



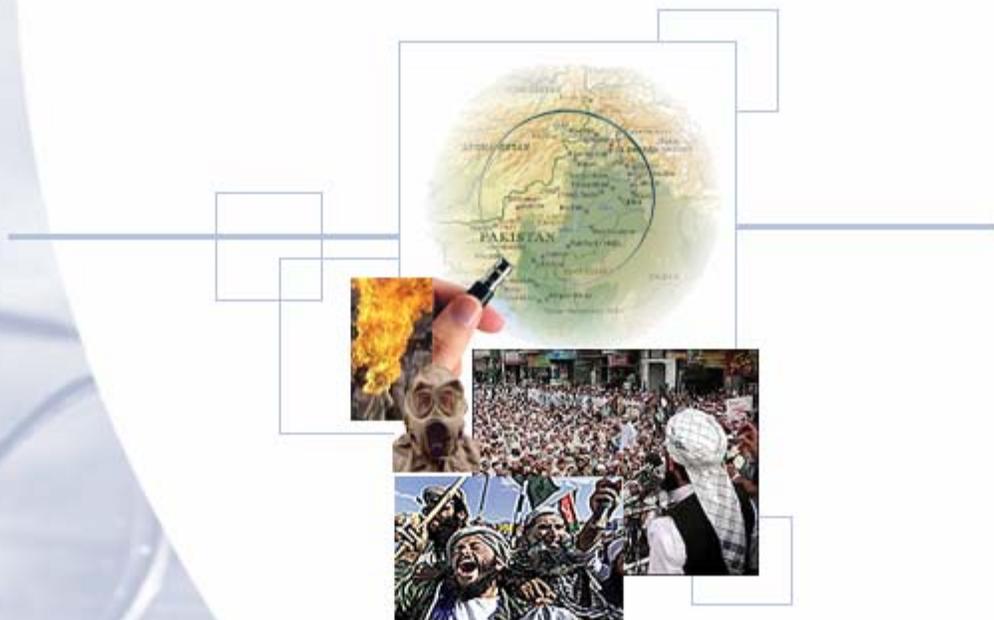
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Myth of United India & Democracy or Hypocrisy?

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MYTH OF UNITED INDIA

OVER TWO DOZEN FREEDOM STRUGGLES IN PROGRESS IN INDIA

Before the Muslim conquests to the Indian subcontinent, little was known about India or her dwellers. Historians concede “*the historical phase of India began with the Muslim invasion. Muslims were India's first historians.*” (Gustave Le Bon). Thereafter how the Muslims contributed to the culture of the Indian subcontinent, is all too well known. Muslim reign lasted for around 1000 years, before they met their Waterloo at the hands of the British.

The English plunder of the Indian land is too gruesome for words. They robbed India of everything that there was, right from their gems and jewels to their culture and language. They went further. They mercilessly divided India along ethnic lines for the sake of their own convenience. The mess that the Indian subcontinent finds itself in today is a gift by her imperial rulers.

The rise of Hindus to the realm of Indian politics occurred while the British ruled. They had long served under the Muslim charge, and now saw their way to the top by licking the boots of their new *gora* masters. What a pity! They shamelessly stabbed their Muslim brethren in the back who in their rule of 1000 years had treated them as equals. Whereas the British enslaved them, brutally murdered them and trampled over their customs and values.

But if nothing else, one is forced to acknowledge the shrewd mentality of these disciples of Chanakya. After the British departure from India had become imminent, these Hindu politicians began to chant slogans of right of self determination and liberation of India. Muslims, who by that time were well aware of the despicable aspirations of these politicians, had been insisting on the creation of an independent homeland. The Hindu politicians under the banner of Congress played their cards very intelligently. They convinced the world to have single-handedly rescued their land from the clutches of their colonial occupiers only to have been beaten by a few traitors who in their greed for power imposed the dissection of their beloved mother India.

Six decades onwards, they play along similar lines. Their politicians, media and intelligentsia are all part of an age long campaign to demonize Pakistan, a failed state plagued with terrorism and at the verge of a collapse. At the same time, they are quick to remind how India in all these years has risen as the world's largest secular democracy, where people of all castes, religions, color and creed co exist in harmony.

Of course it all sounds very remarkable, especially when one looks at their thriving film industry, where the most notable names in the business are Muslims. In sports too, with the emergence of the likes of Pathans, Khans and Mirza's one is deceived into believing such professes.

