CONCLUSION

The mobilization of sections of the society on the basis of religious beliefs for the purpose of political power, is a central point in the intensification of communalism in modern social infrastructure. This perception has materialized during the last decade. Along with religious differences, many other socio-economic, cultural, historical and political forces were also behind communalism, which gave real shape to it, and create the deep differences and conflicts among the communities. Religious differences is a visible force while the other forces are latent, which in reality, hasten the conversion of graceful religion to aggressive communalism. It is not difficult in India to get the whole community together in the name of religion, because religion in India is deep rooted in almost every one’s life and it accompanies them from birth to death. The politicians coin some common religious cause, for the different sects of a religious community, to bring them together on one platform and use it as an instrument, for gaining political power. The construction of Ram Temple as a common cause for the mobilization of the Hindus, regardless of sectarian differences is a glaring example of this kind. Although in several parts of the country, especially in West Bengal, Maharashtra and South India, Ram is not a popular deity, yet in these areas, the temple campaign has succeeded in bringing Hindu masses together on this issue.

The objective analysis of the topic under study reveals that in the realm of politics, this concept is understood to mean sentiments of hatred and animosity towards the rival communities, and it is associated with a narrow, selfish, divisive and aggressive attitude of members of the religious groups. When communalism turns into fanaticism, it becomes a lethal ‘cannibal’ which swallows thousands of lives. We can explain the happenings in Gujarat and Ayodhya merely in terms of feeling in religious superiority, which breeds hatred, fanaticism, fascism, terrorism etc. An author writes,

I have learnt that religion has never been of any use of human values. Religion has been the single largest reason for killing in the human history. Gujarat is proof of this phenomenon.¹

It further brings forth that communalism had apparent influence on the whole political infrastructure of India. The electoral process has been badly distorted owing to
the communalization of the secular polity. As regards the vote bank politics, almost all political parties are unhesitatingly using caste, communal and linguistic factors, in their greed to attain power. It is also notable that each political party, blames others as communal, while all of them encourage communalism in various forms. Actually, politics is a game of numbers and in this game, all the political parties are dependent upon certain vote bank. This fact has forced every party to use every available opportunity to exploit religious feelings to get votes. Sometimes, they strategically undertake the smallest issue and give it a communal colouring for their personal gains and political advancement.

The most significant fact that has emerged while analyzing communalism in India is that the ruling party and state itself are playing a direct role in communalizing the political process. In the numerous cases like, Bombay-Bhiwandi, Ahmedabad, Delhi, Bakaro, Kanpur and elsewhere, the violence, following the assassination of Indira Gandhi, established beyond any doubt the ruling party (the Congress Party) played a leading role in spreading communalism and arousing chauvinistic sentiments among large sections of the society and the state remained a silent-spectator during riots. The riots in Meerut and many other old cities, including Delhi proved that it was an outcome of the ‘gangster politicians’. The Gujarat riots are also an issue of the same kind. The state played a major role in the spread of communalism in India. It has not been firm against the aggressive communalism, of Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims and consequently, the whole of north India has been communalized. The state is obviously guilty of appeasing all communalism, whether of majority or minority. After the reversal of judgment of Supreme Court in Shah Bano case, the doors of disputed shrine in Ayodhya were opened, perhaps as a balancing act, for appeasing the Hindu sentiments. Harold Gould, an anthropologist, notes the significant changes in the political scenario during 1980s and opines,

The period between 1986 and 1992, changed everything. For the first time, since independence, a secular government compromised its unambiguous affirmation to secular (i.e. ethno-accommodative) principles and colluded with the proponents of the ethno religious state .... The Sangh Parivar’s claim that its advocacy of ethno-religious state represented the restoration of an original Hindu
culture and statecraft, is a classic manifestation of the *ex post facto* invention or working of a tradition to fit contemporary political stratagems…. By acceding to unlocking of the Babri Masjid and then remaining passive, when the mosque was torn down by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, the Congress helped to facilitate this reworking of tradition to accommodate the Sangh Parivar’s political agenda and by doing so, cut the moral ground out, from under itself.2

Prof. C.P. Bhamibri concludes his analysis of theme by pointing out the moral that, “the state can fight against communalism, if it does not make compromise with any kind of communalism.”3

The noble concept of secularism as enshrined in the constitution seems to have lost its real connotation. The true secularism has now taken the shape of pseudo-secularism due to nefarious designs of the unscrupulous politicians and is used to attain maximum votes for political power. The policy of appeasement by the politicians, has debased the concept of secularism, for the transient political gains. Ramjanmabhumi-Babri Masjid is a major dispute which extremely denied our commitment to secularism. It not only created the spirit of insecurity among the minority communities, but has also put a blot on the image of modern Hinduism. This is not a clear cut matter of legislation on minority rights, like Shah Bano case and debates on Uniform Civil Code. Actually, it deals with legal practice of supposedly secular state, India, and proves that it needs to secure practically and not theoretically the minority rights.

