In Bihar, during 1951-1958 there were a number of communal riots but those were not serious in nature. As we have discussed in the previous chapters, the post-independence Bihar witnessed a spate of outbreak of communal riots. Major riots after independence, up-till 1967 were: Jamshedpur riots (April 1959), riots in the 1964, Ranchi-Hatia riots (August, 1967), Sursand, in Sitamarhi subdivision of Muzaffarpur in north Bihar, riots (October, 1967), Rampur Khas ((in Belsand of Sitamarhi Sub-Division in Muzaffarpur district)) riots (November, 1967) and Bhagalpur riots (December, 1967).

**Bihar During the 1960s**

The Indo-Pak war in Kutch (1965), followed by the Bangladesh war in 1971, which affected the Hindu-Muslim relations in India specially in Bihar, because during the Liberation war of Bangladesh, India collaborated with the East Pakistan (Bangladesh) where majority of the Bihari Muslims suffered. During the Bangladesh war a number of Bihari Muslims suffered because at the time of partition of India some of them migrated to East Pakistan. Many of them were looked upon as lording over the Bengali Muslims and were suspected to have sympathized with the West Pakistan during the liberation war of East Pakistan (Bangladesh) Hence they were subjected to loot, genocide and general terror perpetrated by the East Pakistan regime. But it was not the whole truth, after partition of India there were communal riots all over the country and about 30,000 Muslim was killed in so called “Bihar Killing” in October and November. Thus people from Bihar, West Bengal, Assam, Orissa, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura and Sikkim, migrated to newly established, Pakistan. Majority of the people migrated from the Bihar so they were well known as Bihari in East Pakistan. Bihari’s language, culture, custom, tradition was quite different except the religion to East Pakistan. But the Urdu speaking Biharis shared the same language with West Pakistanis who captured the economic and political power in East Pakistan. The similarity of language and religion created opportunity for Biharis in the position of East Pakistani economy as West Pakistani rulers patronized them for their own
interest.\textsuperscript{1} Since Indian Government (then the CPI-M led front was in power in the Indian province of West Bengal) collaborated with East Pakistan and eventually Bangladesh was liberated, thus, Bihari Muslims (not all the Bihari Muslims) suffered and in Bihar Muslims, who had their relatives in Bangladesh were drifted their support towards the Jan Sangh, demanded that the Indian Government should guarantee the the safety and honour of the Bihari Muslims in Bangladesh.\textsuperscript{2} Refugees from Bangladesh added fuel to fire. The country again suffered riots in Ranchi, Jamshedpur, Aligarh, Bhiwandi and other towns. With Pakistan born in 1947 and Bangladesh in 1971, there emerged a distinct possibility of a third break-up of the subcontinent\textsuperscript{3} and this gave immigration of refugees on large scale form Bangladesh. In Bihar, approximately 1 crore (10 million) refugees were accommodated. Because of these immigrations, there were threats of communal riots even the minor issues turned into communal clashes such as in Chatra (Hazaribagh) a coomunal clash erupted on 23\textsuperscript{rd} February, 1971, when a Hindu had gone for toilet in a field near the mosque.\textsuperscript{4} The burden of those refugees had created an imbalance in the Bihar economy.\textsuperscript{5} By 1971, many other “odd” developments took place such as, the Naxalites sped up their activities, and due to heavy rainfall rabi crops were destroyed. This shot up the prices of daily commodities and unemployment, thus tension spread into the society.\textsuperscript{6} The Hindu mood with an emphasis on the Hindu Rashtra began to take shape in the minds of Indians against the backdrop. The frustrated Hindus thought they were being marginalized in the process of nation building and that was time they too raised their banner of identity.\textsuperscript{7}

With the consolidation of the middle castes and their awareness of their numerical political strength which has been going on for decades, the political scenario of country in general and of Bihar in particular began to change in the mid 1960s. The gradual decline in the voting percentage of the Congress from 1952 to

\textsuperscript{2} Prasad (ed.), Jayaprakash Narayan: Selected Works, pp. 9-10.
\textsuperscript{3} Bihar Sarkar, Arakshi Varshik Prashasnik Prativedan- 1971, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{4} Bihar Sarkar, Arakshi Varshik Prashasnik Prativedan- 1971, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{5} Bihar Sarkar, Arakshi Varshik Prashasnik Prativedan- 1971, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{6} Bihar Sarkar, Arakshi Varshik Prashasnik Prativedan- 1971, p. 4.
1967 had much to do with the gradual coming up of the middle castes, which had first found a platform in the Ram Manohar Lohia led Samyukta Socialist Party (SSP) that had emerged as the single largest party in the Bihar Assembly elections of 1967. The period from 1967 to the imposition of Emergency in June 1975 was a period of political tumult and instability. By 1960 the forward castes started losing their hold over the lands that strengthened the capacity of new land-owning class mainly consisting of the upper Other Backward Castes (OBCs), i.e., Yadavas, Koeris and Kurmis. By 1968, the consolidation of these upper segments of the backward castes enabled them to stand against the upper caste hegemony, who denied them the emerging socio-economic opportunities. The land owning class of Yadavas had small political parties that merged, after the 1967 Assembly elections, with the Communists, the Jan Sangh and the Samyukt Socialist Party (SSP) to form a grand coalition called the Samyukt Vidhayak Dal (SVD) was formed and a former Congressman, Mahamaya Prasad Singh (1909-74) was sworn in as the first non-Congress Chief Minister of Bihar in March 1967 with Karpoori Thakur (1924-88) as his Deputy. Unlike UP, however, SVD government did not last long and, using the

9 The lower OBCs and the SCs were in weaker position in comparison with the upper OBCs because the lower OBCs and SCs were remained largely landless and at most tenants-at-will, depending on the erstwhile zamindars as well as the new Yadav land owners., see, Sanjay Kumar, Mohammad Sanjeer Alam and Dhananjai Joshi, “Caste Dynamics and Political Process in Bihar”, Journal of Indian School of Political Economy, Vol. XX, No. 1&2, January-June, 2008, p. 8.
10 Even the forward castes that dominated the Congress, did not seems to be comfortable with the idea of sharing power., see Kumar, Alam and Joshi, “Caste Dynamics and Political Process in Bihar”, p. 8.
11 The Samyukta Vidhayak Dal (SVD) was an experiment that worked in Uttar Pradesh as well and Choudhary Charan Singh after splitting the Congress was working at larger project of peasant politics, which later formed the basis of the OBC mobilization., see, Kumar, Alam and Joshi, “Caste Dynamics and Political Process in Bihar”, pp. 8-9.; The SVD, in fact provided a model for secular parties to come to terms with the RSS-led Jan Sangh in the Hindi heart-land. The ‘non-Congressist’ fold now excluded the most explicit spokesmen of Hindu communalism. The emergence of the Janata Party and the setting up of the Morarji Government in 1977 was the culmination of the SVD process, wherein Chandra Shekhar and Golwalkar, Jagjival Ram and Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Madhu Dandavate and Maharani Scindia, George Fernandes and Advani joined hands to usher in the eldora do of a secular India, wedded to Gandhian socialism and genuine non-alignment., see, Moonis Raza, “Communalism: The Dragon’s Teeth”, in Pramod Kumar (ed.), Towards Understanding Communalism, Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development, Chandigarh, 1992, p. 129.
12 V. Krishna Ananth, India Since Independence: Making Sense of Indian Politics, Dorling Kindersley, New Delhi, 2010, p. 110.
13 Karpoori Thakur’s policies – language policy, reservation policy and employment policy – and suggestions on security to the landless dalits and poor were couched in the language of populism and social justice. He was both loathed and adored for his policies and suggestions, especially on reservation, language and security. His reservation policy divided Bihar along caste lines; his suggestion about the security divided the state along caste and class lines, and his language policy, especially, divided the state’s politics on the class and rural-urban axis.; cf. Jagpal Singh, “Karpoori Thakur: A Socialist Leader in the Hindi Belt” in EPW, Vol. L. No. 3, 17 January 2015, p. 57.
factionalism within the SVD, Satish Prasad Sinha became the “interim” CM in January 1968 for 3 days, paved the way for Congress-backed instant coalition called Shoshit Dal.14 He was overthrown by the former Congressman and the sitting SVD minister Bindeshwari Prasad Mandal who was elected as chief minister by the Shoshit Dal (SD). Within a few weeks the former Congress Chief Minister Binodanand Jha (1900-1971) along with a group of Dalit MLAs split the Congress to form the Loktantrik Congress Dal. He made Bhola Paswan Shastri, the first Dalit CM of Bihar in March 1968. Shastri also had an unstable government and within less than 100 days of his becoming the Chief Minister, Governor’s Rule was promulgated.15

The 1969 Assembly elections were also resulted in an unstable Assembly. The first OBC CM of the Congress, Harihar Prasad Singh, the first ever Chief Minister belonging to OBC, was sworn in but his government lasted for only 4 months. Bhola Paswan Shashtri again formed the government but his was also a freakshow of two weeks, thus Bihar was under President’s Rule once again.16 Indeed, the emergence of Chaudhary Charan Singh (1902-87)17, from 1967 to 1979, was the result of the growing power of the middle castes in North India.18

**Bihar During the 1970s**

By 1972 Bihar gained notoriety for administrative incompetence, political corruption, nepotism and various other ills. There were some ministers whose corruption was defended on the ground that they collected funds for party politics. It is alleged that there have been Ministers and Chief Ministers in Bihar whose regimes have been marred by illegitimate extortion of money for illegal gratifications and selfish accumulation.19 There have been rumours that some Chief Ministers had to supply funds to the Congress Party High Command to electoral purposes. Even if

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15 Kumar, Alam and Joshi, “Caste Dynamics and Political Process in Bihar”, p. 9.
16 Kumar, Alam and Joshi, “Caste Dynamics and Political Process in Bihar”, p. 9.
17 Chaudhary Charan Singh was born in a well off family of Jat tenants from Meerut in Uttar Pradesh.; for more details see, Christophe Jaffrelot, *India’s Silent Revolution: The Rise of Low Castes in North Indian Politics*, Permanent Black, Delhi, 2003; also see, Paul R. Brass, *Production of Hindu-Muslim Violence in Contemporary India*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2003.
such charges are not legally validated, they vitiate the political atmosphere and generate streams of resentment.\textsuperscript{20}

The ‘Total Revolution’ led by Jai Prakash (JP) Narayan, hence also called the J.P. Movement, launched in Bihar in 1974, was essentially a popular protest against corruption which had acquired disturbing dimensions. The J. P. movement was followed by a period of emergency and the announcement of elections.\textsuperscript{21} But with the second tenure of Mrs. Gandhi, corruption\textsuperscript{22} had assumed truly gargantuan proportions. The countryside was marked with caste atrocities and massacre, many of them faced atrocities by the police. In Bihar, the places such as Pipra, Masaurhi, Arwal, Dhanarua, Parasbigha, Kacharia, Birra, Dalilchak were the scene of horrible violence.\textsuperscript{23} The system of Government by the people and for the people transformed into the Government by the corrupt and for the corrupt.\textsuperscript{24} The ruling Congress-I, had contributed to the resurgence of communalism by its indulgence and appeasement of religious fundamentalists of both majority and minority communities.\textsuperscript{25}

Criminals who were wanted by the police and the courts of law and who could not enter the country for fear of being arrested and tried had now become politically powerful. They were boasting about the accessibility to and influence the corridors of power and in centre cases even participated in discussions with ministers on the economic future of the country. International smugglers have become eagerly sought for guests while their nefarious activities were continued to ruin national economy

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\item \textsuperscript{20} Varma and Verma, “The Political System in Bihar”, p. 507.
\item \textsuperscript{21} Prabhash Pd. Singh, Political Violence in India, Amar, Delhi, 1989, p. 51.
\item \textsuperscript{22} Indira Gandhi commenced in her second tenure in office with an act of gross fiscal impropriety. The bankrupt Murti was taken over to help family and friends. An artificial sugar scarcity was created to help sugar barons earn billions. Enormous quantities of edible oil were imported to help the oil lobby. Black Bonds were launched to help whiten black money. Wheat was imported in spite of a good crop and a comfortable stock position, just to earn commission. Sad to say, commissions had become a consideration even in the purchase of arms for national defense. Indeed the arms agents and their patrons were seeing to it that our dependence on foreign arms continues and grows all the time., c.f., A. M. Zaidi, Dr. Shaheda Gufran Zaidi, Naushaba Firdos Alvi, Abdul Moid Zaidi and Amin Ahmed (eds.), The Annual Register of Indian Political Parties: Proceedings and Fundamental Text, 1981, S. Chand and Company LTD, New Delhi, 1982, p. 546, also see, Data India (weekly), 29 January - 4February, 1979, p. 58.
\item \textsuperscript{23} Sankarshan Thakur, The Making of Laloo Yadav: The Unmaking of Bihar (Biography), Harper Collins, India, 2000, p. 64.
\item \textsuperscript{24} Zaidi, Zaidi, Alvi, Zaidi and Amin Ahmed (eds.), The Annual Register of Indian Political Parties: Proceedings and Fundamental Text, 1981, pp. 545-546.
\end{itemize}
that was almost under official and political patronage. The corruption at the centre and political violence has spread like a malignant cancer to the states. The 1977 election was marked by a vicious expression of sufferings of the people against the state of emergency and the party in power. There were more occurrences of political violence in the 1970s, in different forms- agrarian conflict, caste conflict, class conflict, communal violence, electoral violence, inter-party conflict, intra-party conflict, language conflict, regionalism, student unrest, Trade Union conflict, etc.

Because power was transferred from the Congress to Janata Party but by 1979 Janata party breathed its last and again the country faced Parliamentary and Assembly election. Political violence such as agrarian conflict (since Bihar is an agriculture based economy) and electoral violence (as there was conflict for power between forward caste and backward caste, and emerging upper OBCs) had made situations severest in Bihar. Agrarian conflict was mainly caused by land disputes, minimum wages dispute, share cropping and Naxalite activities. And the immediate causes of violent disputes were the land laws and minimum wages Acts were passed by the Government of Bihar, were quietly favoured landed classes. And electoral violence in the rural Bihar was mainly caused by violent conflict between the members of the so-

27 Between 1977 and 1980, in case of electoral violence, Tirhut division was leading with 55%, Darbhanga 47%, Bhagalpur 40%, Patna 34%. Kosi 28.6% and Chotanagpur (north) 18.5%. Similarly in case of Agrarian conflict Kosi tops with 50% and it was followed by Bhagalpur 34%, Patna 27%, Tirhut 20%, Darbhanga 16.6%, and Chotanagpur (north) 11%. Occurrences of Trade Union conflict were 52% in Chotanagpur (north) and 15% in Chotanagpur (south), reason might be the presence of industries and coal fields in these regions. In Patna (14%) and Darbhanga (9.5) caste conflicts were significant. During 1977-80, communal violence had been reporte from Chotanagpur (south) with 20% of the cases of violence, and all these violence has been turned in loot, atrocities on lower class of people and riots. See, Singh, *Political Violence in India*, pp. 67-74.
29 By 1977 and 1980, out of 284 cases of political violence in Bihar, about 35% had occurred in Patna division, 17% in Tirhut division, 17% in Chhota Nagpur (north and south), 15% in Darbhanga, 11% in Bhagalpur and 5% in Kosi division. In the period 1977-1980, except for Patna and Chota Nagpur (north and south), all other divisions had shown greater number of political violence, thus there seems to exist inter-regional variations in the occurrences of political and communal violence in the state., see, Singh, *Political Violence in India*, pp. 63-64.
30 The important reason for the Naxalite movement in India was the threat form Soviet Union to China and India was the main ally of the Soviet Union, thus to weaken their power on the 100th birthday of Lenin on 22 April, 1969 the CPI (ML) was born, since it came into being at Naxalbari in West Bengal it came to be known as Naxalites. The most fertile ground for the movement in Northern Bengal and in Northern Bihar. The movement started from the Naxalbari fight of landless labour and the poor from 1967. This movement spread like bush-fire from West Bengal to Bihar to areas of U. P., Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu etc. Although the Movement was disappeared in 1977 with the symbolic death of Charu Majumdar (the ideologue of Naxalite movement in India) in police custody on 28 July 1977 but the idea was still alive because the indian polity gave no relief to landless labourers and the poor. The exploited poor in rural areas of Bihar and in other parts of the country continued this movement till today., see, N. S. Saksena, *Terrorism: History and Facts in the World and in India*, Abhinav Publications, New Delhi, 1985.
called forward caste and backward caste. The immediate cause of such violence was the reservation policy of Janata government that created reservation for backward caste in government jobs. Thus people from both caste (forward caste and backward caste) got mobilized around this issue like forward caste against the reservation policy and backward caste in favour of this policy. But the Mandal issue had the advantages for the Janata Dal because no political party, even the BJP could dare to oppose the ‘Mandal proposals’ for the reservations for the minority community. BJP came with the Ramjanmbhoomi (Ram Mandir) issue thus it took the form of Mandal vs Mandir that projected the BJP on to centre-stage. Mandal-Masjid controversy resulted in riots all over India in wake of rathyatra by Advani, like riots in Meerut in 1987, where local political leaders, instead of helping local authorities, exploited the situation. However the promise of BJP to built Ram Mandir at place of Babri Masjid remained in pending; therefore it is that the BJP’s commitment to built Ram mandir was only a way to gain electoral advantages. This move of BJP was angrily responded by the Muslims, as Syed Shabuddin stated, “Till the title is decided any such allotment will amount to official support and patronage to an unlawful activity and prejudging a subjudice matter.” Further, Ahmed Bukhari, son of the Imam (prayer leader) and leader of Babri Masjid Action Committee (BMAC), said that the opening of the lock had already done irreparable damage which had sown the seed of perennial conflict between two communities.

32 BJP wanted to spread militancy through 4 point programme- (i) bring Hindus under one manch to fight for Hindu causes, (ii) ban proselytisation, (iii) promote Sanskrit as a uniform Language, and (iv) back political candidates who support Hindu interests.,see, India Today, 31 October, 1989, p. 27.
33 Since in India especially in Bihar caste and class wars were rampant and votes were divided on the caste and class lines. In fact every minority has been divided, socially, politically and economically, see, Moin Shakir, “Electoral Participation of Minorities and Indian Political System” in, EPW, Vol. XV, Annual Number, February, 1980, p. 221; In such situation BJP started popularising the Babri Mosque and Ram Mandir issue Because BJP wanted to earn the whole Hindu votes for them by creating emotive and religious issue before them (the Hindus).
34 Thakur, The Making of Laloo Yadav: The Unmaking of Bihar, p. 70.
35 Although, in 1989 in Bihar it was Satyendra Narain Sinha (of the Congress the then ruling party) who was the then CM of Bihar, on 22 October, 1989, Laloo Yadav dispatched a team of two members-Raj Kumar Singh, then a Secretary-level Official of the Bihar government and Rameshwar Oraon, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of the Bihar police- to Samastipur to arrest Advani, to put a stop on Advani’s Rathayatra with least upheaval and report him back. See, Thakur, The Making of Laloo Yadav: The Unmaking of Bihar, p. 80.
38 India Today, 31 October, 1989, p. 33.
These conflicts between the communities were produced by the political conflicts. Between October, 1977 and December, 1978 as many as twenty-one political murders had been committed. Such as in Pupri (Sasaram), Saryu Ram a member of CPI, was attacked by 10-12 men (Kurmi-farmers) armed with guns, pistols, swords, lathis etc., on 28th August, 1978 and was shot dead while he was heeding towards Gogri (a village situated in the west of Pupri). Ramkrish Ram was also chased when he intruding in the matter, thus he took refuge into the nearby house of Bhagirath, another Harijan, but he was not spared out from the attackers (rich farmers of the Village). The assailant broke open the door and open fire on him even after that they dragged Ramkrish Ram to the nearby peddy fields and chopped hid head. Such atrocities were done by the rich farmers to the Harijans. And the reasons were purely economic. After the atrocities on lower OBCs, in Belchi, Pupri, Dharamapura, Agra, Villupuram, Marathwada, Kalia etc., the question posed that whether the Indian Left had to pay enough attention to “caste-war” whether they have done enough to organize and came to the defense of the depressed class. Even on 3 March, a team of 6 members of the Peoples Union of Civil Liberties (PUCL) from Delhi went to...

