Hindutva and Terrorism: 
Implications for Federal India

Arshi KHAN
Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India

Abstract: The diversity of India’s social realities and historical identities, as well as its centuries of experiences with social cohabitation, has brought about an evolving recognition of the federal polity. Diversity is well recognized in India’s Constitution, in relation to both national minorities and those who are dispersed in areas dominated by the majority religious community. Despite adhering to the principle of ‘common citizenship,’ the concept of group/cultural rights is also embedded in the 1950 Constitution. On the other hand, India’s territorial vastness and regional variations have been dealt with by federal political arrangements, both symmetrical and asymmetrical, for the states of the Indian Union on the basis of cultural, linguistic and ethnic factors.

Keyword: Hindutva, terrorism, muslims, federalism

Introduction

Human beings are known for their socio-political and moral attributes which prepare the broad boundary of society to encompass various institutions, mainly the polity for regulating the behavior of the individual and the groups in areas affecting their counterparts. Platonic polity wanted human beings – both the governed and the ruling persons – to construct a model city-state with moral and ethical ambitions and expectations. The Papacy-dominated Republica Christiana was envisaged to prevent human wickedness through a coercive but benevolent state. Later states were taken over by absolute kings who were finally challenged by the emerging needs and desires of the new economic classes and parliamentarians all over the Western Europe. Finally the issue of governance was settled within the logical framework of the principles of state sovereignty, people’s right to accountable government, vigilant citizens (in the scheme of J. S. Mill), rule of law, and the right of the state only to use force or other methods for keeping peace in society.
Other than the western model, there is also a very successful Ottoman model of the Millet system through which the Ottoman institutions and principles endorsed those models and features which are being debated in the west today. The Millet system became the vital hub of facilitating pluralism, civic demos nation, group rights, consociationalism, and a kind of common law system resulting in the promotion of the rights of nationalities including minorities. However, the rise of nationalism and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire finally squeezed it into a Turkish nation-state. Experiments in other parts of the world seem to indicate the fact that a large number of countries have followed the Western and the Ottoman models, along with the addition of their own attributes of painting the picture of political universalism with local miniatures. Whatever may be the differences of their pasts and experiences, almost all the politics seem to maintain the rhythmic coherence of creating a terror-free society. This expectation became a kind of systemic choice of those politics which are associated with democracy as well as social and political federalism.

Federal Attributes of Indian Polity

Peace, non-violence, maintenance of order, attainment of rights and other attributes usually set the constitutional key-note of the Indian federal polity which negated all kinds of terrorism by any kind of actors — state or non-state. The diversity of India’s social realities and historical identities, as well as its centuries of experiences with social cohabitation, has brought about an evolving recognition of the federal polity. Diversity is well recognized in India’s Constitution, in relation to both national minorities and those who are dispersed in areas dominated by the majority religious community. Despite adhering to the principle of common citizenship, the concept of group/cultural rights is also embedded in the 1950 Constitution. On the other hand, India’s territorial vastness and regional variations have been dealt with by federal political arrangements, both symmetrical and asymmetrical for the states of the Indian Union on the basis of cultural, linguistic and ethnic factors. Besides accommodating various rights under federal arrangements for the 28 states and the seven Union territories within the Indian Union, the Indian Constitution and several later statutory developments envisaged compensatory measures for economically weak, historically discriminated peoples, as well as for alienated tribal populations of the country, in terms of reserving seats in elected bodies, employment, job promotions and, in many areas, community development schemes.

It is important to recall the view of the late Rasheeduddin Khan, one of the greatest advocates of federalism in India:

India’s polity is federal twice over. Political federation of the union type has been superimposed by the constitution over a classic socio-cultural federalism whose survival and continuity in the duration of time, continental dimension, social complexity, and cultural diversities which makes it the world’s oldest, largest and most persistent plural society, the like of which human history has never known.

Federalism also becomes fundamentally relevant as a principle of governance in terms of managing a bi-communal or multi-communal society where no community should dominate over


Hindutva and Terrorism: Implications for Federal India

another due to the risk of it becoming a permanent majority or minority ruling community in a diverse society. Therefore, federalism should not only balance the interests of the federal and constituent governments but also the interests of the diverse communities. It is now commonly recognized that federalism provides a safety valve for minorities against the permanent domination of the majority. In other words, federal principles of governance in a diverse and multicultural society further boost democratic institutions and the democratization process by either creating a ‘functional civic establishment’ or by providing some viable measures for the protection of minorities.

Thomas Fleiner and Lidija R. Basta Fleiner have argued that minority protection has to be understood as an immanent characteristic of true democracy. Thus, the objective of federal governance is to build such a polity and society in which individuals and groups – minorities and majority, governments and public – can trust and cooperate with one another despite sometimes being critical and competitive. In the contemporary world, this is expressed in one dominant form: the principle of territoriality. In other words, different layers of governments, commonly known as federal government and constituent units, together legitimize the supremacy of the constitution as well as the choice and will of the people and public. She has said that democratic integration remains a major challenge in multicultural societies, not only as an objective but also as a strategy. She has warned that the winner takes all system within pluralist and segmented societies inevitably produce illegitimate group politics. It is well argued in her summation that it is federalized democracy as a strategy of constitution making that can be critically important to nation-building in multicultural societies.3

Emerging Threats to the Social Order

The federal polity ensuring the rights of the vulnerable communities is now under threat due to the rise of the fascist elements in various spheres. No preferential treatment is available for Muslims who constitute over 14 percent of India’s total population. They have been declared backward and very backward by at least three commissions set up by the Government of India – the Dr. Gopal Singh Committee (1983), the Justice Sachar Committee (2006), and the Justice Ranganath Mishra Commission (2007). Over 80% of Muslims in India are poor, very poor and vulnerable. Preferential treatment exists for several weaker segments of the Hindu community. Today the majority of the Muslims are excluded from the structures of powers. The rates of unemployment, illiteracy, poverty, housing problems and other issues are higher for the Muslims. This requires constitutional and policy measures on the part of the national and sub-national governments for the fulfillment of social and economic rights. They are now trapped in another problem of the terrorism by the Hindu fascists and terrorists. In fact, they are the only community, other than the Christians, which face terrorism of the out-group fascists.

To begin with, it would be imperative to mention three unique social settings of India. First, it has eight religious communities with about 80 percent Hindus. Muslims constitute the second

biggest grouping (14%, unofficially more) and the rest of the minorities, except Neo-Buddhists, are prospered communities. Second, India is a historical society where communal consciousness is deeply embedded. All the communities have maintained a kind of medieval social construction showing strong allegiance to their faith, religious institutions and traditions. Third, the use and misuse of the community-religious factor in political mobilization, particularly by the majority group of the center-right and fascist political parties since the 1970s, have weakened the constitutional rights of the minorities, particularly the Muslims, due to communal politics. Communal consciousness or communalism is a common social Indian reality signifying the attachment of an individual with his faith and community and preferring priorities for the ’self’ against the ’other’.

Modern-looking secular, federal and democratic arrangement of institutions were endorsed and adopted to transform the ‘communal’ nature of society into a ‘civic’ society. Secularism was meant to maintain peaceful co-existence and federal democracy was meant to uphold substantive equality and social justice against discrimination, exploitation, poverty, backwardness, special birth-rights (caste-system), and exclusions and deprivations on the basis of religion, color and creed. In this context, one can find three major set of questions that India had to address after it became independent in 1947. They were Federal-Units sharing of power (related to the powers and autonomy of sub-national governments), Casteism (caste conflicts and caste-based inequalities), and Communalism (community-based fear of insecurity, discrimination and backwardness due to the representation and force of numbers/majority community). The first two have been addressed systematically without similar sensitivity to the problem of communalism. Therefore, majority communalism was strengthened due to lack of checks and balances at the level of the organization, principles and guidelines for political parties, distribution of party-tickets for contesting elections, employment in the government sector, enforcement agencies, delivery of goods and in the sphere of the ’rule of law.’ As a result, communal tendencies became rooted in the structures of powers and political parties which transformed communalism into communal politics facilitating the forces of Hindutva echoing cultural nationalism with the advocacy of One Nation, One Culture, One Language and its opposition to asymmetrical federalism, particularly in the case of Jammu and Kashmir.

