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September 2004

In Lieu of an Introduction

The results of the 14th Lok Sabha Elections have been a pleasant surprise to a vast section of the political activists, intellectuals and masses of India. They are highly elated and the defeat of the BJP-led alliance in the elections has been a welcome relief to them. This mood has been truthfully reflected in the following words of columnist of a daily newspaper: “If there is anybody out there who allowed herself or himself to be seduced by the statesmanship of Vajpayee and is still ambivalent about the regime change that is now upon us, I have only one request to make. Take a deep breath, close your eyes and think about the kind of place India would be if Murli Manohar Joshi, Praveen Togadia, Vinay Katiyar, LK. Advani, Narendra Modi and the small old men in Nagpur who are obsessed with Muslims and violence had a free run for another five years. (*S. Varadarajan, Times of India, 22.05.04*). To a certain extent, these feelings and reactions are normal, natural and reasonable. But, yes, there is a “but” in this, which is highly important in the present context.

It cannot be disputed that the defeat of the BJP-led alliance in the parliamentary elections has opened up a space for the progressive and radical forces of India to move and strengthen the camp, if they have the serious intention and the strength for such a move. But the elations, celebrations and sighs of relief expressed after the defeat of BJP in the elections have reflected much more than the acceptance of this truth. These do reflect the understandings (or misunderstandings) that the electoral defeat of BJP has dealt a serious blow to the politics of *Hindutva*, has effectively halted the offensive march of the fascism based on *Hindutva*, has been able to almost banish the threat of this fascism. The great sigh of relief that this section is heaving now is based on these understandings. This is the serious “but” about which we have expressed our concern earlier.

We should never forget that fascism and a fascist party are not like any other ordinary bourgeois force and party. It has some special characteristics which distinguishes it from other ordinary bourgeois parties and forces. **One of such special characteristics is its capacity to effectively combine parliamentary and extra-parliamentary**

activities and its special emphasis is on its well organised extra-parliamentary activities. Hence, any electoral defeat can only cause some temporary inconvenience, but can neither put a stop to its well organised extra-parliamentary activities, nor can wipe out, in any major way, its gains accumulated through these continuous well organised activities and on the basis of which it can keep its strength almost intact inspite of the electoral defeat. The events of Germany in the late twenties and early thirties of the last century stand as a clear proof of this. **As it is, the bourgeois elections do not necessarily reflect the real strength of different political forces and parties and more so when a fascist force is in the fray.** So one should not read too much from the election results nor can arrive at conclusions which the election results do not provide. The world had already paid heavy price for this error.

The difference between an ordinary bourgeois party and a fascist party can clearly be observed in the post-election Indian scenario. We have seen in the past that a defeat in the parliamentary elections sends ordinary bourgeois parties like Congress, Janata, etc. into almost hibernation. In the interim period before the next parliamentary elections these parties generally roam in the wilderness and suddenly come alive just before the next elections. The leaders of these parties then move from door to door to forge 'fruitful' alliances, breeze through the entire length and breadth of the country and put their hopes on the disillusionment of the Indian masses about the ruling party or alliance of the past four years, or, in the present journalistic jargon, on the 'incumbency factor'.

But BJP or the entire Sangh Parivar is behaving entirely in a different way. After their defeat in the parliamentary elections BJP has not gone into hibernation. On the contrary, even after the electoral defeat they are still growling, howling and threatening. Immediately after the election results Vajpayee and Advani audaciously declared that they would not sit on the opposition benches for the full period of the present parliament and this declaration should not be taken as an empty boast.

After the election defeat the Sangh Parivar quite effectively marshalled its forces to raise a hue and cry on the question of Sonia Gandhi's foreign origin which forced Sonia Gandhi and her Congress to backtrack. More recently, BJP and Sangh Parivar have wasted no time to start a hate campaign against the Muslims on the issue of higher birth rate