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39 Data India (weekly), 5-11 March, 1979, p. 115.
40 Saryu Ram was a member of CPI and had joined the party rally on 27th August, 1978 at the district headquarters at Rohtas district. Jamuna Ram, one of the beneficiaries of ‘the landless programme’, was a leader of local Khet Majdoor Union. Although there was seviour attacks on Harijans but such labourer organizations provide the strength to the labourers to live in the villages. Nathuni Ram only one Harijan who facilitate himself to go to college, was able to understand the intentions of the farmers that they only create all these havoc so that the Harijan, to get rid, leave the villages and they occupy all the land without any hurdle., see, Hamendra Narayan, “The Pupri Killings”, EPW, Vol. XIII, No. 37, September 16, 1978, pp. 1580-1581.
42 The killings of the Harijans had its root in economic issues and just for land. In 1976, a land of 1.7 acres was allotted by government to landless Sukhvilas, brother of Ramkrish Ram and Jamuna Ram but the land was allegedly and illegally occupied by the farmers. Thus landless Sukhvilas filed case against the farmers but no actions were taken against them even they did not care to appear in court on the due dates. The farmers were not willing to evacuate the lands on contrary they even boycotted the local labourers and brought labourers from the adjacent villages even they paid them higher wages in comparison to the local labourers. Even farmers also dig a channel just by the side of Harijan tola that endangered the Harijans’ huts and Harijans closed the channel thus, on 13th February, 1978, farmers percher on their roofs and started firing towards the Harijan tola and asked the Harijans to withdraw the case. Then on 25 March, at Bishrampur, under the adjoining police station of Dinara, Kurmi farmers collected from the nearby villages and set fire to huts of Harijans and killed 4 labourers., see, Narayan, “The Pupri Killings”, p. 1580.
43 Since the Belchi massacre in the year 1977, scores of such deadly clashes had been taken place in several parts of Bihar. to put it bluntly, in a good part of rural Bihar law and order was totally collapsed., see, Zaidi (ed.), The Annual Register of Political Parties: Proceedings and Fundamental Texts, 1987, p. 381.
Singhbhum district to investigate into the matter of atrocities\footnote{45}{Atrocities on the SCs, STs and other section of the society, were the result of the active involvement and deliberate encouragement of the dominant communal and chauvinist forces like RSS and by the rulers of the Janata Party. The grave situation resulted in loot, arson, rape and murder on large scale in Belchi, Agra, Marathawada, Muzaffarnagar, Pant Nagar and many other places., see, Zaidi, Zaidi, Zaidi, Alvi and Ahmed (eds.), \textit{The Annual Register of Political Parties: Proceedings and Fundamental Texts}, 1979, p. 94.} on the Harijans, were tortured and beaten with lathis and rifle butts by the police. A member of the team was kept into custody from 5:30 pm of 7 March to 3 am and on 8th March 1978 that member was accused as a Naxalite. Even the members of PUCL were sought to be implicated a number of cases. However the PUCL team visited Ichahatu and Serengda village where the police atrocities had occurred in November, 1978.\footnote{46}{Data India (weekly), 26 March–1 April, 1979, p. 153.} The Inspector-General of Police R. Lal claimed that there was an overall improvement during 1978, although the anti-reservation agitation and the panchayat elections had pushed up the number of cognisable offences from 102,323 in 1977 to 106,963 in 1978.\footnote{47}{Data India (weekly), 5–11 March, 1979, p. 115.} Murders, loot and rioting showed an upward trend, while crimes against property (theft, dacoities and burglaries) decreased in 1978. In 1978, there were 1,867 cases of murders, 1,408 case of loot and 9,019 cases of riot incidents had been filed. Sixty percent people were killed during the panchayat elections and twenty percent people were allegedly killed by Naxalites.\footnote{48}{Data India (weekly), 5–11 March, 1979, p. 115.} These atrocities by the police and landlords were conducted on landless labourers demanding prescribed minimum wages, humane behaviour from landlord and stoppage of replacement of sub-plantation by more commercially valuable teak since the sal seeds were a source of subsistence to them.

Incidents involving extremists and atrocities on Harijans declined. 47 Harijans were killed in 1978 against 62 were killed in 1977.\footnote{49}{Data India (weekly), 26 March–1 April, 1979, p. 153.} Bhojpur, Rohtas, Monghyr, Nalanda, Begusarai and Dhanbad reported most of the murders and incidents of atrocities against Harijans.\footnote{50}{Shri Bindeshwari Prasad Yadav, Shri Purushottam Mishra and Shri Arvind Nath Mishra (eds.), \textit{Karpoori Ka Sansadeeya Jeevan}, 1967–1988, Part. 2, Pustakalya Evam Shodh-Sandarbh Shakha, Bihar Vidhan Sabha Sachivalya, Patna, 2003, pp. 674.} R. Lal (the then IG of Police) said that the orders had been issued, preventing the use of ‘Crime Control Ordinances’ also known as ‘Anti-Goonda Act’ that was only used against students, trade unionists and political workers.
only when they indulged in crimes. R. Lal admitted that this legislation has not been used even once against people committing atrocities on Harijans.52

Besides the killings of Harijan there was also another kind of development, there was ghastly killing of men, women and children of seven families of Rajput caste of two villages, Dalilchak and Baghaura in Aurangabad district of Bihar on 29th May 1977 by a mob of 700 people from Yadava and other communities, it was quite shocking and alarming. It was reported that 45 to 50 were killed. Although killings and counter killings were assumed as retaliation in caste war but behind this, there exist socio-economic factors such as antagonism between landlords and the landless and land poor, as the root cause of these killings.53

In Bihar, corruption assumed such scandalous proportions that Central Intelligence was constrained to make confidential enquiries. The enquiries revealed corruption on a colossal scale and yet, again, no action was taken. In Haryana, even Congress(I) leaders had exposed the corruption of the Chief Minister. But the latter was non-chalantly bribed central leaders with gift plots.54

Even Dr. Jagannath Mishra was charged with abusing his official position as public servant and committed communal breach of trust with dishonest intention for furtherance of his personal, political and party gains. The charge-sheet, against Jagannath Mishra, said that Dr. Mishra maneuvered to purchase the jeeps out of the Legislative Council’s fund in disregard of objections of the council and that investigations had established that all the jeeps were bought only for the Congress poll campaign on the eve of and during the 1977 Lok Sabha elections.55

The Bharatiya Janata Party was born in 1980. Many, including Jayprakash Narayan (1902-79) genuinely believed that the members of the Jan Sangh, after merging with the Janata Party, had shed their communalism totally.56 Be that as it may, the members of the Jana Sangh were either broad-minded or tactical enough to change their ideological stance. However the political destiny had something else in mind. The Janta Party collapsed, perhaps inevitably, and in the catastrophic political event, four new parties were born. In 1980, neither Janata rhetoric nor Gandhian

52 Data India (weekly), 5-11 March, 1979, p. 115; also see, Rajni Kothari, Communalism in Indian Politics, Rainbow, Delhi, 1998, pp. 29-30.
54 Zaidi (ed.), The Annual Register …, pp. 546-547.
55 Data India (weekly), 29 January - 4February, 1979, p. 58.
56 Kumar, “The Roots of…”, P. 10.
Socialism came to the rescue of the anti-politicians. It was in the political vacuum of this decade that the ideology of communalism spread. “It took various forms. But the most virulent was that of Khalistani movement.” The collective Hindu psyche was first mobilized by Rajiv Gandhi, not by the BJP. Perhaps the Congress and Rajiv too felt that the Hindus needed a boost against the backdrop of growing Muslim and Sikh assertiveness.

In Bihar, political elites, who dominated the Congress party, were always factionalized thus there was faction within Congress party. Growing conflicts over power along both caste and party lines added to the political fragmentations. State’s bureaucracies, including police were also not remained unaffected by this intra-elite power politics, thus intrusion of politics undermined their professionalism, and in Bihar they became least effective. All these processes disintegrated the state’s legitimacy and cohesiveness and less political leaders came to the power, with their policy of favourism, to deal with political and socio-economic conflicts.

Growing socio-economic conflicts in Bihar can be best understood as products of Bihar’s relative underdevelopment. Thus issues of social and economic inequality, however, need to be studied in a more comprehensive manner. Although Bihar is rich in mines and minerals but Bihar is the poorest and densely populated state of India. Almost 90% of the population of this state lived in the rural areas. Agricultural production between 1969 and 1984 grew at annual compound rate of around 0.5%. There was continuous increment in population at the rate of 2% and rural incomes declined. Thus most segments of Bihar’s economy had failed but increment in population was continued. Likewise, people’s level of consciousness and political organizations had not remained stagnant. Political development under strained economic condition has had perverse and possibly led to gain political

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57 Kumar, “The Roots of…”, P. 10.
58 Kumar, “The Roots of…”, P. 10.
59 Favouring the community to which a politician belongs, intrude in politics of independent India. Perhaps it was also remain keen to politics in pre-independent India.
63 Per capita income of Bihar was 1000 rupees in early 1980s. That contrast with more than 3000 rupee for Punjab and nearly 1800 rupees for India as a whole. According to the 1981 census, only Kerala and West Bengal were more densely populated than Bihar. Bihar’s figure of 402 per square kilometer, contrast with the all India average of 216. Cited from Francine, “Breakdown in a Backward State…”, p. 255.
position for power and economy. Attempts by new emerging groups were met by force. The landowning castes, especially the middle castes, have sought to maintain their exactions by attempting to impose something like ‘second serfdom’, enraged the lower castes. Incapacity of the state in mediating such conflicts has further encouraged the formation of private armies, thus this also create tensed atmosphere in the society and led occurrence of periodic violence and the vicious cycle of retaliations.\footnote{Francine, “Breakdown in a ‘Backward’ State…”, pp. 254-255.}

Caste identities deeply embedded the social, economic and political life of Bihar.\footnote{Francine, “Breakdown in a ‘Backward’ State…”, pp. 255-256.} The Bihar Brahmins, although own considerable amounts of land, were rarely the agriculturists. Kayasthas were a very small minority within Bihar, over prolonged period, however, they became educated elite and acquired the status of an elite caste and started claiming themselves Brahmins. They tend to own fair amounts of land and were definitely an elite caste. Unlike pure Brahmin they also cultivated lands they own. There was another cast, the Rajputs who also owned a lot of land and lower caste peoples were employed over the land.\footnote{Francine, “Breakdown in a ‘Backward’ State…”, pp. 255-257.}

By the time the Muslim vote concept shifted towards Hindu vote it can be accepted as electoral formula.\footnote{There was no such thing as Muslim vote bank, neither does the largest minority community exercise its right to vote en bloc; but in fact, with the social and economic reforms steadily taking roots among the Muslims and with the emergence of diverse political options by the time Muslims votes had distributed among different leaders and political parties., see, Asif, “Image of Muslims” in, A. U. Asif, \textit{Media and Muslims in India Since Independence}, p. 29.} Proponents of the notion were likely to argue that even if the Hindus, not regarded as a largely cohesive electoral entity, any attempt to cater to their common religious susceptibilities in a bid to cut through divisions of caste and regions amount to wooing the Hindu votes.\footnote{\textit{Muslim India}, June 1989, Vol. VII, No. 78, p. 279.} The Muslim leaders and the Muslim organizations did attempt to confuse the Muslim voters. The main role was played by the Jamat-i-Islami which has been friendly to the RSS. Msilm Majlis, the National Muslim League, the Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen and the Maharashtra Muslim Democratic Forum, unitedly established as Natonal Muslim Front under the leadership of Zulfiqarullah.\footnote{Moin Shakir, “Electoral Participation of Minorities and Indian Political System” in, \textit{EPW}, Vol. XV, Annual Number, February, 1980, p. 223.}
Zulfiqarullah, the leader of the National Muslim Front, asserted that the Janata Party was the only political organization which commanded the confidence of minorities and restrain the restive communal forces.\footnote{There was gap between the minorities, majority of whom were rural dwellers and illiterate or least educated, and leaders of minority community, who were urban dwellers and highly educated. Thus the real issue of the minorities were never solved and the so-called Muslim politics was dominated by all sorts of non-issues like, the protection of Muslim Personal Law etc., see, Shakir, “Electoral Participation of Minorities and Indian Political System”, pp. 223-225.}

The real problem there was that there was no evidence of Hindu’s communal response.\footnote{Muslim India, June 1989, Vol. VII, No. 78, p. 279.} In fact, over the years, political parties’ need to cultivate distinct electoral bases has led to steady fracturing of the Hindu community. This has resulted in the stagnation of overtly Hindu organizations such as the RSS and its political arm, the BJP.\footnote{Muslim India, June 1989, Vol. VII, No. 78, p. 279.} It is important here to explore this fracturing process. With the spread of Green Revolution in North India, there was emergence of Other Backward Castes (OBCs) as a powerful and broadly cohesive political entity.\footnote{Muslim India, June 1989, Vol. VII, No. 78, p. 279.}

Chaudhury Charan Singh, who happens to be from Jat community, was among the first leaders to recognise the electoral potential of this development and worked assiduously towards consolidating it. This, more than anything dents the Hindu vote theory. In this saga of the decline of the RSS’ ideological-cultural influence, it is often forgotten that, ironically Charan Singh was himself a staunch Arya Samaji and so were most of north Indian thinkers and activists of this time. Despite its overt abstention from the political process, the Arya Samaj sowed the first seeds of political activism in large parts of north India in the 1920s and 30s. Most freedom fighters came to the Congress via Arya Samaj.\footnote{Muslim India, June 1989, Vol. VII, No. 78, p. 279.}

But somewhere down the line the Samaj lost its thrust. And the RSS which re-emerged, especially after partition, as the principal defender of so-called Hindu nationalism, failed to espouse the democratic doctrine with its earlier effectiveness. An anti-Brahmanical thrust, on the other hand, could have paid rich dividends to the RSS had it championed this as an article of faith in the mid-sixties when the green revolution began. The main grievance of the OBCs, something that has resulted in their determined electoral opposition to the Congress, was that they had not received a fair deal from the urban (read Brahmin) leadership independence. They will not go so far as to wage an all-out war on Brahmenvad, because of their sharp contradiction.
with the land-labourers and agriculttural workers who were mainly harijans. The OBC's or the Shudras are clearly divided into 2 groups: “Forward” Shudras e.g. Yadavs, Koeris and Kurmis forming 20% and the “Backward” Shudras, who are as backward as the SC's and ST's, totalling upto 30% of the population but divided in many sub-castes on occupational basis and widely scattered. Considering that the OBCs constitute the second largest caste bloc, accounting for 40 to 60 percent of the Hindus in most north Indian states thus these lower castes, taken together, composed the largest within Bihar. However it was extremely assorted group. The Yadvas, Koiris and Kurmis were the most significant and generally the elite among the backward castes. Among the backward castes, Yadavas were politically the most significant and Kurmis were reputed as being hardworking agriculturists, it was next to impossible to visualize a coordinated “Hindu” electoral response. This was a constituency both the Congress and the RSS-BJP have lost.

During 1971-1981, political parties were searching for new strategies to dethrone the ruling Congress party. Thus caste and religion based politics started surfacing. Populist slogans and religious considerations became common to woo the minorities. The watershed in the history of India's administration, both the civil service and police, was the national emergency declared by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1975. The use by her government of emergency powers under the Constitution of India to suppress the opposition through indiscriminate arrests of prominent leaders and censorship of the press contributed to an unprecedented fear psychosis. The call by Mrs. Gandhi and her associates for a "committed" civil service compounded the situation by eliminating the thin line between government and party. Muslim Law Board was formed to protect the personal law based on Shariat. Hindus started demanding the Uniform Civil Code. Shah Bano case, the judgement upheld Shah Bano's contention under the secular law that she was entitled to maintenance for life and not for only the *iddat* (waiting period before re-marriage.

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after the divorce which is three months) period. This judgement delivered in 1985 was thought to be another attack on Islam and Muslim identity in India. The Muslim leadership across the political parties and sectarian divide unitedly opposed the Supreme Court judgement and launched an aggressive movement to reverse it. This added to already aggravated communal situation and went a long way to further intensify hostility between two communities.\(^{81}\) Meenakshipuram\(^{82}\) conversions, opening of Babri Masjid for Hindus etc. all these issues communally charged the atmosphere of whole India. The RSS which provides ideological direction to Hindu communal forces was quite unhappy at the Jan Sangh renouncing communalism and adopting secularism which is perceived to be anti-Hindu. The Jan Sangh members were forced, by their RSS mentors, not to renounce their RSS membership. All the top leaders of the then Jan Sangh were also members of RSS and the socialist leaders like Raj Narain in the Janata Party raised this issue - known as the duel membership issue - and asked the Jan Sangh members in the Janata Party to resign their RSS membership. The RSS made it plain to their members not to resign and planned several communal riots in Aligarh, Varanasi, Jamshedpur etc. to display its strength. The Janata party Government fell apart on this question in 1979 and replaced by the government led by Charan Singh which also lasted for few months. In the ensuing elections in 1980 Mrs. Gandhi came back to power though with less popular vote.\(^{83}\)

Bengali Muslims were completely different from their brethren in North Indian Muslims (mainly from Bihar) who were settled in West Bengal, especially in Calcutta. And this separate entity of Bengali Muslims stands out of the concept of pan-Islamism that advocated by Jamaat-e-Islami-e-Hind (JIH), and preached by the Tablighi Jamaat (TJ). Both Jamaat-e-Islami and Tablighi Jamat did not appeal to Bengali Muslims they only to Calcutta where Muslims from North India lived and Claim Urdu as their language. Except for a few pockets of Bihari Muslims that live in


\(^{82}\) Throughout the 1980s overt political utilization of communal identities grew dramatically as political parties attempted to come to grips with socio-economic change and developed new political constituencies. When a large number of low-caste Hindus of southern village of Menakshipuram converted to Islam in 1982 and the cry ‘Hinduism under threat’ was raised by the BJP, RSS, VHP., see, Russell Hocking, “The Potential for BJP Expansion: Ideology, Politics and Regional Appeal- The Lessons of Jharkhand” in, Jhon McGuire, Peter Reeves and Howard Brasted (eds.), Politics of Violence: From Ayodhya to Behrampada, Sage, New Delhi, 1996, p. 222.

the Muslim ghettos\footnote{84} of Kolkata- like Rajabazar, Matiaburuz, Park Circus, and the Khidirpur dock area- the rural Bengali hardly stand out as different as their rural Hindu counterparts. Hindu communal parties were visible in North India and rich Marwari-owned business houses were open friends of them. Not many Muslims from the Indian side, meaning West Bengal, migrated in 1947 to East India, Pakistan (now Bangladesh). The Hindus from East Bengal, on the other hand, have moved over not only during the time of partition in 1947 but in another major wave in 1971, and they continued to do so till now. The feeling of insecurity among the Hindu citizen of Bangladesh made them to leave their ancestral homes thus with their sorrow they carried along the feeling hatred for the Muslim community. The CPI(M) provide them security and ration cards in return for sure vote, and these refugees become one with the rest of the plaint Bengalis. In fact there existed subtle animosity between the Bangals and the Ghotis (East Bengal immigrants were called Bangals, and the resident Hindu Bengalis are called Ghotis) because of economic problems that had been arose out of unprecedented demographic change due the unchecked crossover as jobs and economic opportunities had became scarce due to a sudden increase in the population.\footnote{85} In 1971 Communist Party of India engaged in provoking the peasants by land grab \textit{bhoomi-harap} movement (which earliest has been seized by the landlords by placing their flag on the desired land), thus relation between landlords and peasants strained as result 47 people were killed.\footnote{86} In 1971 twenty-two riots occurred in Bihar in that 43 cases were filed, 574 people were arrested. On 23\textsuperscript{rd} February, 1971 at Chatra (in Hazaribagh) a communal disturbance took place over the issue that a non-Muslim used the field adjacent to a mosque, for latrine. This disturbance was seized by 24\textsuperscript{th} February, 1971. In that disturbance 4 Muslims and 4 Hindus were injured.\footnote{87} On 3\textsuperscript{rd} March 1971, during elections, communal riot occurred in Laheriyasarai (Darbhanga). In that 5 huts of Muslims and 3 houses of Hindus were set on fire. As many as 13 Muslims and 12 Hindus were injured. Riots were seized on 8\textsuperscript{th} March, 1971.\footnote{88} Riots occurred on 4\textsuperscript{th} April, 1971, in Chataniabagh-Sadam village Gomiyan (Giridih) Police station, when Ramnavami procession taking before a mosque and that was objected by Muslims thus situation was strained. Stone and arrows were thrown

\footnote{84} Densely populated area by a particularly community termed as ghettos.

\footnote{85} Farouqui., \textit{Muslims and Media.}, pp. 134-135.

\footnote{86} Bihar Sarkar, Arakshi Varshik Prashasnik Prativedan- 1971, pp. 4-16.

\footnote{87} Bihar Sarkar, Arakshi Varshik Prashasnik Prativedan- 1971, p. 4.

\footnote{88} Bihar Sarkar, Arakshi Varshik Prashasnik Prativedan- 1971, p. 4.
on Hindus. As result of riots 3 Hindus were injured, 5 shops of Muslims, 1 truck and 1 shop of Hindu were set on fire. Police open 8 round (chakra-goliyan) fire. On 20th June, 1971 at Sadam (Police Station- Gomniyan) there was bomb blast in a Hindu hotel that resulted in death of 3 Hindus and 2 Muslims. Shops and house of 5 Hindus and 2 Muslims were looted. In Avapur Muslims opposed Hindus for using cemetery land as grazing land, thus riot occurred on 11th July, 1971 in that 1 Hindu was dead and 8 Hindus were injured. 

**Bihar During the 1980s**

The 1980s witnessed considerable change in the dimension of communalism. Events in earlier decades had been sporadic, spontaneous and short lived. Firm and concerted action on the part of the Government and police invariably brought the situation under control. Citizens were united in their resolve that communal conflict be contained and eradicated. During that decade, however, riots took place in Assam, Mahrashtra, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar. There was an undercurrent of simmering communal discontent. Communal issues increasingly gained political flavour and it appeared that the old value attached to communal harmony was evanescing.