The consolidation of communal forces in power politics, including some other civic institutions, established three disturbing trends in the country. First, anti-Muslim violence (usually called communal riots) has become a permanent feature of power politics since 1947 and more racy after the 9th General elections of 1989 when a small political party increased its strength in Parliament from 2 to 88. On the other hand, anti-Christian violence started as a new phenomenon in the late 1990s with planned and coordinated attacks on churches, priests and their followers.

Second, in many places, the enforcement agencies have begun to habitually overlook lawlessness which resulted in giving a free hand to the attackers and organizers of crimes against the peace and the law of the land. It is important to mention here that timely reporting and warnings by local and domestic intelligence agencies, which are supposed to know the deports of weapons, training grounds, publication of heinous literatures and hate speeches, could have controlled violence in many places as most of the violence has appeared as organized crimes against humanity. The tradition of setting up inquiry committees is quite strong but actions and implementation of their suggestions have not yet set precedents. As a result, the organizers of violence and hate crimes do not get discouraged.
One of the Hindutva brigands — Shri Ram Sena — a chief based in Karnataka. Pramod Muthalik, “agreed to vandalise an art exhibition for a price” when it became clear under a sting operation conducted jointly by Aaj Tak TV channel and Tehelka magazine.¹

Third, the followers of the militant ideology went to the extent of taking advantage of the ‘War on Terror’ by engineering bomb blasts at several places in the last few years and accusing the minority community of the crimes against peace. Such blasts, of quite a new kind and nature in the Indian panorama, were shocking incidents to Federal India which began to create the image of Muslims as enemy-terrorists. Muslims in India have no organized or unorganized terror organization for waging war against India. A small group of youngsters belonging to the Student Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), known for their militant approach but not involved in terrorist activity, is already banned and their key members were arrested. Muslim militancy exists in the northern state of Jammu and Kashmir, mainly due to the excessive use of force by the governmental agencies and blatant violation of the federal principles and autonomy of the special federal unit in the country. The central state governments have been chasing militants in Kashmir since 1989 that has resulted in thousands of deaths. They have also chased SIMI and others who have no physical existence at all but similar efforts and precautions seem to be lacking against those who organize terrorist acts against minorities and masterminding bomb-blasts in different parts of the country. After a great deal of damage was done to the Muslim minority community for the blasts, some of the more honest officers unmasked the deep involvement of the Hindutva forces in such blasts in which military connections were also found for a missing 60 kg of RDX explosives. A leading English daily newspaper reported from Mumbai in November 2008 that the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) suspected that Lt Col Prasad Purohit supplied the RDX explosive that was used in the Samjhauta Express blast on February 18, 2007 that killed 68 passengers. Seeking an extension for the police custody of Purohit, Special Prosecutor for Maharashtra ATS Ajay Misar told a Nashik court that a witness in the Malegaon blast case told the agency that Purohit had claimed he had 60 kg of RDX in his possession which he had got from Jammu & Kashmir. Misar said: “When Purohit was stationed at the Deolali army camp, he had gone to Jammu and Kashmir on official work and is believed to have got 60 kg of RDX and a part of it was given to this link ‘Bhagwan’, who used it in the Samjhauta train (India-Pakistan bound) blast. The ATS is probing his involvement.” Madhya Pradesh police officials involved in the probe last year said that when a SIMI connection failed to emerge, suggestions were made to examine the possible involvement of Hindu right wing groups, but it was not taken up then. Harvans police confirmed that the SIMI angle was ruled out after investigation.²

The central government has been informing its counterparts in the US and other countries about the role of the ISI, here the ATS was claiming that the blast was the handiwork of a serving Indian Army officer. Forensic examination of the blast site and two unexploded bombs had conclusively proved that RDX was not used, but the ATS was leveling an allegation to the contrary,” a senior bureau

---


official observed. The ATS had also arrested Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur, Dayanand Pandey and a retired major, Ramesh Upadhyaya, among others, for the blasts, which were allegedly planned by the radical right-wing Hindu outfit A Bharat. It is, therefore, important to analyze those aspects of Hindutva, which is politically motivated to create hatred and to demonize the Muslims in the minds of the majority, government and in other public sphere. Such hatred and prejudices have increased over the years as reflected in the rising number of trials, detentions, encounters and forced confessions. In the case of Muslims, even doubts are enough to implicate them whereas existing substantial evidence, in the case of Hindus, are not generally taken as substantive grounds for the same methods of inquiry by the police, intelligence and media as in the case of Muslims. On the other hand, Hindutva is busy in representing itself as the savior of the majority community for its political consolidation in which the attitude of the officials, media and intelligence is to maintain benign neglect.

Hindutva: From Communal Politics to Communal Terrorism

After India experimented with party-politics and periodic elections while the governmental apparatus expanded, communal consciousness turned into communalism/communal politics signifying communally motivated actions, policies and preferences made by the parties in power. Parties in opposition, and enforcement agencies which resulted in discrimination, inequality and prejudices against the Muslim community in general. Since late 1980s, militant communalism was openly embraced by the chauvinist, rightist and fascist political party, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP with Hindutva ideology) and its followers which expanded the number of its deputies in Parliament from 2 in 1984 to over 80 in 1989 general elections. The cost of this spectacular rise of the BJP was caused by not only a paradigm shift from building India into a civic nation to a misguided kind of ethno-nation where the Muslims and the Christian communities are made country-wide projects for hatred, intolerance, subjugation, discrimination and prejudice.

In other words, the communal Indian society became a divided society due to politically motivated hatred but this division was not based on the national ground of different faiths; instead it was based on the fascists’ terror agenda of creating anti-Muslim hysteria, feelings and prejudice in villages, towns and cities in many parts of the country. The fascists made massive rallies, anti-Muslim speeches, video films, audio-visual cassettes, print-outs, posters and stickers to misguide common Hindus and divert the majoritarian sympathy against the Muslims on the pretext of erasing the Babri Mosque and to erect Hindu temple in northern India. They demolished the mosque contrary to the order of the Supreme Court and engineered massive anti-Muslim terror in various parts of the country.⁶

---

⁶ “ATS retracted RDX claim under pressure”, The Times of India (Mumbai), 18 November 2008; http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/India/ATS-retracted-RDX-claim-under-pressure/articleshow/3725212.cms


Hindutva and Terrorism: Implications for Federal India

The fascists formed their governments (from 1989 onwards) in several important federal units of the country, including the partner of the coalition government at the federal level. As a result, they consolidated their position and injected their sympathizers into ministries and governmental agencies. Media had no hesitation to embrace them. Moreover, their affiliates and satellites also expanded all over the country along with their anti-Muslim activities. They advocated *Hindutva*, which they mean to be cultural nationalism and add other meanings serving their interests. I have tried to define it here, *Hindutva* is a politically motivated ideology of Hindu communal-fascist organizations generally known as the *Sangh parivar*, headed by the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* (RSS). It aims to transform all Hindus from a tolerant religious community into a monolithic militant and political community on the basis of creating prejudices, exclusive nationalism, fear and hatred against the Muslims and the Christians which do not constitute Sangh’s notion of the Hindu Nation. As a result, it benignly justifies its anti-Muslim and anti-Christian mind-set, schemes and actions on the pretext of protecting and promoting Hindus’ interests.

