CHAPTER VIII
COMMUNALISATION OF KERALA SOCIETY
As has been said in one of the previous chapters of the present study, communalism emerged in Kerala even before the official formation of the state on November 01st, 1956. After the establishment of modern Kerala state the communalists, either it is the Hindu communalism or the Muslim communalism or the Christian communalism, began to concentrate in the growth and expansion of their influence and ideology among the Keralites. In other words the next major plank of the communalists was the spread of their ideology among the people of Kerala, thereby communalise the society. For this intention they utilised every opportunity and method came in their way. Actually in the initial stage this process was in snail pace and gradual. But once it gained the momentum, especially during the 1990s, the communalisation process was full-fledged and constant one. So a detailed investigation into the methods and tactics of communalisation or communal mobilisation of Kerala society is vital and fundamental.

It is clear that communalisation/communal mobilisation of a society is a long-term process and to communalise/communally mobilise a society or people communalists use different methods and strategies. Like- historical misinterpretations, usage of religion, religious symbols, religious festivals and culture, making competitions for economic and other material things, creation of segregation between ‘we’ and ‘they’ or ‘other’, construction of community identity, ignite violence, especially, communal violence, propagation of

---

communal ideology through the mass media, particularly through electronic media and so on.\textsuperscript{637}

It is very obvious that communalists use history of the country, especially of the past, to communalise/communally mobilise a society. Scholars like RS Sharma, Bipan Chandra, Romila Thapar, Ram Puniyani, K.N Panikkar etc. were very strongly criticised those who misinterpret history, especially ancient history, for their vested interests. R. S. Sharma believes that communally leaned historians are responsible for the emergence of communalism and communalisation of a society.\textsuperscript{638} Ram Puniyani writes “Today, one witnesses the gross abuse of history in order to spread communal hatred towards the ‘other’ community. As a matter of fact, it is the favourite weapon in the hands of those who base their politics on religion. The Muslim and Hindu communal forces, in contrast to the nationalist forces, resorted to gross communal interpretation of history”.\textsuperscript{639} Here Ram Puniyani strongly criticises both the Hindu and Muslim communalists for their misuse and misinterpretation of history for spreading communal hatred and venom towards the ‘other’ communities. In order to widen their grip over the society the communalists use history as their one of favourite weapons. While KN Panikkar says “communalism in India draws sustenance from history, from its interpretation and selective appropriation. It seeks to construct an ‘imagined’ past in order to legitimise its view of the present”.\textsuperscript{640}

In a study Harbans Mukhia very clearly illustrates how is the modern origin of communalism, through the misinterpretation and abuse/distortion of history. He says “It is necessary to lay stress on the modern origins of communalism, because these origins are often interpolated into medieval Indian history, to the so called “coming of the Muslims” and the establishment

\textsuperscript{637} See Bipan Chandra, Communalism…, Op cit., Asghar Ali Engineer, Communal Riots…, Op cit., and K.N Panikkar, “Culture and…”, op cit.,
\textsuperscript{638} R. S Sharma, “Communalism and India’s Past”, in Social Scientist 200-01, January-February 1990, p.4
\textsuperscript{639} Ram Puniyani, Communal Politics: Facts …, Op cit., p.43
of the “Muslim rule”, to be precise. This interpolative argument, somewhat simply put, runs along the following lines: While the Indian (i.e. the Hindu) society had always welcomed any outsider with open arms and while prior to the Muslims all outsiders had merged their identity with mainstream of Indian life, e.g. the Greeks, the Shakas, the Kushans, the Hunas, etc., it is the Muslims who came only to dominate over the vast majority of the Hindus and refused to be absorbed in the Indian society. On the contrary, they demolished Hindu temples and tried to impose their own religion through the use of military and political power. This is where communalism originates”. In this manner, in the modern times, communalists and communal organisations are very frequently and indiscriminately using history for communalisation process and for communalising people.