Iqbal Khan, editor of *Mashal* (Pakistan), having noticed the feelings of the Indian enlightened Muslims, who demanded justice and equality, instead of the appeasement, remarked,

Modern politics is a game of numbers, power belongs to those who command the highest number of votes. In a backward society, where people's behaviour is governed by emotions and prejudices, rather than reason, and where society is fragmented into numerous groups on religious, ethnic, tribal, casteist, biradari etc. lines, it is
not surprising, that politicians win votes by playing off one group against another.\textsuperscript{4}

The secularism has, thus, lost all its credibly and has just become a farce in India. Subash. C. Kashyap, having gone through the whole situation of communalism opines that,

where there is a discrimination between man on the ground of religion, where governors, ambassadors, ministers and other high functionaries are appointed or not appointed because of the community or caste, to which they happen to belong, by the accident of birth, where even for the highest office of the Head of the state, caste and communal considerations are seriously and shamelessly discussed, where there are separate laws and codes for different communities, where the administration of places of worship can be entrusted to Government officers, where no government has the courage to enforce the laws in regard to misuse of religion during elections, where parties with communal denominations, not only exist but participate in elections, where even fundamental rights are demanded and conceded on grounds of communities, it is a cruel joke to talk of secularism.\textsuperscript{5}

The practice of aggressive communalism by Sangh Parivar has given birth to fascism. This trend has posed a grave threat to the national integrity and unity of the country as a nation. This is evident from the sorrowful and sad happenings before and after the destruction of Babri Masjid and widespread communal violence in Gujarat.

The ugly face of fascism in the history of Indian communalism began with the destruction of Barbri Masjid on 6 December 1992. The uncontrolled use of force by a mob, revealed the fascist potential inherent in communalism. The strategy of mobilization employed by the Sangh Parivar, was to utilize the Ayodhya dispute to their advantage, by uniting all Hindu votes in favour the of the Bharatiya Janata Party, through a series of public interventions from the Ram Shila Puja on 30 September 1988, to the demolition of Masjid on 6 December, 1992. The Ram Shila Puja in 1988, was a turning point for the Hindutva movement. The wishful thinking of the opportunistic politicians
that Ayodhya dispute may prove helpful to strike the Muslim community and mobilized the Hindus in majority, appeared a living reality.

The Gujarat carnage in 2002, with the active collaboration of the state and widespread participation of civil society, was the second major aggression of communalism, to aggravate fascism among the Hindus for achieving political mileage. This carnage was a planned holocaust, a wanton attempt for destruction of our secular fabric and flagrant violation of human rights. It was also a real fascist phase. There were thousands of Muslims who were citizens, and were killed but government did not take action for their safety, it rather acted as an agent of savage retribution and collective punishment. The Gujarat genocide demonstrated how quickly governance is eroded. This carnage was itself followed by a resounding electoral victory for the BJP in assembly elections 2002, in the state with Narendra Modi, the former RSS Pracharak and chief architect of pogroms. Before the Gujarat violence began, the BJP had suffered a series of setbacks in local elections and by-elections in October 2001. Then in December 2002, near about nine months after the pogroms and spearheading a culture of cruelty and politics of hate, Modi fructified 126 seats out of 181, improving the previous tally of 117.

Deaths of two thousands or more of Muslims was justified by calling them “enemies”, “outsiders”, “Pakistanis” and terrorists”. They continued to be treated as aliens who can avail no rights, not even the right to return to their own homes. The localities in which they reside, were termed ghettos which denied the basic amenities of water and electricity. Banks and schools denied them services. They were compelled to feel that they live in Hindu Rajya, yet not in the Hindu Rashtra. It is not part of “shining India” the fiction about which the Hindu top leaders cried itself hoarse. The study of growth of offensive communalism, also brings forth an incontrovertible fact that the Indian history also goes against the Muslim community. All our Indian heroes just happen to be Hindus/ Sikhs etc., who have fought against Muslims rulers. Not one in our pantheon was Muslim. Akbar was a solitary figure who can be said to be secular. Now the Sangh and the BJP have capitalized on these old prejudices about the Muslims. They preach that today’s Muslims resent not being the rulers of India and are intolerant to the rule of the majority community, which happen to be Hindus. They, thus, dub the whole community as the agent of Pakistan, the sworn Indian enemy. On the other hand, the
Muslim community argues that they are more sinned against than sinning. They argue that they cannot be held responsible for the atrocities committed by their forefathers against the Hindus and consequently no violence against them is justifiable. They argue they opted for India as their country, in 1947, but the Government did nothing to ameliorate their pathetic and wretched economic conditions. Their economic plight has gone from bad to worse, despite developments in the country.