Therefore, Indian federal polity has been passing through the dangerous phases of violence, terrorism and hatred, particularly after 1989. Hindu-Muslim riots are generally known as communal violence but the dozens of investigation reports have shown that the fascist agencies and parties are directly involved in anti-Muslim acts of terrorism. I will briefly mention the mother organization of terrorism later. The fascists use words like ‘*Hindutva*’ (adherence to their Hindu way of life), ‘cultural nationalism’ and ‘greater India’ but in reality they are highly anti-Muslim and anti-Christian. Since their (RSS) inception in 1925, they have killed a large number of Muslims in organized acts of terror, raped women, destroyed their properties and prevented them from seeking justice. It was only after 1989 that they also started terrorism unambiguously against the Christians, their churches and their followers.9

The RSS is known for many problems of insecurity, killings, loss of honor, destruction of properties, and fear vis-à-vis the Muslims and Christians. It has many affiliates and its political face is represented by the BJP (established in 1989), which is known for creating a post-Partition Hindu-Muslim divide. Before independence (and partition), it was mainly the RSS which had created the Hindu-Muslim divide. It is more than that of the EOKA terrorists who destroyed the unity of Greek and Turkish Cypriots in 1950s. It is an open fact that RSS members killed the Father of the Nation – Mahatma Gandhi – in 1948. They also planted idols in the Babri mosque in 1949 to order to claim it. In the late 1980s, they held thousands of anti-Muslim demonstrations aimed at demolishing the Babri mosque and sensitized the Hindus with anti-Muslim propaganda. This resulted in many cases of anti-Muslim terrorism in several parts of the country due to their 10,000 km journey inside the country.

They finally demolished the mosque on 6 December 1992 in spite of all security precautions. Soon after the demolition, these terrorists made massive acts of terrorism in various parts of the country and destroyed hundreds of tombs, other masques and graveyards in many places. While appointing the Special Investigation Team in 2008 to probe hundreds of instances of communal violence in the

---


10 Ibid.
state of Gujarat (western India), the Supreme Court of India observed: "Communal harmony is the hallmark of democracy ... If in the name of religion people are killed that is absolutely a slur and blot on the society governed by the rule of law.... Religious fanatics really do not belong to any religion. They are no better than terrorists who kill innocent people for no rhyme or reason." The fascist programs and activities shifted from communal politics to communal terrorism which can be easily traced in various acts of anti-Muslim and anti-Christian violence and acts of terror in rural areas and other peaceful places. Most of these acts were pre-meditated and politically motivated violence against the Muslims in furtherance of political and social objectives. Their actions can be rightly observed in the American definition of terrorism which amounts to endangering life, property, infrastructure to intimidate or coerce civilian population. In general, the media, intellectuals, political parties and the judiciary have designated the terrorist activities of the RSS and its family maximum as communalists, rightists, and ultra-nationalists. J.K. Shukla, who resides in Los Angeles, uses terms like Hindutva terrorists, Hindu fascism, terrorist gangsters, saffronzi gangsters-rapist-arsouists-murderers-thugs, theo-terrorist gangsters, and traitorous squads.

The comprehensive meaning of terrorism includes violence aimed at inspiring fear and intimidating target populations:

Any other act intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or to any other person not taking an active part in hostilities in a situation of armed conflict, when the purpose of such an act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a Government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act.

In response to the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the Sixth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly attempted to formulate a comprehensive general definition of terrorism. Article 2(1) of the Draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism provides:

(1) Any person commits an offence within the meaning of this Convention if that person, by any means, unlawfully and intentionally, causes:

(a) Death or serious bodily injury to any person, or

(b) Serious damage to public or private property, including a place of public use, a State or government facility, a public transportation system, an infrastructure facility or the environment; or

11 S. Vanadurajan, "Immunity for Mobs in the War on Terror", The Hindu, New Delhi, 7 April 2009, p. 8.
14 Indu Kant Shukla, Hindutva: Treason and Terrorism, Phuros, New Delhi, 2005.
Hindutva and Terrorism: Implications for Federal India

(c) Damage to property, places, facilities, or systems referred to in paragraph 1(b) of this article, resulting or likely to result in major economic loss, when the purpose of the conduct, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a Government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing an act.¹⁶

The Terrorism Act 2000 (UK) defines terrorism:

1. In this Act ‘terrorism’ means the use or threat of action where –
   (a) the action falls within subsection (2);
   (b) the use or threat is designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public or a section of the public; and
   (c) the use or threat is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

2. Action falls within this subsection if it –
   (a) involves serious violence against a person;
   (b) involves serious damage to property;
   (c) endangers a person’s life, other than that of the person committing the action;
   (d) creates a serious risk to the health or safety of the public or a section of the public; or
   (e) is designed seriously to interfere with or seriously to disrupt an electronic system.

3. The use or threat of action falling within subsection (2) which involves the use of firearms or explosives is terrorism whether or not subsection (1)(b) is satisfied.¹⁷

The RSS claims to be a cultural-nationalist organization but there is much evidence which proves it to be a dreaded terrorist organization. It was banned twice by the Government of India in 1948 and again in the mid-1970s for a short time. It has over 44,000 branches operating across 30,000 cities and towns. The exact number of its volunteers is not known but could be in the range of seven to eight million. S. M. Mushrif, the Inspector General of Police in the western state of India – Maharashtra, who retired in 2005, has dealt with the issue of the terror of the RSS in detail with a lot of credible sources and other materials in his book.¹⁸ These branches meet every day in the early morning to indoctrinate the Hindu youth. The youths and the preacher wear a particular dress at a particular time. The donors and the amount collected by the RSS is still a secret. It has its own military schools, hidden training camps and indoctrination centers. Mushrif has also listed the names of its front organizations which have many different names (to confuse the general masses) for the different purposes of agitation, militancy, education, publications, media, etc.¹⁹ The RSS guides

¹⁶ Ben Goldar and George Williams, "What is ‘Terrorism’? problems of legal definition, p. 274.
many organizations endorsing its objectives so the combined effort is known as the Sangh parivar. To them, the disruptive forces are represented by the non-Hindu segments of society – Muslims, Christian and the westernized elite.

The RSS reign of terror in India is a different kind of terrorism which seeks to draw the attention of the world. The whole world knows about the Gujarat genocide where thousands of Muslims were killed by the RSS and its family in 2002. Even today there are thousands of Muslims living in the relief camps and only the exceptionally fortunate ones have gotten justice either in getting the culprits arrested or in getting some monetary compensation. Writing on this subject of the terrorism, Jairus said:

In other words, these ghastly mobs comprised both directing groups and directed serialities, bound together in dispersive acts of murder and destruction orchestrated by the activists of the VHP and the Bajrang Dal, who formed an organized element extracting organic actions from inert non-organised series. A democracy that cannot disarm these storm-troopers is a democracy well on the way to its own destruction by fascism.

Anurita Basu says:

The movement that Hindu nationalist groups launched around the destruction of the mosque in Ayodhya fostered extensive Hindu-Muslim violence which, in turn, weakened already frayed institutions, deepened biases of the civil service and accentuated a leadership crisis in the state. Most importantly, Hindu nationalism seeks objectives which are antithetical to democracy, above all in seeking to undermine minority rights.

**Automacity of Fascism: Anti-Muslim Riots**

Riots, in which several actors play roles before and after the crimes against humanity, poison many minds beyond the boundaries of the rule of law. The term ‘riot’ is quite commonly used to describe all kinds of violence that take place at the inter-community level. For example, the recent violence in Gujarat has been termed by many who visited the affected sites as ‘genocide’. Terrorism against the Muslims as reflected in the communal riots has taken place in all those places where the members of minority groups maintain sizeable strength and they have occurred almost every year under the regimes of all different parties. The following table contains the official numbers, which differ significantly from the local estimations. A table is given below to show violence against the Muslims in India during 1950-2002.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of riots/communal incidents</th>
<th>No. of persons reported officially as killed</th>
<th>Injured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>1070</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>2053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>1309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>674</td>
<td>2702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>1607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>1330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>1318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>1123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>1853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>2379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>2691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>2613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>3025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1143</td>
<td>3652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>4836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>3751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>768</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>5389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>711</td>
<td>383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>710</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>922</td>
<td>802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Inquiry Report of Justice Joseph Vithayathil on the Tellicherry Riots of 1971, the Report of the Justice Venugopal on the Kanyakumari Riots of 1982 and other reports have lamented the unlawful behavior of the fascist organizations. The Justice Jagannohan Reddy Commission report on the Ahmedabad riots (1969) also indicted the Sangh leaders and workers of organizing violence against the minority. Terror riots also cause collateral damage to the victims — mainly economical and psychological. Rasheeduddin Khan, whose scholarly views are better known in relation to secular democratic India, said:

