INTRODUCTION

Communalism is a serious threat to the integrity and economic development of the countries, which have diverse religions, communities and linguistic groups. It is an infectious disease and when its germs, sting the people of one community, it gets enraged and sheds the blood of the other. Such germs exist largely in regions, where different religious, caste, class, groups, fear the continuity of their specific social, religious and regional identity. This results in increasing mistrust among them.

The word communal is derived from the word ‘commune’, striking the meaning of a feeling of oneness or consciousness or friendliness. But this word has been used in the Indian context in a worst derogatory sense. In India, the word “communal” means mistrust, hatred, rivalry etc. among the people of different religions. It is characterized by tension or conflict between culturally distinct, but geographically mixed communities.

The term communalism has thus negative as well as positive connotations. In the right sense of the term, a religious person cannot be a communalist and a communalist, cannot be a religious, because every religion of the world preaches love, tolerance, mutual respect, and welfare of humanity. No doubt true dedication towards one’s own religion does not generate mistrust or hatred towards other religions, but when the religious leaders, incite the feelings of its orthodox, illiterate and gullible devotees, such heinous tactics of the selfish leaders and resultant charged feelings, of the followers, gain the terminology of communalism.

There are numerous definitions of communalism, which have emerged from different political and ideological orientations. Scholars have elaborated this concept from socio-economic, cultural, political and historical angles. The essence of their views conveys that communalism is a multi-faceted phenomenon, in which each factor has a close relationship with the other. India has a variety of cultures and religions, with conceptual differences. These differences have created antagonism and distrust among them.

The burden of the argument is that in India, a religious community, is an economic as well as political community at the same time. This complex phenomenon of communalism, dominates Indian political discourse. On the basis of false community
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consciousness, elites incite the people to wage movements, to avail more resources and encourage separate identity on communal lines.  

The ghost of communalism has not emerged suddenly or developed by chance. It is rather deep rooted in pre-partitioned India. Its seeds were sown by Britishers as part of their political policy of “divide and rule” and it largely changed the whole political landscape of India. Unfortunately after partition, the socio-economic conditions in the country, continued to favour the breeding of communalism. The Indian economy has grown at less than the required rate. Such a critical situation gives birth to the new problems, like unemployment, inequality, as well as a large gap in the distribution of wealth. The whole situation breeds frustration and social anxiety, among the people. The politicians too resorted to the British policy of exploiting the communal situation. Now politics is closely mingled with a sort of communalism and naturally, it has poisoned the national life in various ways. The tragedy of the recent Indian politics is that the people are more religious than communal, while the political leaders are more communal than religious. Some political parties of India are too much communal in nature. The mainstream parties like the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party, have theoretically liberal ideology for minority communities, just to attain power. They are least concerned with the fundamentals of our constitutional set up. The political parties are using religion as stepping stone for political power. Similarly the religious organizations, utilize it for political clout or to preserve hold on their vote bank. The places of worship are being converted into centers of political activities. The party tickets in elections are ensued, keeping in view the particular caste, creed, language or religious group, so as to enhance the chances of victory. It is this process, that actually prepares the ground for communalization of politics. This intermixture of religion and politics has encouraged the concept of communal politics in Indian political infrastructure. Ramjanmabhumi-Babri Masjid dispute is the major example of this fact. The concept of communalism in India, generally, has been used to explain the confrontation between the Hindus and the Muslims, as they are the major religious groups and their numbers really matter in the elections. There had been many conflicts and riots emanating from Hindu-Muslim communalism, in the post-independent era. Prominent among the riots are Jabalpur
(1961), Meerut (1968), Ahmedabad (1969), Gujarat (2002) and the major issue of Babri Masjid-Ramjanmabhumi, which is under study, is the matter of the same kind.

During the mid-1980’s, the status of relations between the Hindu majority and the Muslim minority was redefined, with the much debated case of Shah Bano\(^8\) and the controversy over Mandir-Masjid at Ayodhya.\(^9\) The situation was completely propitious for the growth of communal politics. Religion entered politics with a new force. The Congress Party under Rajiv Gandhi leadership appeased the orthodox Muslims in Shah Bano case. The government’s move, towards bringing legislation to undo the Supreme Court judgment, was essentially motivated by the idea, assuaging the Muslim constituencies. With the passage of this retrogressive legislation, the Congress Party sought to consolidate the minority support base among the Muslims. Anticipating a possible retaliation from the Hindu orthodox organizations, the Congress made a comeback to woo the Hindus too. This time it ordered the opening of the locks (on 1 February 1986) of Babri Masjid and allowed the Hindus to offer prayer in its precincts.\(^10\)

This action of the Congress party infuriated the placated Muslims and they turned against the Congress. The Hindus were also not happy with the Congress, on its dubious stand on the construction of Ram Temple. Thus the Congress failed in its double game to appease, both the communities.

The failure of the Congress party in Shah Bano case and Ram Temple at Ayodhya, gave way to the Bharatiya Janata Party, to win the Hindu votes. The BJP took recourse to the agenda of Hindutva and its populist slogan, *Mandir Vahin Banayenge*. Frequently under the banner of Sangh Parivar, all the Hindu orthodox organizations, rendered immense help to the BJP, by rallying the support of the Hindus during the Parliamentary elections (1989). It is true, the Bhartiya Janata Party along with Sangh Parivar, openly provoked this issue, but the Congress could never tolerate the majority vote bank to the BJP. Actually it was the Congress government ruling at the centre which allowed the *Shilanyas* (laying of foundation stone) in November 1989, when Buta Singh was the Home Minister.\(^11\) The dispute took a serious turn when inspite of assurances of state government of Uttar Pradesh to Supreme Court and Central government, the Babri Masjid was demolished on December 6, 1992. Not only three domes of the mosque were broken on that day by fanatic Hindus, but three domes of constitution, justice, and rule of
law were also broken. The then Prime Minister P.V Narsimha Rao, remained silent spectator and did not take any action in favour or against the demolition, while the Central Reserved Police Force (CRPF) was on duty, few kilometers away from the site in question. If the Congress could order military action in Golden Temple, where there was a small gathering of Sikhs, compared to Ayodhya, why not a single gun shot was fired upon the fanatic Hindus in Ayodhya. Undoubtedly, it is clear that it was a matter of political discrimination. The occasion of demolition of Babri Masjid was celebrated in the entire country by the Sangh Parivar, which in turn created violence on a large scale in some parts of country. It was the worst communal violence after partition. In this violence, the local police force and the provincial armed constabulary, also encouraged riots. During this action Muslims suffered as a minority at the hands of majority Hindus. Even before the demolition in 1992, the Ayodhya issue was being used to garner votes since 1986, when doors of Babri Mosque were opened. This nexus between religion and politics proved, much rewarding for the BJP, which could win 85 seats in 1989 and 119 seats in 1991 Parliamentary elections and emerged as the main opposition party. More importantly, it came to power in four north Indian states-Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh, and emerged as a main party in almost all other states.