The decade of the 1990s will perhaps be regarded as the watershed in the history of communal politics. It began with massive communal mobilization and polarization of an order hither to unknown. The events leading to and arising from the demolition of Ram Janma Bhoomi-Babri Masjid Complex even now continue to cast their shadow. Institutions that were expected to uphold the ideals of national integration and communal harmony suffered serious debilitation until their efficacy became suspect in the public mind. In later years there was even evidence of the machinery of State either turning a blind eye to the travails of individuals at the hands of marauding mobs or at its worst it was found to have played a willing handmaid to communal oppressors.

The Mandalisation of politics in the late 1980s effectively mobilised the backward castes in the state. It all began with the then prime minister V. P. Singh’s

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decision to provide 27 per cent job reservations to the backward classes as recommended by the B. P. Mandal Commission. The decision was bound to provoke reaction from the upper castes and it did. Thus protests against reservation policy, enveloped the whole of the rural Bihar which further polarized the tension between pro-reservationists and anti-reservationists. Bihar appeared to have gone through a serious anti-reservationism of 1978, with the upper castes taking to the streets, rampaging, with arson and looting of government property and shops and property belonging to backward castes began to be resulted in stray incidents. The backward castes saw it as an opportunity to capture power decisively as the political ‘moment’ during the ‘Mandal’ phase was in their favour. Following the Bhagalpur communal riot towards the end of 1980s, Muslims too had fallen sick of the Congress and deserted it. The dalits were uncomfortable with the patron-client relationship with the forward castes during the Congress regime and had been waiting to break the shackles. The coming together of backward castes, dalits and Muslims was now ready to script a new chapter in the political history of the state. The results of Lok Sabha elections held in 1989 and assembly election in the following years corresponded to this new script. The Congress had suffered a major setback.

In 1968 (on 17 June 1968, there occurred a riot in Nagpur in Patna) and in 1969, incidents of communal nature took place in almost all months of the year. But none of them were serious in nature. It was again in 1970 that a serious communal riot takes place in Chaibasa (Singhbhum District), now in Jharkhand. These riots were the result of odd developments in politics and economy, which we have already discussed in this chapter, of the country in general and in Bihar in particular.

**Chaibasa Riots, April 1970**

Chaibasa was situated in Singhbhum district (now in Jharkhand). West Singhbhum district was full of dense forests and hills and harbors a variety of flora and fauna. There was also Maganese Ore mines in Chaibasa. Economy of Chaibas depended on

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these natural resources. Chaibas provided timber to the saw mill in Jamshedpur and iron-ore and manganese were also brought in Jamshedpur from Chaibasa.

A serious communal riot broke out at Chaibasa on April 15, 1970, when few bombs hurled while a Ramnavami procession was passing through Bari Bazar, a predominantly Muslim area. The processionists retaliated. More explosions, gunfire and cases of assault, loot and arson followed. In these incidents 23 Muslims and one Tribal were killed. 42 Hindus and 14 Muslims were injured. The trouble also spread to Chakradharpur on April 17, 1970, where 2 houses of Muslims were set on fire and one Hindu was fatally stabbed. Stray incidents were reported till April 20, 1970.

At Chaibasa, in the first two hours, the riot was an affair between Muslims and Hindus but the policemen of lower ranks took the field and resumed the riots thus riot turned into its more devastating and brutal phase. Because a false rumour was spread by the rioters’ squad that a constable was slain by the Muslims, this rumour spread like wild-fire that abruptly changed the behaviour of policemen thus, a communal riot turned into a war waged against the Muslims by the police. Though the fact came to the light that the constable was only injured but a false rumour destroyed everything in Chaibasa.

Although in Chaibasa peace was restored but again a major riot occurred in 1979 in Jamshedpur. But in between many riots took place all over the country like in Bhiwandi town of Thane district in Maharashtra, communal riot broke out on 7 May, 1970 when Shiv Jayanti procession was brick-batted. Between 7 and 12 May, 1970, and 17 Hindus were killed. On 8 May, 1970, in Jalgaon (Maharashtra), again an anti-Muslim riot took place over the trivial argument and dispute between some Hindus and Muslims at a betel shop.

After Maharashtra riot of May 1970, there was lull in recurrence of the communal riots on account of colossal political development in the sub-continent, viz.

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99 Home Department (R&P Division), F. No. 5/12/1976, pp. 20-21.
101 Bhiwandi was a large concentration of Muslim population engaged in flourishing power-loom industry. Muslims constituted 65% of the population of Bhiwandi, thus it had been prone to communal tension thus there was recurrence of incidents., see, Shashi B. Sahai, _South Asia: From Freedom to Terrorism_, Gyan, New Delhi, 1998, p. 120; also see, Zaidi (ed.), _The Annual Register of Indian Political Parties: Proceedings and Fundamental Text_, 1984, p. 439.
102 Sahai, _South Asia…_, pp. 120-121.
the Indo-Pak war of 1971, and liberation of Bangladesh, intense political agitation in India culminating in the Emergency regime. But the Emergency regime (Congress Party under the leadership of Indira Gandhi) was voted out of power in 1977 and lull in communal occurrences was broke out with riot in Sambhal\(^1\), a sub-divisional town of Moradabad district in Uttar Pradesh, on 29 March, 1978 over the tussle between rickshaw-pullers and betel shopkeeper. Unlike Bhiwandi and Jalgaon of Maharashtra, in Sambhal, the riot was provoked by the Muslim communalists.\(^2\)

After Sambhal riot, relatively a less destructive, riot occurred at Aligarh (U.P.) on 5 October, 1978.\(^3\) During this period 1971-81, the political parties looked for new strategies to dethrone the ruling Congress party.\(^4\) But here we shall only focus on Jamshedpur Riots that broke out in 1979.

**Jamshedpur Riots (1979)**

The growing assertiveness of the low castes\(^5\) in Bihar in the 1960s was largely a by-product of the socialist strategy. Christophe Jaffrelot has analyzed it in terms of quota politics. Thus the Upper Backward class became more powerful with the rising demands for the Backward Class. It made 27% reservation in government

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\(^1\) Like Bhiwandi, Sambhal was also a pre-dominantly Muslim town. But unlike Bhiwandi, here riot was provoked by Muslim communist who happened to be the leader of rikshaw-pullers, gave a call for bazaar bundi to press their demands but a Hindu betel shopkeeper denied to close his shop ans riot started over the tussle between Muslim rickshaw-pullers and Hindu betel shopkeeper. Thus in this riot out of 25 killed 23 were Hindus. Apart from deaths, shops and establishments including a timber godown and a Khandsari factory owned by Hindus, were looted and destructed., see, Sahai, *South Asia…*, p. 121.

\(^2\) Sahai, *South Asia…*, p. 121.

\(^3\) Because of its mixed population of 60% Hindus and 40% Muslims, Aligarh has been porn to communal riots. there had been minor communal riots in Aligarh in 1962 and 1971 also., see, Sahai, *South Asia…*, pp. 121-122; also see, Sachin Chaudhary (ed.), “Aligarh Riots”, *EPW*, Vol. XIII, No. 46, November, 1978, pp. 1869-1870; In Aligarh there was also riot in December, 1990 over the false publication in Agra edition of *Aaj* (Hindi daily), from 11 to 13 December, 1990 that the [Muslim] doctors in Medical college of Aligarh Muslim University had been killed 32 Hindu patients by giving them injection of poison. Thus an anti-Muslim riot broke out which covering the campus area. But it was later revealed that the news was fabricated., see, Shahid A. Chaudhary, “Difficulties in Tackling Muslim Issues” in, Asif, *Media and Muslims in India Since Independence*, pp. 35-36; also see, Brass, *Production of Hindu-Muslim Violence in Contemporary India*.


\(^5\) There was change in politics; at the Ministerial level there was shift from Forward caste to Backward caste in Bihar. Between 1962 and 1977, there was decline in upper caste dominance in Bihar Legislative Assembly. During the 1977 election there was visible decline in the Forwards’ representation, 59% in 1962 to 48.6% in 1977, and this decline was largely borne by the Brahmans, who dropped from 17.2% in 1962 to 7.6% in 1977 of the general seats. Thus it was Brahmans who lost heavily; see, Harry W. Blair, “Rising Kulaks and Backward Classes in Bihar: Social Change in the Late 1970s” in *EPW*, Vol. XV, No. 2, 12 January, 1980, pp. 67-68.
jobs for them. Thus violence erupted over the reservation of jobs and due to the foundation Jamshedpur as an industrial city there was jobs for each section of the society and more than half of the employees in TISCO and TELCO were Muslims. The economic prosperity among the Muslims was contested by the competitors of the majority community which we have discussed in the riot of Jamshedpur in 1979.

A communal riot broke out on 11\textsuperscript{th} April, 1979 in Jamshedpur. The Jhanda of Sonaram Manjihi of Dimna Basti Akhara was taken out at about 8:00 am and New Purulia road at about 9:15 am. Procession further moved up to Yadava Petrol pump and stalled there and demanded release of B. K. Trivedi and other persons who were arrested. District Collector not made any effort to get the procession moved and cleared through the New Purulia road, procession was held up which resulted in one of the worst communal riots in the industrial city of Jamshedpur. It was caused when a Hindu religious procession led by members of Janata Party of State Assembly halted near a mosque. This exactly justify the views of Sandria Freitag’s, “taking out religion in public sphere” and Paul R. Brass’, “violence is production of elite manipulation”.

TISCO was founded in August 1907 and steel began to be produced in 1913 but it was named as Jamshedpur in 1919 by the then Viceroy Lord Chelmsford. Although this city does not have a municipality, it provides its employees and workers better residential facilities and paying and stable jobs. TELCO was established in 1945 (present TATA) and has its companies all over Jamshedpur thus all economic activities directly or indirectly linked with TELCO. Timber brought from Chaibasa to the saw mill in Jamshedpur and iron-ore and manganese were also brought in Jamshedpur from Chaibasa. Business and job opportunities here open for all, and this also facilitated the growth of the Muslims but there existed comunal biases within the management of TISCO during 1940s which we have been discussed in the second

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109 Udayan Sharma, \textit{Daahat} (Hindi), Prakashan Sansthan, New Delhi, 1995, p. 35.


chapter of this work. Muslims prosperity and success in the city reflected in the rich and colorful designs of the mosques that they built up over the years. This city also developed culturally and attracted the awesome talents from all over India.

Jamshedpur, the Steel city, witnessed large-scale communal riots which started on 11 April 1979. It was alleged that the riots were triggered off by Hindu landlords bent on injecting their Muslim tenants. The saddest part of the whole affair was that the carnage could have been avoided altogether if the local administration had stuck fast to its earlier decision not to allow the Ramnavami procession on April 11 to pass by a mosque. It was a matter of great shame that the local administration was unprepared, cowardly and the substantial section of the intelligentsia alleged that the local police and the BMP (Bihar Military Police) were partial on one stage or another.

There were various reasons behind communalism in Jamshedpur which we have discussed in the previous chapter. There were the memories of 1964, when Muslims were butchered by Hindus, excited by torture of the Hindus of the East Pakistan. On that occasion the adivasis took active part in attacking and killing the Muslims. And the deserted land and property of the Muslims were looted and exploited for so many generations of adivasis. Deserted lands of he Muslims were sold out at cheap rates to every community that settled down in Jamshedpur. Thus Muslims (minority) decided to move out and they settled in large groups. Thus

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116 Until 1976 there was no mosque in Maango area. In 1976 two reputed Muslims, Shifat Ali and Habib Jaan, of Maango area purchased a piece of land out of waqf fund and built a mosque known as Saabri Masjid but it was under dispute from the very day its construction was completed. Even many cases by the community Block Development Officer (BDO, a Deputy Collector in the Bihar Administrative Services) were filed against it., see, Sharma, *Dahshat* (Hindi) p. 36.
117 Within few years after independence there was growth in prosperity among the people, involved in handiwork and other small scale jobs, of Muslim community. Many of them became rich because they were employed in Gulf countries. Apart from this Muslims involvement in small scale industries also made them grow prosperous and Muslims this prosperity became sore in the eyes of the poor Hindus of nearby Bastis of Dalits. During most of the riots rioters, while they looting and destroying Muslim properties they often shouting, “Musalmanon par bahut charbi chadh gayi hai”. Muslim youths after independence became more conscious for their rights and wanted to settle out of their ghettos. Thus their growing prosperity and ambitions made many Hindus panic.; cited from- Madhu Purnima Kishwar, *Rashtrawad Ki Chakari Mein Dharm*, translated (Hindi) by Yogendra Dutt, Vani Prakashan, 2005, p. 314.
Muslims started buying up lands on cheap rates from the adivasis in Mango area and Muslim bastes Azad Nagar, Azad Bastee, Sabrinagar (two hundred yards away from Dimnabasti, an adivasi colony) etc. emerged.

Jamshedpur also witnessed many riots between 1975 and 1978, which occurred on the occasions of Hindu religious festivals. In 1977 a communal had arisen because a Muslim had kidnapped a Hindu girl. The incident had occurred over the construction of a mosque at Sabrinagar.

Law and order have two enemies: the full truth and complete lie. When people realize truth, they start revolutions and in case if they are fed lies they begin meaningless riots. Businessmen, traders, politicians, goondas, leaders of ‘cultural organizations’ (like the RSS) feed the people with lies that enraged the people and then these leaders actually set up the events which provoked conflagration. After the Jamshedpur riots, The Hindu correspondent wrote on April 14, 1979 that, “One thing is clear and established beyond doubt:

The conflagration, clashes, carnage and widespread arsons were not a sudden eruption…. Contractors, goons and musclemen who inhabit the densely populated and squalid areas, which have sprung up on fringes of the industrial township, dominate Jamshedpur. That the whole operation was meticulously planned is established by the grim fact that gangsters, goons, musclemen and sophisticated arms were being smuggled into Jamshedpur, days and weeks before the holocaust began.”

There is also an interesting and important point that the Muslims of Jamshedpur city form one of the richest Muslim communities in the country. They were in jobs and more than half the employees out of 50 thousand workers of TISCO

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120 Another group who buying up lands from the adivasis (Most of the lands in Mango were owned by an adivasi Ravi Manjhi) were Rajputs, Brahmans, Bhumihars and Yadavas of the Bhojpur region, most of them were employees of TATA, which resulted in Daigittu a Hindu baste., see, Sharma, Dahshat, pp. 35-36.
121 Report of Three-Member of Inquiry, Headed by Shri Jitendra Narain, farmer Judge, Patna High Court, to Enquire into the Communal Disturbances that took place in April 1979, in around Jamshedpur, August 1981, p. 9.
122 Report of Three-Member of Inquiry, p. 9.
124 Engineer, Communal Riots After..., p. 49.
125 Sharma, Dahshat, p. 35.
and TELCO were Muslims. Moreover just as in other cities of southern Bihar (now Jharkhand) of Ranchi, Dhanbad, etc., there was also the stronghold of lumpen proletariat and goonda elements make this city heaven for the anti-social elements. The Thakurs control the Hindu underworld and Muslims’ underworld is controlled by Muslim traders.

Two roads marked the boundaries of Sabrinagar, Road No. 14 and Road No.15. The Road No. 15 went up to Dimnabasti and the Road No. 14 ended on the side of the fields separating the adivasis from the Muslims. On the Road No. 14 there was a thatched mosque which the Muslims constructed and there was a madarsa on the premises of the mosque.

On behalf of the Dimnabasti Akhara Samity, Sona Ram Manjhi (the organizer of Akhara procession through Road No. 14) claimed that the Jhonpra Masjid was an unauthorized construction and appeared as an obstruction on the route for procession.

Balasaheb Deoras, the chief of the RSS visited Jamshedpur and while addressing a meeting on April 11 mentioned that it was very sad that in their own country Hindus were not allowed to take out their religious processions. Both the RSS and Jamaat are communal bodies and they often work to arouse tension in their respective communities.

The Janata politicians, working with the RSS and other, including probably the Muslim Jamat-e-Iaslami (the organization which has been and continues to be the biggest enemy of the Indian Muslims), had decided to provoke communal riots as early as October 1978.

A joint meeting of all Akhara Samitis falling under the Mango P.S. area was held on 5th April 1979 at 8a.m. in Bajrang Mandir in which it was unanimously resolved that unless the Dimnabasti procession is not given a license to proceed

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126 Sharma, Dahshat, p. 35.
127 The goondas start riot during religious processions to give Muslims bad name and big leaders were responsible for these riots who patronized these goonda elements to gain political power through the means of violence., see, Bhavna Mehta and Trupti Shah, “Gender and Communal Riots” in, EPW, Vol.XXXVII, No. 47, 21 November, 1992, pp. 2522-2524.
128 Sharma, Dahshat, pp. 39-40.
129 Ghosh, Communal Riots in India..., p.134.
131 Narayan, Communal Riots in India..., p. 118; also see, Ghosh, Communal Riots in India..., Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi, 1987, p. 137.
through Road No. 14, no Jhanda from Mango area would be taken out nor any festivities celebrated.\textsuperscript{133}

As we know that the Jamshedpur riot (1979) was result of internal conflict of ruling Janata party. The Karpoori Thakur (Janata Party) ministry included members of erstwhile Jana Sangh that has merged itself in Janata Party in 1977. The MLA from Jamshedpur belonged to Jana Sangh group and was known to be extremely communal. Ramnavami procession of Jamshedpur had been taken out for years and its route was well established. Except Ramnavami procession there were many other factors that agitated the people of all section of Jamshedpur and atmosphere was communally charged.\textsuperscript{134}

In 1978, for the first time, taking advantage of being the member of ruling party, the local MLA and various Hindu Organizations through pressure on the district administration to permit a deviation from the established route so as to take procession and its accompanying ‘Akhara’ (a group of wrestlers usually armed with lathis and spears), along the Road No. 14. Taking out procession through such route created tension. The tension increased as the armed processionists began to shout provocative slogans. Somehow the Administration succeeded in the procession peacefully.\textsuperscript{135}

Next year (in 1979) wanted the same decision from the administration but administration refused to permit any deviation from the traditional route. The

\textsuperscript{133} Report of Three-Member of Inquiry, p. 11.
\textsuperscript{134} During 1977, after Legislative Assembly election, there was total lawlessness in Jamshedpur, thus there was transfer of S. P. Ram Aasre Pande and the new S. P. was appointed, who started war against the criminals and arrest them, this led chaos among the goondas. In between S. D. O., D. O. Gangadhar was also transferred and U. K. Sinha was appointed. Both S. P. and S. D. O. were honest officers, thus there presence also worried the Trade Unionists. There was agitation among goondas because there in TISCO, stealing of scrap iron was carried by Shivji Singh through the gate which was open in Jugsalai, and the combo of S.P. and S.D.O. also acted against this and the gate of TISCO, that was opened in Jugsalai, was closed and against this goondas openly declared that the livelihood of many people was dependent on these stolen irons even in the leadership of Chhedi Singh, a leader of Janata Party, there was violent protests. Marwaris were also agitated because police imposed challan on their leader Vishwanath Rungta. Muslims were also agitated because their so-called savior, Anwar, an infamous goonda was shot dead, and Muslims took out a procession out of the expenses of Kareemiya Trust. And a mosque on the TISCO owned land, that was taken on lease to run a Madarsah by bidi workers but instead they constructed mosque, was plundered on court orders which resulted in violent agitation in October and November, 1978. And in April 1, 1979, a session of RSS held at Regal Maidan of Jamshedpur, where Devras Balasaheb in his speech expressed pity on the construction of the mosque in the country and also asked Hindus to stake their life for the protection of the religion. All there culminated in 1979 riots of Jamshedpur., see, Sharma, \textit{Dahshat} (Hindi), 1995, pp. 40-42.
\textsuperscript{135} Report of Three-Members of Inquiry, p. 19; also see, Udayan Sharma, \textit{Dahshat} (Hindi), Prakashan Sansthan, New Delhi, 1995, pp. 36-37.
controversy over the route of the procession was utilized by the Hindu organizations to communalize the atmosphere in the city.\footnote{Report of Three-Members of Inquiry, pp. 21-22.}

On 7th April, the Shri Ramnavami Kendriya Akhara Samiti issued a pamphlet which can not be called anything but utterly communal in character: indeed rarely do the investigators of riot display their hands so openly. This pamphlet is headlined ‘An appeal to religion-loving public of Jamshedpur’. Two shoulder headlines said, “Dharma ki Jai ho, Adharma ka Naash ho.”\footnote{Akbar, Riots After Riot…, pp. 25-26.} This pamphlet contains:

… Ab tak yahan ki janata ne shantipoorn dhang se har zulm ko bardasht kia hai lekin shanty ki ad me yahan ke Hinduon ko kuchla ja raha hai. Unka daman kia ja raha hai. Dhatiadih me Hanuman ki moorti ko police dwara tora gaya, Jugalai lathi charge aur ashru gas ki versa ki gayee, Mango me Hinduon ko alpsankhyak bana dia gaya…\footnote{Report of Three-Members of Inquiry, p. 52.}

… aur jab tak ye bhraust aur Hindu drohi S.P. yehan rahega tab
tak yehan moortian tootti rhangi…\footnote{Report of Three-Members of Inquiry, p. 52.}

At the back of this controversy was the strong action taken by the honest and strict superintendent of police against the Hindu and the Muslim Mafia operating at that time. Both the mafias were interested in creating a communal problem to discredit and oust this officer from Jamshedpur.\footnote{Sharma, Daashtat, p. 40.}