Communal riots in India have acquired a permanency as a factor of recurrent tension and violence. Basically it is a phenomenon of Hindu-Muslim conflict and violence, in which, as almost all the official reports and judicial inquiries establish over the years, without any exception, stated that the main sufferers in terms of causalities and loss of properties have been mainly the Muslims. Communal riots have been a euphemism for the killing of Muslims and destruction of their business and properties. Of course members of the Hindu community are also assaulted and killed, but their total number and proportion and loss of property is always smaller.24

Ultimate Goal of Sangh Terrorism

Terrorism is generally seen as the most brutal and violent act of murder and destruction of properties belonging to individuals, groups or the government. In most of the cases, the terrorists

use explosives and other weapons. In the case of the Sangh Parivar, it is a unique case of terrorism in terms of propensity, duration and psychological impact. The Sangh terrorism is not only linked with the instant loss of life and property but to a large extent their terrorism is aimed at inflicting deep psychological, social, cultural and religious wounds. Even if the affected person survives, he or she would never have a normal life due to painful memories. As a result, the affected person or the group would not even think of taking relief and help within the law as their constitutional rights. This happened in 18 districts of the state of Gujarat (western India) and in many other states where cases of anti-Muslim violence occurred. If the affected Muslims not only hesitated to submit their complaints to the police but they also restricted themselves to claim only the amount of compensation promised by the government. In the cases where the certain amount had to be paid by the government, many of them received a far lesser amount due to the involvement of corrupt middlemen. Despite knowing these facts, the victims lost the courage to seek their just compensation.

This is basically the post-violence impact of the Sangh terrorism which needs to be addressed by the national and state governments and by the international organizations, in case of the failure of the former actors. In other words, their terrorism has both intermediate and ultimate goals which are meant for creating a frightened community blind to their constitutional rights and claims.

Another unique dimension of the Sangh terrorism is the new phenomenon of bomb blasts in markets, trains, Hindu temples, mosques and other places which has puzzled the minds of many. Hundreds of Muslims were arrested without evidence. The new name of the Muslim Mujahideen was flashed in the media to which no one claimed. Muslim ulema belonging to different sects openly condemned these blasts but the psychological game of framing Muslims as terrorists continued until the unfortunate killings of three senior police officers who had traced the major roots and sources of these blasts. The Sangh terrorism was exposed, although very late, in 2008 by one of the most bright, honest and fair police high officials and his team in western India which indicated the involvement of a several politicians and leaders associated with the Sangh parivar. In the major terrorist attack in the city of Mumbai in western India on 26 November 2008, the terrorists killed foreign nationals, some Jews, and over one hundred Indians (with a good number of the Muslims) which looked like a Muslim terrorist attack. Terrorist attacks took place in several places in Mumbai where the intellectuals and the local government numbers differ from the official version.

In these attacks, the leading team of three senior police officers known for their commitment to the Rule of Law, and not the Sangh ideology, were shot and killed. Various statements by the academic wife of the most famous police officer – Hemant Karkare – who had exposed for first time in the history of bomb blast cases in India in the 21st century, which were reported in the English dailies, confirm that anti-democratic, fascists and enemies of communal harmony killed her husband. The Sangh terrorism is aimed at creating a monstrous image of the Muslim community as an enemy of peace and stability. In this case, hundreds of the Muslim youths belonging to all categories – rural, urban, rich, poor, literate, techie, illiterate, intellectual and academic, political, social, petty criminals, etc. -- and from different regions of India were arrested and detained. Forced confessions and other evidence were obtained.

It is important to mention here that over 150 million Muslims of India, with the exception of those in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, have never entered into organized or unorganized militancy or terrorism against the state or any community. They have also maintained distance
from cross-border terrorism. Nor they ever showed any kind of engagement with Al-Qaeda, the Taliban or Pakistan-based militant groups. They even do not have a history of retaliating against the Sangh terrorists and officials who killed their people, raped their women and destroyed properties and homes in thousands of incidents of anti-Muslim violence. It was in the midst of the American war on terror and India’s pledge against terrorism that the Sangh parivar wanted to ‘fly their own fish.’ Dozens of bomb-blasts occurred in different places and Muslims were blamed directly, their faces and dress became the front-page news in the press. In some blast cases, solid evidence of the Sangh involvement was found but soon disappeared. Detained Muslim youths were first shown as having an independent terrorist organization, then with Pakistan and then with Kashmiri militants. At the end Pakistani terrorists were highlighted. This game continued until Hemant Karkare opened the tight knot of the rope of the Sangh-sponsored terrorism. However, again the infiltration of six terrorists through Nepal and Bihar became headlines.25

Communal Terrorism of the Sangh Parivar in Gujarat

I have taken up the case of Gujarat terror and the bomb blast cases to reflect the nature and forces of violence and terrorism. In the words of Amartya Sen: “The Gujarat massacre, unrestrained by a state that proved to be, at best, grossly incompetent but very likely a great deal worse, is a manifestation of vicious sectarian politics that is doing its best to turn India into a barbaric country of which every citizen has reason to be ashamed.”26 He further says: “The Gujarat butchery is more than a communal slaughter, it reflects a diabolic bestialness that communal sectarians have planted well into India’s body politic.”27 It covered as many as 40 cities and over 2000 villages. The losses amount to about 40,000,000,000 rupees. In Surat and Ahmedabad cities, over 60 factories owned by Muslims have been completely gutted. In other cases, all big and small commercial establishments have been looted.28 In one district of Himmatnagar alone, 2161 houses, 1461 shops, 304 smaller enterprises, 71 factories, 38 hotels, 45 religion places, and 240 vehicles were completely or partially destroyed.29

In the recent Gujarat riots, more than 2000 Muslims were burned alive and over 20 mosques and mausoleums were vandalized: “15 of them were converted overnight into temples.”30 The mosque in the middle of Naroda’s busy bazaar was a few hundred meters from the local police station and the mazar (grave) of the poet Valji Gujrati stood in the middle of the road between the police lines and the police commissioner’s office in Shahibagh. Assessing the situation on the ground, a journalist reported:

25 The Hindu, New Delhi, 2, 3, and 4 January 2010.
27 Ibid., p. viii.
The civil administration … has been quick to erase any signs that these buildings actually existed. It has leveled the land and removed the rubble at the sites of 22 mosques and mazars, turning them into vacant plots, or in the case of Vali Gujarati's mazar into part of the road that runs by the Police Commissioner's office. … In many places in the city Maha-aris, a public ritual favored by the VHP [Vidhan Hindu Parishad organization], were held - including at the Mansa Masjid [Masjid meaning 'mosque' in Arabic] in Bapunagar and Noor Masjid in Hardasnagar – and statues of Hanuman placed inside. Even now saffron flags hang from the minarets of desecrated mosques.31

By all accounts, most of the attacks were made “in full view of police, who remained mute spectators to the crime. The continued indulgence of the Gujarat police towards the Sangh Parivar over the years has virtually snowballed into Hindutva protagonists virtually acquiring quasi-police powers, calling the shots in almost every walk of life.” One senior police officer told a journalist that “the intention this time was mass murder of Muslims.” He described it as a “genocide” and said “a substantial amount of homework was done beforehand … they knew which shop, business, factory … which home belonged to a Muslim.” The fact is, as many police officers agreed, “Ahmedabad was bloodied because the police high command and the civil administration allowed it to be bloodied.”32 The Justice Madon commission on the Bhiwandi, Jalgaon and Mahad riots (1970) said that “the working of the Special Investigation Squad is a study in communal discrimination. The officers of the Squad systematically set about implicating as many Muslims and exculpating as many Hindus as possible irrespective of whether they were innocent or guilty.”33

Before discussing the Gujarat case of 2002, it would be useful to briefly look at some of the activities of the RSS family, particularly during its anti-Muslim activities in the late 1980s and early 1990s. During this period, it was seriously engaged in a kind of psychological operation to reconstruct the Hindu community as an anti-Muslim body for the purpose of ethnic subjugation. It raised the issue of demolishing the Babri Mosque in order to build a huge Ram temple to show a kind of subjugation of the Muslims. In this pursuit, the RSS family commonly known as Sangh parivar resorted to terrorism. Its activities led to terrorism against the Muslims in the form of communal riots in Aligarh, Muzaffarnagar and Khatavli districts in October 1988 in the state of Uttar Pradesh.34 The Sangh parivar decided that the Hindus would not abide by the court verdict or any executive decision on the Babri dispute and would lay the foundation stone of the Ram temple on 9 November 1989. For this purpose, it collected bricks for construction from over 100,000 villages of India and collected funds for the temple.35 Its aggressive communal mobilization resulted in widespread terror against the Muslims and tension in northern and western India, which created a sense of insecurity.