Communalism in the 1990s, emerged amidst the collapse of the Congress system and the political order, established by it. Communal politics in the 1990s, reflects a change in the tenor and tone of the political parties. The effect of these changes can be seen now also. After seventeen long years time, the dispute about demolition of Babri Masjid, flamed once again when, the Liberhan Commission Report was presented in the Parliament (but not opened in the Parliament). The Commission indicted former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, along with L.K Advani, and former BJP President Murli Manohar Joshi and 65 others, for the demolition of Babri Masjid on December 6, 1992. But the punishment cannot be expected to the accused, even after the presentation of this report, because there is not a single instance in which the Indian government took any strong action on the recommendation of any Commission. The recent examples are, Ranganath Mishra Commission and Nanavati Commission Report on the anti-Sikh riots of 1984 and Shri Krishna Commission Report on the 1992-93 Mumbai riots. The
government took no action against the accused persons. These reports had no effect on
the political leadership. They did not learn any lesson from these reports, but adopted the
communal policies to gain power, which is still continuing. For example even after the
Liberhan Commission Report, the politicians were arousing the same slogan, *Ayodhya
mein Mandir Ban Kar Rahega*. And recently during the assembly elections of Uttar
Pradesh, February 2012, the Congress party announced 4.50% quota for backward classes
of Muslims out of OBC quota of 27% and that Urdu language will be made the second
official language. According to our Constitution, any community cannot be given any
reservation on the religious basis. So a new drama was played on the BC Muslims. Even
the Election Commission is an independent agency, but to get the Muslim votes, the
Congress did not hesitate to hit the Election Commission. On the other hand, the
Bharatiya Janata Party promised to build Ram Temple in Ayodhya and ‘A Spiritual
Design’ at Brijbhumi of Mathura.

Thus the practice of communalism continuously remained an effective instrument
for the consolidation of the vote bank. The Congress has been tacitly using communal
identities for gaining power. It however preferred to be represented as a secular party,
appeasing to various religious communities and making alliances on religious basis. On
the other hand, the BJP openly used the communal card for political purposes. It
wholeheartedly, declared itself a Hindu party, fighting for the Hindu cause, using
ideologies, such as Hindutva in elections. The cause for which the public was mobilized
in the name of Rama and Ayodhya, was not religious but it was absolutely political.
When the Rath Yatra (September 1990) was being performed under the leadership of L.K
Advani, Bhanu Kumar Shastri, a former member of Parliament, bluntly told, *The Times
of India*, that, “The election campaign has begun. The real question is whether or not,
Ram Bhakti will translate into votes”.20

The level of communal violence, however, sharply declined in the late 1990s and
largely in 2002s, apparently providing some credence to BJP’s claim, that their rule span
was better than that of the Congress Party. Contrary to the aforesaid claim, a massive
series of Hindu-Muslim riots in the BJP ruled state of Gujarat, following the horrible
murder of fifty seven *Kar Sevaks* travelling in a train, in the town of Godhra, who were
returning from the temple building campaign (27 February 2002), was the direct sequel of communal politics. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) called for a state bandh, or complete shutdown, in Gujarat state to mourn and avenge the Godhra attack. The armed bands of VHP activists, retaliated by attacking, Muslim localities, where Muslim men, women and children, were identified, attacked and then brutally murdered in several following days. Even Ahsan Jafri, an ex-MP of the Congress party was burnt alive with 39 more persons in Chamanpura in Ahmedabad city on 28 February 2002. The state police either remained conspicuously absent from the riot-torn areas or actively participated in the violence.

The Chief Minister justified violence in terms of action-reaction, that is, a Hindu response to Muslim provocation at the Godhra station. Along with Modi’s state government, the Central Government of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, failed badly to control the situation. Even Vajpayee proved communal minded and was termed as the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS) pracharak, like Narendra Modi. On the other hand, others considered it as a pre-planned violence. The preparation for this carnage was planned by the VHP and the RSS, since a long time. The Godhra incident has its political and communal background in the larger framework of democratic political process. The referred carnage created a feeling of insecurity among the Muslims and they held that they were not granted justice in India.

Aftermath of the Gujarat violence, media reports as well as reports of inquiry commissions have pointed out the planned, rather than spontaneous nature of pogroms, police complicity, sexual violence on large scale, and mutilation of women’s bodies, participation of women (Hindu), Dalit and Adivasis in attacks on Muslim community, and the absence of government rehabilitation for victims of attacks. Moreover, the victims of the riots did not get any glimpse of justice.

We need a separate law to deal with communal violence to stop it and, “The Communal and Targeted Violence Bill, 2011”, can be helpful in this connection, but it is still pending now.

Now, nine years after a fire on the Sabarmati Express (27 February 2002) at the Godhra railway station, triggered a communal pogroms in Gujarat state, a special court in
In December 2002 (Vidhan Sabha elections in Gujarat state), Modi escaped political punishment for massacre, and got re-elected. Since then, India’s justice delivery system has failed to bring the real culprits of the pogroms to book. The latest setback (May 2012, closure report) is the Special Investigation Team’s (SIT) effort to let Modi off the hook in the Gulberg society case. This defies credulity (reality) and insults the intelligence agency. The Hindutva mobs could not have done it, without complicity of state police and top leaders. This was documented and confirmed by many non-government Inquiry Committees. Out of all the political parties, the BJP availed maximum benefits in the riots affected areas. Before Gujarat carnage, the BJP’s popularity was on the downslide. A nervous BJPs central command, brought in the hardliner Narendra Modi, as Chief Minister to rescue the sinking ship.