The next important approach of the communalists for communalisation is the usage of religion, religious idioms, religious symbols and festivals to communalise a society. Communalists use religion, religious idioms, and religious identity as a good weapon to communalise the mind of a society. Because religion and its sentiments provides a unified group people, which clearly illustrated by Emile Durkheim that ‘a religion is unified system of belief and practices relative to sacred things that is to say, the things set apart and forbidden- beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a church, all those who adhere to them. The individuals which compose it feel themselves united each other by the simple fact that they have a common faith. A society- whose members are united by the fact that they think in the same way in regard to the sacred world and its relation with the profane world and by the fact that they translate these common ideas into common practices, is what is called a church’. K.N. Panikkar further explains it, ‘religion provides an identity of being part of a community to all

---

641 Harbans Mukhia, Communalism: “A Study in its Socio-Historical …”, Op cit., p.46
those who believe in the same religion. It perceived and believed that those who belong to the same religion have a certain identity. It is this belief in commonality, which is used for communal mobilisation or creating conditions for communal mobilisation.\textsuperscript{644}

Accordingly, communalism uses religion as an instrument to cement communal monoliths. Communal propaganda projects the commonality of social, political and economic interests of all members of a particular religious, caste or other ascriptive group. It creates an illusion of the universal content of the secular interest of unequal individual members of a caste or ascriptive group.\textsuperscript{645} Communalists and communal politics also using religious imageries and symbols like- ‘Trishul’, Saffron colour and flags, ‘Crescent’, Green colour and flag, ‘Cross’ and so on to mobilise the people around its agenda and for the realisation of their vested interests and aims. It, also, constructs a doctrine, which is powerful to rouse the passions of people.\textsuperscript{646} Besides these communalists organise religious processions even, with age-old men, women and children carrying religious symbols. Above all, they disseminate communal ideologies in guise of patronising culture, literature, theatre, arts and science. M Muralidharan says that conducting festivals, processions, renovation of dilapidated temples are the other major methods of communalists to communalise a society.\textsuperscript{647} The net result of these processes is that it further helps in consolidation of communities and creates a hostile ambience in the society.

In this sense construction of Mosques, Churches, Temples, Shrines etc…have very crucial roles in the process of communalisation/communal mobilisation of a society.\textsuperscript{648} Because Emile Durkheim says that ‘A religion is united system of belief and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, the things set apart and forbidden- belief and practices which unite into one

\textsuperscript{645} Pramod Kumar, Polluting Sacred Faith: A Study of Communalism and Violence in India, Delhi, Ajanta Publications, 1992, p. 16
\textsuperscript{646} Aneesudheen PK, “Communalism in …”, Op cit., p. 43
\textsuperscript{648} Aneesudheen PK, “Anatomy of …”, Op cit., p. 62
single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them. The individuals which compose it feel themselves united each other by the simple fact that they have a common faith. A society- whose members are united by the fact that they think in the same way in regard to the sacred world and its relation with the profane world and by the fact that they translate these common ideas into common practices, is what is called a church’.  

The next major modus operandi of the communalists for the process is the usage of culture. KN Panikkar says that culture is the central means as well as an integral part of communalism. To them, culture imparts an all-comprehensive character, embracing political, religious and social activities. 

At the same time, it is to be noticed here that culture and cultural symbols had used very widely during the times of the national struggle for freedom. However, unfortunately some of the vested interested people used it to communalise the society. Hence it is clear that through local nuclei that communalism has built up its cultural and ideological hegemony. Besides it scholars, generally, believe that communalism and communalisation/communal mobilisation are going on in the society through the competitions for secular things like, economic and other mundane materials. Asghar Ali Engineer affirms it as “it must be noticed that communalism is product not of religious hostilities but of political and economic struggle for share in power and resources between the educated elite. So communalism is an upper class elite phenomenon. It is not a subaltern phenomenon either as they are not involved in such struggles”. In actual fact one thing can be said that culture and cultural sentiments are used/used communalists for the purpose of communal mobilisation of a society.

---

649 Quoted in Pramod Kumar, *Polluting Sacred* ……, *Op cit.*, p. 10
651 Interviews with KN Panikkar and Rajan Gurukkal, *Op cit.*
Another important instrument for the communalisation/communal mobilisation process is inciting or creating communal riots. Communal riot has been understood as ‘purposefully planned, deliberately and precisely unleashed violences and killings by people belonging to one religious community on those of another, within the territorial jurisdiction of the same state system’. In Kerala communal mobilisation is mainly carried out through communal riots. But unlike other scholars, K N Panikkar is not ready to accept communal riots as the ultimate expression of communalism. Instead he argues that communal riots as the best vehicle or instrument for communalisation process.\(^\text{653}\)