But if truth is to be told, this impression of Incredible India couldn't be more erroneous. William Dalrymple, the distinguished author of numerous works particularly involving the Indian subcontinent, notes, *In the world's media, never has the contrast between the two countries appeared so stark: one is widely perceived as the next great superpower; the other written off as a failed state* He further adds, *On the ground, of course, the reality is different and first-time visitors to Pakistan are almost always surprised by the country's visible prosperity. There is far less poverty on show in Pakistan than in India, fewer beggars, and much less desperation. In many ways the infrastructure of Pakistan is much more advanced: there are better roads and airports, and more reliable electricity. Middle-class Pakistani houses are often bigger and better appointed than their equivalents in India. Moreover, the Pakistani economy is undergoing a construction and consumer boom similar to India's, with growth rates of 7%, and what is currently the fastest-rising stock market in Asia.*

It would take a fool to not to see the direction towards which India is headed. Far from being the next superpower or the sole ruler of the entire Indian Ocean, India is a country at the brink of disintegration. And not only because she has earned enemies due to a hostile foreign policy towards neighboring countries, and its desire to create hegemony in the region with the hope to expand her boundaries to include countries like Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Ceylon, Burma, Nepal and more to create a huge Indian empire, or Vishal Bharat. It's her Troubles at home that are most likely to drive India towards a fate similar to that of Soviet Union.

To say the Indians are unaware of the gravity of the issue would be untrue. They have paid a heavy price already at the hands of various existing sub nationalists and continue to do so. In 1984, Indira Gandhi, daughter of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the then Prime Minister was assassinated by Sikh separatists. Such an event shouldn't have surprised the world, particularly after how Mrs. Gandhi dealt with the Sikh demand of Khalistan- a separate country for India's Sikhs carved out of the (Indian) Punjab province. In September of 1981 a group of Sikh separatists had taken refuge in the Golden Shrine, one of the most revered shrines of Sikhism. Knowing that the civilian presence in the temple was in great numbers, Gandhi ordered her army to storm into the temple with full force to flush out the militants. There is much uncertainty over the exact number of casualties. Some estimates put it at 3000. Much to the despair of the Indian establishment, the Khalistan movement did not die with Gandhi.



Delhi's Nightmare - Sikh Militants

flashback

India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh apologized in Parliament recently to the Sikh community for the 1984 riots in which 3,000 Sikhs were killed, most of them in New Delhi. His apology came after the report of a government inquiry led by retired Supreme Court G.T. Nanavati said local Congress leaders and workers had either incited or helped the mobs in attacking the Sikhs. **Jaskaran Singh**, who was a college student in Delhi at that time, reminisces on the harrowing moments at that time and reflects on the enduring emotional scars.

ANTI SIKH RIOTS 1984
REMEMBRANCE AND REFLECTION

Though the threat of an independent Sikh state is not as great as it was in the 80's, the concept is well alive amongst the Sikh community of India. According to news reports the exiled leader of the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF), Dabinderjit Singh has been making attempts to approach Canadian politicians and radical Sikh leaders in the hope of reviving the Khalistan movement. Earlier this year Jet Airways Flight 225, that flies from India to Canada, was delayed for several hours because of a bomb scare. This brought back to life grim memories of the 1985 bombing of Air India Kaniskha, in which all 329 passengers, 280 of whom were Canadian nationals, were killed. In the court rulings that followed the incident, the worst in the history of terrorist attacks on aircrafts prior to the September 11, [Inderjit Singh Reyat](#) was convicted of manslaughter. Investigations hinted that the attack had been masterminded by at least two Sikh terrorist groups, to avenge the golden temple massacre. Even though the latest incident was no more than a hoax, the Indian establishment was not amused. India is overwhelmed by the number of secessionist movements, threatening to breakaway from the country. An addition to these will surely have Indians panicking, signs of which are evident already.



They lost Rajiv Gandhi too, son of Indira Gandhi in an assassination attempt by the nationalist group Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), more casually known as the Tamil Tigers. It had so happened, that in the summer of 1987, the Sri Lankan government had decided to start an offensive against the Tamils in the Jaffna peninsula, situated in the north of the country. Under pressure from the Indian government Sri Lanka agreed to the signing of an accord in which it was decided that the Indian Peace Keeping force or IPKF would take to the task of disarming the Tamil Tigers and bring about a ceasefire. But relations between the Tamils and IPKF turned sour by October of that year. An intense fighting broke out between the two which lasted till the year 1989. Without delving much into the details it is enough to mention that the operation ended with India taking heavy casualties. The IPKF had to finally withdraw from the Sri Lankan territory, but not without leaving behind traces of brutality, a hallmark of the Indians.

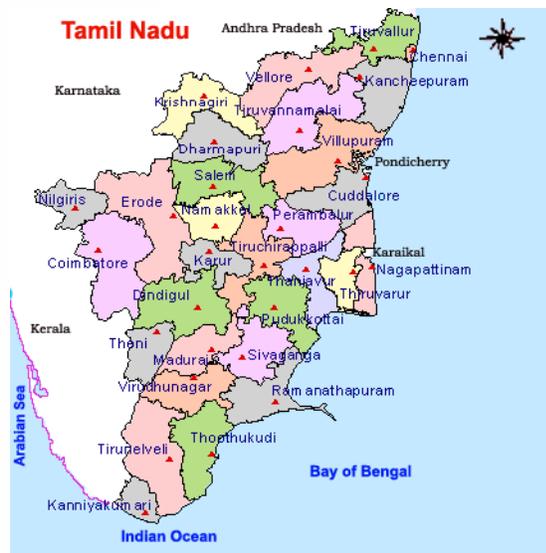


Rajiv's assassins – Tamil Tigers

The residents of Jaffna still recount the pain and misery that was inflicted upon them by IPKF which was renamed by its victims as the Indian People Killing Force.