The Ramnavami orders dated, 27th March 1979 by the DC (affidavit, annexure,3) and the one dated 3rd April 1979 issued by S.P.(affidavit, annexure,4), both mentioned about the delicate situation that had arisen in the wake of the death of Anwar in a police encounter, affidavit by D.C. is as follows:

Dinank 25/26th Farwary 1979 ki ratri men Jamshedpur ke ek apradhkarmi Anwar ke police ke sath muthbhed me mare jane ko lekar sthiti bari hi bhavpravan ewam najuk ho gayi thi (.). Abhi bhi is ghatna ko lekar katipay vyaktiyon ke dilon me badle ki bhawana vyapt batlai jati. Uprokt ghatnaon ke pariprekshya men yeh avashyak prateet hota
According to the leaders of RSS, Anwar was looked upon as a protector of Muslims and hence his death was viewed as a threat to the safety of the Muslim community. Thakur Prasad further said that the dispute over the grant of the route was secondary event and that even if there had not been any dispute, the anti-social elements amongst the Muslims must have perpetrated the riot.142

The above evidences suggest that Muslims looked upon the mafia as their savior. Anwar a mafia man was shot dead and this led resentment among the Muslims (according to the sources). So the subsequent analysis of the incidents provoked that the underworld played a major role in outbreak of the riot. We also see that the Hindu underworld was controlled by the Thakurs and Muslim mafia was run by Muslim traders.143

A mob of about 100 people, including the people like Shri B.K. Trivedi, Rajendra Singh, Janardan Sharma, Jogendra Kumar and two others were, among the mob, were arrested on the spot and others fled away according to relevant FIR the mob was raising following slogans:144

_Sale Musalmanon ko ujar kar rahenge. Koi shakti hum logon ko rok nahin sakti hai. Yeh hum logon ki dharma aur pratishtha ka prashn hai. Is ke liye mur kar rahenge. Police Musalmanon me shamil hai aur hum logon ko daba rahai._145

Even Hindus argued: how could the Muslims prevent them from taking out a legitimate Ramnavami procession? After all Hindus never stopped the Muslims from taking out their Moharram procession: Muslims, on the other hand argued that the Hindus were deliberately establishing a right of way where none had existed before, and this route, once established, would be an annual insult to the pride of the Muslims.146

The disturbances were pre-planned because the way of attacks that was made on the procession on the New Purulia Road from Road Nos. 7.5, 3, and to the

141 Report of Three-Members of Inquiry, p. 43.
142 Narayan, _Communal Riots in India_…, p.122.
143 Sharma, _Dahshat_, pp. 40-41.
146 Ghosh, _Communal Riots in India_, p. 135.
throwing to the brickbats, bombs, bottle-bombs explosive etc. from the western side of New Purulia Road from the house tops and the mosque. According to magistrate Shri R. D. Ojha (GOW/14), the numbers of bomb thrown would be about 100 and to manufacture or prepare the kind of bombs that had been hurled at the procession, sufficient must have been taken. Magistrate Shri V.N. Mishra had noticed 300 to 400 bombs exploding. Magistrate Shri R. C. P. Sinha was for half an hour near Hanuman Mandir and he saw 40 to 50 bombs and inflammable materials and bottle-bombs being thrown continuously on procession (Ext. GO/174). According to FIR (Ext. GO/174) 30 or 35 bombs were found on the road and taken charge of by a police officer. It also mentioned that the police had taken charge of 4 bombs containing wicks. The Magistrate had given out the number of bombs and bottle-bombs thrown on the procession. The number, in its very nature, can not be accurate but existence of such a large number of missiles in a particular locality indicates pre-planning.\footnote{Report of Three-Members of Inquiry, p. 105.}

There was a deliberate attempt to delay the passage of Dimnabasti Jhanda Procession on New Purulia Road so the exhortation made to the religious minded persons of Jamshedpur convinced.\footnote{Report of Three-Members of Inquiry., p. 108}

Initially the administration denied the appeal for the use of Road No. 14 for procession and began making preventive arrests. The Samiti- many of whose members found themselves behind the bars, called off the Akharas scheduled for April 5. Instead they planned to collect the entire city’s Akharas. The morning of April 11 was mooted as the day for all the Akharas to unite and take out a combined procession through Road No. 14. Dinanath Pandey (who became infamous as Jagannath Pandey), the local MLA, was directly involved in organizing combined procession. On April 10, a local peace committee was formed in the Maango area, a locality of the town of Jamshedpur, consisting of Hindus and Muslims, to attempt a compromise and solution for the route. But the Hindus were insistent.\footnote{Ghosh, \textit{Communal Riots in India…}, p. 135.}

Those involved in taking out procession on the 11\textsuperscript{th} April, 1979, made their intentions clear from the very beginning. While they announced that the time for the departure of the procession was 2 p.m. (after the Zuhar prayer, i.e., the afternoon prayer) it started at 12 noon sharp. In about an hour there was a crowd estimated at about 50,000 people, who poured in across the bridge from the other side of the river.
to join the Akharas. The call had gone out and Hindus began assembling carrying weapons in their hands. The procession progressed very slowly. In the lanes of Mango particularly in Azadbasti and Azadnagar, the Muslims began collecting. Both sides were prepares for battle.\footnote{Ghosh, \textit{Communal Riots in India...}, 1987, p. 136.}

The processionists started shouting anti-Muslim slogans and before the police had a chance to stop them, the procession changed route and proceeded along the banned Road No. 14. Members of the Akharas participating in the procession, openly displayed their weapons like lathis, swords and spears. It was then that the critical incident occurred which will help us to understand that myth built up around the starting of a riot. The procession was halted in the midst of a densely populated Muslim locality, just as it came in front of an important mosque of the city. The leaders of the procession put forward some very illogical demands before the administration further as a condition to move the procession further.\footnote{Sharma, \textit{Dahshat}, pp. 42-43.}

But it was in such sensitive time that the Janata MLA and old Jana Sanghi, Dinanath Pandey ensured that riots did take place. He announced that the procession would not move until the Hindus, arrested earlier, were released. The local MLA (Dinanath Pandey) and others started making provocative and fiery speeches to add to the atmosphere of tension. The processionists made menacing displays of weapons and shouting objectionable slogans for several hours. The efforts of the leadership to incite the processionists and at the same time the efforts of the administration to move them, continued for hours. The spots where procession halted were surrounded on all the four sides by the Muslims’ houses. Finding themselves in the close vicinity of an armed frenzied mob bent on rioting, the Muslims also started collecting on their roofs with stones, boiling oils, lathis and spears. Many Muslims had collected in the mosque as well.\footnote{Ghosh, \textit{Communal Riots in India...}, p.136; also see, Sharma, \textit{Dahshat}, p. 44.}

If we analyse the behavior of the processionists, it becomes clear that they behaved like a group of people determined to provoke those whom they considered as their antagonists to caste the first stone. After several hours of trying, they finally achieved their objective. At about 11:40 a.m. a stone was thrown and a bomb was exploded. The riots spread. But according to official sources rioting in the steel city
started at 2:30 p.m. The Muslims of Mango were prepared for the violence; they had obviously been instigated by their communalists. At the same time as the Muslim attacks all over Jamshedpur, as if one cues, mobs of Hindus began attacking Muslim areas. And this time the police, instead of defending those who here being attacked, joined the mobs and looted and destroyed Muslim homes. The Bihar Military Police (BMP), a paramilitary troop of the provincial government, packed with caste Hindus from Arrah, Ballia and Chapra, wrote their names in the history of shame. The pamphleteers were not wrong apparently, when they said that the constables and the havildars were on their side. They would help smash open closed Muslim doors with the familiar abuse on their lips: sala, yehan Pakistan bana raha hai! They were not a peace making force; they became the armed wing of the RSS. Only the Gorkhas of the company, were the one behaved with any partiality; they went berserk.

After twelve hours of violence on 11 April, some time after one at night the administration was able to arrange for vehicles to pick up Muslims surrounded in the school and the mosque in Bhalubasa. The Army had been called out and had begun restoring order. Tata Medical Hospital’s ambulances, buses, trucks and sundry other vehicles passed into service.

The area where the worst scenes of brutal riots had taken place were spread far apart from Mango in the extreme North across the river, to Jugsalai in the South outside Tatanagar railway station to Sakchi (Where an entire shopping market was raise to the ground) and Bhalubasa in the centre of the city, which altogether covers an area of roughly 25 sq. miles. The outburst took place almost simultaneously, beginning on the early afternoon of April 11 and continuing through the night to grip most of April 12 as well.

The saddest incident took place during the evacuation of an ambulance load of Muslim refugee to a refugee camp. Ambulance number BRX6112 was part of the second convoy, and was carrying about sixty people (estimates vary, but this is probably the most reasonable figure). It was being driven by an adivasi and was in middle of the convoy, which was being escorted at the head and at the back by the

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153 The Hindustan Times, 13 April, 1979, p. 16, but another source speaks that the first stone come as the darkness of night fall.
154 Akbar, Riot After Riot..., p. 28.
155 Akbar, Riot After Riot..., p. 29.
156 Ghosh, Communal Riots in India..., p. 136.
157 Ghosh, Communal Riots in India..., p. 137.
police jeeps. Two police guards were actually inside the ambulance, in order to provide protection in case of any mishap.\textsuperscript{158}

As convoy was crossing a bridge over Kharkai river, in the Kashidih mohalla, this ambulance suddenly veered off into a side lane. None of the vehicles following bothered to stop and check. The driver immediately behind later said that he thought it was part of ambulance’s planned route. The police vehicles also did not bother to investigate.\textsuperscript{159}

Then ambulance was driven a short distance into the lane and the driver and the policemen decamped. On cue, a mob attacked the ambulance and set fire to it. The commissioner was a little behind the convoy. When he reached the lane he saw the ambulance burning and heard the cries for help of women and children trapped inside burning to death. In a similar crime, a bus with six Muslims was burnt; all died.\textsuperscript{160}

According to PTI curfew was imposed on Mango near Jamshedpur. After police fired to disperse a violent mob which attacked a Ramnavami procession with bombs. The attackers also fired shots into this procession. Six people were killed and 80 injured in the clashes and firing.\textsuperscript{161} But according to an official source, more than 100 people were injured in police firing and mob violence.\textsuperscript{162}

Jamshedpur has been divided in three zones for effective control of the situation. A three-tier control system is under operation at Thana zonal and district headquarters level with heavy deployment of troops BSF and CRF.\textsuperscript{163}

Mr. Singh (the commissioner of Chotanagpur division Mr. Kumar Suresh Singh) said that the taking out of a ramnavami procession was not the main cause of trouble in Jamshedpur. He maintained that the allegation that the procession was first attacked from a mosque was wrong.\textsuperscript{164}

The general secretary of the Communist party of India Mr. C. Rajeshwara Rao has said that, “Jamshedpur carnage” was a continuation of the ghastly Aligarh events of last year.\textsuperscript{165} Mr. Rao said in a statement; “it was unfortunate that the Prime
Minister and the Janata party President, instead of taking effective measures against this menace, are still seeking to defend the RSS- Jana Sangh”. 166

Union Home Minister (H. M. Patel) took serious note of complaint by local newsmen about the refusal of Inspector- General of police Rajeshwarlal to provide security to them in covering the incidents. 167

Asked about the Congress-I allegations that the RSS was behind the incidents. Mr. Patel said that RSS was always in the head of Congress-I. 168

To matter worse, even as the members continued to flicker, the communalists returned to their game, their lust for blood undiminished. In the third week of April, a rumor swept the city that the Ramnavami procession would be taken out again as it was interrupted the last time and the puja could not be completed! Any sane person could have seen this was madness but there was revenge and blood in the eyes of too many people. 169

At 5 p.m. some unknown persons set fire to the huts situated near Sheetla Mandir in which one Muslim was burnt to death. At 8 p.m. Sakchi Bazar was set on fire in which Sabzi Market was completely burnt. These shops belonged to both Hindus and to the Muslims. At the same time houses of Muslims near the Congress office were set on fire by the rioters. 170

Under Telco P.S. the first incident took place around midnight of 11th/12th of April, 1979 when a case of arson in the house of a Muslim of Laxminagar was reported. 171

Under Sidgora Police Station at 3 p.m. on the 11th April, 1979, it was found that there was confrontation between members of both communities on Road No. 1, 2 and 3 and cross roads of Agrico colony. The rioters were indulging in brick batting, arson and loot. Out of the 125 Muslim houses, 115 had been burned. 172

The Hindus were evidently attacking the Muslims in their residential areas and the Muslims were resisting the attack by throwing brickbats, shooting arrows, throwing lukanis (fire-bolls) and firing guns. Some of the shops near the Masjid, which mostly belonged to Muslims had also been set on fire. The police force opened

166 The Statesman, 17th April, 1979, p. 1.
167 The Hindustan Times, 14th April, 1979, p. 8.
168 The Hindustan Times, 14th April, 1979, p. 8.
169 Akbar, Riot After Riot…, p. 31.
fire to control the situation and finally the Army reached the spot with Magistrate
K.N. Das. The Army was engaged in controlling the situation for nearly one and a
half hours. After the disturbances were quelled, a large number of Muslims of Munshi
Mohalla, numbering about 2,700, came and surrounded before the Army, along with
fire arms.\textsuperscript{173}

Some \textit{Gumtis} were also set on fire by a mob at the Bus Stand. At 8 p.m. on 12
April, 1979, a strong Hindu mob armed with deadly weapons attacked Abdullah
Mansions and Tanga Lines as a result of which one Muslim was killed. At 9 p.m. on
the same day, rioters set fire to abandoned houses of Muslims on Kalimati Road,
Gandak Road, Hampipe Road and Sand Line Road. At about 4 a.m. the same night on
hearing some sounds an armed force rushed to the Birupa Road. Two Muslims were
found killed and one quarters of a Muslim was found burnet.\textsuperscript{174}

On 12 April communal fire did not spare any police station. Almost all police
station witnessed incidents of communal violence. Even after 12 April flames of
communal fire continued leaping up and seriously threatened peace at Jamshedpur.
Many incidents took place on 13 April, 1979. On 13 April, 1979 at about 9 a.m. a
Hindu mob tried to attack Mohammedan Line and fire had to be opened as a result of
which the mob dispersed.\textsuperscript{175}

On the same day (13\textsuperscript{th} April, 1979) at 10 a.m. information was received about
the confrontation between the Adivasis and Muslim mob.\textsuperscript{176}

The above mentioned incidents on 13 April were of serious nature. Apart from
these incidents several other incidents also took place during this period at
Jamshedpur. It was after the 13\textsuperscript{th} April that the situation could be brought under
control. As a result of this, major incidents were not reported from any part of the
Jamshedpur area since then.\textsuperscript{177}

Jamshedpur riots were the culmination of many incidents and reasons and the
prominent one is political cause. We see that by this period political leaders played
this dirty game only to gain and satisfy their lust for power. According to Kailashpati
Mishra, the then Vice President, there was nothing new what Deoras had told the
audience. So there was no relation between the riot and his speeches at Jamshedpur.

\textsuperscript{173} Narayan, “\textit{Communal Riots in India…}, p. 107.
\textsuperscript{174} Narayan, “\textit{Communal Riots in India…}, pp. 108-109.
\textsuperscript{175} Narayan, \textit{Communal Riots in India…}, pp. 111-112.
\textsuperscript{176} Narayan, \textit{Communal Riots in India…}, p. 113.
\textsuperscript{177} Narayan, \textit{Communal Riots in India…}, p.114.
But the Chairman of the commission, Justice Ansari, alleged in an interview on the 3rd August, 1979 in Madras that “RSS elements were indirectly associated with the Riots 178 But the speech Deoras itself speak about their involvement in the Jamshedpur riots.

The Commission quoted Deoras extensively and said:

“… The speech of Shri Balasaheb tended to encourage the Hindu extremist to be yielding in the demands regarding Road No. 14. Secondly, his speech amounted to communal propaganda. Thirdly, the Shakhas and camps held during the conference presented a militant atmosphere to the Hindu public. In the circumstances, the commission could not but held the RSS responsible for creating a climate for the disturbances that took place on the 11th April, 1979 and thereafter…” The commission also believed that the Akhara Samitis in Jamshedpur were controlled by the local RSS leadership (various Commissions have commented on the RSS’s link with organizations which are floated for specific causes, and which have played dubious roles in communal riots). 179

The Commission concluded that, Dinanath Pandey was a member of the RSS; and he acted accordingly for the fulfillment of the general scheme of the Hindu communalists of Jamshedpur, and they were also aimed at achieving the plan announced in the leaflet circulated by them. His conduct had thus directly contributed to the outbreak of the riot. 180

Significantly the commission said the riot was fomented to consolidate the political objectives of the Jana Sngh, forerunner of the BJP, on the page 103 to 104, of its report make a detailed analysis of the “true intensions” of Jana Sangh in the context of the collapse of the Janata Party and emergence of BJP. The Commission concluded that, the RSS played their role in this matter, motivated by the long term political objective of gaining strength foe their political wing, simultaneously with propagating their doctrine. 181

Apart from all these causes we find that Jamshedpur riots were the result of Administrations’ lethargies as we see in a report in the Navabharat Times, dated; 14th April, 1979:

178 Narayan, Communal Riots in India…. p. 119.
Jamshedpur me hua sampradaik danga is bat ka saboot hai ki kanoon aur vyavastha ke rakshakon ki neend durghatnayen ho jane ke bad khulti hain. Yeh prashn sahaj hi mastisk me kaundh jata hai ki Rammavami ke juloos ke samay itna tagta inizaam kyon nahin kiya gaya ki juloos par patthar phenkne walon ko usi samay ya pehle se hi girafter kar liya jata? Jamshedpur ki police nahin keh sakti ki juloos par pathrao ki ghatna aksmat hi ho gayi. Donon smpradayon me tanao pehle se tha aur juloos ke raste ko lekar pehle hi chunautiyon ka aadan-pradan ho chukka tha. Yeh prashasakon ki kami hi mani jayegi ki juloos ke samay danga ho jane ke bawajood bandobast itna kamzor tha ki Jamshedpur me dusre din bhi hatya aur aajjani ki ghatnayen ghatin. Yadi ab police aur fauz ki sakhti ke karan danga ruk jaye to ganimat hogi.

... bharat ke prashasak pichhli ghatnaon se koi sabak nahin sikhte. Dangon ki roktham ki kala me hamari police ab bhi nipun nahi ho payi hai, jabki aaye din dange hote rehte hain aur dang eke karanon tatha tariyo par har samay lambi-chaudi khojbeen bhi hoti rehti hai.

Jahan tak danga karne wali janata ka sawal hai bhavnatmak prashnon par kuchh samoohon ko uksana kathin nahin hota khaskar unke liye jo vighn santoshi rajnitigya hain aur vidambana to yeh hai ki in logon ke sath samaj virodhi tatva bhi shamil ho jate hain. Dange ke samay in tatvon ko khulkar khelne ka mauka milta hai...[^82]

Not since the 1967 Ranchi riots has Bihar witnessed such an outburst of communal violence as the one rocking the steel township of Jamshedpur for three days. Triggered on Wednesday (11 April, 1979) afternoon by a dispute over a religious procession, the riots have claimed nearly 100 lives so far in clashes and intermittent firing by the police army personnel. More than a third of the 120 people hospitalized were said to be in a critical condition. The situation was tense all over the township, particularly the 12 business and commercial localities badly were scarred by the riots.

[^82]: Navabharat Times, 14 April 1979, New Delhi, p. 4.
For, tension has been mounting for nearly a week over the Ramnavami procession, the route fixed for it originally was objected to by the members of the minority community. Though an agreement was hammered out finally, altering the route of procession to avoid “sensitive” areas the authorities seem to have overlooked the need for precautionary steps like deploying more policemen. This was all the more necessary, considering the background of the events and the surcharged air that led to the procession being taken out one day later. In the event, when brickbats and bombs came raining down on the procession as it approached a mosque, clashed erupted and spread like wildfire.

The Bihar Government has done well in deciding to institute a judicial inquiry into the riot. But nothing will console those who have lost their ones. The administration also failed to arrest communalists and anti-social elements in adequate number before the outbreak of the riot. Muslims were not only economically oppressed by the bourgeois-landlord but were also discriminated in the sphere of language, culture and jobs.\(^{183}\)

During the course of inquiry by the commission there were wide ranging complaints by the CCC, JUH (Jamet-Ul-Ulema-I-Hind) and CPI regarding the anti-Muslim behavior of the BMP. Although CPI (M) had always defended the Muslim Minority and raised its voice against the discrimination and oppression of the Muslims, a overwhelming section of the Muslims remained alienated from the common class and democratic movements. And, of these weaknesses, advantage was taken by the Jamat-i-Islami with an appeal of Islamic fundamentalism in order to disrupt the democratic and working class movements.\(^{184}\)

The Inquiry Commission held that the administration and the Police, having failed to provide protection to the minority community. The Administration also failed to provide protection to women and children of the minority community while carrying them to safer places by an ambulance van.\(^{185}\)


\(^{185}\) Narayan, *Communal Riots in India…*, p. 100, also see the Report of Three – Members Inquiry, pp. 125-126.
Whether the disturbances were pre-planned? In this context we find many evidences. According to Magistrate R.D. Ojha a number of bombs were thrown on procession. Though the number may not be accurate but the existence of such a large number of missiles in a particular locality indicates that the riots were pre-planned.

The editor of the ‘Aryavart’ also maintained, “The use of arms and ammunitions against the procession supported the theory of pre-planning.”