among them, Bajrang Dal has openly declared with ominous overtone that Laloo Prasad Yadav is their prime target and saffron-clad, cow-lover Uma Bharati has been put on the warpath. And, VHP vows to demolish the Afzal Tomb in Maharashtra. To all these add BJP's grandiose national conference, its boycott of the parliament, its successful campaign against Siby Soren, etc. and you will find that the defeat in the parliamentary elections has not affected BJP very much and in no way to the extent such defeat would have affected ordinary bourgeois parties like Congress and others and the flaunting of the flag of militant *Hindutva* is still being kept in an advanced gear. How is this possible? This is possible because BJP is the parliamentary wing of the fascist outfit Sangh Parivar and **it is the Sangh Parivar which skillfully combines the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary activities through its various wings – parliamentary and extra-parliamentary, which complement each other.** So although BJP is defeated in the parliamentary elections, the extra-parliamentary wings of Sangh Parivar, RSS, VHP, Bajrang Dal, etc. are still quite live and kicking. The election results have hardly affected the organisations of RSS, VHP, etc. and therein lies the strength of BJP.

So there is no room for complacency. It will be absurd to assume that the march of any fascist force can be thwarted through elections alone, through parliamentary path alone. To resist the onslaught of fascism in any serious way, **this has to be seriously confronted in the extra-parliamentary arena, in the arena of real class-struggle.** The backwardness of India – lack of capitalist development, preponderance of feudal remnants in agriculture, existence of medieval exploitation like caste-exploitation, age-old deprivation and subjugation of the tribals and various nationalities, utmost poverty & destituteness among overwhelming sections of the people, the legacy of the Hindu-Muslim communal divide handed over by the past British masters, the dominance of past over the present in the social life – all these have provided a convenient **material basis** for the fascism of *Hindutva* to thrive. So it must be confronted at the level where it is thriving – at the level of the basic contradictions of the unfinished democratic revolution of India which are being skillfully used by the extra-parliamentary wings of the Sangh Parivar to spread their net.

This issue of *Update* is aimed to hit at the complacency which the election defeat of BJP has given birth to. We want to remind all those who seriously want to

resist the fascist advance of *Hindutva* **that fascism is fascism because of its ability to skillfully combine parliamentary and extra-parliamentary activities.** Any serious attempt to resist fascist advance demands all-round resistance **with special emphasis on the extra-parliamentary struggle against it, because it is the extra-parliamentary arena wherefrom fascism derives its main sustenance.**

With this aim we have tried to give a picture of the extra-parliamentary activities of different extra-parliamentary wings of the Sangh Parivar – the methodology they follow, their clever exploitation of the existing contradictions of the Indian society and their present strength. – *Update*

Fascism Alive

“BJP has not abandoned its ideology. Hindutva is not an electoral issue but a way of life and we are proud of it. ...The Supreme Court has also said Hindutva is the basic identity of India and there is no question of being apologetic... Our workers will be interacting with the people to remove any such wrong perceptions.”

[Venkaiah Naidu, BJP president, Times of India, 14.06.2004]

“He (The BJP spokesperson Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi) denied that the BJP was trying to revive its old agenda of Hindutva. ‘There’s no question of reviving it. It was always there.’

Mr (Venkaiah) Naidu seconded Mr Naqvi’s stand: ‘The question of going back to Hindutva does not arise because we have never left it nor will we leave it.’ ”

[Economic Times, 23.06.2004]

[In the ‘laboratory’ of Gujarat, the fascist projects of the Sangh Parivar had been masterfully executed. Reports regularly published in the media clearly revealed that the carnage orchestrated in Gujarat was planned beforehand with splendid precision. In fact, ‘Gujarat’ had been prepared through years. The siblings of Sangh Parivar, i.e., the VHP/Bajrang Dal/Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram etc. did the groundwork beforehand which culminated in the gruesome murder, rape, burning, looting of the Muslim community. Gujarat had a saffron government since 1995. Well before coming into power in Gujarat, the Sangh Parivar had tested and verified its fascist experiments through several programmes. These infamous programmes were: ‘*Ramjanmabhoomi* Movement’, ‘*shila puja*’, demolition of Babri Masjid & murderous attacks on Muslim community following that demolition, series of attacks & intimidation of Christian people etc. etc. Once captured the power through elections, these fascist projects gained tremendous momentum in Gujarat.