In this context, communal politics in India has been on the rise. The political parties continuously incite communalism, using religious issues and try to feed their power hunger. Minority communities have suffered in India due to it. For sometimes after independence, communal politics did not assume dangerous form, because of continuous hold of the Congress Party in the elections, it being an unchallenged party. After 1980, the Congress Party changed its affinity towards communities and violence in Punjab, was the culmination of the same. The Congress government at the centre is seen as the prime culprit for building up the controversy between the Babri Mosque and the Ram Temple. The Bharatiya Janata Party jumped into the situation for which the groundwork was created by the Congress Party. But somehow, from some studies, this did not get reflected.

The present study aims to analyze communalism and Mandir/Masjid dispute, keeping in view the above facts. This analysis is confined to Hindu-Muslim communalism in the post-Babri phase and the dubious role of the main political parties.

The focus is also on the analysis of the political trends in the Indian political system that have propelled political parties to use them under the cover of communalism and secularism. The study, in this way, critically analyses these developments and inter-
relationships with political parties, especially the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Congress Party.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Although much literature is available on communalism, communal politics, Ayodhya issue and Gujarat carnage, but there is no focussed study available on the post-Babri Masjid phase in the wider perspective. The relevant material gives us considerable understanding of problematic developments of the time. The under mentioned study reveals the review of the relevant studies:-

Anirban Kashyap\textsuperscript{33}, deals with the problem of communalism, keeping in view the provisions of the Indian constitution. The author reveals that communalism and communal politics, is an effective force in independent India, possibly even more forceful than the pre-partition days. Many factors and forces such as religious misunderstandings and contradictions, fanaticism etc. have contributed to its growth. The constitution makers have contributed to its growth, because they were not far away from religion and communalism. Accordingly, he concludes, that constitution is not as secular as it is made out to be. The study propounds relevant factors towards the subject.

This is a collaborative study\textsuperscript{34} perpetrated by four independent, self willed persons, who have different opinions, about the handling of the problem of communalism in this book. The study describes all the events of Ayodhya from beginning to the demolition of the Babri Masjid. This study gives a partial narration of the Ramjanmabhumi conflict, and a glimpse of the political culture of inter-religious conflicts. Thus study is mainly done from viewpoint of Hinduism. It does not make an attempt to balance its portrayal of Hindu nationalism, by a discussion of Islamic revivalism or of the cynical Muslim leaders, who have played a significant part in Ramjanmabhumi issue.

Asghar Ali Engineer,\textsuperscript{35} discusses the phenomenon of communalism in details having its genesis in politics and can be defined as the art of skillfully manipulating the religious sentiments and cultural ethos of people, by its elites, to realise its political, economic and cultural aspirations, by identifying these aspirations as those of the entire
community. The study has pointed out that politicians are hand in glove with anti-social elements, who played a leading role during communal riots.

This study describes the intellectual atmosphere in the country, post judgment of Allahabad High Court on Ayodhya issue (30 September 2010) and gives a perspective about different facets of consequences of this verdict. In the aftermath of verdict, many social commentators, activists, historians, leaders of groups, and parties came out with their opinions in various ways. The study gives the sample of the verdict by giving the major excerpts of judgment, the opinions of all the three judges, and the editorial opinions.

Bipan Chandra endeavors to trace the roots of Hindu-Muslim communalism, in Indian society, which is educationally, economically and socially backward. His version is that communalism is the outcome of 'divide and rule' policy of the Britishers. During the recent times, communalism has become the effective weapon of social, economic and political reactions. Though the study is confined to the pre-independence period, the author analyses communalism in the modern times and suggest measures to decommunalize the society.

D.E. Smith argues that a secular state gives maximum possible freedom of religion to its citizens, in which citizenship is vested in the individual person, so that his religious identity becomes irrelevant, which refuses either to promote or to interfere in the affairs of religion. The conception of a secular state involves three distinct but inter-related sets of relationships, concerning the state, religion and the individual (i.e. religion and the individual, the state and the individual, and the state and the religion). Most of these ideas have their origins in the western social framework, and none of them exists in India with the same social relevance.

Gerald Barrier elaborates communal incidents from history, that helps to understand the recent problems, and past inter-relationships between the two communities. The Mughal emperors were tolerant enough. They did not interfere in religious affairs of the Hindus. This policy was put to an end during the British imperialism. The communal consciousness developed after 1857, primarily as a result of the disruptive tactics of the Britishers.
Gyanendra Pandey\textsuperscript{40} investigates the concept of communalism as part of a large exercise, aimed at understanding the construction of Indian society and politics in recent times. The author traces the history of the term communalism and the politics and attitudes, it seeks to encapsulate, while attending closely to the social, economic and political issues, underlying Hindu and Muslim struggles. He also investigates the role of different participants in the sectarian politics of the period, attached to these politics. It is important for analysis of the growth of communalism in Indian society.

K.N Panikkar\textsuperscript{41}, highlights the numerous factors like, history, polity, culture and economy, which are working for the development of the communal consciousness among Indians. The Hindus and the Muslims are engaged in intolerance, aggressiveness and fanaticism. The restoration of temples, destroyed during the medieval period, is the most emotive issue being raised by VHP and BJP. The Indian state claims for secularism, but in practice, it does not perform its functions in a real secular manner.

K.R. Malkani\textsuperscript{42} analyses the age old Hindu-Muslim relations and holds that the Hindu-Muslim relations did not remain stable, but varied from time to time. The author attempts to give details of the incident, which occurred on 6th December 1992, and its politico-economic consequences. Politicians played major role, especially the leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party. This part is mainly relevant for our study.