Women of Jaffna were known for adorning themselves with gold. After the Indian operations in the peninsula it is unknown if the Indian peacekeeping force spared any for the locals. They raped their women, young and old. Many natives were killed brutally by this Indian force. But perhaps the final showdown to this battle came with the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, under whose leadership the entire operation was orchestrated. The Tamil struggle continues till date and is gaining momentum each passing day.

This is a worrying trend for the Indians and for a good reason. The Tamils lay a claim on the Tamil Nadu state of India. Since 2006, Sri Lankans have come hard on the Tamil Tigers. The LTTE is now taking refuge in Tamil Nadu, using it as a base to regroup and reorganize. In the recent past, many confiscations have been made involving highly explosive devices and other weaponry. They are also finding recruits on the Indian soil from the Sri Lankan refugees and local sympathizers. Indians understand the challenge this development poses to the national sovereignty, and they acknowledge that the LTTE has a huge support base in the state and beyond. It will take more than a military action to dilute the LTTE organized campaigns because of the strong cultural, linguistic, ethnic and historic affinity that the Tamils on both sides of the border share. Besides, the humiliation from the failed offensive of 1987 will keep Indians in two minds before they launch another military attack against the LTTE.



Tamil Nadu has a population of 62,405,679; it makes up 6.05% of the total population of India.

THE SEVEN SISTERS

June 29, 2008 a bomb rips through a market place in a village located in the northeastern state of Assam. According to initial reports, eight killed and 45 injured, some critically. So was reported in the media. But the mess in Assam and other regions in the northeastern part of India have a much more violent history than the blast on June, 29, the most recent of many since the conception of India as an independent country.

The responsibility for the blast was taken by ULFA, United Liberation Front of Assam, one of more than two dozen militant groups, fighting for either an independent homeland or then more political economy. In the past 25 years as many as 10,000 people have lost their lives in the violence. Thousands more have been displaced; now living in refugee camps.

The tensions have never seemed to subside; while certain militia groups did make deals with the government which brought some calm in the region; other armed groups have continued with their terrorist activities. The year 2006 saw a spate of bombings by ULFA until August when the government agreed to stop its military operations in the region. The truce only lasted till September, and in November the military operation resumed. There have been constant attacks on politicians, security forces and railway construction workers ever since. Like Assam are six other states with equally fierce movements calling for more autonomy, known as the Seven Sister States of India. They are situated in the northeastern part of the country, comprising of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura states. The states are joined to rest of India by a narrow piece of land, called the *chicken's neck*.



“Seven sisters” in deadly distress – Naga rebels

The region is marked by multiplicity of tribes, ethnicities, cultures and religion. It is home to around 400 tribes or sub tribes. The whole of northeast India is marred by conflicts, including infighting amongst various villages, tribes and other warring factions, all for secession for their many districts, villages and tribes. Violence is also pitted against migrants of Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal.

Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Meghalaya are relatively more peaceful than the rest.

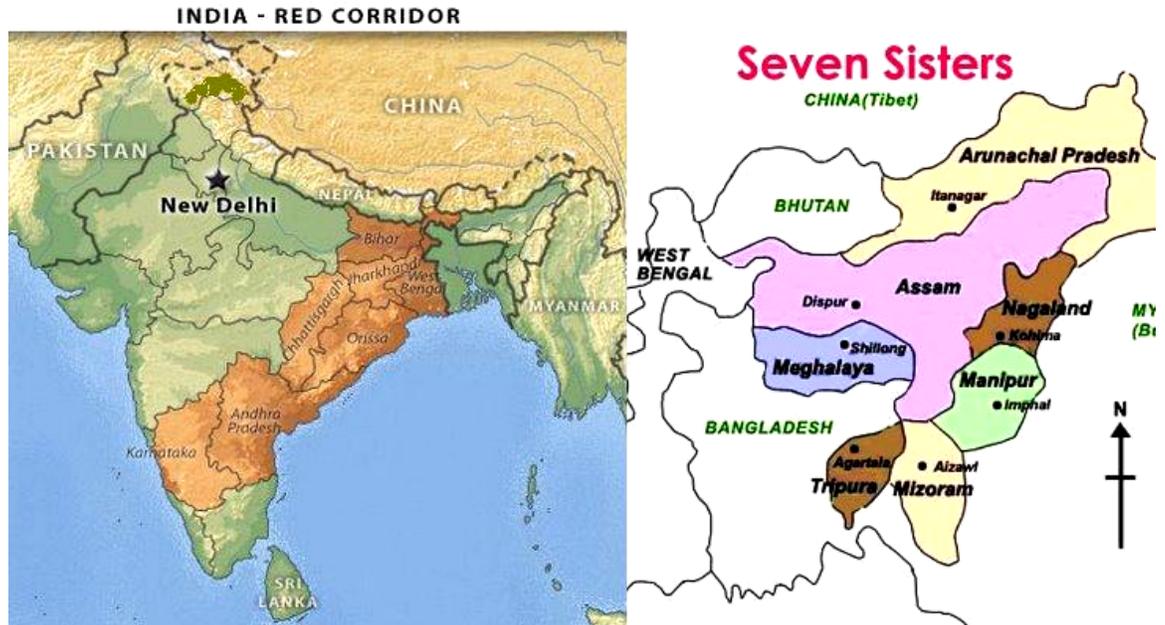
Nagaland is the oldest of insurgencies of India and is believed to have inspired almost all the ethnic groups in the region. More than 20,000 have been killed before a ceasefire was announced in 1997. They demand a separate homeland comprising of mainly Christian dominated areas of Nagaland along with certain areas in Manipur, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. The region is endowed with oil reserves worth billions. A state owned company – Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) was forced out of the area until 2006, when it was allowed back in.