Communal riots again reared its head in Jamshedpur, the steel city, between 28th and 29th August, 1979. According to the official record 10 people were dead and according to unofficial records 18 people were dead. 50 people were injured during these riots. Record about the reason behind the riots and the communities involved in the riots are not available.

The Ram sundar Das government was failed totally to control the situation in Jamshedpur. The BJP leader, Dinanath Pandey, was considered as the main accused of the Jamshedpur riot. According to the report of Balasubramaniam, Jamshedpur riot was confined to the urban areas and the Janata Government controlled the riots within three days.

After Jamshedpur riot there were a series of communal riots in Purnia, Giridih, Biharsharif, Phulwarisharif, Ranchi, Hazaribagh, and others.

Communal Riot in Purnea District, Bihar (1979)

Riots broke out in twelve villages of Purnea district on 4th July, 1979, which continued for three days (up to 7th July). In which 30 were dead, 100 were injured. There is no record available about the immediate cause of the riots and the communities involved in these riots.

Communal Riots in Giridih in February, 1980

Communal riots broke out in Giridih on 12th February between two communities over the quarrel between two boys of the involved communities. During
this riot 2 people were injured and 6 shops were burnt. But the exact records regarding
the cause and the communities involved are involved.192

In 1980-81, the political situation was very different. The communal riots
related to overall economic changes that had taken place in the country. Hence,
economic interests and allied political interests, apart from purely business
compulsions of higher sales through sensationalism, determined the role of the
newspapers. Even some of the leading so-called national newspapers were failed to
show their sense of responsibility. Reporting in many cases was tendentious and local
rumors were passed off as news that magnified the tensions and violence and given
credibility to unconfirmed figures of casualities. Even analytical articles and editorials
spread communal hatred, at times more balantantly.193 Beside this, there were
atrocities on the lower caste people, their homes, looting of their property and rape of
Harijan women by upper-caste landlords, their hirelings and the police had became
common occurrence in Bihar and other States.194

Since Indira Gandhi’s return to power, over 50 Harijans had been killed in
Bihar alone, and a dozens of places their bastis had been burnt down by the landlords.
Congress(I) hoodlums had played a major role un committing these atrocities and this
was also happened countrywide.195 In the Kanas area of Puri district, a Congress(I)
state minister personally instigated, along with some MLAs and gangsters, the attack
on Scheduled Castes fishermen villages with guns, bombs and other lethal weapons,
in the presence of the police on several occasions.196

The root cause of these atrocities on low castes people was the failure of the
Congress rulers to giving the lands to the low castes people, guarantee them decent
wages and set-up an effective machinery to protect their rights.197

192 Engineer, Communal Riots After Independence…, p. 50.
193 Subrata Banerjee, “Communalism as a Commodity in Media Industry” in Kumar (ed.), Towards
Understanding Communalism, p. 388.
194 Zaidi (ed.), The Annual Register of Indian Political Parties: Proceedings and Fundamental Texts,
195 In U.P. massacres in Deoli and Sadupur shoked the conscience of the entire nation. In Mainpuri
district alone, to which these two villages belong, 46 Harijans had been killed in a year. In the name of
anti-dacoit operations, innocent lower caste people were shot down in cold blood. In the background of
general breakdown of law and order in this Congress(I)-ruled state low-caste-baiting became common
practice of the landlords and their hirelings, the police and the anti-social elements belonging to the
Congress(I). Though not on such colossal scale, heinous crimes against low castes were committed in
Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and in other Congress(I) ruled states even in Tamil Nadu., c.f., Zaidi
(ed.), The Annual…, p. 524.
196 Zaidi (ed.), The Annual Register…, p. 524.
197 Zaidi (ed.), The Annual Register…, p. 525.
In the eleventh Congress of the Communist party of the India (Marxist) expresses its grave concern over the periodic occurrences of communal riots in various parts of the country. The Muslim mass becomes the object of incendiary and murderous attack by Hindu chauvinist with the convenience of administrative personnel during the riots. The RSS was involved in organizing such riots as exposed by many reports of enquiries. The Muslim minority was also discriminated against and ill treated under the bourgeois-landlord rule notwithstanding constitutional proclamations. Apart from being economically oppressed, they were discriminated against in the sphere of language, culture and jobs. Even in states where their population was substantial, the Urdu language had not been given status of second language.  

Communal riots broke out in Sambhal in U. P. on 15th August, 1980. Riots broke out when procession was taken out in protest against the Muradabad riots.

The Biharsarif Riots, 30th April to 4th May, 1981

Though the riots occurred between the Muslims and Hindus (Yadvas) over skirmish for toddy but the real cause was a dispute between the yadvas and Muslims over a cemetery land. Towards the end of 1980, a dispute over a piece of cemetery land was going on between the Muslims and Yadvas (a dominant agricultural community) at a place called Gangadivan.

Biharsharif is situated on the Patna-Ranchi road, about 50 miles away from Patna. Biharsharif now is the district headquarters of newly created Nalanda district created in 1976 when it splited out from Patna. Biharsharif constituted 48% of

199 On 13 August 1980, a domesticated pig from the Dalit colony strayed into the Idgah during the Id prayer. Around 50,000 Muslims were attending Eid prayer at the location. The Muslims, who considered the pigs as haram, believed that the pig had been deliberately released by the Hindu Dalits. They asked an on-duty policeman to chase the pig away, but he refused to do so, leading to a heated argument. The violence broke out when some Muslims pelted stones at the policeman. The Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) collapsed when a stone hit his forehead, and the Additional District Magistrate (ADM), D. P. Singh was dragged away by some people; he was found dead later. The policemen then started firing indiscriminately into the crowd. The police force was reinforced by the Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC) troops that arrived in trucks along with the District Magistrate. Several Muslims were killed in the firing; about 50 more lost their lives in a stampede that followed the firing. The Muslim leader Syed Shahabuddin later compared the firing to the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. C.f., Engineer, *Communal Riots After Independence*…, p. 53.
200 Engineer, *Communal Riots After Independence*…, p. 56.
Muslims of the whole population of the town during those days. Because of large population of Muslims there were a number of cemeteries in Biharsharif.201

“There is no doubt that historic memories as well as contemporary socio-economic upheavals play their part. The underlying hostilities, the age-old repression and the revanchist tendencies, fanned by the ideologues of communalism exacerbated the social tendencies generated by the economic restructuring and find explosive release in such orgies of violence”.202

The town of Biharsharif was dotted with a number of cemeteries most of which have been shown in records as ghairmazrua (uncultivated government owned lands) lands. There were dispute over all of those cemetery-lands and cases were in pending in court of law. A section of other community claims as field or khalihan. In that situation there were 23 such places in the town where people living since long in the state of strife and mutual distrust.203

The town has also religious significance. There are mausoleum of Makhdim Sahib204 (a Muslim religious saint) and Mani Baba (the Hindu saint). Because of these shrines thousand of believers from the respective communities were attracted from all over Bihar. Anniversaries of both saints celebrated every year with great fanfare. People coming from nearby villages in search of livelihood, most of them settled there. The town thus expanding fast with drastic growth in land prices day by day. This factor played crucial role and help us to understand the nature of the present conflict.205

Another importance of this town was its bidi (is a kind of country cigarette, tobacco rolled in leaves) industry and a large number of Muslims and low-Caste Hindus were employed in the Bidi industry. According to Abdus Samad206, nearly

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204 Sharafuddin Ahmad ibn Yahya Maneri is the full name of Makhdum Sahib. He is also known as "Makhdum ul-Mulk". He was a famous Indian Sufi saint of 13th century and he was a contemporary of Feroz Shah Tughlaq. Sharaf al-Din Ahmad ibn Yahya Maneri’s The Hundred Letters is a bibliographical work on Makhdum Sahib. [Hazrat Maulana] Syed Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi (rah) has dedicated the last chapter of his masterpiece ‘Tareekh e Dawat o Azeemat’ Vol II (Saviours of Islamic Spirit Vol. II) to Hazrat Makhdum Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri (rah). I think C W Troll’s edited volume may be containing a chapter on this sufi, probably by I H Siddiqi. Please check.

205 Engineer, “Case study of Five Major Riots: From Biharsharif to Pune”, p. 239.

206 Abdus Samad then was a research student in the Patna University.
15000 laborers most of whom were Muslims were employed as bidi workers. Generally bidi manufacturing units were owned by the Muslims. The traditional residents of the town were engaged in weaving. The Sonis and Telis were business communities while the Yadwas (who were mainly embroiled with the Muslims in communal holocaust) were cultivators. Biharsharif is also known for potato cultivation which is quite profitable that also needed land to grow. Thus, many people had their eyes on the cemetery lands. Towards the end of 1980 a dispute over a piece of land was erupted between the Yadwas and Muslims at a place Gangadiwan. Gangadiwan was a predominantly Muslim village on the Southern outskirts of Biharsharif.

Apart from land dispute, which represents an economic factor, there was a political dimension also of Biharsharif riot. And this dimension was equally, perhaps more, important. Due to the high ratio of Muslims in population, the town was a hotbed of politics. About 32 ward commissioners were elected in municipal elections, of which 50% to 60% were Muslims. And it was quite sure that, there in Biharsharif, either Chairman or vice-Chairman was always a Muslim. However, in fourth general election a non-Muslim got elected with Muslim votes but CPI’s policy regarding the Bihari Muslims in Bangladesh, CPI lost its influence among

207 A large number of Muslims were very poor and earned their livelihood by working in the bidi industry. There were some old zamindar families among Muslims, but the large number of them were fast declining and they took up new professions. There was also a section of Hindus who wanted to acquire larger share of economic development and resented the social mobility and enhanced competitiveness of the Muslims; see, Engineer, “Biharsharif Carnage: A Field Report”, pp. 887-888.

208 Since Biharsharif was also known for its potato cultivation, there sprung a number of cold-storages in the town for storing potatoes before sent it out. There was further need of land to build cold-storages and for cultivation of potatoes, thus the land prices was soaring high and to acquire land at cheapest cost, there were only one way, to acquire the lands illegally that eventually resulted in the violence.

209 Engineer, “Case study of Five Major Riots: From Biharsharif to Pune”, p. 239.

210 Because of Muslim majority alcohol was banned, did not mean that there was no toddy shop neither did it mean that only the Hindus were addicted to alcohol. There were some Muslim patrons too. Thus the immediate cause was the altercation between the Muslim boys and toddy-taper (a Hindu)., see, P. R. Rajgopal, Communal Violence in India, Uppal, New Delhi, 1987, p. 82.

211 The situation was very similar that of Bhiwandi where, Muslims constituted 65% of the population of Bhiwandi and Muslims were engaged in flourishing power-loom industry., see, Sahai, South Asia: From Freedom to Terrorism, p. 120; see also, Engineer, “Biharsharif Carnage: A Field Report”, p. 887.

212 The CPI had stronghold among the bidi workers, most of whom were Muslims, thus they owe their elections largely to the Muslim votes. Even members of Anjuman-i-Mufidul Islam admitted this. According to the secretary of the local CPI, more than 3000 members of the party were bidi workers. In 1981 both MP and MLA of Biharsharif were from the CPI. The RSS strongly resented influence of CPI especially among the Muslims. The RSS wanted to spread its network in the town thus it runs a number of ‘shakahs’ (branches) in different localities. The RSS found support in business communities from Soni and Teli castes. And to combat and dwindled the power and influence of CPI, the RSS always made determined efforts to heighten communal consciousness among Hindus. Thus, the RSS were aware of it that, communal riots will also made Muslims conscious of their religion and derive them
Muslims thus in 1974, Jan Sangh candidate won\(^{213}\), obviously with Muslim support but CPI gained the power again in 1977 elections.\(^{214}\)

Communal riots of Biharsarif took place on 30 April, 1981 and in the following days, according to the Government figures, as many as 47 persons were killed and 68 were injured. This riot enveloped the rural areas and took a heavy toll of life and property during next four days. While the starting point of this riot was the issue of cemetery but the fire of riot was lit after quarrel between the two Muslim boys and toddy taper. In which Yadwas interrupted and spread false rumors against Muslims thus riots spread.\(^{215}\)

On the afternoon of, 30 April, 1981, around 3:30 pm. Chotan Pasi lowered down a pot of toddy, two Muslim (Matin and Gama) hoodlums asked him for toddy\(^{216}\) but Chotan denied to give that to them without payment. But Matin and Gama simply snatched the pot and began to walk off. Hearing the dispute two Yadwa youths arrived and forced Matin and Gama to give back to toddy. This enraged Matin and Gama and they brought small crowd of their Muslim supporters. The Yadwas too gathered and battle-lines were drawn.\(^{217}\) Gangadiwan is only 15 minutes walk from police station on the Ranchi-Patna highway but police took more than an hour. However, the police officer in charge (O.C.) of the Muradpur police station (P.S.) turned up with his men and prevent violent clash between the two groups. The crowds were dispersed but a section of Muslims set fire to a haystack, a hut and burnt a buffalo to death and 15 Hindu families in panic left the village. Thus rumor stated spreading that Muslims had massacred Hindus.\(^{218}\)

A serious riot broke out in Biharsarif. It was not on account of land disputes, though this problem had been creating tension between the two communities for a long time without leading to a show down. The immediate cause was a brawl between some drunkards in a liquor shop. In no time the trouble spread and hell was let loose, into the arms of conservative Muslim forces. Engineer, “Biharsarif Carnage: A Field Report”, pp. 887-888.

\(^{213}\) The political opportunism for the forthcoming electoral gain, which was in complete disregard of national interest and moral and political issues, was shown by the Jan Sangh by demanding that, “the Government of India should guarantee the safety and honour of the so-called Bihari Muslims in Bangladesh and facilitate the return to India.”; see, Prasad (ed.), \textit{Jayaprakash Narayan: Selected Works}, Vol. X, p. 9.


\(^{215}\) Rajgopal, \textit{Communal Violence in India}, p. 82

\(^{216}\) Toddy: Juice of the palm tree which becomes intoxicating when it is ferment.

\(^{217}\) Narayan, \textit{Communal Riots in India}…, p 136.

\(^{218}\) Narayan, \textit{Communal Riots in India} …, p 136.
leading to cases of arson and general mayhem. At its wits end, the administration clamped curfew over the entire city. The peace loving people had to remain behind the doors but lot of thing happening outside the city and it environs were the mischief-mongers had a free hand and arsonists were on the rampage in the countryside. Conditions in the village were even worse. Only those who had been forewarned about the shape of things to come escaped with their lives. One special feature of this riot was that the high caste Hindus took no part in it. On the other hand they went to the extent of saving lives of the Muslims while the backward class Hindus wholeheartedly participated in the riots. The fact was that it was those people who were made of the cat’s paw by the rich in unleashing riots during 1946.219

According to Azmat Husain Khan, a lecturer in history from Bihasharif, this land on a hillock belonged to the Muslims but the Yadwas were claiming it as their own. According to Mr. Husain, the Yadwas came in sizeable number secretly in the dead of the night in the cemetery and constructed there a small temple and covered it with the cow dung to hide it from others. The plan was to discover it few month later in order to claim the land.220 However, the Muslims noticed it a month later and a pitched battle was fought between the two groups using bombs and bullets. Fortunately there were no serious casualties and the police brought the situation under control. Tension prevailed for about four months.221

According to Azmat Husain, a deputation on behalf of the Anjuman-i-Mufidul Islam222 met the District Collector on 25th April and persuaded him to settle the question amicably to avoid the further fury among these two groups. Agreeing on the proposal of Azmat Husain, the Collector called a joint meeting on 1 May to survey the

220 The same thing had happen in my village Amhar (Ballia district of UP) on the night of 5th February, 1992. Some Hindus constructed an idle of Hanuman in the field of Qasim but did not hide it with anything. Next morning there gathered a sizeable crowd to see what has happen. Hindus use to say that, “Hanumanji dharti phar ke prakat huye hain.” This way they carved out a piece of land from Qasim’s field as Hanuman Mandir.
221 Engineer, “Case study of Five Major Riots: From Bihasharif to Pune”, p. 240.
222 Anjuman Mufidul Islam was founded by Sheikh Ibrahim Mohammed Dupley (a resident of Surat) in 1905 in Kolkata in 1905. After partition, Anjuman’s office was set up in Dhaka in September 1947 through the initiative of Mr. S. M. Salahuddin, the then chief administrative officer. The Anjuman organized a movement for the education of poor Muslims, and established public libraries and arranged debates. In addition to these activities, its important work was to bury unclaimed Muslim dead bodies. See, http://amibd.org/aboutus.php?cid=32&sid=6, accessed on, 23 January 2015; also see, http://www.banglapedia.org/HT/A_0248.HTM, accessed on, 23 January 2015.
land under dispute. He also agreed to settle the dispute in respect of other cemetery plots.\textsuperscript{223}

According to the members of the Anjuman the news of assurance by the Collector (District Magistrate) to Muslims, disturbed the Yadvas who were also not sure about for testifying their claims.\textsuperscript{224}

Political dimension of the conflict is important to discuss because of high ratio of Muslims in the population, the town was a hot bed for the politics.\textsuperscript{225}

In Municipal elections 32 ward commissioners were elected of which the Muslims shares 50-60 percent. In the I (1952), II (1957), and III (1962) General elections the area was represented in the provincial legislative Assembly by the Muslim candidates. In the IV General elections (1967), a communist (a non-Muslim) candidate was elected with Muslim votes.

But due to this policy towards the Bihari Muslims in Bangladesh which we have already discussed in this chapter, the CPI lost much of its influence and in the 1972 elections a Jan Sangh candidate had won, obviously with Muslim support. However, the CPI resigned its seats in the 1977 elections.\textsuperscript{226} The CPI had strong position in Biharsharif because of its Trade Union for \textit{ bidi} workers. No need to say that the CPI owed this election victory largely to the Muslim votes and this fact had also been submitted by the members of Anjuman-i-Mufidul Islam.\textsuperscript{227}

The RSS, on the other hand, was trying to acquire strong position in the area and strongly resent this all pervading sway of the CPI especially among the Muslims.\textsuperscript{228} In this order RSS finds its support among the business communities which comprises mainly Teli (oil pressers and sellers) and Soni (goldsmiths) castes. They were making determined efforts to induce communal consciousness among the Hindus in order to combat the CPI’s control among the said community and area.\textsuperscript{229}

Due to recurrence of communal riots Muslims became over conscious of their religion and drive them into the fold of conservative forces. Research paper of Abdus Samad throw light on, they have their share in trade and commerce. They

\textsuperscript{223} Engineer, “Case study of Five Major Riots: From Biharsharif to Pune” p. 240.
\textsuperscript{224} Engineer, “Case study of Five Major Riots: From Biharsharif to Pune”, p. 240.
\textsuperscript{226} Engineer, “Case study of Five Major Riots: From Biharsharif to Pune”, p. 241.
\textsuperscript{227} Engineer, “Case study of Five Major Riots: From Biharsharif to Pune”, p. 241.
\textsuperscript{228} Engineer, “Case study of Five Major Riots: From Biharsharif to Pune”, p. 241.
\textsuperscript{229} Engineer, “Case study of Five Major Riots: From Biharsharif to Pune”, p. 241.
have their own markets, cold storages and shares in cinema halls. They have started two high schools and one college. This growing social mobility and greater ability for economic competitiveness on the part of Muslims creates resentment among the section of the Hindu community aspiring for a greater share in economic development.\textsuperscript{230}

No diligent spectator of Biharsharif could deny the role of RSS in the Biharsharif riots because the lead role was played by the RSS in imbuing communal consciousness and tension in Biharsharif.\textsuperscript{231} Dr. Jagannath Mishra, the then Chief Minister of Bihar, himself in a press statement unequivocally blamed the RSS for fomenting the communal trouble.\textsuperscript{232} On the other hand, while addressing the press persons on the evening of May 16, 1981, the RSS Chief of Bihar criticized the attitude of some political parties to blame the RSS for communal riots.\textsuperscript{233}

While in the Bihar Legislative Assembly in an adjournment on the Biharsharif riots Nath Prasad brought it to the knowledge that on May 1st, 1981, R. N. Singh, the magistrate, and Fisheries Extension Officer, Biharsharif, had brought to the police station 34 persons who were from Bangalore were the members of Jamait-e-Islam and came there with the aim to violate the communal harmony.\textsuperscript{234}

The fight between the Yadvbas and Muslims over the issue of toddy just a tactics (of Yadvas) to disrupt the district authorities’ attempt to settle the graveyards disputes came in conflict with the Muslims and the RSS was waiting to start the massacre. On 1st May 1981, Alinagar, where mostly poor Muslims lived, was attacked by a mob during the curfew hours. Akhtar Husain (a victim from a relief camp who had witnessed the scene) told that when Muslims went to the mosque for \textit{Juma} prayers, it was then, between 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm an organised mob from Teli mohalla came with bomb and guns and other weapons and attacked the Muslim in Alinagar ans 12 houses completely burned. The maximum numbers of people were killed in Alinaga an most of the killed were women and children.\textsuperscript{235} Accordingly Akhtar Husain mob was led by Rajkishor and Pannalal (the RSS activists). The area

\textsuperscript{230} Engineer, “Case study of Five Major Riots: From Biharsharif to Pune”, p. 241.
\textsuperscript{231} Engineer, “Case study of Five Major Riots: From Biharsharif to Pune”, p. 241.
\textsuperscript{232} Engineer, “Case study of Five Major Riots: From Biharsharif to Pune”, p. 241.
\textsuperscript{233} Narayan, \textit{Communal Riots in India}, p. 141.
\textsuperscript{234} Bihar Legislative Assembly Debates, Patna, Part 2, Section 8, No. 1-6, 29 June to 6 July, 1981, p. 37.
said to be the stronghold of RSS. In other areas where non-communal parties were strong (the CPI had several strong pockets) attacks were not attempted or were given up.\(^{236}\)

In the villages, Alinagar, Rupaspur, Rohini, Chorsua, Muslims were killed in large number than that of Hindus. In village Gulni out of total population of 500 Muslims only 100 were alive. Muslims took shelter in the mosque and resented for long hours. But the Hindu mob attacked the mosque with *lukaris*\(^{237}\) and Muslims were trapped inside had hardly any option to escape, if the did not came out they would be burnt alive. Here 4 Muslims were killed.\(^{238}\)

Asghar Ali Engineer in his ‘Case Study of Five Major Riots From Biharsharif to Pune’ give the report that, during riots it was a common complain that rioters and goondas were abetted by the military police in looting, burning properties and killing of the people.\(^{239}\) The victims testified us but before the arrival of the BSF and CRP the toll of life and property in Biharsharif town would have been much higher. The BSF and CRP displayed remarkable impartiality in handling the situation, and saved many lives and properties. The Collector also had admitted this fact. The BMP, on the other hand, made no bones about its anti-Muslim bias.\(^{240}\) In Biharsharif itself the loss of the life was not more than 20. But the actual catastrophe took place in the adjacent villages. And that happened because the RSS mechanism worked efficiently to spread false rumors in those villages. The local CPI MLA itself told that the RSS activists visited the rural areas in jeeps and scooters equipped with loudspeakers to announce that 200 Yadwas have been killed by the Muslims.