According to Bipan Chandra communal violence not only represents barbarism, but also spread communal ideology in geometrical proportions. It forces even secular persons to organise self-defence on communal lines and to join hands with communal forces to defend their lives and property. It arouses in a flash all the hidden passive communal elements in the personalities of the mass people it further works towards the segregation of people on religious lines.\(^\text{654}\) That is what exactly happened in the Marad society after the riot in 2002. So it is obvious that communal violence and riots are best weapon in the hands of the communalists for their agendas and it enough powerful to organise even secular persons on communal lines and to join hands with communal forces to defend their lives and property. In this sense communal violence and riots at Naduvattam in 1956, at Thalasseri in 1971, at Eravipuram in 1992, in Bombay in 1993, in Gujarat in 2002, at Nadapuram in 2002, in Pathanamthitta in 2002, in Marad in 2002 and 2003, in Beemappally-Cheryathura region in 2009 etc. were very helpful to the communalists for their communal activities and communal mobilisations in the state.

Very after a communal violence or riot the communalists use the terror situation of the spot and mind of the people to further communalise the


\(^{654}\) Bipan Chandra, Essays on…, Op cit., pp.138-9
people. As a result of this people, particularly the victims began to ghettoise into a particular area where they feel much safer than the other places. But there this group, may, becomes powerful and, in future, create their own strong holds. More over this type of communal segregation and ghettoisation enhances the possibility of further communal violences and riots in the locality. Ram Puniyani says “Communal violence gives electoral rewards and ‘desired’ results to the perpetrators of communal violence”. It can be seen in the cases of Bombay riots after the demolition of Babri Masjid, Gujarat riots in 2002 and Marad riots in 2002 and 2003. But, what was the immediate direct effect a communal riot is that it further enhances and fastening the communalisation process in the society. That’s why Paul R. Brass writes “… the maintenance of communal tensions, accompanied from time to time by lethal rioting at specific sites, is essential for the maintenance of militant Hindu nationalism, but also has uses for other political parties, organisation, and even state and central governments”.

Communalists also use mass media for communal mobilisation and thereby communalisation of a society. The growing communal bias and communalisation of Mass Media has been one of the most important developments in the Fourth Estate in the country during the last few decades. When looking to the roots and psychology of communalism, one can see the role played by the Media, especially the print and visual Media, in the development of communalism. Some Media, even, using highly inflammatory languages to describe the killing or riot or destroying of properties and most of the time never missed a chance to use community’s name or the person’s name. This further surcharges the already tensed atmosphere. For instance, during the Gujarat riot in 2002 the Gujarati local press like ‘Sandesh’ and ‘Gujarat Samachar, and channels like J.T.V, Dheep T.V and U.N.M played the most unscrupulous and vicious game when they

---

656 Aneesudheen PK, “Anatomy of …”, Op cit., p. 102
657 Paul R. Brass, *The Production of …*, Op cit., p. 8
were reporting the riot and even supported the riot. It is contemptible and shameful to the Media. Nehru, during the 1930s, strongly criticized the role of newspapers in communalism and its wide spreading. He once said “newspapers spreading communal hatred should be checked". At the same time he was in favour of freedom of opinion and did not want newspapers, seeking to increase their circulation, to spread communal hatred. He continued “it has become absolutely intolerable that a newspaper should spread utter falsehoods and incite communal passions and make money in the bargain. Instead of this such a newspaper should be punished”.  

That is why historian Rajan Gurukkal says that mass media, especially the electronic media have played a significant role in the communalisation process of Kerala society. Mass media also incite communal fury through its telecasting, presentation and distribution. The best instance is the telecasting of Ramayana and Mahabharata in Door Darsan channels. Mass media have very vital role in the outbreak of communal riots, for instance the reporting of Godra incident and the subsequent Gujarat genocide. In the post riot situations, media can play a crucial role in the strengthening or weakening of social relationship and further developments in the riot prone area. For this the best instance, in the Kerala context, is the role of a few media after the riot of 2002 in Marad.

In short, communalisation/communal mobilisation is the result of multifarious functions and strategies of the communalists. At the same time communalisation of Kerala society is mainly carried out through communal riots and subsequent communal segregation of the society. For this the Marad society is a best instance.