If we study and observe the facts carefully and consciously, it will be revealed that the same fascist projects of the Sangh Parivar is going on throughout the country with full steam mostly along extra-parliamentary path. It is true that in the States like Gujarat (and also in Jharkhand, Uttaranchal where the Parivar is in government), they are reaping the

benefits of the administrative power. In fact, in the last five years, the rule of BJP-led NDA at the centre delivered the Parivar immense advantages to propagate and proliferate. But, in the states where the Sangh Parivar is out of power and/or never capture governmental powers, these fascist projects are very much alive and pushing forward with vigour. States like Kerala, Assam, Karnataka witnessed this phenomenon. Even 'red'-ruled West Bengal are witnessing this saffron march (the national conclave of the VHP was organised with much publicity in Kolkata in last June-July). In states like Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and even in the north-east India, where the Parivar had not-so-significant presence in the first half of the last decade, it proliferated like a wild fire. Whether, they are/were in power or not, the fascist projects of the Parivar is running with speed. The reports/data collected by *Update* will vividly demonstrate the fact how the Sangh Parivar masterfully combines both parliamentary and non-parliamentary avenues.

All over the country the Sangh Parivar used to follow a chosen path to proliferate its organisation and ultra-reactionary ideology. This path followed by Parivar has different methods in different states taking account of the characteristics of that particular state. But in essence, it is Sangh brand of fascism in every corners of the country.

The 'Hydra-headed' Sangh Parivar has a well-knit organisation covering almost all sections of the people with an aim to organise them with its ultra-reactionary '*Hindutvavadi*' ideology. In *Update 8*, we have focussed on some its organisations which are working within various sections of the population. In fact, in the last few years, the work of Parivar in these sections have been increased tremendously. Gujarat has shown, how the Parivar has indoctrinated the **tribals & dalits** and organised them to perpetrate the mayhem. In fact, the fascist projects of Parivar among the **tribals and dalits** in several states are increasing by leaps and bounds. Several outfits such as '**Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram**' or '**Vanavasi Kalyan Kendra**' etc. Based upon the poverty, illiteracy, deprivations & exploitation by upper sections of the society, Parivar made deep foray into them. They are working in these sections to 'hinduise' them. Massive programmes have been taken to make them belief that they are integral part of the Hindu community. In states like Orissa, MP, Chattishgarh, Jharkhand, Rajasthan and in the north-eastern states (including the 'laboratory' of Gujarat), the Parivar made significant inroads among the **tribals and dalits**. The mouthpiece of the RSS estimates:

“Approximately **80 million** non-literate *Vanavasis* live in over **100,000 villages** across our country. Among them, a staggering **85 per cent of men and 95 per cent of women** are illiterate.” (*The Organiser*, 23.05.04) On this mammoth population, which are deprived, oppressed & stricken with poverty for years, the Parivar applied massive stress to win them over. *The Organiser* (25.07.04) estimates the proliferation of Parivar: “**It was decided to increase the number of Sangh shakhas to 75,000 by the year 2006.** Presently there are about **40,000** Sangh shakhas and during the peak time in October last year there were 49,000 shakhas. The number of shakhas will go up to over 50,000 this year and by the next year, it will be increased to 75,000.” It is a massive projection indeed!

In last February 2004, the RSS *sarasanghchalak* KS Sudarshan said in ‘*Virat Vanavasi Sammelan*’ (conducted in preparation of the Golden Jubilee of *VKA*) of *Akhil Bharatiya Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram (ABVKA)* sharing the dais with the former Prime Minister AB Vajpayee:

“*Vanvasis, Gramvasis and Nagarvasis* all are parts of the same religion. ‘The Hindu culture was itself born in the forests. Our rishis developed it while sitting in the forests and mountains. That is the reason trees and mountains are still integral part of the Hindu culture,’ he said adding that God is one and there are different ways to attain Him. Despite this fact **there are several forces that are trying to prove that *Vanvasis* are not Hindus, which is totally wrong,** he said. Stating that conversion by Christian Missionaries is posing a danger to the integrity of the nation, the *Sarsanghchalak* said Hindu society has been combatting this menace for hundreds of years. The struggle of *Vanavasi* heroes against conversion is highly appreciable and needs to be emulated by the whole society, he emphasised.

