

PAPER IV
LAW AND ORGANISED CRIMES

COMMUNAL VIOLENCE IN INDIA

Reasons:

problems and solutions:

HALIMA BI SHAIKH
LLM FINAL YEAR
KARE COLLEGE OF LAW

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INTRODUCTION

Communal riots have become a distinct feature of communalism in India. Whenever conflicting groups from two different religions, which are self –conscious communities, clash, it results in a communal riot. An event is identified as a communal riot if

(a) there is violence, and

(b) two or more communally identified groups confront each other or members of the other group at some point during the violence.¹The reason for such a clash could be superficial and trivial, though underlying them are deeper considerations of political representation, control of and access to resources and power. communal riots are not caused spontaneously and also that they are rarely caused by religious animosity. They arise due to conflicting political interests, which are often linked to economic interests.

There is a significant change in the pattern of communal riots since the 1990s, which could be noticed in the later part of this chronology. This brings forth the shifts that have occurred in the nature of communal riots in India. Moreover, the aim is to underline that religion in most of the cases is not the reason why communal riots occur. The reason for the occurrence of communal violence has been different in the two different phases. During the time of partition, it was the clash of political interests of the elite of two different communities which resulted in communal riots.² But, from the 1960s till the late 1980s, the local political and economic factors played a very important role in instigating riots. The emergence of Hindutva politics in the last two decades has been a cause of communal riots in this phase where the local factors have also helped in instigating riots.

Communal riots that took place from the 1960s to the 1980s follow a particular pattern. They have mostly occurred in urban towns which are either industrial belts or trading centers with the economy largely based on a particular occupation. Most of these places had a considerable percentage of Muslim population whose political or economic interests clashed with those of the Hindus. Moreover, the major riots occurred when the Congress was in power in these states or during the short and uncertain phase of the Janata Party coalition rule at the Centre. Riots in this phase might have occurred in the villages or rural areas like the Biharsharif riots, but they have often remained unreported. Therefore it is important to distinguish this phase from the 1990sduring which the BJP and its sister organizations have been active in instigating communal riots.

Communal violence since 1990s needs to be seen in the light of the changing political equations in the country. The decline of the Congress and the emergence of the BJP as a strong political force resulted in shifting patterns of communal riots. Communal violence in

¹ Ashtosh Varshney, *Ethnic Violence and Civic Life*, (New Haven : Yale University Press, 2002), p.309

² Asghar Ali Engineer, "Gujarat Riots in the Light of the History of Communal Violence," *Economic and Political Weekly*, December 14, 2002, pp. 5047-5054

the last two decades is a result of the manipulation of the religious sentiments of people by the Hindu right-wing organizations for political gains. The politicization of the Mandir-Masjid issue and the subsequent demolition of the Mosque gave the BJP the opportunity to consolidate its vote bank.

But in the process the controversy created a communal divide, and frequency of riots also increased during this time. Since partition, never before has one particular incident resulted in the emergence of violence in almost all the states. From the 1960s till 1980 local factors played a very important role in the emergence of riots, but since the late 1980s this trend seems to be changing. Communal violence has always occurred when the BJP has wanted to expand its base. In the recent years the South Indian states, particularly Kerala and Tamilnadu, have also witnessed communal violence and are slowly growing into communally sensitive areas. This is primarily because of the recent entrance of BJP in the political arena of these states.

Apart from Godhra, the other incidences of communal violence in the 90s have been minor, yet they cannot be dismissed. These eruptions of communal violence have not been spontaneous, but are organized, and often have the support of the local administrations. The state support to riots is a long established feature in India, yet the state has never been such an active participant in the violence before the Gujarat riots.

Communal violence has entered a new phase with the Christians and members of other minority religions being made the victims of planned attacks. Communal riots in this decade have been both urban and rural features, but the extent of damage is always greater in the thriving centres of trade and commerce. Tribal population in the rural areas is being forced to get involved in the attacks on Christians and Muslims by bringing them within the Hindutva framework. Apart from economic reasons, the call for Hindu unity which is primarily a means to achieve political advantage is the main source for communal violence in this decade.