33  Ibid.
35  “Communal contagion at the Kumbh”, Link, New Delhi, 19 February 1989, pp. 4-8.
among the Muslims. Anti-Muslim violence was engineered by the Sangh parivar in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Karnataka. In September-October 1989 alone, 55 acts of anti-Muslim violence took place due to the Sangh parivar demonstration for the temple. It laid the foundation stone of the temple near the mosque. It recruited lumpen (disassociated) youths throughout the country to make up suicide squads for the demolition of the mosque. The Sangh-sponsored motorized journey of the BJP leader L. K. Advani covering a distance of 10,000 miles again resulted in anti-Muslim violence in several places due to the Sangh terrorists’ anti-Muslim slogans like the “offspring of Babur will go to the graveyards”. “Give one more push and break the Babri mosque. They also displayed various weapons. The then Prime Minister of India, V. P. Singh, heading the minority government at the center, said on 22 October 1990 in his address to the nation: “What we face is not just a new problem [or] a new crisis; the nation is being tested as never before. The challenges we face is not only to the rule of law, not only to our political system and our Constitution…”

During 1987-1992, the Sangh parivar not only resorted to hundreds of episodes of politically-motivated violence but also tried for the emotional outburst of the Hindus against the Muslims. The chronology of these events is fully mentioned in a widely read book. In brief, the unlawful demolition of the 500-year-old Babri Mosque by the Sangh terrorists and their well-planned violence against the Muslims and their belongings, including their religious places and institutions, certainly created a deep sense of their insecurity, fear and humiliation, which are the manifested outcome of terrorism.

Another major incident of Sangh terrorism can be found in the western Indian state of Gujarat where the state government was headed by the Sangh-sponsored party – the BJP – resorted to pervasive terrorism in early 2002. Within hours of the Godhra outrage, a meticulously planned pogrom was unleashed against the Muslim community. Led from the front by the Sangh parivar, thousands of Muslims were killed. More than a hundred and fifty thousand people, driven from their homes, now live in refugee camps. This figure is a fact about only one major district whereas anti-Muslim terrorism affected 18 districts of Gujarat. Women were stripped and gang-raped; parents

40 The Patriot, New Delhi, 6 June 1990.
41 “Advertising Discord”, written by a group of academics of JNU, New Delhi, Mainstream, New Delhi, 26 January 1991, p. 51.
44 The Economic Times, 18 April 2002.
45 Indian Express, 17 April 2002.
were bludgeoned to death in front of their children. Two hundred and forty mausoleums and 180 mosques were destroyed. In Ahmadabad, the tomb of Wali Gujarati, the founder of the modern Urdu poem, was demolished and paved over in the course of a night. The tomb of musician Ustad Faiyaz Ali Khan was desecrated and wreathed in burning tires. Arsonists burned and looted shops, homes, hotels, textile mills, buses and private cars. Tens of thousands lost their jobs. There was a deliberate, systematic attempt to destroy the economic base of the Muslim community. The leaders of the mob had a computer-generated registry list marking out Muslim homes, shops, businesses, and even partnerships.

Soon after this terrorism, the Sangh parivar called its Chief Minister – Narendra Modi – a national hero and equated the incident with a struggle for freedom. Arundhati Roy, internationally renowned Booker prize winner, wrote:

Whipping up communal hatred is part of the mandate of the Sangh parivar. It has been planned for years. It has been injecting a slow-release poison directly into civil society’s bloodstream. Hundreds of RSS branches and its Saraswati Sishu Mandir (their schools) across the country have been indoctrinating thousands of children and young people, stunting their minds with religious hatred and falsified history...

Eminent Indian scholar of Politics, Rajni Kothari wrote:

Hindutva is the biggest single danger faced by Indian civilization (consisting of a Hindu core and several other cultural and religious traditions and milieus). It represents a new—fanged Hindu militancy as against traditional Hindu religiosity. There is nothing religious about Hindutva (just as there is not a shred of religious striving in the RSS). The appeal of the RSS is heavily secular more so since it became the main-spring of the Sangh parivar.

Defining the RSS and, in general, the organizations of militant Hinduism as undemocratic, with authoritarian, paramilitary, radical, and violent tendencies, and as having sympathy for fascist ideology and practice, has been a major concern for many politically-oriented scholars and writers. The first Premier of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, always called the RSS communal and fascist. It was

46 The Hindu, 18 May 2002.
50 Arundhati Roy, "Gujarat, Fascism and Democracy", in Chaitanya Krishna, ed., Fascism in India, p. 32.
51 The Economic Times, 23 April 2002.
52 Arundhati Roy, "Gujarat, Fascism and Democracy", in Chaitanya Krishna, ed., Fascism in India, p. 36.
banned in 1948 for the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. The confidential report circulated within the Congress at that time stated that the RSS started as a sort of Hindu Boys Scout movement and gradually developed into a communal, militarist organization with violent tendencies. It practices secret and violent methods which promote fascism. The general public is usually told that its aim is only physical training but the real aims are shared with the inner circle. There are no records or proceedings of the RSS organization, no membership registers are maintained. There are also no records of its income and its expenditures.\(^{55}\)

Marzia Casolari has alleged, on the basis of archival evidence, that the representatives of the Hindu organizations and fascist Italy had direct contacts for the militarization of the Hindus. Another leader, V. D. Savarkar, has also been associated with Nazism.\(^{56}\) The Sangh terrorism in Gujarat in 2002 was carried in a planned manner – with the stockpile of weapons, trained terrorists and deadly chemicals to burn houses and bodies, to deftly light and toss burning gas cylinders, to make available swords (a contraband object) — “all this proves months of systematic planning and not at all spontaneous outburst.”\(^{57}\) The RSS drew a single corollary from this – that all Muslims are a threat to faith and nation, and especially to women at all times....”\(^{58}\) Another horror of the Sangh terrorism rooted in their deep psyche is its “dark sexual obsession about allegedly ultra-virile Muslim male bodies and over-fertile Muslim female ones, that inspire and sustain the figures of paranoia and revenge. Its religious wing—the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) leaflets, openly circulated in Gujarat in 2002 promised: “We will cut them and their blood will flow like rivers. We will Kill Muslims the way we destroyed the Babri mosque.”\(^{59}\)

Priyanka Kakodkar has related the accounts of nine Muslim children from different victims’ camps in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, whose statements would flood our eyes with tears.\(^{60}\) Testimonies of sexual violence (gang-rape, killing and burning of the bodies of Muslim girls and women) are too inhuman to be rewritten here.\(^{61}\) Earlier the investigations made by the biggest national women organization – AIDWA – in 1992-93 in two cities of two different states in India, Surat and Bhopal, had pointed out several similar features. Muslim women were “tormented, molested, raped and then burnt to death. Sometimes their children were killed before their eyes.”\(^{62}\)

Coming back to the Sangh terrorism in Gujarat in 2002, women were killed in very large

\(^{55}\) Sardar Patel Correspondence, microfilm, reel no. 3, National Archives of India, A Note on the RSS, undated, mentioned in Marzia Casolari, “The Fascist Heritage and Foreign Connection of ‘RSS: Archival Evidence’”, in Chaitanya Krishna, ed., Fascism in India, p. 108.