“In the same ‘*sammelan*’, *Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram* president, Shri Jagdev Ram Oraon said ‘there is no difference between nature worship and the *Sanatan Dharma*. But the Missionaries are trying to separate *Vanvasis* from *Hindu Samaj* by propagating false and baseless theories.’ He said the aim of the *Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram* is all-round development of *Vanvasis*. ‘The glorious traditions of *Vanvasis* begin from the point from where the Indian culture has originated. **The Lord Rama took the help of *Vanvasis* to liberate Sita from Ravana. A number of characters in the *Mahabharata* were *Vanvasi*.**

Not only this *Vanvasis* were always in forefront of the battles against the Mughals and the Britishers,' he pointed out.

“Pejawar Swami Vishweshtirth Maharaj appealed to *Vanvasis* to be united against conversion. ‘All saints of the country are with *Vanvasis* in their progress and welfare. I hail from Karnataka, which is the land of Lord *Hanuman*. **What *Hanuman* did for *Vanvasis*, nobody has done. Hindus are one, despite so many diversities of languages and regions.** The behaviour of every person could be different, but all are children of one mother. ***Shabri* was a dalit and *Vanvasi* woman, but Lord *Rama* happily accepted her hospitality. You all should have the *bhakti* and *shakti* that *Hanuman* had shown,’ the Pejawar Swami said. (*The Organiser*, 15.02.2004)**

Firstly, the *Adivasis* (tribals) are called as ‘*Vanavasi*’ to claim that the Aryans (and not the tribals) are the actual adi-vasis of the country. **Secondly**, a character like *Hanuman* have been chosen cleverly as the god of ‘*vanavasis*’ who can dedicate his life for the service of *Rama*. **Thirdly**, it is forcefully argued that the ‘*vanavasis*’ are the part and parcel of the Hindu community. In the later section, this design of work among the tribals will be further elaborated. *The Organiser* (01.04.04) reports:

“Highlighting the details of the Golden Jubilee Year, Joint Organising Secretary, *Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram Somayajulu* said that during the year [i.e., in 2004] contacts would be established with **at least 12 lakh families of 50,000 *vanvasi* villages and one lakh families of about 1000 small towns of the country.** There would be more than **500 mass rallies** all over the country and in February a grand convention of more than **one lakh *vanavasis*** would be held in Ranchi, he pointed out...”

These projections are massive which indicate the surging influence of Parivar among the tribals. Same type of design is being followed to win over the ‘untouchable’ dalits (or *shudras*) to utilise them as the foot-soldiers of Parivar.

In the same fashion, the Parivar made deep inroads into the **workers, peasants, rural labours, small traders, women, students, teachers.** It may be noted in the following discussions that Parivar have given more stress to organise rural people (apart from the tribals & dalits). Hence, Parivar is trying its best to shift its hitherto focus from the urban masses on the rural section of the population. Moreover, they have special branches within lawyers to defend the Sangh men in several cases. They even infiltrated

into the defence personnel to develop among them the sense of '*Hindutva*'. They have a special unit which are rewriting the history of India. They have '*Sewa Bhibhag*' which organises several charitable work within the poor. They even organise several self-help groups to 'empower' the 'weaker' sections of the society and so on. In this section, the activities of some of this organisations will be discussed.

Moreover, in the states where Parivar is in power (including the five-years' rule at the centre), it infiltrated into the administration and government machineries with their ulterior motive. They appointed a RSS man as Vice-President of India (barring the RSS governors at the states). They contaminated police forces and bureaucracy (most extraordinarily in Gujarat) with utter communal venom; placed RSS men in each important administrative positions; preferred few yes-men in judiciary; made extravagant progress in re-writing the history and syllabus at educational level; utilised the Archeological Survey of India in digging the demolition site of Babri Masjid to 'discover' ancient structure of 'Ram' temple, so on and so forth. Hence they reaped extra advantages in states where the were/are in power.