The problem of communalism is extremely grave and needs to be tackled on war footing, by taking recourse to immediate double pronged approach i.e. pursuasive as well as punitive. The pursuasive or educative approach has significant role to play to get India freed from the clutches of communal politics, by taking pre-emptive measures, carefully and earnestly. Political parties must look to the citizens, not as ‘voters’ but as ‘people’ and people must consider each other, belonging to same nation, and be companionate among themselves and also part of humanity in the interest of communal harmony. The insistence on establishing human rights and the equality before law, irrespective of caste, creed and religion, need to be reassured and upheld. The media should also play its role and propagate the concept of human rights, national integrity and equality before law, in the interest of integrity, progress and prosperity, of the nation. Everyone should be made aware that communal harmony is a pre-requisite to survive as one nation and country. Nobody should have any illusion about this incontrovertible truth, that united we stand, divided we fall. It must become clear to all of us that it is totally a perverted rather absurd thinking that one can make progress, at the cost of others. Communal harmony should also be made a compulsory curriculum in the schools and the colleges so that the citizens are fully sensitized to this problem from the childhood. It is a known fact that right education on this issue in the schools and the colleges would leave imperishable, positive impression, on the formative minds of our youth. This is a historical truth that a nation swims or sinks as a whole. All must always bear in mind the famous words of Pandit Nehru, the architect of India, who said, “who dies if India lives and who lives if India dies.”

As regards the punitive measures against this detestable problem, stern law be acted upon by the Parliament to modify or change the existing provisions of the ‘Criminal Procedure Code’ and the ‘Indian Panel Code’. The weaknesses of law has become
evident for the fact that all the politicians and other influential persons, who openly indulged in ignominious acts and heinous crimes, against humanity, have escaped punishment. This is sending a wrong signal across the country, among all the notorious leaders. As such this is the need of the hour that there should be provisions in the law of the land, that all the communal riots, must be investigated by the CBI, within the statutory time schedule and tried and adjudicated by the special courts, on day to day basis hearings under the supervision of the Supreme Court. The culprits must be brought to book within laid down time frame to send a right message to the nasty elements of the society that they would not go scot free under any circumstances, if they connive with or commit any communal crimes. Severe punishments like life imprisonment for instigating communal riots and death sentence for committing communal violence must be prescribed in the law. The provisions also need be incorporated for severe punishment for the Government agencies who fail to maintain law and order. If it is so, the police force or bureaucracy would not connive with the rioters to please their political bosses for consideration of favour or fear. The immediate stern action by them against the notorious elements trying to disturb communal harmony would nip the communal riots in the bud. So we have need for a separate law to deal with communal riots. ‘The Communal and Targeted Violence Bill’,2011 can be helpful in this connection but it is still pending now.

A bitter lesson that the world history teaches is that a nation that does not learn from its past blunders, perishes from this planet. We all thus must hang our heads in shame and realize, without an iota of doubt that the heinous and horrible crimes against one religious group by any other group in the recent past decade, are not patriotic acts or in national interest, by any stretch of imagination. All the political parties must sit together and find ways and means to eliminate this communal dragon from the country if they want to survive as one nation and want to become a world power.
ENDNOTES AND REFERENCES


6 ‘The Prevention of Communal And Targeted (Access To Justice and Reparation) Bill’, 2011as drafted by the NAC(National Advisory Council) and submitted to government, has been criticized from various quarters. It was criticized by the BJP and the Sangh Parivar without proper reading of all the provisions. They said that Bill is anti-Hindu or anti-majority. But actually all provisions of Bill are applicable with equal force to every accused person, whether belonging to a majority or a minority. The untenable allegations have been made that, it divides the citizens as majority and minority and portrays the majority as perpetrators of communal violence. This is not only untrue, but also the result of a planned propaganda, unleashed to kill the legislation before it even takes birth .For details see, Mihir Desai, “The Communal And Targeted Violence Bill”, *Economic And Political Weekly*, Vol. XLVI, No.31, July-August 2011,p.12.