K.N Panikkar says that the process of communalisation of Kerala society became more powerful and affluent during the last years of the

660 Cited in Asghar Ali Engineer’s Communalism in India…, Op. cit., p. 95
661 Ibid.,
662 Discussion with Rajan Gurukkal on 28-12-2008
twentieth century, particularly after the demolition of Babri Masjid, which was an important marker in the social consciousness of both the Muslim minority and the Hindu majority. He further apprehends that during the last couple of decades, the activity and influence of communal formations have considerably increased in the state.\textsuperscript{664} It is true that during the last two or three decades Kerala witnessed wide and powerful communal mobilisation of people by the communalists in the state. For that they, particularly the Hindu communalists, use religious idioms, symbols and identities. As a part of it, the Hindu communalists distribute ‘Trishuls’ (Tridents) among the Hindu believers, thus creating a self confidence rooted in the religious identities.\textsuperscript{665} Moreover, in this endeavour the Hindu communalists receive tremendous helps and backups from the various cultural organisations- they promoting and disseminating communal ideologies and propagandas- and other institutions such as Saraswathi Shishu Mandirs, Kalyan Vanavasi Mandirs and so on. This involvement and interference of the communalists have made quantitative and qualitative changes in the outlook and consciousness of a major part of Hindus in Kerala. The net result of the process was, in the words of K.N Panikkar ‘a fundamentalist shift has taken place among the Hindus of Kerala’.\textsuperscript{666}

At the same time, the Muslims and the Christians in Kerala were also not different from this kind of developments. During the last a few decades or at least after the demolition of Babri Masjid a majority section of the Muslim youths were dangerously turned towards the Muslim outfits like the National Democratic Front (NDF), Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI), Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Jamaate Islami etc… and they were dissatisfied and strongly against the pacifist methods of the democratic-secularists. Instead they believed in the maxim of ‘retaliation in the same coin’.\textsuperscript{667} Noted journalist N.P Chekkutty argues that ‘this opportunity successfully utilised by

---

\textsuperscript{664} K.N Panikkar, “Communalising Kerala”, in \url{http://www.hindunet.com/the_hindu/2003/05/13}, p.01
\textsuperscript{665} Christifor Jaffrelot, \textit{The Sangh Parivar}, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2006, p.159
\textsuperscript{666} K.N Panikkar, “Communalising …”, Op cit., p.02
\textsuperscript{667} \textit{Ibid.},
the Muslim communalists and thereby they further bloomed in the Muslim community. Unfortunately the secular-democratic forces and organisations in the state failed to curb this tempo among the Muslim youths. Instead those organisations and forces tried to ally with the communalists, especially during the pole times. It further enabled the Muslim communalists to go with their propagandas and activities in the society. Finally it reached at the level of recruiting the youth for militant and communalist activities in the state as well as in the nation and international level.

On the other hand, among the Christian community the tendency of fundamentalism, religiosity and communalism is fastly and steadily growing. The Christian communalists and fundamentalists are very actively and vigorously propagating their communal ideologies among the innocent believers. For the purpose they organise religious processions, religious ceremonies, festivals and so on pubically. That is why K.N Panikkar says “Religious processions in which women and children participate carrying religious symbols are a familiar sight in almost all parts of Kerala. The street processions have become common for festivals of all religious demonstrations. This was unknown about twenty years back”. Besides these, with aid of foreign countries the Christian communalists even continuing proselytisation (forced?) in the state. It creates much hue and cry among the others. That means the Christian community is also facing the problem of communalisation of the community.

With the formation of modern Kerala state and the subsequent assume of power by the Communist government under Sri. E.M.S Namboodirippad, the different communal forces and elements compelled to withdraw or at least shrink to their shells or shelters. But that was only for time being, because very soon communalism came back to the political scenario of the state. It

668 Discussion with N.P Chekkutty on 10-12-2008

669 According to K.N. Panikkar ‘communalism among the Christians of Kerala has the nature and characteristic of an instrument to gain and protect the interests and aspirations’. (K.N. Panikkar, “Samskarathile Edapedalum Mathavum” (Malayalam.), Mathrubhumi Weekly, December 28-January 1, 2004, p. 31)

670 K.N Panikkar, “Communalising…”, Op cit., p.2

671 Aneesudheen PK, “Communalism …”, Op cit., p. 42
proves the later history of Kerala. However, John Oommen says that the formation of the state Kerala in 1956 by merging different units into one never lessened the intensity of communalism that prevailed in different areas. On the contrary, communalism further intensified and different communities began to assert themselves with redoubled vigour in the politics of the state.\(^{672}\)