Political parties have always had a hand in instigating and exploiting communal violence so as to meet their electoral interests. Though communal riots are condemned in various quarters, there is still complete inaction both from the administration and the ruling governments in many states. Though religious festivals and processions are generally the starting points of communal riots, still sufficient security is not provided during these times. There is also not much response against incidents of communal violence from the civil society. Till the time the political parties which instigate communal riots are voted to power, the incentives to combat communalism will not be able to develop fully.³

³ Communal riots in India-chronology (1947-2003) March 2004 IPCS Research papers, by B. Rajeshwari

Meaning

Communal conflict as *violent conflict between nonstate groups that are organised along a shared communal identity*. This definition deserves some further clarification. *Violent conflict* refers to the fact that the parties use lethal violence to gain control over some disputed and perceived indivisible resource, such as a piece of land or local political power. This follows a generally accepted conceptualisation of armed conflict. The groups involved are *non-state groups*, meaning that neither actor controls the state and armed forces (although state actors may be involved as an important supporting actor in a communal conflict). Finally, the groups are *organised along a shared communal identity*, meaning that they are not formally organised rebel groups or militias but that the confrontation takes place along the line of group identities.

Some would equate the concept of *communal identity* with ethnic or religious identity, but as conceived here the definition is purposefully left more open, since group identity can be considered as socially constructed rather than a static phenomenon. Instead, communal identity is conceptualised as subjective group identification based on, for instance, a common history, a common culture or common core values. Affirming that identity refers to ethnic or religious identity would make the term less flexible, and unable to capture other forms of possible communal identity. For instance, in local conflicts where the dividing line is between ‘original’ inhabitants of an area (‘indigenes’) and more recent ‘settlers’, as is often the case in parts of West and Central Africa, this should be seen as a communal conflict since people very strongly identify themselves (and the ‘other’ group) along these lines. Demarcation along such lines often causes ‘sons of the soil’ conflicts where the indigenes perceive themselves as the rightful owners of the land (Fearon and Laitin 2011). Similarly, in other areas the main identification may be based on one’s livelihood, and conflict may be fought along those lines (for instance, pitting pastoralists against agriculturalists). Livelihood conflicts often parallel ethnic lines as for instance pastoralists living together are often from the same ethnic community. However, this is not always the case. For instance, villagers often identify as inhabitants of their particular villages no matter if the village is ethnically homo- or heterogeneous. The bottom line is that what constitutes the basis for a communal identity may differ across time and space; hence, leaving the definition of this term more open allows for a broader contextual range.

Characteristics of Communal violence:

There are certain characteristics of Communal Violence

- (i) Communalism is an ideological concept,
- (ii) It is a complex process,
- (iii) It has a broader base which encompasses social, economic and political aspects for its manifestation.
- (iv) It causes rivalry, violence and tension among masses,

(v) It is used by the higher class people and elites as an instrument for division and exploitation of the communal identities of the poorer sections of their co-religionists.

(vi) Communalism is simply engineered by opportunistic political and economic interest of contending groups and factions within a political party or by political parties.

(vii) It strikes at the roots of democracy, secularism and national integration.

(viii) Its effects are disastrous

Communalism is basically an ideology which evolved through three broad stages in India—

(i) Communal Nationalism:

The notion that since a group or a section of people belong to a particular religious community. Their secular interests are the same, i.e., even those matters which have got nothing to do with religion affect all of them equally.

(ii) Liberal Communalism:

The notion that since two religious communities have different religious interests, they have different interests in the secular sphere also (i.e., in economic, political and cultural spheres).

(iii) Extreme Communalism:

The notion that not only different religious communities have different interests, but these interests are also incompatible i.e., two communities cannot co-exist because the interests of one community come into conflict with those of the other.

Communal conflicts can take many different forms, and in order to understand the different dynamics of communal conflict, it is useful to analyse their underlying causes and the issue over which the conflict is fought. Different conflict issues may necessitate different types of interventions and conflict resolution strategies. A first set of communal conflicts takes place in connection with local or national elections⁴. A core reason for this is that political allegiance in many countries follows ethnic lines and when one group's candidate loses, this group might seek revenge against the other group. This is often worsened by the patrimonial systems that characterise most countries where communal conflicts are common. Such systems include a strong patron-client relationship in which access to power becomes extremely important. The violence shows multiple and clear political connections. Behind the different militias are often local politicians who provide them with weapons and shelter and direct the violence. In addition, to the national political dynamics, a crucial part of these communal conflicts concern access to land.