The government has been trying to ease tension in the region by striking deals with the rebel groups but no real breakthrough has been made to ensure a long term peace in the area. Manipur has been fighting for an independent country since 1974. The Indian army took control of the state in 1980. Lack of education and job opportunities has forced many to join separatists groups. Army has been carrying out operations to tackle the insurgency problem but that has only added to the sufferings of the locals. Some 6000 people have been displaced because of the operations and rebel fighting.

A controversial Armed Forces Special Powers Act or AFSPA has been a subject of debate and criticism for long. This act gives various concessions to the army which has led to extreme violation of human rights.

Another issue that haunts Manipur is its proximity to the opium fields of the Golden Triangle, which has driven people to drug addiction. Incidents of HIV/AIDS are also on an increase as a result.

The last of the seven states Tripura, has been a refuge for many Bengalis after the war of 1971, when Bangladesh got its independence. The influx of refugees and the building of a fence by the government along the border of Bangladesh have prompted attacks by the two major rebel groups, the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) and the All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF). With thousands homeless and harsh living conditions, life is miserable for the local population.



THE NAXALITES

The Naxal movement of India was inspired by the revolutionary ideology of Mao Zedong. The movement feeds on a similar philosophy to that of Nepal's. It first originated in the 1960's in a remote area of West Bengal, Naxalbari. Today it has under its influence eastern Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, eastern Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Bihar, popularly known as the Red Corridor. Naxalites (also known as Maoists and Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries) pose a serious ideological threat to the state of India. Earlier this year, Indian PM Manmohan Singh, described the rebels as "the single biggest internal security challenge ever faced by our country."

The PM had good reasons to grant Naxalites the title of *the single biggest internal security challenge ever*. They have been involved in ruthless train hijacking, jailbreaks and murder of local politicians. They have refused to accept anything other than independence, a Naxalite leader has been found saying on record *Talks are a part of our tactical line. Naxalism is not a problem, it is a solution.* With a strong army of 15,000 soldiers, the Naxalites control one fifth of India's total forests. They have grown into 160 off 604 administrative districts of India.



“India’s single biggest internal security challenge ever faced” – Indian PM on naxal rebellion

The Indian army has been compelled to arm the villagers to take on these rebels. They are supplied with guns, spears and bows and arrows. Child soldiers too go through a rigorous training. The entire forest has been turned into a battlefield. The battlefield between the Indian army and the Naxalites is one of the most fertile lands in the entire country, with heavy deposits of natural minerals including iron core, coal, limestone and bauxite. The land has been sold off to some big Indian companies to extract the minerals for industrial purposes. This guerilla movement believes in a violent revolution. With the backing of half of the tribal population, by choice and otherwise, Naxalites maintain a strict control over the area, most of which is off limits to the government.

The government has been desperate and has begun a new terror campaign against the guerillas. As a result the locals are bearing the brunt of these military operations; on one hand they are tortured and killed by the rebels for supporting the government and on the other, the mobs backed by the army bundle the villagers into trucks to dump them at refugee camps where they are met with harsh treatment and tough conditions. The unrest in the region is growing with each passing day.

This battle is perhaps the fiercest of all that India has to encounter on home ground.

PART II

INDIAN DEMOCRACY OR HYPOCRISY ?

Minorities reeling under violence in Hindu secularism

After the British departure from the sub continent, came into existence two independent states- India and Pakistan. Pakistan, the Islamic republic of, is known to be the first country to have been founded on ideological grounds; Israel being the only other.