Ornit Shani\textsuperscript{43} traces the interconnection between caste, class, communalism and the state. Communalism is sternly related to caste as well as reservation policies and their discourse. The rise of communalism and formation of a Hindu identity, since 1980 are elaborated as ethno-Hinduism. They were driven by tensions between members of minority groups among Hindus. The study intensifies, caste tensions against Muslims. Just like in 1990, threatened by V.P. Singh’s decision to implement the Mandal report, Advani responded immediately, by launching the \textit{Rath Yatra} to unite Hindus on an anti-Muslim agenda. The author describes how the state helped the fanatics by its ‘inaction’ as in Mumbai in 1992-1993, and by active participation as in the Gujarat state. The study is relevant to expose the policy of assistance by state to majority community, against minority community in many massacres.

Peter Heehs\textsuperscript{44} brings forth the distinction between religious nationalism and communalism, with specific reference to Hindus. He reveals that the historical analysis
proves a cause of confrontation and also takes up the differences between mythic narratives and historical truth.

Prabha Dixit\textsuperscript{45} has tried to justify that communalism is essentially a political doctrine, which derives use of religio-cultural differences. The study analyses socio-political relationship between the Hindus and the Muslims in the medieval age and concludes, that the area of conflict is always confined to the small circle of ruling elites. The study brings to light the qualitative differences between the politics of the Congress Party and the Hindu Mahasabha and concludes that the Hindu communal movement is independent of the Congress influence and it is inspired by the political and economic consideration, which played a decisive role in the emergence of Muslim separatism in the Indian politics. The study deals with extensive coverage to the subject of communalism.

Pradeep Nayak\textsuperscript{46} elaborates in details the different aspects of Ramjanmabhumi-Babri Masjid dispute. The dispute has opened the controversy over the definition of secularism. In this study, the author lays emphasis on the activities of the political parties, especially the Bharatiya Janata Party, which played a major role in fomenting the conflict and misused religious emotions of the people for political objective. The analysis is authentic and helpful to approach the different aspects of the dispute, specifically and communalism in general.

Analysing the political nature of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and its functioning and behaviour of the Bharatiya Janata Party, which pursued their political goals, through communal game, Praley Kanungo\textsuperscript{47} convinces that the gruesome happenings in Gujarat are not spontaneous, but organized by the RSS and its ideological concerns, took shape over the past seventy five years and it spread its tentacles, in each domain of the country's social and political life. The study provides a valuable account of the way RSS and Bharatiya Janata Party pursued their political aims, the kind of organizational problems they faced due to unexpectedly fast growth and the dangers based on such a development to the Indian polity.

Rafiq Zakaria\textsuperscript{48}, discusses communal tensions between the Hindus and the Muslims in the historical perspective. The study highlights the causes of communal riots which occurred in Gujarat. The occurrence of train incident in Godhra and the terrible results of communal riots, creating distrust between the Hindus and the Muslims. The
study reveals other grievances of the Hindus, against the Muslims and the religious misrepresentations and historical distortions, pertaining to Islam and the Muslims, were used as a cannon fodder by communal Hindus in their tirade against Muslims.

Siddharth Varadarajan,⁴⁹ traces some rare facts related with Godhra carnage, which still is in mystery. Commenting upon the role of Bharatiya Janata Party, and pursuit of Hindutva policy for electoral purposes, the party encouraged communalism. The role of media in provoking mob violence worked to create enmity between the Muslims and the Hindus.

S.K. Ghosh⁵⁰ holds economic competition and religious fundamentalism as the major cause for the development of communal phenomenon. Both have been used as a camouflage by political parties, which have always wished to grind their own axes. A major part of the study deals with Hindu-Muslim conflicts, which took place before and after the Indo-Pak partition (1947). Before independence, the Britishers followed the 'divide and rule policy' to exploit communal differences among the Indians, since they wanted to strengthen their hold in political power. After independence, political parties followed the same path. The study propounds that most of the communal riots took place during religious festivals and processions. This factor vindicates the point that politicians deliberately use religion for political purposes.

Steven. I. Wilkinson⁵¹, in this study especially discussed the religious politics and communal violence in India. The study is a collection of different essays on religion, power and elections. The author finds salience of religion in Indian politics that has arisen sharply in the past twenty-five years, leading to major outbreaks of violence, most recently in Gujarat in 2002. It provides leading sociological, psychological, economic and political explanations for the incidents of communal violence in several states of India. It is relevant for detailed incidents of Gujarat in 2002 in political and communal perspectives.

Hansen⁵² analyses the agenda, growth, style and functioning of Shiv Sena in Mumbai. The study evinces that the success of Shiv Sena is possible due to its ability to embrace technological progress providing young men, especially with an ideal. Distinction between secular forces and communal forces are also discussed. The study is
relevant in understanding the role of Bharatiya Janata Party and Shiv Sena in Gujarat state and Mumbai, respectively in the context of communal violence.

V.N Rai\textsuperscript{53} has analysed in details the role of police during communal violence, attitude of the masses, role of communalists, communal bias in reporting facts, treatment of arrested persons in police custody, discrimination in preventive actions. The author has deeply studied some cases of communal violence, which proved that the police behaved partially during violence. The author argues average policemen are thinking on communal lines and they believed to be the protector of the interests of their community. The study suggested various recommendations and measures to be adopted to check the menace of communal riots in the country.

Zenab Banu\textsuperscript{54} holds that communalism has been deeply connected with India's socio-economic and political development, and it proved a major threat to the minorities and harmful to secularism. She makes a departure from the traditional explanation of communalism. The study deals with cases of riots affected cities i.e. Udaipur and Ahmedabad. It explains that form and nature of communalism has changed in free India and is different from the phenomenon, prevalent during the pre-partition days. Before independence, the phenomena of communalism and communal riots was imputed(to blame or hold responsible) to the two-nation theory and the British policy of divide and rule. But in the post-partition era, the politicians are exploiting the illiterate and the 'tradition bound masses', by manipulating communal feelings for their own selfish ends.

A.G. Noorani,\textsuperscript{55} concludes that Mandir-Masjid controversy has intermingled with politics, from the very beginning of the incidence. This issue has no reliable evidence used by various political parties in the near past. The Congress and the BJP, both the political parties are busy to create differences on the basis of religious phenomenon. The study expresses that the Congress Party has played double role in this issue.