⁴ For a thorough investigation on this issue in the case of India, see Wilkinson 2004

Communal conflicts can be an effective way of gaining access to land as the number of people displaced often is huge, even when the number of deaths is fairly limited. Thus, ruthless political entrepreneurs, are the key actors in the Kenyan post-election communal conflicts. Land is also often at the heart of communal conflicts that centre on groups' main livelihood. One example is pastoralist conflicts, i.e. herder-farmer conflicts and conflicts between various pastoralist groups. Pastoralists and their animals move over extensive areas, often under extremely harsh conditions, and during this movement they often come into conflict with other communities that are either also on the move or more settled. Such conflicts constitute one of the oldest forms of organised violence in the history of mankind . The eruption of such conflicts is compounded by the extreme conditions where access to grazing land or a well is often a question of survival for both animals and humans. Most often these conflicts are solved in non-violent manner, and when they do turn violent the violence is often kept at a low-scale level.

However, sometimes such conflicts cause widespread human suffering. Similarly related to control over land, but fought along another identity dimension, are conflicts pitting the 'original' inhabitants of a locality against more recent settlers.

PREVENTION OF COMMUNAL AND TARGETED VIOLENCE (ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND REPARATIONS) BILL, 2011

A

BILL

To respect, protect and fulfil the right to equality before law and equal protection of law by imposing duties on the Central Government and the State Governments, to exercise their powers in an impartial and non-discriminatory manner to prevent and control targeted violence, including mass violence, against Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and religious minorities in any State in the Union of India, and linguistic minorities in any State in the Union of India; to thereby uphold secular democracy; to help secure fair and equal access to justice and protection to these vulnerable groups through effective provisions for investigation, prosecution and trial of offences under the Act; to provide for restorative relief and reparation, including rehabilitation and compensation to all persons affected by communal and targeted violence; and for matters connected with it.

Under this bill Communal violence has been defined under section as whoever, being an individual, singly or jointly with others or being a part of an association or on behalf of an association or acting under the influence of an association, engages in continuing unlawful activity of a widespread or systematic nature knowingly directed against a group or part thereof, by virtue of their membership of that group, by use of violence or threat of violence or intimidation or coercion or by committing sexual assault or other unlawful means, is said to commit the offence of organised communal and targeted violence. The prescribes the duty of every public servant to prevent communal violence. The bill also prescribes that the central government should constitute a National and State authority for communal harmony justice and reparation.

REASONS FOR COMMUNIAL VIOLENCE:

There are a number of causes which are responsible for the prevalence of communalism. Some of two important causes of communalism are discussed below.

1. Tendency of the Minorities:

The Muslims fail to be intermingled in the national mainstream. Most of them do not participate in the secular nationalistic politics and insist on maintaining their separate identity. The elite among the Muslims have failed to generate the appropriate national ethos.

2. Orthodoxy and Obscurantism:

The orthodox members of minorities feel that they have a distinct entity with their own cultural pattern, personal laws and thought. There are strong elements of conservatism and fundamentalism among the Muslims. Such feeling has prevented them from accepting the concept of secularism and religious tolerance.

3. Design of the Leaders:

Communalism has flourished in India because the communalist leaders of both Hindu and Muslim communities desire to flourish it in the interest of their communities. The demand for separate electorate and the organization of Muslim league were the practical manifestations of this line of thought. The British rule which produced the divide and rule policy, separate electorate on the basis of religion strengthened the basis of communalism in India. Ultimately the partition of the country into India and Pakistan provided further an antagonistic feeling towards each other.

4. Weak Economic Status:

A majority of Muslims in India has failed to adopt the scientific and technological education. Due to their educational backwardness, they have not been represented sufficiently in the public service, industry and trade etc. This causes the feeling of relative deprivation and such feelings contain the seeds of communalism.

5. Geographical Causes:

The territorial settlement of different religious groups especially Hindus, Muslims and Christians causes in them wide variation in the mode of life, social standards and belief system. Most of these patterns are contradictory and this may cause communal tension.

6. Historical Causes:

The Muslims, all over the subcontinent, are converts from Hinduism, which was facilitated due to the caste-hate relations and under the compulsions of Muslim rulers. The problems of social segregation, illiteracy and poverty that had set apart the low caste people remain unresolved for them, as the foreign elite that ruled never shared power with them. Their work ended with the conversion of the Indians and the converts began by imitating the masters in thought, speech and dress. It caused their alienation. Gradually, elements of

communalism entered in the Muslim community. The separatist elements in the Muslim community, from the very start of the national resurgence had discouraged others of their community, from associating themselves with it. As a result Muslim league was formed which demanded partition of the country.