Quaid e Azam, Muhammad Ali Jinnah had said at a certain occasion,

"We maintain and hold that Muslims and Hindus are two major nations by any definition or test of a nation. We are a nation of a hundred million, and, what is more, we are a nation with our own distinctive culture and civilization, language and literature, art and architecture, names and nomenclature, sense of value and proportion, legal laws and moral codes, customs and calendar, history and traditions, aptitudes and ambitions. In short, we have our own distinctive outlook on life. By all canons of international law we are a nation."

In these words not only had Jinnah refuted his critics who in their twisted logic had insisted that Muslims and Hindus were nothing but one people, but had at the same time given Pakistan the ethos on which were to be erected the various institutions of this newly founded state. Islam was the cause of the birth of this country and only Islam can justify its existence.

India chose a completely different direction than that of Pakistan; declaring itself a secular state. With time many such jargons have been attached and detached with the state name of India as per required- progressive, world's biggest democracy, incredible... to quote a few. Phony as they sound, India has been wise in using them for its best interests. By portraying itself as a state not governed by any religious philosophy, it targeted the Muslim claim that Muslims couldn't survive in a country dominated by Hindus. Last year Indians marked 150 years of the infamous Indian mutiny of 1857 against the British, celebrating it as a day when the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs of India had united against their occupiers to fight for the liberation of their homeland. It was more than just a mere commemoration of that historic day; it was yet another attempt to question the legitimacy of Pakistan's independence movement. What wasn't highlighted was the fact that the first seeds of the independence struggle which ultimately led to the creation of Pakistan were sowed in the wake of this mutiny. In the days after the uprising was crushed by the British, the Hindu betrayal

of Muslims had forced Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to prophesize that Muslims and Hindus will never be able to live next to one another in peace.

They have used this religious versus secular rhetoric to establish that Pakistan is a failed state marred by religious sectarianism and violence; a state hostile to the religious minorities that make up hardly 2% of the total population; a state where women are oppressed in the name of religion and most recently a state that has become the breeding ground for terrorists. Thus, a state that poses a serious threat to world peace. While India stands as a total contrast to its unruly neighbor.

Abraham Lincoln had illustrated the spirit of democracy in the words, *of the people, by the people and for the people*. The authenticity of any country's democratic status is measured against this set criterion. That said it is not difficult to determine that there is nothing democratic, or even secular for that matter, about India.

One of the leading political parties in India is the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP]. The party was in power between 1998 and 2004. It is widely accepted as a radical right wing political party. Those who share similar radical ideologies with this political party include the nationalist organization which goes by the name of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh [RSS] and Sangh Parivar. Another such political party is the Shiv Sena of Maharashtra headed by Bal Thackeray. What's common between all these political and nationalist outfits is the radical doctrine of *Hinduvta*, which dictates (as mentioned in the "The Struggle for India's Soul," *World Policy Journal*, fall 2002) that India is "not only the [Hindu] fatherland but also ... their punyabhumi, their holy land." To Hindu extremists, all others on this land are viewed as "aliens" who do not belong there.

Recently *The Hindu*, a national daily carried comments of Bal Thackeray which invited Hindus to organize suicide squads in response to the Islamic terror threat to India. The plea was made after a bomb planted in a movie theatre by Hindu terrorists had failed to explode. Thackeray was pushing them to make more powerful bombs.

Sociologist Dipankar Gupta explains the mindset of the members of the Shiv Sena club:

"A good Hindu for the Shiv Sena is not necessarily a person well versed in Hindu scriptures, but one who is ready and willing to go out and attack Muslims ... To be a good Hindu is to hate Muslims and nothing else."

(Citizens versus People: the Politics of Majoritarianism and Marginalization in Democratic India, Sociology of Religion, Spring 2007)

John Dayal while commenting on the book titled "Religious Demography of India" disrobes the Indian propaganda (forwarded by the said political parties) of inciting public opinion against Muslim and Christian minorities of India. Much has been said about such schemes in this commentary and the one that preceded it. Selective pieces

from Dayal's observations only reaffirm all that has been said. Following are a few chosen sections which stand strong without the need to be accompanied by any additional remarks.

“Narendra Modi ensured his continuance and canonization as Chief Minister by repeating a gutter phrase Hum Paanch Hamare Pachees (we are five - husband and four wives, and we have twenty-five children, five per wife), perpetuating a myth that defies both logic and time...The slogan however caught on. Civil society watched in horror as god fearing, and sensible Hindus, made a beeline to the polling booths to vote for Modi.”