Agya Ram Shakya,\textsuperscript{56} attempts the different types of communalism prevailing in India i.e. religious, inter-religious and linguistic communalism. He defines communalism as different from racial conflict and terrorism. The author argued that plurality of religions, sects and languages etc., create a sense of superiority and loyalty, among the people towards them. When these are challenged or ridiculed, a communal conflict
emerges. The study is important for understanding, emergence or development of communal sentiments.

Arshi Khan explains the exploitation of minority and majority classes, by political elites for political ends. The central government too, had supported the state governments, from time to time, in their mala-fide activities. Even the judiciary has worked as a puppet in the hands of the ruling party. Similar situation occurred in case of Gujarat. The ruling party has violated democratic conscience of the constitution & federalism. Communal considerations have prevailed over the Indian political culture. Political process mixed with communal thinking, posed serious threats and challenges to federalism and constitutionalism. The figures and facts revealed in the article are quite relevant to the subject under study.

Arshi Khan describes the decision of Allahabad High Court on Ayodhya, in the favour of Hindu community. The court accepted, the disputed site as the birth place of Ram Lalla, but maintained silence over politics and terror of Sangh Parivar. There were no objections over the act of demolition in which the instructions of Supreme Court were violated. The verdict does indicate the primacy of the Hindutva claims over the rule of law.

Arun Majumdar examines the train incident which took place in Gujarat, behind which the BJP's main purpose was to regain the political power with the help of Hindu vote bank. The interim elections took place due to this bloodshed, and by this way, the BJP came back to power.

Arvind Lavakare, in his article, specifically discusses the report concluded by Justice Tewatia team, which elaborated that the Godhra incident took place at the behest of the then government of Pakistan, which had planned to burn the entire Sabarmati Express. The primary object of the Pakistan government was to create Hindu-Muslim conflagration in India. The study proved that the state government of Modi had no role in the incident.

Arvind Rajgopal finds that politicians have dramatically presented the Godhra incident as a big cruelty on Hindus by the media. Thus the role of the media is insidious as well as inclined towards specific directions. The author provides a close study of the “split media”, the differences between English language newspapers and vernacular
newspapers, respectively assumed to be “secular” and “communalist” in their news coverage. Rajgopal’s analysis finds that media (national television, in particular) is an important technical means, for Hindutva’s production of a national identity, and he finds in an emergent “Hindu national realism,” a major threat to secularism. The study provides a physiological account about Hindutva concept.

Asghar Ali Engineer discusses many aspects of communalism, which entails social attributes. The referred aspects cannot be ignored by the theory of communal riots, as they have dangerous effects. The communal phenomena attributing to religion alone is a misconception and the author traces the causes for the spread of communalism to politico-economic factors. Illiteracy has been blamed for creating communal consciousness among the backward societies.

Asghar Ali Engineer describes the local reasons of communal riots, during the 10th Lok Sabha elections and conducts of political parties, especially the role of Bharatiya Janata Party in Mandir-Masjid controversy. A number of communal riots occurred, in the country, when election campaign was initiated and same happened, when the election results were declared and a new government formed. The BJP, for their political gains, created communal tensions through Ramnavami procession in few cities of Uttar Pradesh Communal militancy was fueled by political propaganda of BJP, VHP and RSS, on the issue of Mandir-Masjid. He concludes that BJP came closer to power at the centre, only because of the use of religious issues.

Asghar Ali Engineer analyses major communal riots after 1950. After partition, Muslims were reduced to a very small minority and they felt insecure in Hindu majority. The RSS, the VHP, the BJP, the Bajrang Dal and the Congress are equally responsible for post-independent communal riots. The Congress and the BJP caused communal riots from time to time, for their selfish motives. The author has also proved that communalism is not the product of religion, rather it is a competition among the political parties to use religion to achieve power. But in this work, the author has failed to dwell upon the economic reasons of communalism.

Asghar Ali Engineer criticizes the role of the state and the centre government during different communal incidents in Gujarat, particularly Godhra train massacre. The Bharatiya Janata Party in 1999, promised riot free India, but in the year 2002, the Godhra
carnage occurred in the BJP ruled Gujarat. The author has put the whole blame of the communal riots on Bharatiya Janata Party. The role of the Congress has not been mentioned at all.

Bhikhu Parekh holds that the Gujarat carnage was a pre-planned massacre against the Muslim community, which the Sangh Parivar supported openly. Numerous socio-cultural, religious and political factors paved the way for the above referred violence. The reasons, due to which, both the central and the state government were unable to control and take measures to tackle such a grave situation are discussed in the study.

Deepal Trevedie has presented the political aspect of Gujarat riots in which Narendra Modi played important role, under the influence of BJP, RSS, and VHP. The facts revealed in the study evince that the Bharatiya Janata Party created distrust between the Hindus and the Muslims for their power hunger. Each of them played tricks to hit the rival. Narendra Modi did not behave like a Chief Minister, during the bloodshed. He played nefarious role under the influence of Sangh Parivar. These revelations propounded by Trevedie, evince the factual knowledge about the communal phenomena in Gujarat.

Dharmendra Kumar clears that the Muslims alone cannot be blamed for communal tension or terrorists activities in India. The act of Hindu fundamentalism has given birth to Muslim fundamentalism. Terrorism is the byproduct of fear in which Muslims are living in India. It is true that in recent past, most communal riots occurred in Muslim populated states like Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, but it is also a fact that several states like Assam, West Bengal and Kerala are highly Muslim populated, did not display communal tension in the recent past. The author concluded that fundamentalism is found in every religion and it is illogical to blame the Muslims alone.

Ghanshyam Shah explains that the post-Godhra communal violence, was not sudden, but it was a result of continued strategy of Hindutva ideology and action, over last three decades. This violence has a far reaching impact on Gujarat’s public life. This study endeavors to assess its impact in general and on the political arena in particular.

Girish Mishra concludes that economic factors are mainly responsible for the growth of communalism. After independence, the industrial towns and major cities have
become the main sites for communal riots. The economic competition between the Hindu and Muslim communities have played vital role in promoting communalism. Similarly, family planning, reservation policy in government jobs, and the Muslim Personal Law, have proved major causes to provoke numerous groups, to take action collectively, giving way to communalism.