7. Social Causes:

Cultural similarity is a powerful factor in fostering amicable relations between any two social groups. But the social institutions, customs and practices of Hindus and Muslims are so divergent that they think themselves to be two distinct communities.

Cow-Protection and Hinduism

Cow-protection is the dearest possession of the Hindu and heart. It is the one concrete belief common to all Hindus. No one who does not believe in cow-protection can possibly be a Hindu. It is a noble belief Cow-worship means to me worship of innocence. It cannot be imposed upon anyone to carry cow-protection at the point of the sword .

Beef eating

The standing complaint of Hindus against Musalmans is that the latter are beef eaters and that they purposely sacrifice cows on the Bakri Id day. Hindus may not compel Musalmans to abstain from meat or even beef eating. Vegetarian Hindus may not compel other Hindus to abstain from fish, flesh or fowl.

8. Psychological Causes:

Psychological factors play an important role in the development of communalism. The Hindus think that the Muslims are fanatics and fundamentalists. They also believe that Muslims are unpatriotic. On the contrary, the Muslims feel that they are being treated as second rate citizens in India and their religious beliefs and practices are inferior. These feelings lead to communal ill-feeling.

9. Provocation of Enemy Countries:

Some foreign countries try to destabilize our country by setting one community against the other through their agents. Pakistan has played a role in fostering communal feeling among the Muslims of our country. Pakistan has been encouraging and promoting communal riots by instigating the militant sections of Indian Muslim community. Kashmir youths are trained by Pakistan to destabilize India's internal security by spreading communal venom.

10. Negative Impact of Mass Media:

The messages relating to communal tension or riot in any part of the country spread through the mass media. This results in further tension and riots between two rival religious groups. Communalism was rooted in modern economic, political and social institutions where new identities were emerging in a haphazard manner even as the old, pre-modern identities had not diminished. A clash of this fundamental dichotomy gave rise to a communal ideology.

11 .Socio-economic reasons:

The professional classes and the bourgeoisie emerged later among the Muslims than among the Hindus. There was rivalry for jobs, trade and industry between the two communities. The Muslim bourgeoisie used the lower middle classes of the Muslims against the Hindu bourgeoisie to further their class interests.

Because of the economic backwardness of India and rampant unemployment, there was ample scope for the colonial government to use concessions, favours and reservations to fuel communal and separatist tendencies. Also, modern political consciousness was late in developing among the Muslims and the dominance of traditional reactionary elements over the Muslim masses helped a communal outlook to take root.

PROBLEMS

Communal violence creates an environment of tension and havoc in the affected states. It creates a lot of problems in the affected states. It has many evil effects along with creating a strong sense of fear. Following are the problems which people of the affected areas have to face ;

1. UNAVAILABILITY OF JOBS TO CHILDREN OF RIOT VICTIMS

Communal Violence affects a lot of people who come under its curb. Many people lose their lives in communal violence. Unfortunately innocent people have to face the wrath of communal violence by losing their lives .Active participants as well as inactive participants become a victim of communal violence.

In some families men are the sole breadwinners of their families. Unfortunately people get trapped in such violence and lose their lives as a result of this his respective family loses its breadwinner. Such families lose their economic status.

As a result the entire economic load falls on the children of such families. Various government policies are framed by the government to provide jobs to such riot victims. But these policies are not properly executed .As a result of this the children of riot affected families are left jobless and hopeless.

2. LOSS/DISTRUCTION OF PROPERTY /SEVERAL LIVES OF RIOT VICTIMS

Communal violence causes a lot of destruction of private property as well as public property. It takes away the lives of many innocent lives including youth women children irrespective of the age groups. Lot of fire is lit , stones are thrown and all sorts of other things are used to destroy houses , shops, factories , industries etc of people.

People are shot dead, lit to fire alive, cut down by sharp swords irrespective of the gender whether it might be a child, a woman and irrespective of age .Woman young girls are physically assaulted and harassed.

3. PSYCHOLOGY OF FEAR

Communal violence casts a strong psychology of fear in the minds of people whether it might be the victims or just viewers of tv channels. Even after the violence is over the fear still remains in the minds of people. The lost lives the destroyed families do not let people forget those evil days of evil violence.

Some people undergo a very strong mental trauma which takes many years to forget and live a normal living. Whereas some people do not come out of such trauma their entire lives.

Running away for fear of death, leaving one's dear ones, temples mosques or music to take care of themselves does not let people forget those awful and frightful days of life.