\(^{56}\) Ibid., pp. 108-128.

\(^{57}\) Tanika Sarkar, “Semiotics of Terror: Muslim Children and Women in Hindutva Rashtra”, in Chaitanya Krishna, ed., Fascism in India, p. 156.

\(^{58}\) Ibid., p. 157.

\(^{59}\) Ibid., p. 159.

\(^{60}\) Priyanka Kakodkar, ‘Gujarat’s Children of Terror’, Outlook, 13 May 2002.


\(^{62}\) Ibid., p. 160.
numbers. At the mass grave that was dug on 6 March 2002 to bury 96 bodies from the locality of Naroda Patia, 46 women were buried.

Tanika Sarkar says:

This identification between killing and masculinity, is a strong and uniquely Sangh teaching. In Gujarat, mobs who raped, sometimes came dressed khaki (deep mustard-yellow color half pant and white shirt) shorts, rape being obviously seen as a religious duty, a Sangh duty. 63

The National Human Rights Commission in its report referred to it:

Given the widespread reports and allegations of groups of well organized persons, armed with mobile telephones and addresses, singling out certain homes and properties for death and destruction in certain districts, sometimes within view of police stations and personnel, the further question arises as to what the factors were, and who the players were in the situation that went out of control. 64

On the other hand, the National Commission on Minorities pointed out in its report that:

Attacks were organized by the VHP and Bajrang Dal who had earlier gathered information on minority houses, shops, etc. The attacks were planned accordingly with first looting, and then burning of shops and establishments along with brutal violence, stabbing and battering of people; besides burning them alive with kerosene, petrol and diesel; they also alleged sexual assault on women and gang-rape in the presence of their relations. The victims were then killed and burnt. 65

The Human Rights Watch said in its report:

“What happened in Gujarat was not spontaneous uprising; it was a carefully orchestrated attack against Muslims. The Attacks were planned in advance and organized with extensive participation of the police and state government officials.” 66

The European Union condemned the carnage. Former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India J. S. Verma said: “The Gujarat carnage was nothing short of war in terms of the sufferings undergone by the affected people. How is it different from war? Are their sufferings any less than in war.” 66

The Case of Bomb-Blasts: Unfolding Linkages

The terror of the Sangh continues in India where 700 million people are voters and the Federal

---

63 Ibid., p. 162.
64 The Hindustan Times, 19 May 2002.
67 The Times of India, 5 August 2002.
government claims to be the largest democracy in the world. However, there is another fact that this democratic polity has not produced a domestic balance of forces to counter the *Sangh parivar*. Over the years, it has grown more its original size while on the other hand, the genuine grievances of the Muslim and the Christian victims of *Sangh* terrorism have seen mere paper promises and Machiavellian statements. Perhaps it seems to be the only democracy where the *Sangh*-like communal terrorists are so confident that they are branded ‘cultural nationalists.’ In fact, the *Sangh*’s existence in its all forms is the anti-theorist to the concept of the rule of law which constitutes the core of democracy and federal polity.

Encouraged by the deliberate misuse of democratic freedoms, the terrorists, along with continuing periodic anti-Muslim violence in different parts of the country, experimented with another dangerous strategy of terrorism by managing bomb blasts in religious places to legitimize their anti-Muslim hatred, since all the detainees were Muslims. In all the blast cases since 2001, mostly Muslims were targeted. Since the Muslim community in India lacks the structures of power, economy, media and pressure groups, their grievances mostly got frozen street talks, occasional demonstrations and reporting in the vernacular press.68 Farah Mihlar of the Minorities Rights Group (London) informed the media that “across the world, counter-terrorism laws have been used to clamp the rights of minorities. In India also, the government has used counter-terrorism measures to detain and arrest a large number of youths belonging to principal minority.”69 It is important to recall that the *Sangh parivar* has all the infrastructure needed to create hatred and militancy. They have managed the military schools since the 1930s. They trained their terrorists for the demolition of the Babri mosque in 1992 and to attack the camera-bearing journalists. The VHP formed ‘suicide squads’ for the Ram temple.70 *Sangh* associate Shiv Sena Member of Parliament Moreshwar Save said on 7 December 1992:

... [the] demolition was planned well in advance and executed with military precision by 500 Shiv Sena *karsevaks* (volunteers) who were trained in Chambal valley. Their use of weapons and explosive materials were hardly investigated. Their premises were never monitored and inspected. Their accounts never worried both the state and federal governments.”71

**Startling Evidences of Terrorism**

The years since 2002, but in particular from 2006 to mid-2008, can be recorded as the most dangerous phase of terrorism in that the claimants were absent and the computer-created terrorist

---

68 Frozen street talks indicate that the grievances are not taken up by the media or the empowered sections of society but remains concentrated on the street talks or the minority press.


70 *Patriot*, 6 June 1990.

organization – Indian Mujahideen – became the headlines. No one knew their chief, or members, offices, training centers, supporters or financiers, except the police and media. When this bombing was engineered in the southern parts of the country, the Deccan (south in the Urdu language) Mujahideen group became the hot news in TVs and newspapers. Later, some Muslim youths were shown linked with Kashmir militants and finally some states with sizeable populations of Muslims, mainly Uttar Pradesh, were shown infected with Pakistan’s ISI agents. This one-way character assassination of the Muslim community gave a free hand to the government and the enforcement agencies to propose stringent laws and to give psychological and political safe-passage to the Sangh parivar to escape.

It worried Muslims about being falsely implicated. Although various signs and evidence of the Sangh involvement were successfully traced at the local level, the facts were suppressed immediately until Hemant Karkare finally got the chain of evidence. After that, bombings stopped until December 1, 2009. Some crucial evidence of the terrorism of the Sangh parivar has been briefly mentioned. In March 2000, 40-50 Bajrang Dal members attended training that included the use of Gelatin sticks. Himanshu Panse, who headed the camp, was killed in the Nanded Blast of April 2006 while preparing a bomb; this was disclosed in the official investigation. In 2001, 115 Sangh members received 40-days’ training in the handling of weapons, the making of bombs and the demolition of the same on the premises of the Bhonsala Military School, Nagpur. Retired and serving army officers and retired senior intelligence Bureau (pro-Sangh) officers were among the trainers (as disclosed in the investigations of the Nanded Blast case of 2006 and the Malegaon Blast case of 2008). In 2003, 50 youths received training in preparing and detonating bombs in a training camp organized at the Akanksha Resort on the Sinhagad Road near Pune city. On May 15, 2002, 155 Sangh parivar members in the age group of 15-45 years old attended a 21-day orientation camp in Pune and, at the same time, similar camps were organized at 71 locations across the country. A week-long firearms training was given to Bajrang Dal members in the Bhopal capital city of the state of Madhya Pradesh. Knife and sword training was imparted to female members of the VHP in a camp in Mumbai on May 17, 2003. The RSS also organized training for women in the use of lethal guns in 73 cities.

72 Computer-created terrorist organization means that the news of a terrorist organization namely Indian Mujahideen (IM) pertaining to North India, and later Deccan Mujahideen (DM) pertaining to South India, do not exist at all as no one claimed affiliation with their offices in India or abroad. Indian Muslims (excluding Kashmir) have no terrorist group so far. So the name of IM and DM are based on emails which too are changed later. There is no inquiry on this.