Harbans Mukhia\textsuperscript{71} explains the communal phenomenon on the basis of history and tradition. The historical evidence favours the Muslims, as there is no mention of demolition of any temple in Ayodhya. On the other hand, Bharatiya Janata Party has moulded the whole situation in favour of existence of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, at the site of Babri Masjid, as it serves as an instrument of mobilization. The work provides commendable information about the communal phenomena.

Analyzing socio-economic factors, Julio Riberio\textsuperscript{72} has disclosed that Hindu religious organisations like Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal, have systematically reduced the economy of private employment of the Muslims in Gujarat state and have become poor too. These victims of poverty never got justice, even they did not know to whom they should complain for injustice. Moreover, it is again a matter of grief that communal poison is deeply rooted in the minds and hearts of Hindu middle class. So, hard economic realities have also contributed to the growth of communal sentiments.

Komal Mitra\textsuperscript{73} has argued that due to the Babri Masjid demolition and the Godhra train massacre incidence, the democratic values have been violated. He emphasises that Babri Masjid site is related to Ram, but this fact could not be proved historically. Judiciary also failed to deliver justifiable decision. In fact, there was political use of Ram for narrow interpretation of Hinduism. The work being relevant to the subject, earns specific weightage in the study of Mandir-Masjid controversy.

Kuldeep Kumar\textsuperscript{74} describing the present intention of the public of Ayodhya, and its vicinal locality, related that the people of Ayodhya wanted peace and they were ready for compromise. Local Hindu-Muslim organizations, called meetings, because they were interested, to resolve the dispute, through mutual understanding and outside the court. But after these meetings, lot of pre-planned confrontation had been created by politicians, who endeavored to complete the political agenda. They are not in favour of compromise.
They want to play the game of power-politics on Ayodhya issue. Even the Mahants and Acharyas are using political strategies.

Kuldip Nayar\textsuperscript{75} presents a horrible face of communal violence during partition and communal riots in Gujarat. The author vehemently criticises the role of political leadership in both the situations, especially the role of the BJP government in Gujarat.

Lancy Lobo and Biswaroop Das\textsuperscript{76} edited essays of different scholars, written on different points after the Gujarat 2002 riots. These indicate definite patterns and a set of trajectories, about the political process experienced in Gujarat. This study deals with the testimony of victims of riots, communalization of adivasis and dalitis, the politics of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), harassment of minority communities, causes and consequences of 2002 carnage. This study is important for understanding the situations of Gujarat before and after 2002 riots.

Mihir Desai\textsuperscript{77} explains that, communal violence is punishable under Indian Penal Code and ordinary law. Various police acts also give the executive and police ample powers, to deal with communal violence, but failure to implement these laws, is one of the major problems confronting the prevention of communal violence. There are number of weak issues in which the present laws are powerless. The NAC’s (National Advisory Council) draft of Communal Violence Bill, takes these weaknesses and shortcomings into account.

Mukul Dube\textsuperscript{78} finds that after seven years of Gujarat genocide, the life of victims (Muslims) has not become rehabilitated. They are even now terrified and ghost of past tortures them. The people, who are responsible for these crimes, are living freely. The victims have now a little hope from the Special Investigation Team (SIT), but it still remains to be seen, how the Supreme Court punishes the criminals and how victims are compensated. It will be clear only after receipt of final report of SIT. The author argues that in case criminals are not punished, this type of crime will flare up more.

Mukul Dube\textsuperscript{79} has tried to justify that communal experiments of Hindutva, have not been only exercised by BJP, but also by the Congress Party oftenly. Whatever, the experiment is practiced in Gujarat by BJP and Sangh Parivar, similar examples are found in other states of India, where BJP was not in power. Now Hindutva experiment is being transferred from lab to factory. It is clear that nothing else but violence will increase. The
study is relevant for future implementations of Hindutva politics and understanding the fact that secularism is being grinded in the dust of communalism.

Nilofar Suhrawardy has raised some questions about Indian secularism, based on Mumbai terrorist attacks 2008. Immediately after the Mumbai attack, the Prime Minister extended an apology, while nothing happened before in the other most drastic riots in Godhra and Gujarat. If the victims of Mumbai attack were wealthy, is their life more valuable than middle class and poor people? How far is the Prime Minister justified in extending apology from the have’s and not have’s? The author observes that communal frenzy aroused by communal incidents, make the Indian secularism weak and poor in its real sense.

This study clarifies that, all provisions and sections of ‘Communal Violence Bill’, 2011 are correct and applicable with equal force to every accused person, whether belonging to the majority or a minority. Inspite of it, the Bill has been criticized by BJP national and state leaderships. Baseless allegations have been made that it divides the citizens as majority and minority and portrays the majority as perpetrators of communal violence. It is a planned propaganda unleashed to kill the legislation before it even takes birth. We need this law and the process about the Bill, should progress in healthy democratic manner.

Prashant Amutkar has analysed about the communal practice prevailing in the name of secularism in India. Indian secularism is different from the western secularism. The characteristics of Indian secularism are responsible for many unhealthy trends and practices in politics. The Indian Muslims opposed the change in their ‘personal law’ to use the safety of ‘religious rights’ in the principle of secularism in constitution. On the other hand, the Hindus also supported openly to their religious organizations, to adopt the violent methods to oppose Muslim fundamentalism. Most of the political parties talk about their secular nature, but in practice they play communal politics, for their political interests. The Indian secularism has been shaken by these type of unhealthy trends. The need of the hour is to review the nature of secularism and functioning of secular polity in India.

Pritish Nandy has criticized the role of Narendra Modi, the Chief Minister of Gujarat, who allegedly ordered the massacre of the Muslim community. Modi was quite
able to take strict steps to control the riots and stop the bloodshed, but he deliberately adopted the delayed tactics. Therefore, the article throws light upon different strategies of the communal-minded political elites, as well as it explores, the tactics of political culture.

Priya Vanda Patel\(^{84}\) has examined the communal situation in Gujarat and analysed socio-economic and political reasons, responsible for creating the situation of communal riots in three major cities of Gujarat i.e. Ahmedabad, Baroda and Godhra.

