INTRODUCTION

India is a confluence of many states, having its own culture, religion, language and food habits combined together to make it a one-nation. Keeping in view the diversities in the composition of the country together with the malaises of large-scale corruption, poverty and illiteracy make it highly vulnerable to various forms of violence and conflict among the people of the country and communal violence is one such violence, which is repeatedly witnessed by the country. The communal violence is linked to the electoral politics, quality of political leaders, growth of religious organizations, role of mass media, perception of insecurity and fear, inefficiency and trustworthiness of the administration of criminal justice including police. Communal violence stems out of prejudice, hatred, deep-rooted passions and jealousies and negative attitudes against opposite group. Violence occurs out of such hostile attitudes because they happen to be members of other religion. Communal violence may be defined as verbal and physical violence against one religious group by another with intention to physically harm or destroy the property or both as they belong to a particular religious group. To control and pacify these communal violence incidents the responsibility lies on the shoulder of law enforcement agency i.e. Police but the role of police in handling such situation is debatable. There are many reasons, which are attributable for their role like;

a). Still governed by the colonial 1861 Police Act.
b). Police corruption.

c). Political support to anti-social elements.

d). Notorious nexus between police and politicians (Khaki and Khadi nexus).

e). Police incompetence and apathy.

So keeping in view all these factors this study tries to ascertain the ground realities, their impact on the secular, democratic polity of the country in general and the state of Gujarat in particular.

Objectives

The main objective of my Research work is to measure the impact on the human rights of the people by the role of police during the communal riot situation thereby;

(a). To assess how much the politics of communal violence helps the right wing political parties to gain in electoral politics.

(b). To measure to what extent police is influenced by the ruling political class in performance of their obligations.

(c). To assess and analyse up to what extent police is carried away bias and prejudiced mindset inherited from the society.

(d). To understand perception of the people of both communities about the role of Police in managing and administering communal conflicts.
To find out how much the role of police changes with the change of command in a decade time i.e from 1992-2002 in the state of Gujrat.

**Hypotheses**

Communal riots represent large-scale killing in the nature of ethnic cleansing or genocide, which witness the naked dance of inhumanity where lives & dignity of people become worthless and Law of the land were deliberately shattered. My focus would be to find out the exact answers to the following questions:

(a) Is the police, which is responsible for containing communal riots, right from the beginning, is influenced more by Political will or Public will?

(b) Whether it is power of impunity or personal prejudiced responsible for the paradoxical behaviour of man in uniform during the riot situation.

(c) How is it that Gujarat has become an epicenter of communal violence in India?

These are some of the questions and the answer of which this study attempt to find out.

After the Babri mosque at Ayodhya in UP was demolished in the year 1992 due to which a wave of communal riots had engulfed the whole country. Surat can not remain to maintain its image of “Oasis of peace” and succumbed
to post-Ayodhya communal violence in which around 175 people died in six days of rioting in the city. Of the many riots that broke out in the aftermath of the Babri Mosque demolition, only Mumbia’s violence surpassed the brutality, arson and destruction experienced by Surat. Ahmedabad also experience post-Ayodhya riots in 1992-93 but they were less in intensity and magnitude as compared to Surat.

On February 27th, 2002, when the infamous fire incident of Sabarmati express took place at Godhra railway station. Cities, towns and even villages throughout Gujarat succumbed to post-Godhra communal violence that claimed at least 2000 lives and forced 200,000 people, mostly belonging to minority community, into refugee camps. The city of Ahmadabad, Anand, Baroda, Sabarkantha, etc were adversely affected. Once Mahatma Gandhi’s centres for non-violent teaching were turned into rioting centers. Following the Godhra incident, Surat, a decade later also experienced only six days of violence that led to around nine deaths only.

Chapter 1 of this study titled Police and Human rights in India, which shed light on the historical concept of human rights from its evolution and condition of human rights in India in general as well as concept of police and policing in India.

Chapter 2 deals with the communal violence and the role of police in India. In this chapter the concept of communalism, its form and manifestation are defined and various theories of violence are discussed along with the
important causes of communal violence. It also includes discussion on, how the police in India deal with the communal violence and what legal and administrative options it has to contain and control communal violence.

Chapter 3 looks into the relationship between police and minorities in India. Here the issues raised are what is the perception of police for the minorities, what inherent attitude they carry about minorities? and what does people belonging to minorities feels about the police especially in the event of communal violence.

Chapter 4 of the study covers the Gujarat and its communal violence scenario especially after the demolition of Babri Mosque in Ayodhya with special reference to the riot in the mercantile city of Surat which surprise everybody because this city was considered as the ‘abode of peace’. What were the reasons and circumstances, which lead both the communities to fight with each other? What role does the police of Surat plays in containing the riot are explored in this chapter.

Chapters 5 is the final chapter of this study. Which deals with the role of police in the ferocious 2002 Gujarat riot, which can be rightly said as pogrom, rather than a riot. This riot engulfs 20 out of 26 districts of Gujarat in a matter of few days. It includes a comparative study of riots of 1992 and 2002. The police role in the 2002 riot was studied and a comparison of difference is made between both the riots. This chapter tries to find out the
causes that led to the alleged deliberate inactiveness and partisan behaviour of Gujarat police in the communal violence.

Limitation of the study

This study tries to find out the role of police in Gujarat communal violence and all those aspects of the study which are crucial, sensitive and emotional. Police which is an armed executive organ of the state, having many statutory powers, beside enjoying patronage of ruling government and communal violence is such an event which everyone, be it victims or witness, do not want to discuss openly because of fear of legal and social actions or repercussions specially in an state where the present government is utilizing it for its political purpose. It became very difficult to collect primary data both from the police as well victims or suvivour of communal riots especially in a communally charged and hostile environment of Gujarat. Keeping in view all these factors I had approached to the Center of Social Studies (CSS) in Surat, an ICSSR affiliated institute, for getting guidance under its student guidance programme. They invited me in the said programme and after going through the synopsis of my research proposal Dr Kiran Desai, an Associate Professor, at the center suggested me to focus more on secondary source of information rather primary that is why this study rely chiefly on secondary source of information.
Further Scope of the Study

Gujarat 2002 still haunts us. India never witnessed such a communal violence. More than eight years have passed but the news related to the Gujarat 2002 still make headlines be it related to the series of fake encounters or about the proceedings of SIT investigating the role of several policemen, politicians as well as extremist Hindu leaders in the riot of 2002. Despite the submission of SIT’s final report recently, the decision on it is yet to be taken. Also, Nanavati commission which is probing the Godhra and post-Godhra riot has to submit its final report. But this study has to stop here due to the completion of its stipulated time. So naturally there exists further scope to study the newly unfolding dimensions of Gujarat 2002.