4.DISTRUST AMONGST PEOPLE

Communal violence creates a strong feeling of distrust hatred amongst the two different religions .People restrain themselves from trusting each other belonging to two different religions. There is a lot of distrust between one another. Many people of two different religions do not believe each others honesty. Distrust never comes from well-defined causes. A variety of causes, more felt than realized breeds distrust. Where riots do take place, they occur because both think communally and because either fears or distrusts the other, and because neither has the courage or the foresight to forgo the present for the sake of the future, or the communal interests for the sake of the national. People are scared to trust one another due to the hatred tension created by communal violence.

5.HAMPERS THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF PEOPLE

Communal violence actually affects the economic markets in the states facing communal violence .Markets shatter shops are burned industries factories are ruined destroyed and broken down. Communal riots creates a havoc in the affected areas which give rise to unnecessary robberies in shops supermarkets .This all affects the economic status of people. Working citizens stay back home with the fear of getting trapped in those brutal situations . Children stop from going out to play .to go to schools colleges .Women refrain themselves from going out to buy household items. This all immensely hampers the economic status of people as the income levels of such families goes down immensely.

6.COMMUNIALVIOLENCE ACTS AS AN OBSTACLE TO UNITY

Communal violence creates the artificial division between two different religions. In its presence both Hindus and Muslims conflict with one another .Their interest is greater than the progress of their country. It acts as an obstacle to the unity between the different religions. It hampers the unity of people belonging to different religions. People of all gender age restrain themselves from trusting each other which in turn affects the brotherhood and unity of people including small children.

7.ATMOSPHERE OF HATRED

The evil images of communal violence makes the blood boil, prejudice reigns supreme; man, whether he labels himself a Hindu, Muslim, Christian or what not, becomes a beast and acts as such. I would like to observe the laws of the game. One hears so often of children and old men being butchered, women being outraged.

SOLUTIONS

Communal violence is a dangerous and a frightful phenomena and a curse for our society. Not only does a communal violence ends up in loss of lives and property, it divides and polarizes the society and gives rise to vicious political debates. Following are some solutions by which this problem of communal violence can be curbed down;

1 .True information should be provided by the newspapers;

The cause of a communal violence should be seen and understood direct from the new items in the newspaper. Understanding and reconstructing the chain of event from political commentators and inquiry commissions will reduce the truth element. The newspaper report can also be politically motive and biased but the likelihood of ideology contaminating the truth in a credible way is much less in case of news items as compared to reports of inquiry commissions and political commentators. One can always refer to multiple newspaper and reasonably filter out the truth.

Second, the news of communal violence should be studied and analyzed at the time of its occurrence itself. Analyzing such an event after lapse of time makes it more difficult to sift facts from ideologically-motive fiction. Since we, unfortunately, have so many communal riots, the sample size is not a problem in such a study and we have enough number of instances of communal riots where such a study can be done. There is poison administered to the public by some newspapers. Newspapers today have almost replaced the Bible, the Koran, the Gita and the other religious scriptures. It is wrong but the fact has to be faced. Such being the case,it is the duty of news paper men to give nothing but facts to their readers

2 . Change in pattern of education

There should be a total change in syllabus, especially of medieval history and modern history pertaining to freedom struggled and division of the country in 1947. It is regrettable that even after 64 years of our freedom our approach to medieval history has not changed. We still use utterly simplistic versions of medieval history resulting in controversy of demolition of temples.

There is no mention, even cursorily cursory of our composite culture and efforts made by Sufi saints, writers, poets and musicians to build bridges between two communities. Sufis like Baba Farid, Moinuddin Chishti, Miyan Meer, Nizamuddin Awliya, Mirza Jane Janan, Dara Shikoh besides musicians, architects, poets and others to fuse two cultures together and bring two communities together. Students studying history have not even heard their names. It would be of immense help to introduce a supplementary text, or at least a chapter on richness of our composite culture to make students realize that both the communities and its intellectual and religious leaders were close to each other and were contributing immensely to enrich our culture religiously, spiritually and intellectually.