He continues: *“My friend Prof Ram Puniyani wrote a fine piece exploring the political psychology behind the Hum Panch Hamare Pachees slogan and its success. Said Ram, "One of the major factors in perpetuation of communal violence is the doctoring of the mass consciousness. The social common sense is manufactured in such a way that the targeted community is made to appear as the culprit. The classic case of 'Victim as Culprit'. And that's how so many myths percolate about the minorities. Apart from the Historical myths the one's related to demographics are playing a dangerous role in the demonisation of Muslims in particular.”*

One another statement from the same article ties all of this together to the ultimate dream of the creation of The Greater India:

“Liken their patrons in the Sangh, the authors are living in a dream land of Vrihata Bharat, a Greater India.”Throughout our analysis, we employ the term "India" for the geographical and historical India that encompasses the three countries into which India was partitioned in this course of the twentieth century.”

To think that such is only harmless oratory wouldn't be true. They have practically demonstrated these principles whenever an opportunity came their way.

The 2002 Gujarat attacks against Muslims were appalling to say the least; they generated a strong reaction from around the globe. The stories of violence and bloodshed were so dreadful that even the international media, which otherwise maintains silence over such issues, couldn't turn a blind eye to the occurrences in Gujarat.

A human rights watchdog reports the events in a manner all too well known to the Muslims who survived the atrocities of 1947- *The looting and burning of Muslim homes, businesses, and places of worship was also widespread. Muslim girls and women were brutally raped. Mass graves have been dug throughout the state. Gravediggers told Human Rights Watch that bodies keep arriving, burnt and mutilated beyond recognition.*



The investigation also brought out the fact that those involved were the members of the Sangh Parivar. The BJP tried to erase traces that bore marks of their involvement in this mass murder. But their sins were so ghastly no amount of cover up could hide the truth. So much so that some within the country were forced to speak against the then government and their heinous criminal activities.

Smita Narula, senior South Asia researcher for Human Rights Watch and author of the report relates, "What happened in Gujarat was not a spontaneous uprising, it was a carefully orchestrated attack against Muslims. The attacks were planned in advance and organized with extensive participation of the police and state government officials."

So cowardly are these terrorists that they only take on their targets where they exit in small pockets. Never have they dared to step into areas where Muslims live in a considerable number. This trend is so obvious that Muslims, who in their attempt to assimilate with the Hindus had chosen to reside in Hindu majority areas, had to find new homes in Muslim neighborhoods.

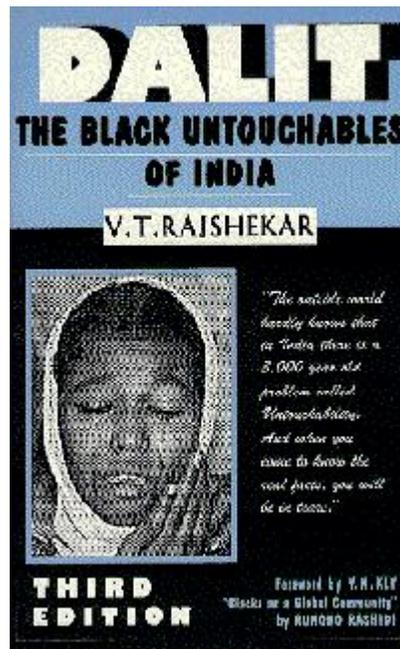
But Muslims are not the only targets. Christian minorities too have had a taste of this vicious campaign which is bent on cleansing India of its alien (non Hindu) population. Attacks have been made against priests and nuns, also including institutions like churches, hospitals and even charitable organizations associated with Christians. Such assaults occurred most frequently under the BJP regime. The assurance by the PM Vajpayee, that these attacks were isolated incidents and not an indication of an ethnic war against Christians, convinced but only few. For these attacks were simultaneously accompanied by hate literature that was widely distributed. The compilation included not just quotations, which wrongly established Christianity as a religion that encourages violence against non Christians but also carried suggestions as to how to harass them.

Mr. Dara Singh is believed to have been involved in the brutal murder of Graham Staines along with his two young sons, Philip and Timothy on 22 January 1999 in

Orissa. He and many more like him have never been brought to justice up to date. And so their malicious acts continue to make India a living hell for such minorities.

But the worst of the worst are those Hindus whose killing is approved by their own faith.

Khairlanji is a remote village in the Bhandara district, in the north-east of the Maharashtra state of India. On 29th September 2006, a group of upper caste Hindus attacked a house in the said village and killed four members of Bhaiyyalal Bhotmange's family; including his wife Surekha Bhotmange, his daughter Priyanka, 17, his two sons Roshan, 19 and Sudhir 21. Details of the murder as narrated by the witnesses are soul numbing- they were dragged outside the house, beaten with bicycle chains, sticks and other weapons that this mob could find at their disposal. The gang, many of whom were neighbors of this unfortunate family had the women stripped, raped and killed. Their only offence, they belonged to a lower caste Hindu family, otherwise known as *dalits* or untouchables.



In this progressive, secular democratic country, Dalits make up for most part of the total population. The recent boom in the Indian economy has done little good to these underprivileged. Between the upper/middle class Hindus and those belonging to the lower stratum lie barricades that bar the untouchables from getting education, fair job opportunities or even state sponsored medical and food facilities for their infants.