Raka Roy\(^{85}\) points towards the symbolic usage of the word ‘slap’(to hit) in recent Indian discussions of the Muslims in India, who are seen to be at the receiving ends of the ‘slapping’. She argues that the phrase ‘a slap on the face’ has acquired a particularly urgent resonance in Hindutva India. According to the author, in Hindu worldview, if the hyper masculine Muslim has in the past been thought to have slapped, raped and penetrated the body of Hindu India, the same must now be done to him.

Rowena Robinson and D. Parthasarathy\(^{86}\) analysed different reports on Gujarat carnage. The reports signify that the violence was no spontaneous outburst. It was planned for political motive. The power of BJP was declining at that time and led to the polarization of communities on communal lines. As a result, the BJP won the following elections and succeeded to raise its hold in politics.

In this study, S. Subhash Chandra\(^{87}\) has cleared the concepts of secularism, regionalism and communalism. Important long term and short term measures have been explained, which prevent communalism. Long term measures like, value oriented education, economic development, ban on communal press, communalization of the state, political elite and civil society, should be checked from time to time and short term measures like posting of secular minded, district and police officials in riot-prone areas, setting up a special court to try communal offence, providing immediate relief to victims, taking severe action against all those, who incite communal tension etc. These multi-pronged measures are needed to prevent the communal tensions and bring about communal harmony in the country.

Saba Naqvi\(^{88}\) has put forth two different faces of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, going through the facts and figures of the Liberhan Commission report. Initially Vajpayee was depicted as a right man caught in the grip of communal parties, but finally he is portrayed
in the shape of staunch Hindu, who investigated the Hindu mentality, against the Muslims and his speeches, played a dominating role in the matter of demolition of Babri Masjid. The study throws light on the activities of Govendacharya, L.K Advani, Apa Ghatate and Uma Bharti, which perpetrated in the Ram movement (about Masjid demolition). The author has also brought into light the weaknesses of the Commission that it did not call the alleged persons in the court.

Saurabh Shah\textsuperscript{89} reveals pro-government ideology about the Godhra incident, where media, misused its sources to hurt the BJP theory. The author blames T.V channels and print media which tried to deface the image of the BJP, which got two-third majority in the December 2002 assembly elections. Moreover, Gujarat was always a safer place, even much safer than other states of India.

Sushil Srivastava\textsuperscript{90} reveals a vivid description of history, related to Ayodhya and has proved that no reliable evidence was there that Babar demolished Ram Mandir to construct Babri Masjid. Actually, it was the policy of British government to divide the local people. This strategy of the nineteenth century, created by the British, became the reason of major clash between the two communities on the issue of Babri Masjid. The first violence took place in the year 1855 AD, during the rule of British and this religious issue got coloured in politics.

Sutapa Dutta\textsuperscript{91} explains the development of communalism to nationalism from late 19\textsuperscript{th} century to early 20\textsuperscript{th} century. In India, British rulers made the people conscious in regard to plural structure of Indian society, by their policy of divide and rule, the consciousness for which Hindu and Muslim politicians played a major role to change it in communal sentiments. They made them known to the interests of their communities. The author also narrates that after 1920, the emphasis laid on Hindu nationalism strengthened communalism. The study provides a historical account about using the terms of communalism and nationalism.

T.R. Andhyarujina\textsuperscript{92}, analysed the verdict of Allahabad High Court on Ayodhya issue and described the composite picture of the problems of judgment. The author criticized the verdict, on this point, that this verdict made no note of the vandalism of December 6, 1992, but legalized and legitimised the demolition of Babri Masjid. The absence of any condemnation of the vandalism of the demolition of the Masjid, is a
conspicuous aspect of the verdict. It is a great discrimination with the Muslim community in the justice system.

Taha Abdul Rauf, analysis the multi-dimensional violence against Indian Muslims, in the context of Gujarat pogroms 2002 on the basis of Johan Galtung’s theory of violence. The study points out that direct violence reinforces structural violence, and cultural violence is used to justify both direct and structural violence on Muslims in India. These type of violence occurred in Gujarat, when in direct violence, people were murdered, burnt their bodies, sexual atrocities on women, killed unborn babies and in structural violence, Muslims were abruptly thrown out of their jobs and those who dared to the return to their homes, continued to face a social and economic boycott. The violence was justified by the slogans or concepts such as “aliens” Muslims, “other” Muslims and “dying Hindu race”.

Uday Mehta describes the social and political backdrop of Gujarat, which made it, the ideal place for experiments of Hindutva. Here, in the state, the reform movements remained weak and the middle class, the rich peasants and traders have dominant forces. The atrocities were committed against minority communities here, and Gujarat became the benchmark for Hindutva forces to influence the other states.

The review of literature indicates that different scholars have studied/analysed the communal problem from different angles. But, it seems that the phenomenon of communalism or communal politics, have not been analyzed properly in the post-Babri Masjid period. The authors are generally Hindus and Muslims, are trying to justify their own views. Some of them have the sense of inclination towards their own religion. Thus none has endeavored to analyze properly the problem of communalism under study objectively. The purpose of this study will be to make an attempt to answer the questions, that how the political parties and politicians used the religious sentiments of public for political gains.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is communalism and how it can be defined?
2. Which factors are responsible for communalism and how they are interrelated with each other?
3. What are the main features of communalism?
4. How communalism re-emerged in post-partitioned India?

5. In what way, political parties played an important role to provoke communalism between various social and religious groups?

6. What role political parties, especially, the Congress Party and the Bharatiya Janata Party played to make the Ayodhya dispute more complicated?

7. Why the political leadership failed to solve the Babri Masjid dispute?

8. What is the controversy about historical and mythological background of dispute?

9. To what extent the political leadership has been responsible for communal violence after the demolition of Babri Masjid?

10. Was the Godhra incident of 27 February 2002 pre-planned?

11. In what way, the Gujarat’s government can be held responsible for the Gujarat carnage?

12. What was the performance of police during riots?

13. Can be the Commissions and their inquiries be helpful to punish the accused or not?

CHAPTERISATION

Chapter-1: Introduction

The research problem, review of literature, relevance of study and research methodology have been explained here.