Another important fascist characteristic of the Sangh Parivar (apart from its well-knit organisations in every sections of the society to organise & activate them with ultra-reactionary ideology) is **arming** of these population. Several newspapers/magazines often published the rifle and/or sword training camps of the militant outfits. In ***Update 8*** this subject was also discussed. In fact, massive programmes of '***trishul***' distribution have been organised in many states (even in those states where the Parivar is never able to occupy governmental power). Numerous (rifle-sword) training camps have been organised to impart martial & military training to the Sangh cadres through the outfits like *Bajrang Dal (BD)*, *VHP & Durga Vahini*. It is now clear from the reports coming from Gujarat, that the footsoldiers of Parivar had been armed vigorously for two years before the Gujarat genocide. This arming of the people (note: it is not the revolutionary arming of the people by the mass revolutionary actions of the people themselves) has been done in all sections of the population though the tribals and dalits are particularly targeted. Also note that this arming campaigns have been done in almost all states – even in the states like Kerala, Karnataka or Tamil Nadu where the Parivar is never able to capture power.

The '*Hindutvavadi*' projects of the Parivar are also surging ahead with utter communal agenda, programmes, hate campaigns and riotous activities. Since the demolition of the Babri Masjid, the Parivar never sidelined the '*Ramjanmabhoomi*' agenda. In the later half of 2003, just before the state elections held on December 2003 and General Elections in 2004, the Parivar inflamed this agenda once again. In Madhya Pradesh the Parivar inflamed the communal fire in Bhojshala claiming it as a *Saraswati Mandir*. In Karnataka, the Parivar claimed *Baba Budan Giri*, a '*Sufi upasanalaya*' and so on. In fact, The Parivar has never abandoned these pet agenda. It has not abandoned its other '*Hindutvavadi*' issues such as '**Uniform Civil Code, 'Cow Protection', 'Conversion', 'Infiltration'**' etc. Even the NDA alliance swallowed some of these pills in their last election manifesto which clearly shows that at present the '*Hindutva*' of Parivar is not so 'untouchable' to their coalition partners. Even the Congress party which is certified by the 'Left' parties as a secular organisation, showed 'soft *hindutva*' time and again in states like Madhya Pradesh, Kerala & Karnataka ruled by them in recent times.

The RSS *sarasanghchalak* KS Sudarshan, while addressing the concluding session of a three-day camp of *swayamsevaks* held at Raipur (Chhattisgarh) delivered an interesting comment:

"[T]he need for special efforts to expand the Sangh network in the remote parts of the country. **He pointed out that various political parties realised the significance of Hindus getting united**, which could ultimately change the very contour of the nation's polity. **Congress too, he said, had now adopted a somewhat mild attitude towards Hinduism.** (...) Referring to the suggestion for declaring India a Hindu nation, he stressed that **Hindusthan was of course Hindu Rashtra.** 'This is the reality and ***Hindutva* is the nationality of India.** As far as RSS is concerned, **every *Bharatiya* is a Hindu.** Yet *Hindutva* did not have the desired impact on the society as a whole because of certain weaknesses in the Hindu society. Muslims and Christians have a goal, namely, to bring the entire world under their fold. Hindus did not have any such goal. That is why they became weak. They forgot their own ideals and the country lost a large part of its territory. Today we need to recreate a sense of self-respect among Hindus. **The Supreme Court has already ruled that Hinduism is not a religion – it is a way of life,**' he reminded the assembly.

Regarding the Jains' and the Lingaayats' claim that they are minority communities, Shri Sudarshan said that only those who came from abroad and settled in Bharat could be a minority. Jews and Parsis could rightly claim themselves as minorities but they seldom claimed that status, he maintained. **As regards the Muslim' and Christians' claim to minority status, he argued that their roots were deep in Hindusthan – they had not come from outside, as such how could they be a minority?** He said that in fact the very idea of minority and majority is irrelevant in a secular state." (*The Organiser*, 01.02.04)

Firstly, many political parties including the Congress realised the 'significance' of '*Hindutva*'. **Secondly**, India is a '*Hindu Rashtra*' having a lone nationality 'Hindu'. Hence, Hinduism is a nationality. **Thirdly**, India has no minorities except Jews and Parsis. Muslims and Christians are not minorities because they did not come India from outside. India has Muslims and Christians. But according to Parivar, they are 'in fact' 'Islamised Hindus' & 'Christianised Hindus' and they will be converted (or return back to their home) in due course.