The agitation against the Education Bill and the subsequent Liberation Movement of 1957-59 was a ‘U’ turn in the history of communalism in the state. The opportunity brought by these socio-political upheavals opened vast avenues for the communalists.\(^{673}\) They fully utilised it with the help and support of the Congress and other political parties, other than the Communists, of the state. Actually, that was a combined effort of the three major religious groups in the state- the Nairs, the Muslims and the Christians.\(^{674}\) It recognises George Mathew, according to him the Liberation Struggle was fought on a religious platform invoking religious sentiments and mobilising the people religious-communal grounds. Mannath Pathmanabha Menon skilfully mixed economic issues with communal pride to arise frenzy among the Nairs.\(^{675}\) Thus, with the backup of these religious groups and political developments the communalists as well as the reactionists grew further in Kerala.

As a result of the Liberation Movement, the Communists lost the power when the president’s rule imposed over the state on July 31, 1959.\(^{676}\) That was a major victory as well as a big breakthrough for the communal forces in the state were concerned. It gave them a good message that if they are united they can defeat any force in Kerala. Thus for the first time the secular-democratic forces in Kerala faced a stiff resistance and attack from part of the communalists.\(^{677}\) So the present study believes that the Liberation Movement and subsequent developments were a big turning point in the

\(^{674}\) Ibid.,
\(^{675}\) George Mathew, Communal Road…, Op cit., p. 151
\(^{676}\) Manorama Year Book 1999, Malayala Manorama, Kottayam, p. 148
\(^{677}\) Aneesudheen PK, “Communalism …”, Op cit., p. 41
Further communalisation of Kerala society. Since then, the communal forces and elements began to successfully interfere in the state politics/administration and bargain their vested interests and aims from the governments. For the purpose the communalists organised and gathered under their respective religious banners and formed or utilised political parties to attain their vested interests. That is why scholars say that the communal phenomenon is political in genesis.\(^{678}\) It arises as a result of the skilful manipulation of the religious sentiments and cultural ethos of a people by its elite which aim to realise its political, economical and cultural aspirations by identifying these aspirations as those of the entire community. At the same time the so called secular-democratic parties like the Congress and the Communists competes each other to get and gather the political help of the communal forces in the state.\(^{679}\)

As a result of this attitude of the Congress and the Communists, political or pole time alliances with the communal parties/forces formed in the state. In the State Assembly Election of 1967 the Communist party established political alliances with the Muslim League and the Kerala Congress and formed a front under the title of United Front. In the election, the United Front fought under the leadership of E.M.S Namboodirippad against the Congress led front. The election result was in favour of the United Front and they formed government under E.M.S on March 06\(^{th}\) 1967.\(^{680}\) Very soon the Muslim League began to ask its share from the government and as a part of it they demanded the formation of a Muslim majority district in the state. For this the Muslim League unleashed tremendous pressure on the E.M.S government.\(^{681}\) Finally the government succumbed to the demand and formed a new district on June 16\(^{th}\) 1969, with Muslim majority population and named it as Malappuram.\(^{682}\) At the same time, this move was strongly opposed by the Hindu communalists and they even organised strong agitations against the

\(^{678}\) Asghar Ali Engineer, *Communal Riots…*, *Op cit.*, p. 34

\(^{679}\) “Legacies of Secularism…”, *Op cit.*, p. 43


\(^{681}\) Interview with Rajan Gurukkal on 17/12/2008

\(^{682}\) *Manorama Year Book 1999*, Malayala Manorama Publications, Kottayam, p.202
government decision. These developments clearly prove the growth and spread of communalism and communalisation of Kerala society. Really it was another major victory for the communalists and a big landmark in the process of communalisation of Kerala. Very after this the Muslim League captured coveted posts in the cabinet through their bargaining power and tactics.

In fact of the subduing of the Communist government before the pressure political strategy of the communalists, particularly before the Muslim communalists communalism began to grow very speedily in the state. People began to come under the banner of the communal parties and this process was very speedily in the districts of Kottayam, Malappuram and Thrissure, where the religious/community concentration is strong. There people looked political or communal forces like the Kerala Congress, the Muslim League, RSS, VHP, NSS and so on as power houses to discharge their long cherished wishes. That’s why Gopal Krishna writes that ‘Non-communal political parties also make their contribution to the aggravation of communal climate in the country. They do this by paying close attention to the communal factors in their electoral calculations and by submitting to communal pressures in order to secure group support in election’. That is what exactly happening in Kerala. But during the period (until 1990) communalism, as discussed earlier, was like a political doctrine. In other words during the period communalism in Kerala was not assumed its cruel form of the destruction of religious communities. Even though the present study considers this period and developments as a crucial breakthrough for the communalisation process. Thus, the communalisation process started with the Liberation Movement, it speeded up the process with the establishment of Malappuram district and subsequent opposition against the formation of Malappuram district.