From 1 May 1981, the authorities had clamped round the clock in Biharsharif town. In the day time the rumor mongers did their dirty job. The RSS organized mobs from the town went to attack the Muslims. On 2\(^{nd}\) May 1981, a mob equipped with bomb, rifles and other lethal weapons attacked the village at 5 a.m. while another victim insisted that the time was 6 a.m. when they attacked the village. Other villagers mainly Paswans (a Harijan caste) and Gwalas (Yadwas) joined the attacked.

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\(^{237}\) “Lukari” term is commonly used in villages. “Lukari” is lighted cloth balls soaked in kerosene oil which is used as firearm in order to attack the enemy from a distance.


The victims of this riot were not the upper class businessmen who had established themselves, but those at the bottom of the socio-economic level and had to depend on their daily wages for their survival. It would be near to truth to say that the vested interests among the communal elements from the both communities look out for an occasion to trigger off a riot. And the selfish members of the both communities do this for their own sake and taking advantage of their (the lower class and poor people) ignorance. It is understood that the vested interests were fanning the flames of religion, communal, linguistic, regional susceptibilities for their own partisan ends.

According to official records 47 people were dead but unofficial records shows the figure of 150 to 200 people were dead. 68 people were injured. 550 people were arrested out of which 5 were well known office-bearers of the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh, this made it clear that behind the riots RSS played well. 12 houses were completely burnt down. And affected areas were Alinagar, Teli Mohalla and Gulni village.

The Biharsharif riot had occurred within less than a year of Moradabad riots of western Uttar Pradesh in August 1980. In Moradabad, riots were between PAC (Provincial Armed Constabulary) and a section of Muslims in which 80 odd persons lost their lives. As many as 52 had died in panicky stamped in Idgah caused by PAC and 20 killed in Police firings. In Biharsharif, however, casualties had occurred almost entirely in attacks by the Hindus and Muslims on each other in which Muslims were the sufferers.

The inhuman events underline the grievous fact that the pious preambulatory prescriptions about secularism and democracy have not prevented the communal elements from organizing themselves systematically for large-scale killing, maiming, arson and loot on the slightest pretext.

There was prolonged debate in Bihar legislative Assembly had gone in which political leaders of different parties accusing one another. Issue of Biharsharif riot was raised by the Munshi Lal Rai (leader of JNP (SC)) that, on April 30th the riots broke out which continued without any break off till 4th May, 1981, which took more than

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241 Rajgopal, Communal Violence in India, p.83.
243 Engineer, Communal Riots After Independence..., p. 56.
100 lives and administration was a total failure in seizing the riots. In response to Munshi Lal Rai, Karpoori Thakur (a Lok Dal leader) assumed this riot as a revolt in which Muslims were butchered. Karpoori Thakur agreed that administration was failed in preventing the riots but the riots in the villages of Nalanda district were only the result of pre-existing tensions. Like a wagon of bomb was sent to Vyas from Panagarh Army Headquarters in October 1980, anyhow, that reached to Biharsharif and ironically on the same day when riots flare-up, radio and newspaper reported that a wagon of bomb have been reached to Biharsharif. This made both communities suspicious for each other and it was the biggest reason for the rioting. On the next day of the riot, there was widespread rumour that the poison has been poured in the water tank and this rumor was testified by the patrolling corpses of Bihar, unfortunately this news were not curbed by the administration. Another reason was that specifically among the Hindus of rural areas that, students (Hindu) were killed in a large number even Dr. J. K. Sinha and Kamta Babu were killed by the Muslims. Thus riots were ignited on 30th April, 1981 and on the very next day curfew was imposed but the bypass were remained open. In rural areas Muslims were killed on larger scale than that of Biharsharif. Muslims were killed by identifying them and their houses were set on fire. Even in confusion son of Lieutenant Carnal J. N. Sahay who has little beard, was killed.246 Although Biharsharif is very close to Patna but not even a single MLA or CM bother to visit the riot affected areas till 4th May, 1981. Only they visit the area when Prime Minister came to visit.247

Karpoori Thakur charged the Government for being completely responsible for the riots and demanded dismissal of Jagannath Mishra, the Chief Minister, while Ramashray Rai (leader of INC (I)) stated that government had ably controlled the situation as well as accused Karpoori Thakur that during the Jamshedpur riots (1979) there was Government of Karpoori Thakur but riots had occurred for months and here riots had been seized within a four days.248 Ramashray also said that behind all this opposition was involved to blemish our party. They hired some professional goondas for igniting the riots. Debnath Prasad said that skirmishes over toddy were only a spark to the prolonged clash over the cemetery land. Gagandiwan, where riot had been occurred, was only at the distance of 100 yards from the Police Station. It was

246 Legislative Assembly Debate (Hindi), Part. 4, No. 2, Dated: 30th June, 1981, pp. 28-32.
247 Legislative Assembly Debate (Hindi), Part. 4, No. 2, Dated: 30th June, 1981, p. 32.
248 Legislative Assembly Debate (Hindi), Part. 4, No. 2, Dated: 30th June, 1981, pp. 32-33.
not true that Collector and S. P. were not present on 30\textsuperscript{th} April but I assert that both of them were present there and on 1\textsuperscript{st} May curfew was imposed. I have asked for a jeep and curfew pass to brought the situation under control.\textsuperscript{249}

On May 5\textsuperscript{th} 1981 in Lok Sabha, George Fernandes criticized Mrs. Indira Gandhi for her irresponsible attitude as she had gone abroad, while there was widespread rioting.\textsuperscript{250}

As ever administration was again failed in handling efficiently and ceasing the Biharsharif riots. George Fernandes (a Lok Dal leader) in his statement to press stated that, the Union Home Minister, Gyani Zail Singh has admitted the failure of Government in preventing the occurrences of recent communal riots at Biharsharif and its adjoining villages in Nalanda districts.\textsuperscript{251}

Instead of arrest of communal elements the power hungry politicians pulling one another’s leg by accusing incapable in ceasing the riots. For instance we see that Kailshpati Mishra, the then vice-president of the Bharatiya Janata Party of Bihar, demanded dismissal of the Ministry of Dr. Jagannath Mishra for its ‘incompetence and ineffectiveness’ in tackling the law and order problem.\textsuperscript{252} Kailaspati Mishra cited the example law and order problem as: A wagon-load of 120 m.m. unclaimed bombs were seized at Danapur, 11 persons were killed in communal riots, one student died of injury inflicted by police in Patna, 18 trucks were set on fire at Bengusarai and Bihpur, and a milkman (Rajaram Yadav) was killed in Madhupur.\textsuperscript{253} Thus Kailashpati in his press statement insisted upon that, Jagannath Mishra had no moral right to remain in power as had failed in preventing riots.\textsuperscript{254}

Chaturanan Mishra (the then President of the All India Trade Union) and Naqui Mohammad (the General Secretary of Bihar Pradesh Yuva Janata) described the Biharsharif Riots as pre-planned. They appealed all secular parties and trade union organizations to maintain peace and harmony in the society and also wanted the Government to crush the anti-social elements of Biharsharif. Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi (the then Secretary of the State Committee of CPI (M)) and Mr. Chandi

\textsuperscript{249} Legislative Assembly Debate (Hindi), Part. 4, No. 2, Dated: 30\textsuperscript{th} June, 1981, pp. 33-35

\textsuperscript{250} The Searchlight, 6\textsuperscript{th} May, 1981, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{251} The Searchlight, 12\textsuperscript{th} May, 1981, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{252} The Searchlight, 4\textsuperscript{th} May, 1981, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{253} The Searchlight, 4\textsuperscript{th} May, 1981, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{254} The Searchlight, 4\textsuperscript{th} May, 1981, p. 3.
(General Secretary of Bihar Democratic Youth Organization) appealed to the people of Biharsharif to restore peace.\footnote{The Searchlight, 4\textsuperscript{th} May, 1981, p. 3.}

Jagadambi Prasad Yadav (the then President of Bhartiya Janata Party, Bihar) accused in a press conference on 9\textsuperscript{th} May 1981 at Patna, accused Jagannath Mishra responsible for Biharsharif flare-up. His gave his statement to the press:

It was surprising that the Chief Minister, Dr. Jagannath Mishra, did not care to visit Biharsharif after the incident for four days while Mr. Chaturanan Mishra, a CPI leader, was allowed to move freely in the affected area during the curfew hours. It was also distressing, he [Jagdambi Prasad Yadav] said, that the BJP leaders were not given the curfew passes despite repeated request to the State Government…\footnote{The Searchlight, 10\textsuperscript{th} May, 1981, p. 7.}

Jagadambi Prasad and Kailashpati, demanded the immediate dismissal of Jagannath Mishra Government and setting up of an inquiry committee, they also demanded dismissal of the Superintendent of Police (S. P.) and also referred to punitive tax\footnote{An official spokesmen of Bihar Government had declared on 5\textsuperscript{th} May, 1981, that punitive tax would be levied on at least 9 villager where majority community had apparently failed to protect the members of the minority community., see, Times of India, 6 May, 1981; C.f., C. N. Chittaranjan, “Biharsharif: Monster at Large”, p. 2.}, otherwise BJP would launch an agitation on May 25\textsuperscript{th} (1981) in support of their demands. They accused Jagannath Mishra that he only raised the bogey of RSS to conceal the fact.\footnote{The Searchlight, 10\textsuperscript{th} May, 1981, p. 7.} They also complained of police terrorism that made indiscriminate arrests. Thus we see that it was nothing but complete failure of administration.

Except, April-May, 1981 riots in Biharsharif there was control on communal situation. All important festivals of both communities were performed peacefully. There were only sporadic disturbances had occurred that only limited to the specific places like Madhubani, Ranchi, Patna, Giridih etc. but these communal disturbances were not so horrific.\footnote{Bihar sarkar (Grih Vibhag) Prativedan (1981-1982), p. 57.} Riots in Moradabad, Aligarh, Allahabad, and Delhi etc. did not affect Biharsharif it shows that Government took stern action to maintain peace. In Biharsharif riots government shows some responsibility that riots were seized within
5 days by imposing curfew, raids were made, arms and bombs were recovered. Many culprits were punished. Riot victims were kept in relief camps.\textsuperscript{260} Though sporadic riots occurred in Narpagranj (in Purnia), Araria, Kisanganj etc. but were seized by the government. Peace committees were organized from panchayat level to district level.\textsuperscript{261}

There was total chaos in Biharsharif and in the riot not only low rank officials but high officials were equally responsible for the spread of the riot.\textsuperscript{262} Even the State Government was slow in reacting to the first outbreak as usual.\textsuperscript{263} The District Magistrate, Nalanda was on “French leave” when the communal conflagration broke out in Biharsharif town in 1981 and took a heavy toll of life and property\textsuperscript{264} thus V. S. Dubey was posted as special district magistrate who imposed curfew to curb the riot but his efforts were unable to check the rumours.\textsuperscript{265} Spread of those riots was checked by the visit of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, even though as many as 19 Muslims were done to death.\textsuperscript{266} V. S. Dubey said that four companies of CRPF, eight Border Security Force, six BMP force and district police had been moved in the interior of Biharsharif and the situation in the town and in the rural areas brought under control. V. S. Dubey also accused that it was local leaders of Congress-I who were involved in provoking the riot and protecting the rioters.\textsuperscript{267} The Chief Minister Jagannath Mishra had been advised by his Chief Secretary P. P. Nayyar and Inspector-General (IG) of police S. K. Chatterjee not to visit Biharsharif.\textsuperscript{268} Jagannath Mishra compensated for his lapse by two historic actions: (i) He set up a historic court of trial to punish the culprits. In the history of free India Biharsharif’s was the first riot for which about two dozen culprits have been sentenced to life imprisonment; (ii) An ordinance was issued for imposing collective fine on the area wherever riot occurred. That bridled the occurrence of communal violence.\textsuperscript{269}

\textsuperscript{261} Bihar sarkar (Grih Vibhag) Prativedan (1981-1982), pp. 57-58.
\textsuperscript{264} Legislative Assembly Debate (Hindi), Part. 4, No. 2, Dated: 30\textsuperscript{th} June, 1981, pp. 48-49.
\textsuperscript{265} Legislative Assembly Debate (Hindi), Part. 4, No. 2, Dated: 30\textsuperscript{th} June, 1981, p. 48.
\textsuperscript{266} Muslim India, September, 1995, Vol. XIII, No. 153, p. 404.
\textsuperscript{267} Legislative Assembly Debate (Hindi), Part. 4, No. 2, Dated: 30\textsuperscript{th} June, 1981, p. 48.
\textsuperscript{268} Legislative Assembly Debate (Hindi), Part. 4, No. 2, Dated: 30\textsuperscript{th} June, 1981, p. 54.
\textsuperscript{269} Muslim India, September, 1995, Vol. XIII, No. 153, p. 404.
Again riots broke out on 29th May, 1983 in Nalanda. There was a clash between the two communities near a religious place but the riot broke out when a posse of armed policemen, led by District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police (Nalanda), were attacked by the clashing mob while tried to disperse the clashing group.

Although in Biharsarif, peace was restored, but communal riots continued in various places of Bihar but the major one was riots in 1986 at Lohardagga, a tribal area. Riots in tribal areas were quite common. Ranchi was still considered as a sensitive spot as far as communal riots were concerned. In November, 1986 there was a widespread riot at Lohardagga which originated out of anti-peasant attitude of the Mahajans (moneylenders). Although tension at Lohardagga was arising out of economic reasons, it eventually took a communal colour. The Oraon tribals were in majority in Lohardagga which was a backward area and there had been no planned development in Lohardagga. This economic tension turned into communal rivalry because, many of the Adivasi peasants had taken loan from a Muslim money-lender and as security of the loan the helpless and poor adivasis had to mortgage their land. They complained against it but they did not get justice. Thus this turned into Adivasi unrest in Lohardagga and some communal minded politicians took advantage of it to spread communal frenzy.

The Local BJP and its recently formed ‘Vananchal Jagran Parishad’ communialized the tribal movement by organizing a massive rally of Adivasis on 13th November, 1986, where provocative speeches were delivered in which they mention that the group, who had cutting the forest and forcibly occupy the lands of the Adivasis, as vidharmi. By calling a group of people vidharmi was a direct hack on the Muslim money-lenders. Thus atmosphere was communally charged. And finally a spark was provided to the communally strained atmosphere on 16 December, 1986, when Muharram (a Muslim festival) and Karma (a festival of Adivasis), fell on the same day. Both communities taken out procession and a skirmish during the procession was resulted in the death of two Adivasis, thus riot started and Jharkhand

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271 Hindu and Muslim fundamentalists were trying to bring about communal polarization to gain their selfish interests., see, Zaidi (ed.), *The Annual Register of Indian Political Parties: Proceedings and Fundamental Text, 1984*, p. 223.
Mukti Morcha supported Adivasi movement to secure political advantage from the situation. Thus, the Lohardagga riot of 1986, illustrated that how communal politics turned a genuine mass movement, arising out of economic discontent, into communal riot.

It was not only politics alone that communalise all aspect life in Bihar. There was another dimension that also played in communalizing the atmosphere that was publication of a Hindi book in 1983 titled, “Boya Ped Babool Ka” by Mahabir Prasad Akela, contained derogatory references to Prophet Mohammed and another paper named “Madhyakaleen Arab Ka Itihas” by Prof. Dhanpati Pandey, who was a Reader in Bhagalpur University, raised the communal heat. Mahabir Prasad Akela, was a political activist and member of the state executive of Communist Party of India (CPI), came to the criticism by his own party-men as well as by minority community. Muslims decided, to celebrate Muharram by taking out black flags instead of taking out procession. Although Mahabir Prasad Akela was expelled by his part bosses, there was anger among the Muslims. At Aurangabad, Gaya, Jehanabad, Sasaram, Ranchi and many other places, Muslims protested against the book. The agitation was strong at Aurangabad because it was the home-place of Mahabir Prasad Akela. However the Administration became alert and started negotiating with the Action Committee and put the writer behind bars because the writer was only safe behind bars. The Left Government put an end to the agitation by banning the book. But it was too late it strained the relation between two communities.

Even telecast of some serials (soap operas) on the television by late 1980s, telecast of *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* and serial *Tamas* also aroused communal atmosphere in the country and in Bihar in general. In this serial it was shown that a dead swine was thrown in front of a mosque and a cow was chased by a Muslim lad. A Muslim boy was killed by a Hindu boy who was portrayed in RSS uniform, khaki

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273 The immediate pre-Emergency years saw some tribal movements like Santhal movement in Dhanbad with the support of the Jharkhand Mukti Andolan, the Bhil movement in Dhubia with support of the Shramik Sangathan and the Forest movement in Andhra under Marxist-Leninist’s leadership. All these movements were emerged against the atrocities to regain their lands., see, Gail Omvedt, “Worseninig Position of Adivasis” in, *EPW*, Vol. XIII, No. 41, 14 October, 1978, pp. 1737-1739.


short pant all these arouse communal feeling during it’s telecast days. Anyhow it was demanded to be banned in Bihar in 1988 by Satyaranayanan Duddan.277

**Bhagalpur Riots, October, 1989**

Bhagalpur has a long history of communal riots in 1924, 1936, 1946 and 1967. The Bhagalpur riots of October, 1989 were different in nature because for the first time riots spread to the rural areas of the district and 88% of the population of Bhagalpur lived in its rural areas and some of the worst riots took place in the rural areas like in Logain village, led by ASI Ramchander Singh of Jagdishpur thana and other policemen278, which we shall discuss later.

Bhagalpur constituted 3.25 of the total land of Bihar where 4% of total population of Bihar resided. Upper caste (Brahmins and Bhumihars) who were only 10% of the total population of the district owned 85% of Agricultural land and 95% of commerce and industry was in the hand of Marwaris and Gujaratis.279 Muslims comprised 13.93%, Harijans comprised 10.98% and non-Harijan backward castes comprised 65.50% (peasant cultivators were 38.56%, agricultural labourers were 41.42% while 4.78% population were engaged in household industry) of total population of Bhagalpur.280

Bhagalpur town is the most important silk weaving and silk dyeing industry in which a large number of employees were Muslims and was a highly congested town with narrow lanes and by lanes.281 Most of the land282 was owned by the upper castes who dominated both bureaucracy and politics. Muslims were mainly craftsmen but many of them were engaged in other activities, most of the better off among the ordinary Muslims, Harijans and those belonged to other backward caste were masons, motor drivers, bus conductors and also engaged in many other menial jobs. Thus tension among them was perpetual and was stimulated by the growing polarization between the rich and the poor.283 There had been a increasing communalization of the

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279 Marwaris and Gujaratis were constituted as the backbone of RSS-BJP and an organization professing cow protection; see, Santimoy Ray, “Bhagalpur Carnage in Perspective”, in *Mainstream*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 20, March 10, 1990, p. 15
282 Also in Bhagalpur land reforms has remained a dead letter means pro-bhumihars, as elsewhere in Bihar.
283 To create tension among the caste and communities, the upper castes, who wanted to deprive the lower astes from sharing power, done inhuman exploitation and atrocities on the lower castes, because
polity thus the caste and community differences had been used to unit the exploited haves—not among the Harijans and non-Harijan OBCs and also to vanish the secular features (to whatever extent it was existed) of the district and extricate the Muslims from the silk craft and other profession even based on self-employment.  