Another statement recently delivered by KS Sudarshan is reported by *Mainstream* (by Mukul Dube, 27.03.04):

"But mathematical precision was just what Shri K.S. Sudarshan came out with in Jaipur. India has no minorities, he said, for these two reasons: **first**, because "minority" and "majority" are notions imposed on us by the West; and **second**, because the ancestors of 99 per cent (yes, just that many, neither 98 nor 100) of Indians belonged to this land.

Shri Sudarshan also said that any individual who accepted the "soul" of India was a Hindu. It is not entirely clear from the report if those who would be called minorities in the false language of the West, e.g., Muslims and Christians, are actually Hindus by virtue of the soul recognition which 99 per cent of them must practise on account of their ancestors. Should this be so, the possibilities would be intriguing and literally endless: Shias are actually Shaivites, Syrian Christians are actually a sub-'gotra' of Sarayupari Brahmins, the 'natiya qavvali' form is actually based on Sarasvati Vandana, and so on and so on."

Hence, 'Hindu' nationhood, once formulated by RSS leader Golwalkar is justified. The massive conversion of tribals & dalits embracing Islam or Christianity into *hindutva*-fold taken by Parivar is also justified as it means the '*Ghar-Vapasi*' (home-coming) of the 'Hindu nationality'. Those who did not accept this sermon are actually 'anti-nationals',

and hence should be 'sent back to Pakistan' or "let them understand that their real safety lies in the goodwill of the Hindus"....

We are not discussing here the ultra-reactionary ideology of the Sangh Parivar in details. Scores of articles/journals/books dealt this subject. We have given in this issue of *Update* particular attention to unfurl/disclose the fascist methods followed by Parivar all over the country utilising the contradictions/conflicts/divisions within the society. To discuss this subject, we first go through the **vast network of Sangh Parivar spreading across the country** in short. – *Update*]

The Sangh Parivar & Its Network

“Muslims breed like rabbits and their population would soon overtake that of the Hindus... Muslims can continue to live here only provided they all become Hindus. In this land of Shivaji, we should all follow Shivaji’s example and finish off all the descendants of Afzal Khan just as Shivaji did.”

[Acharya Dharmendra, VHP leader, *The Hindustan Times*, 04.07.04]

RSS and Allied Organisations

(...) Its [i.e., of RSS’s – *Update*] **basic unit is the local *shakha* (branch)**. The *shakha* meets daily and consists of 50-100 members (*swayamsevaks* – volunteers). Although the typical *shakha* includes all age groups from young boys to men over forty, the majority of participants are usually between 15-25 years of age. A *shakha* meeting lasts for one hour, during which RSS ideology and values are inculcated by means of Sanskrit (language rooted in Brahmin culture), prayers of devotion to the Motherland (*Bharat Mata*), traditional Indian group games, traditional Hindu physical and martial arts drills, and group discussions of ideal moral qualities as well as ways to serve the Motherland. Participation in the highly structured *shakha* meeting and its rituals has the character of an act of religious devotional service (*bhakti*) to the holy, all nurturing *Bharat Mata* and the great Hindu family. *Shakha* participation also develops close personal bonds between *swayamsevaks* as well as ties of loyalty to RSS ideals and leaders. In accordance with the overriding concepts of Hindu brotherhood and unity, caste distinctions are not recognized in RSS activities, and the caste system as it is today, is frowned upon as an institution whose inequities divide the Hindu community. While most RSS *swayamsevaks* are from the higher and middle castes, *Dalits* are encouraged to join.

The RSS organizational structure is hierarchical and centralized. At the apex of the pyramid is the *Sarsangchalak* (Supreme Guide), who is presumed to have “guru-like” charismatic powers. In public matters he speaks, usually after consultation with senior RSS members, for the whole organization. The central RSS headquarters are in Nagpur,

Maharashtra, with regional, state, and local divisions reaching down to the *shakha* base. The structure of the organisation forms its key link and the *pracharaks* (missionaries) its core cadre. Usually recruited in their twenties and unmarried, *pracharaks* are full-time workers who have undergone a rigorous selection process. Normally highly educated, they live austere and can be shifted around within the organization or loaned out to various RSS-affiliated organizations. Within the RSS organization there is constant feedback between the lower and higher levels. State and all-India festivals and other public events regularly bring *swyamsevaks* and *pracharaks* from different localities together with upper leadership levels.