In Tamil Nadu alone, 45 special types of “untouchability” are practiced by the higher caste Hindus. Translated in other words, the high class Hindus deem themselves too high to share their temples, cremation grounds, river bathing points or even their

barbers with dalits and when these boundaries are transgressed, the punishment is severe.

As quoted in a report prepared for the *WashingtonPost* by Emily Wax; Anup Srivastava is a researcher with the People's Vigilance Commission on Human Rights in Varanasi. His job requires him to investigate complaints filed by Dalits about discrimination among neighbors, in schools, at hospitals and at work. He says, *"India is not a true democracy. The country is independent. But the people aren't. How can there be a democracy when there are still people known as untouchables who face daily discrimination?"*

To cite references from another article authored by an Indian named, V.B.Rawat, he protests, *"All those who talks of "great democratic" India and non violent and tolerant Hindu community must address to this issue as where were they when Dalits were being butchered by the Hindu Upper castes. Also, "The Hinduism that is being preached these days is in fact Varnashram dharma which believes in caste hierarchy.... And this caste system makes India as world's biggest practising racist country, worst than the South Africa of apartheid period."*

Desperate, most Dalits are forced to convert to other religions, hundreds every year. But now the silence is being broken. The *nobodies* of India are taking on the government, be it through an interview to a foreign magazine or protest on the streets. They have also found strength in the aphorism majority is authority. The wrath of dalits is a thing local politicians just cannot afford, especially during election season. They can swing election results in the favor of any political party that impresses them or vice versa. These are testing times for the government and a wide interest from international human rights organizations is only adding pressure.

But of all, violence against women is the most brutal practice justified as a religious duty in accordance with the teachings of the Hindu Holy Scriptures. The Hindu texts sanctify the killing of infant girls, by parents who deem themselves not capable of shouldering the responsibility of having a girl child. The Hindu holy book Bhagvad Gita clearly calls women embodiment of the worst desires and justifies the killing of women.

Here is an excerpt from Hindu book which allows killing of women;

"Killing of a woman, a Shudra or an atheist is not sinful. Woman is an embodiment of the worst desires, hatred, deceit, jealousy and bad character. Women should never be given freedom." Bhagvad Gita (Manu IX. 17 and V. 47, 147)

Similarly another holy script of Hindu religious book preaches looking down upon women by terming a woman equal to a dog, crow and shudra (a low cast poor Hindu who has no rights in Hindu society).

“And whilst not coming into contact with Sudras and remains of food; for this Gharma is he that shines yonder, and he is excellence, truth, and light; but woman, the Sudra, the dog, and the black bird (the crow), are untruth: he should not look at these, lest he should mingle excellence and sin, light and darkness, truth and untruth.” – Satapatha Brahmana 14:1:1:31.

Perhaps it's the same teaching of hatred and enmity towards women in Hindu society that still prevails though in the modern times it is being done in a modern way.

In ancient Hindu society new born girls were buried alive while the practice is very much prevalent in the so-called secular, democratic India even today. The killing of newborn babies and the abortion of women fetuses in India is a common practice.

In all cases, specifically female infanticide reflects the low status accorded to women in most parts of India.

As John-Thor Dahlburg points out, "in rural India, the centuries-old practice of female infanticide can still be considered a wise course of action." (Dahlburg, "Where killing baby girls 'is no big sin'," *The Los Angeles Times* [in *The Toronto Star*, February 28, 1994.]) According to census statistics, "From 972 females for every 1,000 males in 1901 the gender imbalance has tilted to 929 females per 1,000 males. In the nearly 300 poor hamlets of the Usilampatti area of Tamil Nadu [state], as many as 196 girls died under suspicious circumstances [in 1993] ... Some were fed dry, unhulled rice that punctured their windpipes, or were made to swallow poisonous powdered fertilizer. Others were smothered with a wet towel, strangled or allowed to starve to death." Dahlburg profiles one disturbing case from Tamil Nadu: Lakshmi already had one daughter, so when she gave birth to a second girl, she killed her. For the three days of her second child's short life, Lakshmi admits, she refused to nurse her. To silence the infant's famished cries, the impoverished village woman squeezed the milky sap from an oleander shrub, mixed it with castor oil, and forced the poisonous potion down the newborn's throat. The baby bled from the nose, then died soon afterward.

A study of Tamil Nadu by the Community Service Guild of Madras similarly found that "female infanticide is rampant" in the state, though only among Hindu (rather than Moslem or Christian) families. "Of the 1,250 families covered by the study, 740 had only one girl child and 249 agreed directly that they had done away with the unwanted girl child. More than 213 of the families had more than one male child whereas half the respondents had only one daughter." (Malavika Karlekar, "The girl child in India: does she have any rights?," *Canadian Woman Studies*, March 1995).