Similarly our textbooks on modern history and freedom struggle are highly biased against minorities, They hardly highlight the role played by these communities in freedom struggle. The names like Maulana Mehmoodul Hasan, Maulana Husain Ahmed Madani, Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi, Maulana Hifzurrehman etc. are not even mentioned

who, made great sacrifices for freedom of the country and many of whom were exiled to Malta, Andaman Nicobar etc. They also launched *Reshmi Rumal* Conspiracy to spread message of freedom and paid heavily for that. The textbooks give an impression as if most of the Muslims, with few exceptions were on the side of Pakistan though the truth is otherwise. A vast majority of Muslims was against partition and for unity of the country. Even today most of the Muslims are held responsible for partition and this remains a prominent issue in many communal riots. It will be in the interest of the country to teach correct version of history of freedom struggle and the role played by Muslims in freedom struggle.

3 . The other point of vital importance is focus on value-education.

Today the entire focus of our education is promoting career rather than character. In our education system, for lack of values, career has become most important and character building has been completely marginalized. Also, our education system produces conforming mind rather than thinking mind. An education system which fails to produce thinking and critical mind is worth nothing. Our education system produces only career-oriented mind.

Not only that our education system creates prejudiced mind, prejudiced against minorities, tribals and dalits. It is anything but healthy mind. Thus by overhauling education system we will do great service to the cause of our nation. It would respect rights of poor, weaker sections and would be more inclusive. Today education system is part of the problem, let us make it part of the solution.

4. Reforming the police system:

Our police are product of the same education system and it also gets influenced by uncritical stories in media about minorities and other weaker sections of society and hence has been horribly communalized. We cannot eliminate riots from India or we cannot handle riots properly without comprehensive police reforms. It is horribly prejudiced. In riot after riot after riot we hear stories of how police promotes, rather prevents communal riots.

Thus there should be secular orientation from time to time through refresher courses, apart from secular orientation along with professional graining before joining the service is highly necessary, such orientation influences police attitude a lot.

5. Enactment of Communal Violence and Targeted Bill.

This law, if passed, will go a long way in curbing communal violence as it fixes responsibility on concerned officers. This Bill has been drafted very carefully by responsible secular activists and gave to Sonia Gandhi to get it enacted. Government convened National Integration Council meeting to test the waters and BJP leaders like Arun Jaitly and Sushma Swaraj mounted such a severe attack on it that government was unnerved and since then the Bill is lying in cold storage. It should be immediately revived, if necessary by some amendments and enacted. Also if it is accompanied by implementation of fifth Police Commission Report it will greatly help. This Bill also

ensures adequate reparations and compensation in the event of outbreak of violence.

6. Mixed and cosmopolitan living:

With every riot Hindus and Muslims begin to leave mixed areas and get polarized religion wise. It greatly harms the cause of integration. In such events communal propaganda and rumours become far more effective. Government should not register any society unless it has members of all communities in it i.e. Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis and Sikhs as well as Buddhists and Jains. In our country caste and religion wise societies are quite common. In Singapore, as per law no society will be registered until all religious and ethnic communities are included⁵.

7. Inter-communal weddings:

This not only makes people connected by "blood" but also discover more about the "other" communities. The practices and customs will have to evolve so that every community involved can be tolerant of the combined practices. This solution will reduce the communal violence as the society comes together as time elapses. There will be a mix of communities and all communities inter-mingle. There are distinct problems with this solution as well. For one, some communities are more precious about preserving its populace and the punishment for anyone leaving its community is dire. The practices cannot be combined easily as aspects of food, celebration etc are held with utmost reverence by some communities while the same aspects are condemned by other communities. This trend of inter-communal weddings is already underway in bigger cities and towns but there is still an ocean to swim if this is supposed to happen across India.

8. Abolishment of communities:

This is very tough given the system of reservation in India and how there is special treatment awarded to certain communities. However, if the politicians can stop exploiting general public for their votes and if general public can get behind the idea of collective development this ideal can be achieved with the help of judiciary. There are several difficulties in getting this accomplished. The main one being preferential treatment of people belonging to communities. I do not think these people are ready to give up the special treatment given to them even though such treatment is harmful to the society in the long run. The other difficulty will be the loss of identity. For several people their community is their identity. This might be based on the work they do (original concept of caste), place they live (tribes, naxals, city dwellers etc) and other arbitrary factors which are better if not used to define people.

9. Atheism:

This leads to absolute morality. Atheists cannot point to any external media to justify their actions. They will have to depend on their conscience and take responsibility for all their actions. Somehow in India religion leads to communities and castes even though all three

⁵A five point formula for riot –free India ,by Dr Asghar Ali Engineer Secular Perspective,Februaury 1-15-2013

constructs are different and can exist without each other. Since religion is a very personal belief it is very tough to get this accomplished.