This reinforces the feeling that the RSS is a great, all-Indian family. Although the membership attrition rate is high, RSS socializing methods seem to have a powerful formative effect on most who participate in the organization. **The RSS believes in slow and methodical work with individual families. They begin by individual contacts with family members and its workers seek to bring every member of the family into the fold of the RSS. The organisation also offers programmes and activities for every members of the family.** Women are inculcated as mothers and loyal workers into the ideology of the Hindu right. They encourage militancy among women, and give them physical training; but at the same time, the ideology of the Hindu Joint family, inherently oppressive to women, is revered.

Militant tradition in certain strands of Hinduism is revered by the RSS. The young men and women in RSS *shakhas* are given physical training in calisthenics and drills. Across North India, the RSS *shakhas* are also linked to wrestling gymnasiums, the *akhadas*. The *akhadas* are to strengthen the 'weakened' Hindu male body and prepare them to protect the Hindu nation by attacking the enemy when the time is ripe. Each *akhada* is for this purpose dedicated to Hanuman (a celibate god, who is revered as an obedient disciple/servant of Ram) and every *akhada* has a Hanuman temple at which members offer prayers. (...)

Physical strength is celebrated by the RSS workers and it generates confidence among young men and women. This physical training is supplemented with ideological indoctrination where young men and women are familiarized with key ideological Hindu nationalist texts.

They are also given information on Hindu nationalist history and organization. They are fed selected religious history and given an outline of the vision of Hindu *Rashtra*. The minorities are then depicted as obstacles to the realization of this vision. The vicious and threatening images of the 'other' are kept alive in the collective memories of RSS workers through selective readings of history and factually questionable events and stories. Muslim men especially are singled out as lascivious persons who abduct and rape Hindu women. The training focuses on producing loyal and unquestioning workers who are respectful of the organisational hierarchy and offer unquestioning obedience. These cadres are very active during riots and also during elections.

RSS membership has increased rapidly since 1975, when the number of its *shakhas* was between **7500 and 8500**. By 1985 there were approximately **20,000 shakhas**, and in 1993 *India Today* estimated the number at **30,000**. The most rapid relative growth since 1977 has been in the four southern states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu. By 1982 there were approximately 5600 *shakhas* in these states. On the basis of written sources and personal interviews conducted in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka in 1991, Douglas Spitz, Sr. estimated that there were then well over 6000 RSS *shakhas* in the four southern states and that the number was growing. (...) [Source: *Threatened Existence: A Feminist Analysis of the Genocide in Gujarat, Report by the International Initiative for Justice (IIJ), December 2003, Annexure I*]

[In fact, the figures stated above regarding the number of *shakhas* of RSS is questionable. 'The Organiser', mouthpiece of RSS quoted earlier informs us the present number of *shakhas* as **49,000** (which is to be increased by Parivar to **75,000!**). From the excerpt/Annexure cited above *Update* find also the names of **forty** Parivar organisations which were published in *Update 8* (published in May 2002). We are not repeating this names again. Instead of that, we are publishing in this issue the activities of few *shakha*-organisations of Parivar which acquired maximum attention in the last few years. Most of the excerpts cited below are from the mouthpiece of Sangh Parivar: 'The Organiser']

The Sangh Outfits

Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP):

At a time when the Hindu majority was under attack from secularists, gloating in colonial hang-over, Shri Guruji took the lead in uniting the Hindu society for a counter-attack. He inspired the important social thinkers to come together at one place for collective consultation on the Hindu cause on the auspicious day of Shri Krishna Janmashtami 29-30 August **1964**. (...)

After a detailed deliberation, it was decided to launch an organisation and it was named the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). Right from its inception, VHP is continuously setting new landmarks in the direction of Hindu resurgence.

The first important step taken by the VHP was holding a Sant Sammelan on the auspicious occasion of Kumbh in 1966 at Prayagraj in which more than 2,500 saints assembled on a single dais. A huge assembly of 30,000 people were pleasantly surprised when a Jagadguru Shankaracharya declared that Hindu patita na bhabet. It was a major step in the direction of social equality and removal of untouchability. After this Sammelan, a Margadarshak Mandal was also formed under whose guidance 10 Dharma Sansads were organised and which gave the call for various programmes and movements. The Ramjanma-bhoomi movement proved to be a big step in Hindu resurgence. Hindu Samaj found a platform and an opportunity to express its feelings. The support given by the Hindu society to the **Ramjanmabhoomi movement has been overwhelming. Ram Janaki Rath Yatra, Shila Poojan, Kar Sevas, Japa Yajna, Paduka Pujan** and various other programmes were organised under this movement.