73 K. M. Mushrif, Who Killed Karkare? The Real Face of Terrorism in India, pp. 43-53, based on highly reliable sources.

74 Ibid., p.43.

75 Ibid.

76 Ibid., pp. 43-44.

77 Ibid., pp. 44.


80 Ibid., p.44, Sunday Express, Pune, 1 June 2003.
Bomb explosions occurred in various places like temples, mosques, offices of the Sangh parivar and other areas during 2006-2008 but the investigations based on solid evidence exposed the terrorist face of the parivar. In the Nanded blast in April 2006, two parivar terrorists were killed while making bombs with striking similarities were found in the temple blast in Aurangabad in May 2006. 82

In June 2006, an attempted terrorist attack on the RSS headquarter at Nagpur was later found to be fake by the fact-finding team headed by Justice B G Kolse Patil. Two suspected parivar members were killed in mysterious blast on 10 February 2007. 83 In September, the police caught three youths in Rampur claiming to belong to an unknown group, the Jihad-i-Islami, who were Hindus. 84 The same month, six bombs were found in Mumbai ahead of the arrival of a cricket team; the local police caught two Hindu youths who were carrying six bombs, enough to kill at least a half a dozen people. 85 In October, the police caught two Hindu youths in connection with sending bombs as gifts in the Hindu Diwali festival. 86

The police arrested eight persons belonging to Sangh parivar after a thorough investigation into the blast at the RSS office in the southern state of Tamil Nadu. The police said that 14 pipe bombs were assembled and the operation had begun in July 2007. The arrested persons confessed that their objective was to create a communal divide. 87 The police caught two Hindu youths on a motorcycle in the Kolhapur district in April 2008 who were carrying 35 crude bombs, ammunition and a gun. 88 In mid-April, the police raided a pathology laboratory in the basement of a private hospital in Malegaon and recovered five live RDX explosives, three used RDX explosives, one pistol, a laptop, a scanner, two pocket-phones, four fake 1000 Rupee notes each one thousand each and 5000 rupees in cash and arrested Hindu youths belonging to an unknown organization. 89

In the case of anti-Muslim violence, the police found the manufacturing of pistols, swords, and other weapons on a large scale in the village of Ameri in the Jalgaon district. It also found one trainer, belonging to the parivar-sponsored political party, who was training youths in the use of weapons and showed communally provocative (anti-Muslim) films and CDs to the youths. 90

There were 43 cases of bomb-blasts, killing over 140 persons in four major cities during June-

82 Ibid.
83 The Times of India, Pune, 11 February 2007.
84 The Milli Gazette, New Delhi, 1-15 October 2007.
85 The Times of India, Pune, 27 September 2007.
87 The Milli Gazette, 16-29 February 2008.
88 Pudhari, Kolhapur, 11 April 2008.
90 The Milli Gazette, 16-31 May 2008.
September 2008. The official investigation of the blast in the city of Thane and the planting of bombs in Vashi and Panvel found the same parivar gang which had planted a bomb in the Muslim graveyard of Ratnagiri on Ratnagiri-Panvel road at the time of Diwali festival in 2007. One RSS activist was arrested by Barabanki police (in Uttar Pradesh state) for conspiring to demolish a Hindu temple and causing anti-Muslim violence. The blast occurred in the Gadkari Rangayatan Theatre in Thane, injuring seven persons in early June 2008 where a modern-secular play was due to be staged. The police found the involvement of parivar and recovered massive stocks of explosives at Panvel based on the tips from the arrested accused. Another bomb was planted at the Cineraj Cinema in the town of Panvel during the screening of the film Jodha-Akbar showing the unity of the Hindus and Muslims. The Nasik Police seized 50 detonators, 11 boxes containing gelatin sticks, and 5 packages of ammonium nitrate from an unidentified vehicle which was suspected to have links with the Bajrang Dal. Another 15 kg of RDX was found in the house of Shankar Shelke (a Hindu) in Ahmednagar district in Maharashtra, who later died mysteriously. In the same district, a large quantity of explosives was seized by the police from a sugar factory at Pathari. In another district, Aurangabad, 4.5 kg of ammonium nitrate, 186 gelatin sticks and 566 detonators were seized. There are more similar cases that will not be mentioned. A terrorist (Nanaon Das) in the guise of a monk was arrested by the police when he was entering the courthouse in Faizabad district carrying a live bomb in his bag. Two Bajrang Dal activists, Rajiv Mishra and Bhupinder Singh, died while making explosive devices in the city of Kanpur in the state of Uttar Pradesh for a massive explosion, during the subsequent investigation, the police found a huge stock of explosive material, a diary and a hand-drawn map of the minority-dominated Ferozabad district. The Special Task Force found in its investigation that the dead terrorists had frequently called two cell phones in Mumbai in Maharashtra state in the two months before the blast.

The Crime Branch of Mangalore (Karnataka State, south India) arrested Duresh Kumar (belonging to Hindu community) for storing a huge quantity of gelatin sticks, detonators and other explosives in a private commercial complex in Puttur. Massive blasts killed over 150 Muslims praying in the mosque in Malegaon (Maharashtra) in October 2008 and the inquiry exposed the involvement of the Sangh parivar unit – Abhinav Bharat – and some Indian army officers who were...

93 Ibid.
95 Marathi Weekly Shodhan, Mumbai, 4-10 July 2008.
96 Ibid.
97 Ibid.
98 Ibid.
also responsible for the blasts in the mausoleum in Ajmer, the Sangh Sainik express train (crossing India Pakistan) and other places. It was revealed that this group was preparing for a nation-wide bombing campaign as early as 2002. In December 2002, the police of the State of Madhya Pradesh had discovered an improvised explosive device at the Bhopal (its capital city) railway station. A second IED was found in 2003 in the vicinity of Bhopal, designed to attack a Muslim religious congregation; they were planted by the same group. In November, two RSS members were killed while assembling bombs in the Kamrup district of the southern Indian state of Kerala. The next day, the police recovered 18 crude bombs from the house of the BJP leader Prakash J, about 200 meters away from the blast spot.

Since the brutal Mumbai terror attack at the end of November 2008, the bomb blasts and other terror attacks have taken a new turn, governmental agencies have unearthed a great deal of evidence against the Sangh Parivar members and associates. Renowned scholars and humanist politicians are also engaged in discussing such terror threats. Subhas Gatade quoted Dig Vijay Singh, the General Secretary General of the biggest part in India, the Indian National Congress, and the former Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh State, who mentioned the names of a few Sangh leading members for training "the activists of VHP and Bajrang Dal in bomb making." Devendra Gupta, under police custody, used to stay with RSS Pracharak Sunil Joshi in Dewas, who also happened to be one of the accused in the Mhow bomb blast in 2001, where six members of the RSS and VHP were found to be involved. The leading TV Channel's (CNN-IBN) website of 14 May 2010, mentioned the statement of Ashwini Kumar, the Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), that "there is a link between the Ajmer Sharif blast (Rajasthan) and the Mecca Masjid Hyderabad blast (both in 2007). Both blasts took place on a Friday night after namaz (prayers). The Home Minister of Rajasthan, Shami Burnwal has confirmed the links."

On 17 May 2010, the National Investigation Agency filed a charge sheet of 3000 pages in a court action against 11 activists of a Hindu right wing organization, Sanatan Sanstha, for the 16 November 2009 blasts on the eve of a grand Hindu Diwali festival that killed two people who were carrying bombs in the Margao town of the coastal State of Goa. Congress spokesperson Manish Tiwari said, "Government will holistically look at the links of the Abhinav Bharat, Ram Sena and its links with the RSS. There was a clearly premeditated design to polarize the society, and its nexus with the RSS, ahead of general elections. Any organization with terror links has to be banned."

The blast in Goa was, in fact, the fourth accidental explosion within a couple of years. In all four incidents – in the cities of Margao, Thane, Nanded and Kamrup – Hindu extremism had allegedly

103 The Hindu, New Delhi, 20 November 2008.
106 Ibid
carried the bombs, which went off accidentally, making them the victims. The CBI also filed charges on 10 June 2010 against four workers of a Hindu terror group in the Mecca Masjid blast of 18 May 2007. Senior Congress leader Digvijay Singh said to a very credible media agency that he had facts regarding the RSS and VHP making bombs. He stated that:

in 1992 there was a bomb blast in the VHP office in Madhya Pradesh, where one VHP member died and two were injured while making bombs. Then in 2002, there was a bomb blast in a temple in Mhow. When the police arrested the VHP activists after investigation, they confessed that they were even given training to manufacture bombs. I have a videocassette of that confession. Again in 2006, in Nanded, there was a bomb blast in the house of a RSS activist where two RSS activists died. After that in March 2008, there were bomb blasts at two places in Tamil Nadu. Then too VHP activists were arrested by the Tamil Nadu police who confessed that they were involved. And how did the Gujarat police suddenly find eighteen bombs planted on trees in Surat? 

