

Babari Masjid: *Rajesh Pilot considers demolition a question mark for secularism (16 June).

*In his deposition before Sri Krishna Commission, then Defence Minister Pawar alleges that armed forces were not allowed to take any action in Ayodhya on 6 December 1992 and in fact kept out of Ayodhya by order of DM.

Shahi Masjid Idgah, Mathura & Gyanvapi Masjid, Varanasi: *AIMMM Delegation visits Mathura & Varanasi. *Shahabuddin writes to H.M. Gupta on situation in Mathura (17 June). *Shiv Sena and VHP announce programme. Shahabuddin reminds H.M. of their Jal Abishek in July.

Places of Worship: *Delhi H.C. restrains builders from demolishing Shiv Temple in Chandni Chowk, Delhi.

Shia-Sunni Conflict: *UP CM Mayawati appoints high power committee to find amicable settlement of dispute over Azadari procession (23 June). Abdullah Bukhari arrested en route to Lucknow (25 June). Shias protesters against ban clash with police in Lucknow, curfew clamped (26 June). Sunni counter-procession for "Madhe-Sahaba" fails (26 June). Shia leader Kalbe Jawad's arrest sparks violence (29 June). AIMMM and A.I. Milli Council denounce arrest and appeal to Shias and Sunnis to reconcile (1 July). BJP leader and Lucknow MP A.B.

Vajpayee intervenes (2 July). police blocks Azadari procession (4 July). Shias agree to suspend agitation (8 July). Shia leaders released (9 July). Abdullah Bukhari and Kalbe Sadiq reiterate support for Azadari and Mohammadi processions (11 July). Seminar in Delhi demands revocation of ban (15 July).

Haj: *Term of defunct Haj Committee indefinitely extended till enactment of new legislation (16 June). Committee authorised to negotiate lease of accommodation for Haj 1998 and convene All India Haj Conference to finalise policy and programme of action.

Wakf: *UP Wakf Commissioner launches campaign to survey Wakf properties and have illegal occupation vacated (16 June).

Cow Protection: *Government of Maharashtra proposes to impose total ban on slaughter of cow and pogeny and on marketing of beef (2 July).

OTHER MATTERS OF CONCERN

Education: *Govt. of Delhi decides to introduce Yoga as compulsory subject in all government and government-aided schools (10 July).

*Madarsas find it difficult to agree on common syllabus (17 June).

JMI: *Joint Action Committee holds "protest day" (20 June). JIH expresses concern at government apathy (23 June). AIMMM demands restoration of minority character (2 July).

*General M.A. Zaki (Retd.) takes over as V.C. (30 June). CPI opposes appointment. 81 eminent leftist personalities criticise appointment. Zaki restores order on campus, announces admission and examination schedule.

Reservation: *Parliamentary OBC Forum convenes All India Conference to demand 27% quota for OBC women within reservation for women (20 June). *Kisan Kamgar Party President Ajit Singh supports reservation for Muslims in public employment (26 June). *Indian Muslim Backwards Seminar in Mau demands reservation for Muslims (1 July). *Shahabuddin demands inclusion of Muslims, as a community, in Central and State OBC's Lists in public employment and reservation in legislature. *Syed Hamid supports reservation in public employment and legislature.

Bombay Disturbances - 1992-93: *Former CM Sharad Pawar admits before Srikrishna Commission no action by army against violent mobs in January 1993 for want of written sanction from State authorities. Denies role of foreign hand (1 July). Mahanagar journalist Mohite files affidavit accusing Thackeray of personally ordering killing of Muslims (2 July).

TADA: *Qaumi Mushawarat Committee expresses concern over TADA detainees; demands withdrawal of all cases and release of all prisoners; criticises all parties and Muslim leadership (17 June).

Hashimpura Massacre: *HM Indrajit Gupta urges UP CM to implement Shahabuddin's suggestions on prosecution of Hashimpura killers. CM takes partial action (17 June).

Communal Violence: *Communal clash in Mehsana district - 4 killed, 7 injured.

Anti-Dalit Repression: *Police fires at demonstration against desecration of Ambedkar's statue in Bombay, 11 killed (11 July). Shiv Sena activists ransack Congress leaders residence (13 July). Disturbance spread to other towns (13 July).

Human Rights: *Madras H.C. urges Union to amend laws to ensure effective help to victims of violation of human rights (1 July).

Indo-Pakistan Relations: *PMs Sharif and Gujral inaugurate hotline (19 June).

*India and Pakistan hold Foreign Secretaries level talks at Islamabad; agree to discuss all issues and set up 8 working groups including one on Kashmir (19-21 June). Salman Haider denies agreement to discuss constitutional and legal status of J&K (24 June). Pakistan feels dismayed (26 June). Pakistan FM Gauhar Ayub denies secret deal on Kashmir and reiterates Pakistan's stand (28 June). *CM Farooq Abdullah demands return of POK (21 June). PM Sharif predicts bilateral trade to progress on Kashmir dispute (4 July).

*CIA identifies India and Pakistan among 8 threshold nuclear-weapon states (3 July).

*Pakistan reported to have tested medium range missiles (2 July). Accuses India of deploying Prithvi missiles on its border. Missile race heats up.

*PM Gujral warns Pakistan against move to destabilise India. Pakistan's hand alleged in revival of militancy in Punjab during CM Badal (13 July).

*PM reiterates that India's nuclear weapon options are open (13 July).

Muslim World: Pakistan: *MQM calls for deployment of army in Karachi; accuses intelligence agencies of instigating killings (19 June).

*Government withdraws appeal against Shariat Court's order on interest-free economy but files application for guidance to enable government to fulfill financial obligations (2 July).

Palestine: *Hate posters appear in Israeli-occupied territory; J.I.H. protests strongly to Israeli Embassy in New Delhi (28 June).

Turkey: *Turkish P.M. Erbakan resigns under army pressure (18 June). M. Yilmaz, head of anti-Islamic coalition sworn in (1 July).

Commemoration: *Renaming of Fort William as Fort Sirajuddin Daula demanded (28 June).

*Urs of Ahmed Raza Khan celebrated in Bareilly (1 July).

**WITH BEST
COMPLIMENTS**

FROM

KALEEM KAWAJA

**THE ASSOCIATION
OF INDIAN
MUSLIMS OF
AMERICA**

**THE ORGANIZATION
FOR UNIVERSAL
COMMUNAL
HARMONY**

**WASHINGTON DC
USA**