Bhagalpur also was the scene of bloodiest communal riots in 1946 and saw some exodus of Muslim population from this district. But by the time there was sizeable population of Muslims from Dono (Amarpur) to Tatarpur (Bhagalpur) that was a belt of 20 km. long which irritates Hindus. The post-independence period had seen the Hindu leadership pass from the idealistic Bengalees to Marwair. Marwaris of Bhagalpur were not only militant but some of them were criminals also. Most of the Marwaris were moneylenders, and also engaged in other trades. Bhagalpur earned in famous notoriety for a variety of reasons instances in support of this fact was available from the manner the convicts were punished in Bhagalpur jail like getting their eyes blind. But the communal carnage of Bhagalpur in October-November, 1989 added new dimension in barbarity in Bhagalpur. The communal violence that broke out in and around Bhagalpur in October 1989 continued for months. It was sparked off by processions carrying bricks for Ram temple in Ayodhya during BJP’s movement against the Babri masjid. Approximately 1070 people lost their lives.

Bhagalpur riots occurred against the backdrop of the Hindu move to construct Ram Janmbhoomi temple at Ayodhya by demolishing Babri Mosque, by mobilizing the support of devotees of Lord Ram under various forms and various stages. Ram Janmbhoomi-Babri Mosque dispute came as an opportunity that the vested interests

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of which these oppressed classes, finding no way for emancipation other than revolt and communal passion; see, Ray, “Bhagalpur Carnage in Perspective”, p. 15.


Report of Bhagalpur Riot Inquiry Commission, 1989, Annexures (Honourable Members Report), Superintendent Secretariat Press, Patna, Bihar, 1989, p. 358; in 1946 Bhagalpur Witnessed a one-sided killings of Muslims as result of massacre of Hindus in East Bengal. Nehru reshed to the place and threatened the people in order to control the situation. Thereafter Bhagalpur was peaceful but communal riots broke out in 1966, 1968 and 1983 but those were not on large scale., see, Ghosh, Indian Panorama: Triumphs and Tragedies, Vol. I, p. 68.


By the passage of time it became crystal clear that the vested interest motives were used in exploiting the issues. Politicians, who were in power, used it to retain their power that was getting eroded on account of their manifold misdeeds. Politicians who were not in power use it as shortcut to attain the power by raising the emotive issue of Hindu raj.
bent on enhancing communal tensions exploited to the extent possible with disastrous consequences for the polity and country. According to a top secret Intelligence Bureau (IB) study, in 1989, mutual distrust between the communities remained at a high level\(^{290}\), though in order to gain support of the devotees they started Rath-yatra all over India. The Hindus claimed the place as birth place of Ram. One of their moves was Ramshila Pujan\(^{291}\) and its procession throughout India and abroad. And a Ramshila procession was also taken out at Bhagalpur on October 24, 1989, which sparked off the communal riot there.\(^{292}\)

The riots started on 24 October, 1989 and not controlled for the next fortnight. Tatarpur was the main center of communal activities because it was a Muslim dominated area and they did not want a Hindu procession to pass through their area. On 23 October the District Magistrate Arun Jha and Superintendent of Police had, reportedly detailed discussion with the Muslim leaders who had assured that the procession would be allowed to pass peacefully. The only condition was applied was that there would be no slogan shouting. But suddenly Muslim changed their decision and were willing not allow to pass the procession. DM tried to bring negotiation between them. As a last resort the DM tried to change the rout of procession but processionists were also not ready to budge even a single inch. Through the approved rout procession was taken out under heavy police guard as stopping it would have mean more trouble (Muslim India, December, 1986, New Delhi).\(^{293}\)

As it was decided, the procession was moving and near the Muslim school, bombs started raining hurling on the procession. They were in large number. The DM ran but he fell in a ditch and S.P. Dwivedi hid himself under the jeep. The security forces started running. The processionists dispersed immediately. Meanwhile police regrouped and asked the Muslims to disperse who were squatted on the road and shouted slogans. Both D.M. and S.P. tried to reason them but they failed in between there started another round of bomb and brickbats. The police open fire and S.P. himself started firing from his revolver. Two people were died on the spot. Suddenly entire town was closed down and Muslims started fleeing from the area. Hindu and

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\(^{290}\) *India Today*, 31 October, 1989, p.29.

\(^{291}\) Ramshila Pujan refers to sacred bricks to be used for construction of Ram Mandir.

\(^{292}\) Narayan, *Communal Riots in India*, p.155.

Muslim started attacking each other by the evening in the areas such as Parbatti, Laharitola and Urdu Bazar.294

According to some reliable sources, the riot was a result of old rivalry between two deadly criminal gangs. Laloo Prasad Yadav as a Member of the Lok Sabha, in the Lok Sabha, on 29th December 1989, in his speech stated:

There are two groups of Muslim criminals at Bhagalpur, namely, Sallan and Ansari and the Bhagalpur riots were started by them. Bomb was thrown on the S. P. of Bhagalpur and many police personnel were injured. Bombs were thrown on the occasion of Ramshila Pujan and these two criminals have not been arrest yet.295

The rivalry between criminal gangs, Ansari gang and Sallan gang, was well known in Bhagalpur.296 It is alleged that Sallan group is patronised by Bhagwat Jha Azad and Ansari group by Shiv Chandra Jha, both former chief ministers of Bihar. There is intense rivalry between these two factions of the ruling Congress and this rivalry is reflected in the conflict between the Sallan and Ansari gangs.297 Sometimes earlier to the riot, 6 members of Ansari gang were killed by the police party led by the Superintendent of police, K. S. Dwivedi. And Ansari gang blamed Sallan gang for acted as the police informers. As result Ansari gang decided to take revenge by attacking the Sallan gang and killing of Dwivedi. Therefore this gang decided that on 24th October, 1989, during the Ramshila Pujan procession they would kill Dwivedi. As planned, on that day there was a fatal attack on Dwivedi. It is not clearly known far how such local analysis of the riot is true, but this is true that the two rival gangs existed as parallel rulers and they received political patronage. And this was the reason that the authorities of Bhagalpur were incapable in controlling the riots and curbing the crimes. It is said that during the riots the Hindus were provided with arms by a local muscleman and an owner of cinema hall. In Chanderi and other villages,

296 It was not the first time that Sallan and Ansari were used to communalise the atmosphere to help the leaders securing power. It was well known that Sallan and Ansari came to Bhagalpur in 1985 election to helped the leaders (who got them released) to win the elections. In return they got protection. Perhaps this also widening the gulf between Hindus and Muslims., see, Report of Bhagalpur Riot Inquiry Commission, 1989, Annextures (Honourable Members Report), p. 359.
the Minority community was under attack, while in Jamalpur, Khera the minority community which was attacked.²⁹⁸

On 24 October, 1989 about 3000 Hindus prepared to take Ramshila Pujan procession from Nath Nagar locality but a group of 300 Muslims attacked the procession. And the riot occurred at Tatarpur with the police remaining mute spectator.²⁹⁹

The procession which turned back from Parbatti, Tatarpur junction turned quickly into a violent mob and was determined to take revenge of its humiliation. They attacked the shops and garages owned by the Muslims on the lower Nath Nagar Road recently named as Lord Mahavir Panth. Hindu mod attempted to seize the locality of Assandpur but the Muslims fired from the roof tops to keep rioters away. Then mob entered to Parbatti where the massacred 40 Muslims. There was attack and counter attack. Curfew was imposed but that was not effective.³⁰⁰

On 25 October the situation took a serious turn when Muslims attacked on Hindu students on the last day of their examination one was kidnapped and another was stabbed to death. On October 25, an 8,000strong mob looted and destroyed Madaninagar, a Muslim settlement, turning it into a ghost town. They also attacked Kanjhiagram, a nearby locality. Bhatoria, a Muslim dominated village was attacked on October 25 and killing several Muslims. In Hasnabad, the Shahi Masjid built during the Aurangzeb's reign was damaged.³⁰¹ Paramilitary and army had to be called to control the situation. On 26 October 155 up trains were stopped and several of the commuters traveling in the train were dragged and killed by the villagers at Naharipur.³⁰² The alleged police atrocities further ignited the violence. The army was called in on 26th October 1989. K. S. Dwivedi, the Superintendent accused of being anti-Muslim, was asked by the chief minister to hand over the charge to Ajit Datt on the same day. However, during a tour of the riot affected area, the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi overruled the transfer of Dwivedi³⁰³ on the demand of a mob composed

²⁹⁸ Jha, Bihar: Criminalization of Politics, p. 218.
³⁰⁰ Muslim India, December 1989 C.f., Ghosh, Indian Panorama: Triumphs and Tragedies, Vol. I, p.69
³⁰² Ghosh, Indian Panorama: Triumphs and Tragedies, Vol. I, p.69
³⁰³ Warisha Farasat, “The Forgotten Carnage of Bhagalpur” in EPW, 19th January, 2013, Vol. XLVIII, No. 3, p. 34; also see, S. Ameenul Hasan Rizvi, “Bhagalpur Riots: Mismanagement by the State” in,
of policemen and Vishwa Hindu Parishad supporters. Again on October 27, Bhatoria was attacked. The attacks and counter attacks continued for days and casualties on both side kept on increasing. Army was also called out after a considerable delay and was not able to bring the situation under control. A curfew was imposed by the state government immediately in the afternoon of October 24, and all the civilian assemblies were declared illegal but imposition of curfew did not improve the matters.\textsuperscript{304}

After the Friday prayers on 27\textsuperscript{th} October, 1989, Chanderi village was attacked from three sides by the people from the adjoining villages.\textsuperscript{305} The Yadavs of the neighbouring villages had opposed the construction of a mosque in the village. Thus the rioters set mosque on the fire, along with some houses, and killed 5 people. A Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry regiment, led by Major G.P.S. Virk and stationed at the Sabaur thana, was overseeing Chandheri and the neighbouring settlement of Rajpur.\textsuperscript{306} When Major Virk arrived at Chanderi, he noticed that Muslims were fled to the neighboring villages and a large number of Muslims were hiding in a large house belonging to one Sheikh Minnat in order to save their lives. The same thing had happened in 1940s, when Qudratullah Shahab, ICS, was posted there as the Subdivisional Magistrate. He observed that Muslims were fleeing silently.\textsuperscript{307} Major Virk entrusted them to the local police which had arrived in the meantime.\textsuperscript{308} Major left soon after assuring Muslims for their safety but on the next morning they were attacked by a large number of Yadavas, Dusadh and Kurmis accompanied by the local police arrived at Sheikh Mannat's house and claimed that they had come to evacuate the Muslims to safety and when Muslims came out, they were attacked by them, some of them were killed on the spot, while the others were paraded to a hyacinth pond before being attacked. In Chanderi village 65\textsuperscript{309} Muslims were hacked

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
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\bibitem{QudratullahShahab1999} Qudaratullah Shahab, \textit{Shahabnama} (Urdu), Educational Publishing House, Delhi, 1999, p. 178.
\bibitem{MuslimIndia1990b} \textit{Muslim India}, January, 1990, Vol. VIII, No. 85, p. 30.
\bibitem{MuslimIndia2000} The English monthly edited by Syed Shahabuddin, IFS retd., \textit{Muslim India} put the number of killed in Chanderi massacre as 66; see, \textit{Muslim India}, January, 2000, Vol. XVIII, No. 205, p. 37.
\end{thebibliography}
with machetes and their bodies were thrown in a pond.\textsuperscript{310} At the pond, he found Malika Bano of Chanderi, a survivor whose right leg had been chopped off.\textsuperscript{311} 61 mutilated dead bodies were recovered from the pond. The police later filed charges against 38 people in the case, out of which 16 were convicted and awarded rigorous life terms; The other 22 were acquitted.

On the political arena in 1989, the difference was the quest for new vote bank, a consolidated Hindu vote bank, cutting across caste lines and extending into rural areas where voting had been along caste rather than religious lines.\textsuperscript{312} Thus it was for the first time a disastrous riot occurred in Bihar in Logain village of Bhagalpur district.

On 27\textsuperscript{th} October, 1989, 116\textsuperscript{313} people (Muslims) were killed by a 4000 strong mob led by the police officer Ram Chander Singh of Jagdishpur\textsuperscript{314} in riots in Logain village of Bhagalpur district.\textsuperscript{315} It was one of the worst communal riots, with more than a thousand killed in the district.\textsuperscript{316} The rioters in Logain buried the bodies in a field, and planted vegetables (cauliflower) there, over the mass grave to hide the evidence.\textsuperscript{317} Officer in Charge of Jagdishpur Police Station and the Block Development Officer allegedly helped in burying the bodies.\textsuperscript{318} 14 people, including the former police officer, were convicted and sentenced to rigorous life imprisonment for the killings, in 2007.\textsuperscript{319}

Evidences reveal that these riots were, by and large, planned and operated by the mafia gangs and with support and encouragement of local rival political leaders. Even Bhagwat Jha Azad former [Congress] Chief Minister of Bihar and also former MP from this area was accused of patronizing Muslim goondas who had helped Azad in winning the elections. A gangster, Ansari happened to be the leader of the Muslim goondas. Political dimension of this could not be denied. \textit{Surya India} of December, 1989 reported that, in Bihar politicians and criminals were the two sides of a coin. During the elections the criminals were hired by the politicians and in return they fetch them power by capturing booths. In between elections they are both busy

\textsuperscript{310} Warisha Farasat, “The Forgotten Carnage of Bhagalpur”, p. 35.
\textsuperscript{311} \textit{Muslim India}, September, 1995, Vol. XIII, No. 146, p. 404.
\textsuperscript{312} \textit{India Today}, 31 October, 1989, p.27.
\textsuperscript{313} Another source put the number of killed at 118, in Logain riots of 27\textsuperscript{th} October, 1989.
\textsuperscript{315} \textit{Muslim India}, January, 2000, Vol. XVIII, No. 205, p.37.
\textsuperscript{316} \textit{Muslim India}, January, 2000, Vol. XVIII, No. 205, p.37.
\textsuperscript{318} \textit{Muslim India}, January, 2000, Vol. XVIII, No. 205, p.37.
\textsuperscript{319} Thakur, \textit{The Making of Laloo Yadav: The Unmaking of Bihar}, pp. 66-68.
looting. Politicians robbed the Government in the name of serving the poor and criminals robbed the rich, the middle class and the Government through their Government contracts.\textsuperscript{320}

On October 26, at least 11 Muslims were killed in the Brahmin dominated Parandarpur village. The same day, 18 Muslims including 11 children were killed in full public view, in the Nayabazar area of Bhagalpur. Around 44 Muslims, including 19 children, were provided refuge by some local Hindus in the Jamuna Kothi building. At 11:30 am, a 70strong mob entered the Jamuna Kothi with swords, axes, hammers and lathis. Within 10 minutes, 18 Muslims were killed. Some of the children were beheaded, some had their limbs cut off while the others were thrown off the third floor. Violences were so horrified that a woman named Bunni Begum had her breasts chopped off. Some other Muslims who had been provided refuge by the Hindus in the neighbouring buildings, managed to survive. In Assanandpur, Muslims also escorted several hostel resident Hindu students to safety. According to the official records loss of lives was 396 but unofficial estimates are reported to be thousand. The police pointed out that due to the indifference of State Government communalism has been growing in the state and as a result communal riots occurred frequently.\textsuperscript{321}

The typical development of the riots can be clearly illustrated in light of what occurred at Bhagalpur which was most violent and horrible riot took toll of 1000 people dead out of which 900 were Muslims.\textsuperscript{322} In October, 1989, the V.H.P. organized a Ramshila Pujan procession which was to pass through the rural parts of Bhagalpur for a period of five days before the converging on 24 October in the town. On that day the procession initially comprising the number of processionists upto 1000 to 3000 persons,\textsuperscript{323} but after a some kilometres it swelled upto 10000, shouting provocative slogans like ‘Hindi, Hindu, Hindustan, Mullah bhago Pakistan’ (Hindi, Hindu for India; Muslim clerics must flee to Pakistan). Procession was stopped by 300 Muslims at Tatarpur, as this rout was not sanctioned by official license issued to the procession. The Processionists, comprised the members of V.H.P., B.J.P. and R.S.S., started shouting slogans such as ‘Long live Mother Kali’ (a Hindu Goddess),

\textsuperscript{320} Ghosh, \textit{Indian Panorama}....., Vol. I, p.69
\textsuperscript{321} Ghosh, \textit{Indian Panorama}...., Vol. I, p. 70.
‘Tatarpur will be empty’ and ‘We will avenge the insult inflicted by Babur on her children.’

After the terrible riots in Bhagalpur in 1989, Vishwa Pratap Singh visited the riot affected areas in connection with Parliament elections. But people of Bhagalpur were surprised because V. P. Singh did not react publicly against the Bhagalpur riots.

Criminal activities in on such a large scale that once in a report on Bihar by Trevor Fishlock in The Times of London during the early 1970s, commented, ‘Bihar is a dirty drain’ but Bhagalpur riot was so devastating that Bihar had become a grave-yard of India. Some say that the 1989 riots in Bhagalpur occur due to the communal politics of Vishwa Hindu Parishad, though the V.H.P. denied of having any hand in the riot. According to V.H.P. sources it was criminal factors that were responsible for the riots and criminal services were utilized by the politicians during the Parliamentary elections. Communal tension eased gradually due to the forthcoming Parliamentary Elections of 1989.

A meeting was held at Imarat-e-Sharia at Patna on 1st November, 1989, presided over by Maulvi Minatullah Rahmani (1912-91). Almost all important personalities of minority community were present there. At this meeting, the Muslim leaders came in for sharp criticism for not resigning from office in the wake of the massacre of the minorities in Bhagalpur. As a follow up action another meeting of the Muslim Ministers and agitators, was called by Hidayatullah Khan, the then Speaker of the Bihar Legislative Assembly, at his residence on 2nd October, 1989. In this meeting the Muslim Ministers said that in spite of their repeated request the government and administration failed to check the communal frenzy effectively. Therefore it was not sensible decision to hold the office any long by the Muslim leaders and legislators.

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325 Jha, Bihar: Criminalization of Politics, p. 216.
327 According to the sources of VHP, a local political sturdy had got released from the jail two history sheeters to utilize their services during the forthcoming Parliamentary elections. After got released, these two history sheeters started reorganizing their criminal gangs and this led to serious threat to law and order in Bhagalpur., see, Jha, Bihar: Criminalization of Politics, pp. 218-219. Correct this sentence.
328 Jha, Bihar: Criminalization of Politics, pp. 218-219.
329 Jha, Bihar: Criminalization of Politics, pp. 219-220.
Thus Deputy Minister asked Chief Minister to postpone the Parliamentary Elections but Chief Minister was opined that if the elections were postponed in Bhagalpur then communal flame engulfed the whole state.\footnote{Jha, \textit{Bihar: Criminalization of Politics}, p. 220}

Although the Chief Minister refused to postpone the Parliamentary election in Bhagalpur, however, in such tensed circumstances Bihar Ministry took bold step by banning religious processions. Unfortunately their effort was proved a failure. On 6\textsuperscript{th} November, 1989, when Rajiv Gandhi, the then Chief Minister, was addressing the public rally at Muzaffarpur, he was informed that Sasaram engulfed into the riots\footnote{The Sasaram riots were not sudden occurrence, communal tension was building up in Sasaram since August, 1989. Prior to 19\textsuperscript{th} August, 1989 Sasaram was quite free from communal tension except caste and class war and killlegs, like in Pupri there was inhuman atrocities in 1978; see, Narayan, “The Pupri Killings”, pp. 1580-1581.; The genesis of the riot on 19 August, 1989 was age-old ‘mahaviri Jhanda’issue. There was an old Idgah to the south of the Sher Shah Tomb and adjacent to Idgah there was field used as wrestling cent by both (Hindus and Muslim) communities for wrestling, which became a bone of contention when a ‘Mahaviri Jhanda’ was planted by some Hindus thus Muslims vehemently objected to this act of Hindus and this issue was brought to the district administration by the Muslims and claimed that the land belonged to the both communities. Thus district administration called a meeting of Peace Committee, comprising members of both communities. On the assurance of District administration that they would release the wrestling centre Muslims decided to participate in Muharram and Muharram was passed off without any disturbance. Howevere, after Muharram the situation was communally charge, when district administration denied Muslims to visit the mosque adjacent to the Tara Chandi Temple in August 17\textsuperscript{th}, 1989 on Rakshabandhan (a Hindu festival ). Thus already agitated Muslims became more agitated and communally charged atmosphere required to ignite the riots and this spark was provided by a minor incident, when two vehicles accidently dashed against each other and the owners of the vehicles were of two communities. This led to the skirmishes between two communities that turned into riots which engulfed Sasaram., see, Jha, \textit{Bihar: Criminalization of Politics}, p. 220; also see, \textit{Recalling Bhagalpur: A Report on the Aftermath of the 1989 Riots}, People’s Union for Democratic Rights, Delhi, February, 1996, p. 1.} and administration had imposed curfew and there was Flag Marching of the B.S.F. in Dehrion-Sone, close to Sasaram. Riot broke out because Ram Shila Pujan procession was taken out inpite of restriction on procession by the Bihar state Government.\footnote{Jha, \textit{Bihar: Criminalization of Politics}, p. 220.}