The then Chief Minister of Kerala, A. K. Antony (now the Defence Minister of India) made a statement on July 14th 2002 where he branded the R.S.S as a terrorist organization. While another Congress Chief Minister, Digvijay Singh of Madhya Pradesh, said on 7 September 2003 that the RSS incites violence and communal feelings. After a sting operation, the TV channel, Headlines Today, made a telecast on the evening of 15 July 2010 regarding secret meetings discussing the need to carry out terrorist attacks. It made a shocking revelation of an audio tape that a senior RSS member had visited a central university in New Delhi to attack Hamid Ansari (now Vice-President of India) in 2007 while he was attending a function but could not find opportunity to carry it out. The next day RSS workers attacked a TV Today office in New Delhi and broke glass panes, destroying property in the process. The TV Today’s Hindi channel Aaj Tak had shortly before reported the alleged links of some RSS activists to the persons accused of the Mecca Masjid blast. In a blatant attack on the media’s freedom of speech and expression, a large mob of activists gathered outside the office building and shouted slogans in support of their leaders exposed by Headlines Today’s report. The mob blocked the streets leading to the building, not allowing traffic and creating panic among bystanders. Delhi police personnel and security guards were punched and pushed with some injuries.

Thus it appears that the Sangh parivar, mainly the RSS and its associates, has emerged as a massive threat to federal nation-building, rule of law, freedom, equality and justice. Its endorsement

and adoption of terror methods and activities are now being unearthed, although not very seriously but systematically, as they became more divisive and destructive. Evidence that Hindutva groups were seeking to acquire terrorist capabilities began to emerge late in 2002. From 2006 onwards, more evidence began to become available that Hindutva terrorist groups were seeking to enhance their lethality. However, few in India’s intelligence services saw these activities as a serious threat. Former Maharashtra State anti-terrorism police chief K.P. Raghuvanshi’s concern was likely driven by information that Hindutva groups could gain access to more lethal explosives. In September 2006, the police seized a 195-kilogram cocktail of military grade explosives from an Ahmednagar scrap dealer. Shankar Shelke. Shelke, investigators found, retrieved the material – more than enough to execute all terror strikes across India since 1993 – from a de-commissioned Indian Army ordnance store which had sold it as scrap. From Shelke’s telephone records, the investigators established the existence of a large underground market for high-grade explosives. What lessons ought India to be learning from the story of the Hindutva terror network?

Keen among them is the urgent need to address the country’s dysfunctional communal politics. Individuals associated with Hindutva outfits like the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and the Bajrang Dal are developing terror networks in north Maharashtra to target the region’s Muslim population. An exclusive report ‘Nanded Blast: The Hindu Hand’ by Shashikant Gupta Ray (www.tehelka.com), which revealed the manner in which local Sangh Parivar members were installing their own terror networks, did not cause any furor. The most disturbing thing about the Nanded blasts is the lack of sincerity on the part of the investigating agencies in pursuing the case, despite getting enough evidence that district and state leaders of Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and RSS were involved in conceiving and executing the plan. As the investigation done by the People’s Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) and other democratic rights organizations (www.pucl.info) made it clear, the district administration even saw to it that the news of the blasts did not get wide coverage outside. They also allegedly pressured the local media to not follow the case any further after the initial reaction was over. The Terrorism Research Center, an eastern Virginia-based center dealing with terrorism and security related studies, declared the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) a “terrorist organization” and lumped it together with a host of jihadi and secessionist outfits. RSS was added to the list way back in September 2004.

Behind the VHP and Bajrang Dal stands a quasi-paramilitary body, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS or Association of National Volunteers), which is the mother organization of the Hindu revivalist BJP. Described by Jawaharlal Nehru, India’s first Prime Minister, as “an Indian version of fascism, the RSS is at the center of a paramilitary network of front organizations. This structure facilitates arm’s-length money-raising. It also makes it easier for the RSS to deny it is inciting agitation against Muslims and Christians. It is high time that more and more people get to know about these criminal/
Hindutva and Terrorism: Implications for Federal India

anti-human actions of the Hindutva terrorists.” There have been other clear instances of Hindutva groups being involved in bombmaking in Nanded, Kanpur, Bhopal and Goa. Most of these are linked to the Bajrang Dal, which is a front of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

There is now a clear linkage between the RSS, its fronts and personnel and a series of bomb blasts. If terror derived from religious fundamentalism has one headquarters in India, it is the RSS, their younger siblings, the Islamic, Sikh or Christian fundamentalists, although dangerous in their own ways, cannot match the organizational network, financial muscle or political legitimacy that the RSS, with its affiliates and personnel, possess. After all, India’s principle opposition party is a 100% subsidiary of the RSS and it is the shrill communal politics of this “family” which has created the political climate where any terrorist act could be, despite all evidence, linked to Muslims.

Although both the State (federal units) and the Central Government have started the process of investigation, they need to be more expansive and speedy. The preliminary findings of the Concerned Citizens Inquiry, conducted by Justice Kolsa-Satil and others, revealed that the site with a forensic expert and conducted interviews supported this conclusion. The fact-finding team concluded that central government should keep a close watch and monitor the increasing low-intensity terror activities being conducted by political outfits that are misusing the Hindu religion. Independent investigation under a team of officers known for their inter-professionalism and neutrality are a must; an impartial inquiry into the Nanded incidents, as well as the Malegaon Parbhani and Purna blasts needs to be instituted, open to the public, to first and foremost investigate whether state intelligence and police agencies are professional and neutral in investigating instances of politically-driven Hindu right-wing terrorism. Even though evidence of the existence of such groups has been there since 2002, investigative agencies have always turned a blind eye towards them. Timely action on the part of investigators could have helped saved many lives and prevent certain blasts. Surprisingly, investigative agencies have time and again neglected cases that have allegedly had the ‘Hindu terror’ angle.

Mumbai advocate and human rights campaigner Mihir Desai said: “For the last 10 years, stories about Hindu right-wing violence have been trickling out. Instead of a systematic investigation, there has been an event-to-event investigation. The larger story has remained under-investigated and under-reported.” All these arrests are an indication that investigators are slowly shifting their focus to the once neglected ‘Hindu terror’ groups and are waking up to the potent threat of Hindutva terrorism.

Communist Party of India (M) leader Sitaram Yechury alleged that Hindutva terrorism is a reality. The police and investigating agencies “did not make serious efforts to probe further and

118 Subhash Gatade, “Hindutva—Terrorism’s New Signature.”
120 Subhash Gatade, “Hindutva—Terrorism’s New Signature.”
establish the culprits and their links with the Hindutva organizations" in several cases. To him, the UPA government has shown a "lack of clarity and firmness in dealing with Hindutva terror."123 It is very important to recall here that Digvijay Singh, who is also the spokesman of the Congress Party, mentioned the "violent and anti-national character of Hindu fundamentalists" over vandalizing the Headlines Today TV on July 16.124 Another Congress spokesperson, Jayanti Natarajan, said that "the involvement of senior RSS leaders with terror groups and specific acts of terrorism" needed to be investigated because "they have the power through such acts to destabilize the entire society, Constitution and our political system."125 Thus it can reasonably be said that Hindutva, an ideological movement based on hatred, prejudices and emotional exploitation of the misuse of Hinduism, which culminated into the Sangh parivar, has resulted in acts of terrorism. This is not only a threat to the minority groups but also to the majority community as it is divisive, provocative, politically-motivated and extremely violent in nature. It needs to be contained very seriously in the larger interest of the people and the letter and spirit of the Constitution of India which seeks to promote liberty, equality, justice, democracy and federalism.

125 Ibid.