683 P. Parameswaran, “Vargeeyatha:…”, Op cit., p. 17
684 Discussion with N.P Chekkutty on 12-08-2007
685 “Secularisation’ and ‘Communalisation’; The Concept and The Process’, www.shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in.21/4/12, Accessed on 11.53 A.M
The Muslim communalists thought that they can win anything by allying with either ruling fronts in the state. Thus they can cherish and fulfil their vested interests and there by become the lone party of the whole Muslims of Kerala. On the contrary, the Hindu communalists under the BJP, RSS and VHP felt that by opposing the decisions and ‘anti-Hindu policies’ of the government they can grow and spread among the Hindus. Thus they can assume the role of the ‘protectors of Hinduism’, there by tune the whole Hindu community in the state according to their will and plan and thus cherish their long pampered dreams.

Meanwhile the Hindu communalists got another opportunity to grow among the Hindus of Kerala; it was in the form of Angadippuram Tali Temple issue of 1967. The issue was that, when the Angadippuram Tali Temple was in a dilapidating state the state government decided to take over the temple, mainly on the basis of convenience for the construction of road i.e., present 213 National Highway. But the then Janasangh, RSS, and VHP were very strongly opposed it and they saw it as an opportunity to influence the Hindus under their belt. For the purpose the Hindu communalists mobilised the Hindu believers and conducted state wide agitations and protest processions. They even convinced much respected freedom fighter and the Indian National Congress leader K. Kelappan to lead the movement. He took the leadership of the movement, thus to the people it was more than what the Hindu communalists expected and they realised the truth that temples could be the focal point of Hindu mobilisation. For that they fruitfully utilised the tradition and history.

Finally the government withdrew its decision, thus the Hindu communalism got another boost for their spread in the state. Moreover, they uplifted Sri Narayana Guru as their moral leader. After this, Benny Joseph writes that, the BJP gained access in electoral politics too in 1980s. In the

---

687 “‘Secularisation’ and ‘Communalisation’…”, Op cit., p.2
688 Ibid.,
690 Ibid., p. 34
1982 election the BJP-Hindu Munnani (Front) combine contested 69 seats and won 2.75% of votes. The Ram Janmabhumi Babri Masjid controversy and the subsequent Ekta Yathra added strength to its cadres in the local areas of the state.\textsuperscript{691} Thus, with the help of carefully chosen myths, cultural symbols, highly selective memories and political issues the Hindu communalism under the umbrella of the BJP-RSS-VHP combination spread in the state.

On the other hand, the Christian communalists were also not far behind of this process. They well organised under the Kerala Congress parties and used pressure political strategy upon the major political parties in the state. Actually, until 1964 the Christian communalists and reactionaries were with the side of the INC. But in September 1964 these groups formed a new political party under the name of Kerala Congress.\textsuperscript{692} But K.N Ganesh says that the Christians as a community began to organise themselves with the coming of the European powers, Missionaries, Udayam Perur Synod and other new collective methods. As a community they also found their identity and peculiarities with their religion and religious practices. When they organised themselves, they began to bargain benefits from the authorities and the State Governments.\textsuperscript{693} Then, like the Muslim League, Kerala Congress also adopted the opportunistic alliance strategy by cooperating with the INC led government and the Communist led government, particularly with the INC led United Democratic Front (UDF) government. They began to bargain from the different front led governments and secured coveted posts in the state cabinet. Above all the concentration of Christian population in the Kottayam district enabled the Christian communalists to use their political powers for attaining their vested interests.\textsuperscript{694}

Simultaneously they also tried to spread and propagate their ideologies among the Christians and accordingly communalise the community. For that they successfully utilised the avenues opened by the Liberation Movement,