Chapter-2: Communalism: A Conceptual Framework

This chapter outlines the conceptual framework. The framework developed by different scholars, analyzed and explanation of communalism there upon. The social, economic, religious and political factors of communalism are also elaborated.

Chapter-3: Communalism In India: 1947-1990

The problem of communalism after independence from 1947 to 1990, has been analysed in historical and political perspective. This chapter traces the growth of communal trends in Indian politics since independence and against this background, it attempts to reconstruct the case of Ramjanamabhumi-Babri Masjid.
Chapter-4: The Demolition of Babri Masjid and Communalization of Indian Politics

This chapter contains the study of the genesis of the Ramjanmabhumi-Babri Masjid controversy. The historical, legal and political aspects have been studied. The role of different political parties, especially the BJP and the Congress, in dealing with this controversy, have been discussed. It is established that the historical, judicial and political aspects of controversy have inter-relationship. The violence in various regions of the country after the demolition of Masjid and the role of political leadership have also been examined.


This chapter deals with the Godhra incident, subsequent communal violence in reaction to the Godhra incident in 2002, the role of central and state governments during these events and different Commissions set up to probe the said incidents, which held some persons explicitly guilty, but still the accused were not punished as per the logic of law. The partisan role of police during riots has been also analysed.

Chapter-6: Conclusion

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study.

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on secondary documentary, historical, analytical and descriptive methods. In order to study the Babri Masjid- Ramjanmabhumi conflict, historical approach helps in understanding the complex nature of the dispute/conflict. The data has been collected from secondary sources which are mainly books and articles published in journals. The additional sources are census reports, manifestoes of political parties, reports of Commissions, white papers of parties and various government documents. The newspapers and magazines, internet services and periodicals are also the part of our source material.

HYPOTHESIS

The political parties in India played a major role to provoke communalism, on the issue of Babri Masjid Ramjanmabhumi. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), along with Sangh Parivar openly provoked and used the dispute and the Congress Party also tried to
use its hidden agenda. The Congress was the prime culprit for the building up of controversy between the Babri Masjid and Ram Temple and the BJP jumped into the situation, harvesting the gains.

**SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The importance of the study emanates from the choice of the period for research in hand. The last decade of the twentieth century has been a turning point in the history of Indian politics. During this time, the long standing issue of Mandir-Masjid, suddenly took the centre stage, and led to massive communal violence, which resulted in the death of hundreds of people. Between the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992, and the pogroms in Gujarat 2002, communalism has gained new grounds and brought the polity and society under its vicious grip. It was a period of dangerous implications for the future. During this period the Indian society has changed in unrecognizable way. The Hindu communalism has entered its fascist phase, with a well articulated agenda, based on aggressive social and political practice. Communal politics reflects a change in the tenor and tone of the political parties. Religious and communal identities were exploited for electoral purposes. Communalism continued to be used as an effective mobilization instrument for the consolidation of the vote bank. The study aims at analysis of communalism in general and of Babri Masjid-Ramjanmabhumi issue in particular. A broad understanding of the role of political parties has been analysed, as these political actors tried to maximize returns, exploiting communal emotions of both the communities i.e. Hindus and Muslims. The need of the hour is to find a viable solution, to this national problem urgently at political, social and religious levels.
ENDNOTES AND REFERENCES


8  Asghar Ali Engineer (ed.), *The Shah Bano Controversy*, Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 1987, p.89. In Shah Bano Case (1985), the Supreme Court had adjudged a divorced woman of 60 years, residing in Madhya Pradesh, was entitled maintenance charges under the IPC Criminal Code, while the Islamic Law, had allowed her much smaller allowances. Her husband had resisted in the Court that this judgment was anti-Islamic law. After this, Rajiv Gandhi Government introduced a Bill in the Parliament in February, 1986 to exempt the Muslims from the purview of section-125 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

9  Asghar Ali Engineer (ed.), *Babri Masjid-Ramjanmbhumi Controversy*, Delhi: Ajanta Publications, 1990, p.2. During the fifteenth century A.D., the Mughal invaded India and established the Mughal Dynasty. Babur was the first among them. His employee Mir Baqi , who had settled in the region, got constructed a mosque in the name of his master. The Hindu community claims that there had
been a Hindu Temple of Rama (the God) and, was demolished by the Mughals. The above mentioned claim is based on more faith and has no solid reliable historical evidence. Previously, the issue of the Babri Masjid-Ramjanmabhumi had arisen during the British rule. Some riots took place upon this issue in the year 1935. From the year 1949, the issue remained the burning point, when on 22 December 1949 the Muslims discovered that the statues of Ram, Sita and Lakshman, had been installed in the mosque and from that time, this site was locked. For details see K.N Panikkar, “Historical Overview”, in S.Gopal (ed.), *Anatomy of Confrontation: The Babri Masjid Ramjanmabhumi Issue*, New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1991, pp.27-28.


*The Indian Express*, 24 November 2009, p.1.This Commission was appointed within 10 days of (on 16 December 1992) demolition of Babri Masjid in 1992. Justice Liberhan took seventeen years for the preparation of the report. The Commission submitted its report of 999 pages in November 2009 and in the Report, the Commission has blamed that Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Sangh Parivar, were responsible for demolition and it has also blamed absurdly the
Muslim leadership for demolition and has been completely silent about the role of
the Congress Party. For details see V. Krishna Ananth, “Liberhan Commission :A
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*Religious Politics and Communal Violence*, Delhi: Oxford University Press,

27 N.L. Gupta, “Communal riots after the Destruction of Babri Masjid,” in N.L.

28 National Human Rights Commission NHRC, PUDR, HRW, Concerned Citizens

29 The Prevention of Communal And Targeted (Access to Justice and Reparation)
Bill, 2011 as drafted by the NAC(National Advisory Council) and submitted to
government, has been criticized from various quarters. It was criticized by BJP
and 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 minority. The untenable allegation 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.


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88 Saba Naqvi, “Pseudocrat’s Tale,” Outlook, 7 December 2009.


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