A report by PALASH KUMAR published on Dec. 15, 2006 says India Has Killed 10 Million Girls in 20 Years. The report says "Ten million girls have been killed by their parents in India in the past 20 years, either before they were born or immediately after, a government minister said on Thursday, describing it as a "national crisis".

A UNICEF report released this week (December 2006) said 7,000 fewer girls are born in the country every day than the global average would suggest, largely because female foetuses are aborted after sex determination tests but also through murder of new borns. "It's shocking figures and we are in a national crisis if you ask me," Minister for Women and Child Development Renuka Chowdhury told Reuters.

Girls are seen as liabilities by many Indians, especially because of the banned but rampant practice of dowry, where the bride's parents pay cash and goods to the groom's family. Men are also seen as bread-winners while social prejudices deny women opportunities for education and jobs. "Today, we have the odd distinction of having lost 10 million girl children in the past 20 years," Chowdhury told a seminar in Delhi University.

"Who has killed these girl children? Their own parents." In some states, the minister said, newborn girls have been killed by pouring sand or tobacco juice into their nostrils. "The minute the child is born and she opens her mouth to cry, they put sand into her mouth and her nostrils so she chokes and dies," Chowdhury said, referring to cases in the western desert state of Rajasthan. "They bury infants into pots alive and bury the pots. They put tobacco into her mouth. They hang them upside down like a bunch of flowers to dry," she said. "We have more passion for tigers of this country. We have people fighting for stray dogs on the road. But you have a whole society that ruthlessly hunts down girl children." The Indian Minister for Women and Child Development lamented. It is arguably the most brutal and destructive manifestation of the anti-female bias that pervades in Indian Hindu patriarchal society.

Most such negative attitudes are linked with the oppressive practice of dowry. Girls who do survive to grow up to be adults are mostly murdered by their husbands or in laws. Around 5000 women die each year for not bringing enough dowries.

The bias against females in India is related to the fact that "Sons are called upon to provide the income; they are the ones who do most of the work in the fields. In this way sons are looked to as a type of insurance. With this perspective, it becomes clearer that the high value given to males decreases the value given to females." (Marina Porras, "Female Infanticide and Foeticide".) The problem is also intimately tied to the institution of dowry, in which the family of a prospective bride must pay enormous sums of money to the family in which the woman will live after marriage. Though formally outlawed, the institution is still pervasive.

A woman can be accused by her husband of immorality and must survive walking through a blazing fire to prove her innocence. It is believed that an innocent woman can not be harmed in the slightest way by fire. In whose favor are the most cases decided? This need not be answered in words. Women are killed in a practice called sati, which is the burning of wife along with the dead body of her husband. Those who escape with only mutilated organs, a punishment for minor offences are the lucky ones.

The incidents of death in the ways mentioned, has decreased incredibly since ancient times. However once every while these practices are revived in some corner of the country and demands a constant check by the government. Recent international surveys also suggest that some customs that are hostile towards women are still very much prevalent in India.

One such incident that gave way to a huge cry all over the world was the compilation of a report by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) that recorded as many as 50 million girls and women to have gone missing as a result of systematic gender discrimination in India. Women are also subjected to discrimination and have poor access to education and food. Spousal violence is a norm, which has driven most of the Indian women to the streets in frustration.

Deficits in nutrition and health-care also overwhelmingly target female children. Karlekar cites research indicat[ing] a definite bias in feeding boys milk and milk products and eggs In Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh [states], it is usual for girls and women to eat less than men and boys and to have their meal after the men and boys had finished eating. Greater mobility outside the home provides boys with the opportunity to eat sweets and fruit from saved-up pocket money or from money given to buy articles for food consumption. In case of illness, it is usually boys who have preference in health care. ... More is spent on clothing for boys than for girls which also affects morbidity. (Karlekar, "The girl child in India.")

Sunita Kishor reports "another disturbing finding," namely "that, despite the increased ability to command essential food and medical resources associated with development, female children [in India] do not improve their survival chances relative to male children with gains in development. Relatively high levels of agricultural development decrease the life chances of females while leaving males' life chances unaffected; urbanization increases the life chances of males more than females. Clearly, gender-based discrimination in the allocation of resources persists and even increases, even when availability of resources is not a constraint." (Kishor, "May God Give Sons to All': Gender and Child Mortality in India," *American Sociological Review*, 58: 2 [April 1993], p. 262.)

The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) of India unearthed some extremely disturbing trends in India. Statistics suggest that in 2005 around 50 women were raped and 480 molested and abducted, every day. India is also to known to have the highest rate of violence against pregnant women; around 50% were kicked while pregnant- some 74.8% tried to commit suicide. While one can continue to delve into such matters to bring to light the ugly truth of the present Indian state that is adamant in its claim to be a secular democracy, it is only a matter of time that these oppressed factions will threaten the establishment. The fate of every Pharaoh has been nothing but disgrace and death. This is the law of nature, which will not change its course no matter what the epoch.

End of Part 2.