\textsuperscript{691} Benny Joseph, “Politics of…”, \textit{Op cit}, p.34
\textsuperscript{692} \textit{Manorama Year Book 1999…}, \textit{Op cit}, p.150
\textsuperscript{693} Quoted in Aneesudheen.P.K, “Anatomy of…”, \textit{Op cit}, p.33
\textsuperscript{694} Benny Joseph, “Politics of…”, \textit{Op cit}, p.34
Sister Abhaya case, Nilakkal issue and so on. At the same time the common Christian believers believed that these movements and reforms of the governments were as the encroachment of the government over their religious feelings and rights. So they tried to oppose those policies of the various governments with their teeth and nail. It further strengthened the Christian communalism in the state.\(^{695}\) In this way the Christian communalists were also filled their communal weapons to use in the Kerala society. Thus during the 1970s and 1980s the different forms of communalism- the Hindu communalism, the Muslim communalism and the Christian communalism- were acquired much acceptance and influence in Kerala.

Meanwhile, the Thalasseri communal riot of 1971\(^{696}\) was a catalyst for the communalists; they took maximum advantage from it and it resulted in the further widening of the gap in the social relationship of the state or at least in the Malabar region. The riot started in the last day of December 1971 and continued up to the 3rd January 1972, in the meantime killed one.\(^ {697}\) The present chief minister of Kerala Mr. Pinarayi Vijayan was one among the injured people, who were protecting the masjid. Actually the Hindu communalists tried to take full political mileage of it. So they even picturised it as the attack of the Muslim communalists, with the help of the CPI (M) and the INC, upon the poor Hindu believers and their places of worship. They conducted district wide campaign about the attack of the Muslim communalists.\(^ {698}\) However the net result and impact of the subsequent developments was that the Hindu communalism as well as the Muslim communalism attained further momentum and acceptance in the Kerala society. After this riot, communal violence in Marad in 1972 and communal clashes in Thiruvananthapuram in 1982 further faded the social relationship in the society.\(^ {699}\) Thus, by the end of 1980s, the different forms communalism

\(^{695}\) Aneesudheen PK, “Communalism …”, *Op cit.*, p. 42

\(^{696}\) Discussed earlier in details


\(^{698}\) *Ibid*

\(^{699}\) Aneesudheen PK, “Communalism …”, *Op cit.*, p. 42
gained much influence and recognition and possessed crucial and pivotal space in the socio-religio-political scenario of contemporary Kerala.

Since 1991, especially after the demolition of Babri Masjid by the Hindu communalists on 6th December 1992 the process of communalisation or communal mobilisation of Kerala society was vigorously and meticulously carried out in the state. More over after the demolition of Babri Masjid the Hindu communalism and the Muslim communalism assumed its worst form in the country. As a result the nation, particularly the ‘Cow Belt’ states and Maharashtra suffered from severe communal riots. Even the South Indian states were not free from this communal fury and fire. The story of Kerala was also same and it witnessed a number of communal violence. P.R.Shittor writes “During the 1990s Kerala witnessed several communal violence in different part of the state, in which about 49 persons were killed”. This statement proves the grave condition of Kerala and it was communally highly sensitive during the time. Thus, like the other north Indian states Kerala was also became a fertile land for communal activities, it proved the later history of Kerala.

From these facts and realities one thing is clear that with the demolition of Babri Masjid by the Hindu communalists and the subsequent communal riots in the country, the Muslim communalism, the Hindu communalism and the Christian communalism in the Kerala state took a big turn. This change was mainly as a result of the insecurity felt to the minority communities, particularly the Muslims and the Christians, in the country. During the period they were haunted by the Hindu communalists. More over the then central and state governments were utterly failed to reduce the apprehensions and fear of these communities. These developments also indicate the drastic changes occurred to the form of communalism in the state.

700 Discussion with Rajan Gurukkal on 28-12-2008
701 The Hindu Daily on 8th, 9th and 10th December 1992
That means, as explained above, until 1992 communalism in Kerala was in the form of a political doctrine, which was mainly aimed the attainment and fulfilment of political ends of various communities. But with the demolition of Babri Masjid communalism in the state assumed its ‘extreme’ demon form and did many calamities to the society.

In other words, since 1992 communalism in Kerala began to show its worst forms and fearful faces and to view/see everything through the religious eyes or communal myopia affected eyes. In this form one religious community targeting the secular and mundane advantages and benefits at the cost of other religionists. Here one religious community considering the other communities as their archrival and strong enemy to compete for the secular and material advantages. It is the worst form of communalism and it results in severe competition and killing of different religionists. That is why during the period Kerala heavily suffered from the severe communal violence and riots. It clearly indicates the depth and width of communalisation or communal mobilisation of Kerala society.