The Prime Minister asked Bihar government to ban all religious processions, particularly in 12 riot-prone districts- Bhagalpur, Chaibasa, Gumla, Gaya, Hazaribagh, Purnea, Muzaffarpur, East Champaran, Darbhanga, Aurangabad, Nalanda and Rohtas.\footnote{\textit{The Times of India}, 28 October, 1989, p. 1.} But even after the communal violence, as many as 60 people lost their lives, Mr. Satyendra Sinha, the then Chief Minister, maintained that banning the procession was not possible at that stage due to technical reasons.\footnote{Indu Bharti, “Bhagalpur Riots and Bihar Government”, \textit{Economic and Political Weekly}, Vol. XXIV, No. 48, December 2, 1989, p. 2643.}

Result of Bhagalpur riot was an unprecedented carnage. Thirty bodies were recovered from a well. Decomposed bodies were strewn all over the town and the
countryside, their stench pervading the entire area. What the police did this time was far worst. They even did not lift their finger to protect the honor and properties of the citizens, their life, but in fact they clouded with the killers, the rapists, the looters and the arsonists.\textsuperscript{335} BMP, the general police and the Home Guard played dubious role and they joined the marauders instead of providing protection to the panicky families moving to the safer places.\textsuperscript{336}

The BMP personnel actively encouraged the rioters and they themselves were busy in attacking and killing the Muslims. Approximately 150 Muslims were rescued from Chanderi village by the army and handed over to the BMP in a protection were also killed. Despite president demands, including, Azmat Husain, a minister in the state government, BMP units were not removed from the riot affected areas. For thee days it was the BMP, well known for its communal bias against the minority community and held responsible for the may riots in Hazaribagh even by the ministers of the state government which was in command in the worst affected districts of Bhagalpur.\textsuperscript{337}

At places entire families of minority community were burnt alive in their houses which were set to fire in the dead of night. Rehmanpur, Mansuragnj, Nathnagar, Champanagar, Nayabazar, Sahebganj, Parbatti, shaqchak and Jogsar localities have been devastated beyond recognition. Villages like Chanderi and Sandehri were entirely wiped out.\textsuperscript{338}

The extent and nature of Bhagalpur riots, in 1989, that it continued from October 22, 1989 to January 15, 1990 affecting almost the entire town and approximately 250 villages around, in which 960 persons were killed\textsuperscript{339} out of whom 93% were Muslims.\textsuperscript{340}

The Congress, still struggling to reclaim its Muslim vote bank in Bihar, is faced with the embarrassment ahead of coming Assembly polls with former Chief Minister Satyendra Narain Sinha accusing his predecessor as also a former Assembly speaker of having “fanned” communal riots in Bhagalpur in 1989 which left over

\begin{footnotes}
339 Some sources put the number of killed as 1000.
\end{footnotes}
1000 people, mostly Muslims, dead. Satyendra Narain Sinha, was the Chief Minister at the time of Bhagalpur riots, wrote in his autobiography *Meri Yaadein, Meri bhoolein* (My Memories, My Mistakes) that, the Bhagalpur communal riots were an unpleasant chapter of his life and of his tenure as Chief Minister. Because of personal jealousy and ill will, some of his political colleagues fanned these riots. He also reveals that, though, some of the politicians were present at Bhagalpur during the riots instead of bringing them under control, they added fuel to the fire names of Bhagwat Jha Azad, then the Chief Minister and former speaker Shivchandra Jha were worth mentioning in this regard. Nikhil Kumar (son of Satyendra Narayan Sinha), a former Delhi Police Commissioner, a Congress MP from Aurangabad, alleged the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi overruled his order to transfer the Police Superintendent of Bhagalpur K. S. Dwivedi that was not only an encroachment of the Constitutional right of the state government but also a step detrimental to ongoing efforts to ease tensions.

Administration failed in preventing the riots. Though the administration sensed of the strained relations of the two communities, they allowed taking procession through a Muslim locality besides it was opposed by the Muslims. This act of administration sensed us that riots were pre planned. Police played dubious role during riots. They were merely acted like a member of their religion and community and were involved in looting and atrocities on Muslims with the rioters and goonda elements. Police shows communal bias and beaten and killed the Muslims. There were several such cases for example in case of Bibi Shahjahen Khatoo (an eyewitness) of Bhikanpur (T), Police Station Mojahidpur, and police behaviour extremely brutal, as she stated:

The gang consisted by police came to my house and broken the door. He struck the door where we shifted the room. My husband shut the door and police drag out and beaten bitterly. One Officer told that ‘Saale ko goli mar do.’

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344 T indicates tehsil.
Continued they beaten my husband then I opposed him. He also beat me by kunda. I fell then down. Five minutes latter heared firing then I fully determined they killed my husband. In my mohalla police beaten many people [Muslims]. I knew that policemen killed my husband and also killed electric Mistry Nayeem. This is the false allegation that Muslim attack on police…. No compensation received because police would have been affected.  

Many other eye-witnesses like Banarasi Das Gupta (Noorpur), Malika Begum (Chanderi), Md. Qasim (Mojahidpur), Md. Khatibur Rahman (Bankipur), Shekh Usman (Pirpanthi Bazar), Shekh Ibrahim (Pirpanthi), Md. Bashiruddin (Kajra) etc. in their statements accused Police for their brutalities on Muslims. One witness Bibi Sakina of Logain village (Jagdishpur Police Station) stated that, “Ram Chandra Singh came with a mob and told- ek bhi Musalman ko zindz nahin rehne dena hai taki koyi gavahi nahin rehne paye.”

The riots at Logain were extremely horrific that those who had migrated from Logain, after the massacre, never mustered courage to return, even though strangers had usurped their lands.  

In all 811 FIRs had been filed after the riots. The Police filed 302 chargesheets, and the lower courts have disposed of 152 cases, acquitting the accused in 119 cases. In the remaining 33 cases, the District Session Court punished many with life imprisonment.

The state government gave compensation of 1 lakh each to the families of 634 victims. Some also got 10,000 from Prime Minister Relief Fund. The administration rejected 169 pleas for compensation though the Session Court had directed the district administration to pay compensation in some of these cases.

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Most accused got bail while others are persuading the appellants to withdraw their cases. All the accused involved in Chanderi were released on bail. The hearing in these cases is yet to begin.\textsuperscript{352}

The inquiry commission should have taken serious note of that example because Bhagalpur riot was the most horrible riot which affected most the rural people. Although Indira Gandhi’s visit to Bihasharif had stopped the violence but violence rather stepped up and 19 Muslims were done to death, while her son was present in Bhagalpur and for a month after his visit there was a massacre.\textsuperscript{353}

The commission also failed to note that in Bhagalpur, the then Chief Minister, Satyendra Narain Sinha, reached in a closed car and remained in it with napkin stuffed in his nose. His ineptitude encouraged the rioters.\textsuperscript{354}

Communal organizations of Hindus have had not only extended influence over common Hindus but also on police personnel and district level administration. Most crucial aspect was that Muslim intelligentsia came to believe that civil as well as police officers betray the VHP mentality when dealing with Muslims.\textsuperscript{355} Former Chief Minister, Bhagawat Jha Azad, and former Speaker, Shiv Chander Jha, have been held largely responsible for the Bhagalpur tragedy. The then Chief Secretary A. U. Sharma had recommended transfer of the then D.M., Arun Jha. and S. K. Dwivedi, the then S.P., but the Chief Minister stopped it under pressure from Bhagwat Jha Azad.\textsuperscript{356}

The Muslims in Bihar had traditionally served as a Congress (I) vote bank, but after the 1989 violence, they drifted their loyalty to Lalu Prasad Yadav, who became the Chief Minister of the state in 1990.\textsuperscript{357} However, the subsequent governments were also accused of not meting out the justice. The survivors accused Lalu Prasad Yadav of not punishing the rioters because many of them belonged to his own caste. Later half of the Laloo-Rabri regime had became a replica of ‘jungle raj’\textsuperscript{358} but Jagannat Mishra’s or of the Congress rule was also not less than ‘jungle raj’.\textsuperscript{359}

\textsuperscript{352} Muslim India, January, 2000, Vol. XVIII, No. 205, p. 37.
\textsuperscript{357} India Today, http://books.google.com/books?id=gP4vAQAAIAAJ, accessed on 30\textsuperscript{th} December, 2014.
\textsuperscript{358} Thakur, Single Man: The Life and Times of Nitish Kumar of Bihar, p. 192.
\textsuperscript{359} Thakur, The Making of Laloo Yadav: The Unmaking of Bihar, p. 65.
On 12 May 2005, a Bhagalpur court sentenced 10 people to life imprisonment on May 12 for the murder of five Muslims in Kamarganj village of the district in the riots.\(^{360}\)

When Nitish Kumar became the Chief Minister in November 2005, he set up a conference on ‘Rule of Law in Bihar’ and pleaded for speedy trials. Since too many criminals were getting off because of loose investigation by the police, too many were beneficiaries of loopholes in the law and too many were patronized by the leaders. Thus two officers were brought in- Abhayanand an IPS officer, and Afzal Amanullah an IAS officer. As result of this initiation of Nitish Kumar, notorious bahubalis of Bihar, criminal-politicians were sentenced life imprisonment. This also led to the retrial of Kameshwar Yadav\(^{361}\), who had led manslaughter against the Muslims in 1989 Bhagalpur riots,\(^{362}\) had earlier been acquitted and given a citation by the state police for maintaining communal harmony, was convicted for killing of Mohammad Qayyum and was put behind the bars.\(^{363}\) In 2007, 14 more people were convicted for their role in the Logain massacre.\(^{364}\) A number of victims were compensated in 2012 by the State Government.\(^{365}\)

**Sitamarhi Riot, October, 1992**

Sitamarhi (a subdivisional headquarters of Muzaffarpur district till 1972, and subsequently district headquarters of Sitamarhi) had a Muslim population of about 30%, according to the 1981 census. According to 1991 census population of district was 22 lakh which comprised 8.50 lakh Muslims out of which 4 lakh were lived in the rural areas of Sitamarhi district. There were 15% muslims in the district out of which only 8% Muslims were economically in better condition and majority of the Muslims were rikshawpuller, vegetables vendors and labourers. Rate of literacy was 20% of total population, 40% population was agriculturists and 48% population was unemployed. All the economic transaction of the town was controlled by the upper

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\(^{363}\) Engineer, “Grim Tragedy of Bhagalpur Riots: Role of Police-Criminal Nexus”, p. 305.

\(^{364}\) Thakur, *Single Man: The Life and Times of Nitish Kumar of Bihar*, pp. 196-197.

caste Hindus.\textsuperscript{366} Sitamarhi had a long history of riots, i.e. since 1895. In 1948 a communal violence broke out in Belsand, then in April 17, 1959, over the Mahabiri Jahnda procession in which 50 persons were killed, mostly were the Muslims. Agan on 13\textsuperscript{th} October, 1967 riot ignited in Sursand took 40 lives and 400 houses were burnt.\textsuperscript{367} This riot occurred over the language issue. However riots kept taking place sporadically like in 1968 in Revasia, in 1969 at Pupri and again riots broke out in Sitamarhi in 1989.\textsuperscript{368}

Riots broke out on 6\textsuperscript{th} October, 1992\textsuperscript{369} in and around Sitamarhi due to the tension created by Durga pooja procession. Sitamarhi has a history of riots and a number of riots have taken place in this small town. In 1948 a riot occurred there in Belsand and was followed by riot on 17 April, 1959 over the issue of Mahaviri Jhanda (flag). This riot occurred on large scale in which 50 people were killed. Most of the killed people in riots were Muslims. Again a riot took place over the issue of cow slaughter. There was a false rumour that a cow has been slaughtered by the Muslims. But later the said cow was discovered at Jankyosthan (Janki Asthan). In 1959 another riot took place here and the issue was also of cow slaughter, at place called Balminiya Akhta and this riot about 11 people were killed and 200 houses were turned to the ashes.\textsuperscript{370} Most of the killed people were Muslims. Riot broke out in 1967 in Sitamarhi along with Ranchi over the issue of Hindi-Urdu controversy. There was a coalition Government in Bihar at that time. The riot which took at Sursand claimed about 50 lives and 400 houses. Mostly, Muslims were affected. Again in 1969 riot erupted at Revasia and Pupri.\textsuperscript{371}

Laloo Prasad Yadav, the then Chief Minister of Bihar, assured the country that there would be no communal riots in Bihar as long as he was in command. That is total irony because circumstances of that time were not so lucid, there was thorough communalization of social and political life in India and even a Chief Minister cannot prevent the riots alone. He needs the cooperation of entire administrative, police and

\textsuperscript{366} Sajjad, \textit{Contesting Colonialism}..., p. 163.
\textsuperscript{367} Home CICD, 9/134/68 cited from Sajjad, \textit{Contesting Colonialism}..., p. 164.
\textsuperscript{368} Sajjad, \textit{Contesting Colonialism}..., pp. 163-165
\textsuperscript{369} Sajjad, \textit{Contesting Colonialism}..., p. 167.
\textsuperscript{371} Engineer, “Sitamarhi on Fire”, p. 2462; also see Engineer Asghar Ali, \textit{Communal Riots After Independence; A Comprehensive Account}, p.125, also see, Sajjad, \textit{Contesting Communalism}..., pp.163-164.
intelligence machinery to prevent or effectively control riots in time.\textsuperscript{372} As Mr. M. M. Jacob blamed the Government agencies for the riot and said that because of lack of co-ordination between intelligence agencies, the local administration and the state government led to the recent communal riots in Sitamarhi.\textsuperscript{373} The economic dimension of this riot was that in Riga (a village in Sitamarhi), a section of local Muslims of this region, revolutionaries their economic condition by producing fiddle and biris.\textsuperscript{374} Better economic condition made them autonomous and made them able to break off with the feudal agrarian set up.\textsuperscript{375} They sold bidi and fiddle regularly in wholesale market in neighboring Nepal. Some of them had even taken to the profession of tailoring.\textsuperscript{376} With the assistance of nationalized Banks and economic institutions has made them (Muslims) autonomous and prompted them to break off with the feudal agrarian set-up.\textsuperscript{377} However, Riga riots had strong economic roots, ignited by break from feudal set-up.\textsuperscript{378}

Simultaneously it spread to Riga, a nearby village on 8\textsuperscript{th} October, 1992\textsuperscript{379}. Mariam, the fiddle seller, was an old lady, while she was at the tailoring shop of her son when marauders struck and pulled down the shop. They also burnt the nearby houses and start chasing the villagers. Anyhow, the villagers took shelter in cane fields and undergrowth. Later crowd throw the old lady into the leaped flames and her son Siraju watched this dreadful act of frenzied mob helplessly from a cane field where he took refuge.\textsuperscript{380} Mob started arson and looting in the villages and their main target was rich village mukhiya (headman) Illyas, who acquired money by selling flutes and fiddles and other musical instruments in Nepal and Bihar. In fact he organized village Muslims and training them in fiddle and other instrument manufacturing.\textsuperscript{381}

The same incidents had happened in Ganeshpur and Kusmpur Bakri villages where marauders indulged in brutal killing and destroy the property of lakhs of

\textsuperscript{372} Engineer, “Sitamarhi on Fire”, p. 2462.
\textsuperscript{373} Economic Times, 12 October, 1992, New Delhi (ND), p. 2.
\textsuperscript{376} Sajjad, Contesting Colonialism…, p. 167.
\textsuperscript{378} Sajjad, Contesting Colonialism…, p. 167.
\textsuperscript{379} Sajjad, Contesting Colonialism…, p. 167.
rupees. Six people were killed including a six year old girl.\textsuperscript{382} This shows that the genesis of these communal occurrences in the rural areas lies in the agrarian imbalances existing in Bihar. Religion has nothing to do with this round of riots.\textsuperscript{383}

This suggests us that the rural areas were already incensed with anger, intolerance and frustration which emanated from the economic backwardness of the region.\textsuperscript{384}

When riots started in Sitamarhi city on 6\textsuperscript{th} October, 1992, it only served to ignite the tinderbox in rural areas where the killing took place in large numbers. Rumors spread like wildfire about the breaking of idols of \textit{Durga}, people were mobilized in the name of religion to take revenge. The administration reacted with characteristic delay, giving rioters enough time to continue an orgy of violence against the helpless people.\textsuperscript{385}

There was a marked difference in the pattern of violence and arson in rural areas and that in urban areas. While the trouble started initially from the city and subsided within 12 hours, it took almost three days to contain violence in rural areas. In urban areas, the casualty figure shows that numbers of both the communities indulged in violence and attacked one another ferociously. In riots in rural areas only Muslims bore the burnt of mobs frenzy.\textsuperscript{386}

Bihar had produced several secular Chief Ministers but no one could match the efforts so far as nipping in the bud the design of the communal forces is concerned. During the Patna city riots he literally took to the streets and worked day in and day out to ensure confidence in the minds of the Muslims. He visited almost all the nooks and corners of the walled city area of Patna and the riots stopped within hours.

By the time communal riots hit Sitamarhi town on the border with Nepal in October, 1992. Mr. Yadav was much matured politician and had learnt the ropes. He was now well aware of the role some of the bureaucrats and police officials play in fomenting the riots.

The surprising aspect is that he landed in Sitamarhi from a helicopter minutes after the first shot was fired. The district officials were completely stumped by the

\textsuperscript{382}The \textit{Times of India}, 12 October, 1992, New Delhi (ND), p. 1.
\textsuperscript{384}The \textit{Times of India}, 12 October, 1992, New Delhi (ND), p. 1.
\textsuperscript{385}The \textit{Times of India}, 12 October, 1992, New Delhi (ND), p. 6
\textsuperscript{386}The \textit{Times of India}, 12 October, 1992, New Delhi (ND), p. 6.
alacrity with which he acted as they had till then not even informed him in Patna. He flew to that place on the information from a private source and continued to visit it for ten continuous days. He pulled up the district officials no end for not preventing the riots from occurring. In one of the localities he even slapped a policeman for dereliction of duties. He visited all the affected villages to calm the atmosphere and warned his party-men and own caste men, Yadvas, from being carried away by the emotion.

This was in total contrast with the response of those former Chief Ministers who were known for the secular credentials not to speak of others. When the steel city of Jamshedpur was rocked by communal riots in April 1979, the state was ruled by Mr. Karpoo thakur (1924-88), an ardent crusader of secularism. He went to that place to quell the riots but did not succeed. In fact more than 120 Muslims going to the refugee camp on a bus were burnt alive by the rioters when he was, physically present, in that very city. The “secular” Chief Minister appeared helpless.

A. K. Biswas later on, in one of his essays, retrospectively argued that “communal violence rarely erupts without a warning or foreshadow which, if overlooked or ignored, can cause misfortune to the people of the district without fail. In such cases the District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police are caught offguard. Intelligence inputs, if at all, are either vague or inadequate or nebulous to pre-empt the eruption of violence.”

When the procession carrying idols of the deity Durga for immersion at Lakhandei river was diverted from the route under pressure from some political bigwigs including a Union Minister of State belonging to the district. This ignited the communal disturbances. The presence of the DM and SP on the spot could have prevented the riots but the saddest part of the Sitamarhi riot (1992) was that when the riot broke out the DM and the SP fled from the scene leaving the emerging situation to their junior officers who were not capable in preventing the riots successfully.

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387 A. K. Biswas, IAS, was the then Commissioner of Tirhut Division (Muzaffarpur), under whose jurisdiction, the district of Sitamarhi was also there.
Conclusion

Caste and communal politics are distinguished from each other though at certain times caste does take on communal overtones. By the 1960s the industrial infrastructure (backed by the Green Revolution) was created that was also favourable to the upper classes and also there were atrocities against the Harijans and the OBCs. STs., etc, and administration was failed to fulfill their promises made to the lower class, thus there was breakdown of administration. Though the RSS, Shiv Sena, and Jamaat-i-Islami, such organizations declared that they have nothing to do with politics but they go on spreading their tentacles, thus there was change in political scene that the indirect and masked use of communalism and communal appeals in politics was moved to more open and blatant calculation and appeal on communal lines.

Political parties with communal leaning played dangerous roles in taking advantages of situations and in fabricating the communal riots in this context we see that the proposal of communist party for the creation of a Special Riot Force, as there was communal elements in the services, was opposed by Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP), reason was the ongoing communal carnage in the various parts of the country in which manslaughter had not been spared because that had direct link with the atmosphere of hatred, created by the vicious communal propaganda by the BJP and its allies VHP, Bajrang Dal and Shiv Sena.

And the unfortunate aspect is that over more than last sixty years the rioters had focused their communal attacks on the economic life of the Muslims as they had been able to establish themselves in traditional crafts. According to the economic historian Amiya Bagchi, the predatory commercialization created such an atmosphere in which communal riots had uprooted a large number of Muslims from even the marginalized livelihood that sustains them. Thus, the flourished power-loom sector of Muslims were severely undermined in Bhiwandi riots (1970), in Jabalpur their bidi industry was destroyed, in Moradabad riots (1980) undermined their brass-

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391 Government of India, Department of Personal and Administrative Reforms, File No. 39036/1/80- E (B), p. 176.
based crafts, in the Aligarh riot (1978) Muslim importance in the lock-making industry was badly affected, in the Meerut riot (1987) Muslim’s livelihood from weaving and brassware were destroyed and Muslim weavers were affected in the Bhagalpur riots (1989).  

Anirban Mitra and Debraj (2014) also suggested that all around the world there is an economic component to Hindu-Muslim riots. They also asserted that the Hindu group have largely been the aggressors in Hindu-Muslim violence and also that the Hindu-Muslim violence is often driven by instrumental, specifically economic considerations.

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