10. Equality of all oneness of man

Life is but an endless series of experiments. Break through the crust of limitation and India becomes one family. If all limitations vanish, the whole world becomes one family, which it really is. Not to cross these bars is to become callous to all fine feelings which make a man.

No religious Divisions

If a free India is to live at peace with herself, religious division must entirely give place to political division based on considerations other than religious. Even as it is, though unfortunately religious differences loom large, most parties contain members drawn from various sects.

11. No Privileged Class

No privileges should be given to anyone in the new India. It is the poor and neglected and down trodden and weak that should be our special care and attention. A Brahman should not grudge if more money is spent on the uplift of the Harijans. At the same time, a Brahman may not be done down simply because he is a Brahman. In fact, the Brahmans are a very small minority. There must be pure and undefiled justice for everyone in both Pakistan and Hindustan. It is the duty of every citizen to treat the lowliest on a par with the others.⁶

⁶ Gandhi and Communal Problems www.mkgandhi.org Page 57

12. Status of Muslim minority loyalty to Union (DO) NOT see evil everywhere. All Muslims are not bad just as all Hindus are not bad. It is generally the impure who see impurity in others. It is our duty to see the best and have no fear. We the Sikhs; the Hindus and the Muslims to forget the past, not to dwell on their sufferings but to extend the right hand of fellowship to each other and determine to live at peace with each other. Muslims must be proud to belong to the Indian Union, they must salute the tri-colour. If they are loyal to their religion, no Hindu can be their enemy. Similarly, the Hindus and the Sikhs must welcome peace loving Muslims in their midst.⁷ Befriend Muslims We should forget the past and learn the duty of having friendly feelings towards all and being inimical to none. The crores of Muslims are not all angles nor are all the Hindus and the Sikhs. Muslims are a numerous community scattered all over the world.⁸

⁷ Gandhi and Communal Problems www.mkgandhi.org Page 58

⁸ Gandhi and Communal Problems www.mkgandhi.org Page 60

CONCLUSION

Even though the Constitution of India has declared India to be a state, yet strangely large-scale violence has been periodically witnessed in our country since independence. It has acquired dangerous proportion in recent decades, with the sharp increase in communal tensions and religion-based politics and growth of communal forces in our body politics. Communal violence has occurred due to the negligence and non performance of state machineries which resulted not only in the loss of precious human lives and destruction of both public and private property and also impeded the economic development process of the country .What is specifically worrisome is often the frequent allegation that these communal incidents have enjoyed the support of the state and particularly that the police has supposedly played not only an active role but also have shown bias in the discharge of its public responsibility while the cold blooded massacres, heinous acts of rape have been committed on the members belonging to the minority communities especially Muslims, Christians and Sikhs in our country.

Besides ,sharp growth in the activities of the insurgents targeting the population belonging to other communities, religious violence by separatists, like more recent attacks on Hindu temples and Hindus by Muslim militants and various Islamic terrorist outfits have accentuated the crisis that is being faced by the state and have posed great challenges to the unity and integrity of India .As far the functioning of the Indian State is concerned, the state is often seen to be acceding to the pressure of both minority at one time and to majority demands at another time, which has fuelled the activities of various groups to engage in one gunmanship in their search for demonstration of closeness to the issues being held onto by the majority and the minority groups, which has contributed towards the heightening of fear and threat to human lives and livelihood.

Howsoever ,these incidents might have been caused, yet it remains the responsibility of the state and society to control the growth and occurrence of incidents of communalism and ethnic violence. In each incident of such collective violence, the quantity and severity of losses only confirms the fact that a greater degree of organization and planning that has gone into the planning and coordination of such incidents in a well calibrated manner but not executed in a proper manner.

Political parties have always had a hand in instigating and exploiting communal violence so as to meet their electoral interests. Though communal riots are condemned in various quarters, there is still complete inaction both from the administration and the ruling governments in many states. Though religious festivals and processions are generally the starting points of communal riots, still sufficient security is not provided during these times. There is also not much response against incidents of communal violence from the civil society. Till the time the political parties which instigate communal riots are voted to power, the incentives to combat communalism will not be able to develop fully.

If the above mentioned problems are looked upon without any biasness in a national spirit and the solutions to the communal violence are followed and implemented with a cooperative and brotherhood spirit than this problem of communal violence can be curtailed down to a great extent in future .

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