Since then Kerala was the land of fearful communal competition and communalisation. This situation very efficiently and fruitfully utilised by the communalists and communalised everything and mobilised people over minor issues for the gaining of vested interests and ends. In this competition the role of the RSS, VHP, BJP, Muslim League, NDF, SDPI, PDP, Kerala Congress parties, Welfare Party and Catholic Movements are unexplainable. These ‘power houses’ successfully intervened and influenced the state administration and thereby met their vested ends and aims very swiftly. For the purpose the communalists mobilised the people even at the grass root level. It further severed the competition and culminated in the subsequent communal riots in Kerala.

ATTITUDE OF THE PUBLIC TOWARDS COMMUNALISM IN KERALA

704 Aneesudheen PK, “Communalism …”, Op cit., p. 42
Even though the people are literate, they are not well understood or bothered about the dangerous presence and consequences of communalism and communalisation of the society. At the same time, the huge majority of the population are secular and democratic in their heart and outlook. But a minority section of the population has been influenced by communalism and its ideological propaganda. This is evident in the occurrence of communal riots and steadily growing acceptance of the communal parties and communal groups in the state. The present study very stoutly believes that it is mainly because of the communalisation of the Kerala society. However, as has been mentioned above, when examining the most affected section/group of the communal troubles and violence in the state, one can see that the major share of the victims are coming from the Muslim community. So it is imperative and vital to examine the response and attitude of the Muslims as well as the other religionists of Kerala society towards it.

The Muslims, Hindus, and Christians of Kerala have a magnificent, unadulterated and glorious history of religious toleration, social amity, communal harmony, commitment and dedication to the society and thereby to the nation. They also stood very firmly with the democratic and secular principles and vehemently fought against any type of communalism and communalisation of the society. More over the holy books such as Quran, Bhagavat Gita and Bible itself oppose and prohibit any type of atrocities, in the name of religion, against the other religionists and say and call for religious toleration and communal harmony. The holy Quran says in its Chapter number 109 that you have your own religion and they have their own religion. At the same time, Holy Bible and Bhagavat Gita also have same opinion about the love of different religion and humanity.

---

705 Manorama Year Book 2011 Malayala Manorama Publications, Kottayam, p.154
707 Discussions with K.N Panikkar, Rajan Gurukkal, and Michael Tharakan, Op cit.,
708 Holy Quran Chapter 109
When examining the history of communalism in Kerala, it is clear that the Hindu communalists, the Muslim communalists and the Christian communalists failed to influence the majority of their respective co-religionists. In the strict sense, until 1992 these communalists had no major uphold and clasp over the society. But, with the unfortunate events of Babri Masjid demolition and subsequent communal riots in the country the communalists in the state, particularly the Hindu and Muslim communalists, gained some advancement in this respect. But unfortunately, recently, a meager and microscopic section from the Muslim community (mainly the NDF, SDPI and PDP) standing against the Hindutva principles and its supporters, with the theory of ‘retaliation in the same coin’ and requesting the coreligionists to support them. Actually they are the counter part of the Hindu communalists. However, during the last two or three decades Kerala society witnessed to the emergence of religiosity and religious revivalism among the people, particularly among small groups of the Muslims, the Hindus and the Christians. It is mainly as a result of the unending propagation of the communalists. The rest, majority sections of the Muslims, Hindus and Christians, have good social relationships and religious amity with other religionists and working with each other for the developments of the society and nation.

Whenever a communal issue emerges in the state the Muslims, Hindus and Christians and their respective religious and political leaders are reacting very effectively and cautiously to save the society. The leaders, being it religious or political, are explaining to their co-religionists about the issue and developments and thus calling to save the secular fabrics of the state. The best example of it is the approach towards the Marad riots, Cheriyathura riot and subsequent events. More over majority of the population are working hardly against the cancer of communalism and thus trying to keep up the peaceful

709 K. N Panikkar, “Communalising …”, Op cit, p. 3
710 Aneesudheen PK, “Communalism …”, Op cit., p. 43
condition in the state. That is why Kerala was able to keep calmness and
quietness during the stormy days of Babari Masjid demolition in 1992-93 and
during the period of Gujarat genocide in 2002. Even then a meager section of
the society, the communalists, is frightening and damaging the secular and
democratic fabrics of Kerala state.