The VHP called a Virat Hindu Sammelan at Boat Club, Delhi, in 1989, which was attended by over half a million people, to assert Hindus' rights.

Cow-slaughter is a blot on the face of the secular government. Nearly 85 crore Hindus worship the cow but on the altar of Muslim vote-bank the demand of Hindu society to ban cow-slaughter is not only being ignored but is being insulted by calling it a communal demand. Despite various movements and sacrifices made by Hindu society, every successive government has tried to suppress this genuine demand.

The Bajrang Dal organised a national convention on January 20-21, 1996, in Prayagraj, in which more than twenty thousand Bajrang Dal activists participated. It was decided to celebrate the years 1996 and 1997 as Go-Raksha years through 650 chowkis. **More than 1.5 lakh cows were rescued from the clutches of butchers, 356 yatras were taken out, and 3,002 public meetings were held.**

In 1995, the terrorists threatened that there would be no Amarnath Yatra. The Bajrang Dal proclaimed, "If there is no Amarnath Yatra in Kashmir, then there will be no taziyas in the rest of country." In 1996, more than 21,000 Bajrang Dal activists went on Amarnath Yatra, accepting the challenge of terrorists. On the call of the Bajrang Dal, more than one lakh Hindus reached Jammu to participate in the holy Yatra. (...)

The VHP organised various successful movements like Dattapeeth liberation in Karnataka, Bhojshala liberation in Madhya Pradesh and various other programmes like the first Matri Shakti Sammelan of over one lakh women in Delhi.

Through more than **8,000** Ekal Vidyalayas, Shri Hari Katha Prabachan Yajna, Hindu Badh Samarasata Manch, the VHP is marching ahead to achieve its goal.

After the Meenakshipuram episode, it is the first time that Christian missionaries and various Muslim organisations are raising their voice against the reconversion activities of the VHP. Anti-conversion activities of the VHP in Gujarat, Orissa, and other states are posing a challenge to their moves. (...) [Source: *The Organiser*, 15.08.2004]

Bajrang Dal (BD):

Vishva Hindu Parishad decided to start 'Ram-Janaki' *Rathyatra* for awakening the society on October 1, 1984. There was nothing against other religions but certain anti-Hindu and anti-social elements threatened with dire consequences if Vishva Hindu Parishad took this *Yatra*. Uttar Pradesh Government, inspite of making sure that those elements could not disrupt our *Rath Yatra*, refused to give protection to *Rath* and the participants. The Holy saints made a call to the Youths to protect '*Rath*'. Hundreds of Youth gathered in Ayodhya. They performed their duty very well. Thus Bajrang Dal was formed with a temporary and localised objective of awakening youth of U.P., and get their involvement in Ram *Janma Bhoomi* Movement. The results of formation of Bajrang Dal were amazing. Most of the young men were proud in getting themselves attached with

Bajrang Dal. In 1986, the VHP decided to form Bajrang Dal in other states and very soon Bajrang Dal was formed in other states too, as its youth wing. The role of Bajrang Dal in Hindu Awakening is not a secret. It successfully got the Hindu Youth involved in Ram *Janma Bhoomi* movement. It is evident from the tremendous success of various programmes, i.e., *Shila Poojan*, *Ram Jyoti Yatra*, *Kar Seva* of 1990 and *Kar Seva* of 1992.

Now, Bajrang Dal has its units in all the states in India. **More than 5 Lakh active workers** of Bajrang Dal are devoted to the service of Mother India and Hindu *Dharma*. Their motto is “*Seva, Suraksha, Sanskar*” (Service, Security, and Embellishment). **Bajrang Dal has proved as a security ring of Hindu Society. Whenever there is an attack on Hindu Society, Faith and Religion, the workers of Bajrang Dal come forward for their rescue.** Hindu Society and its faith are being kicked and insulted by various forces for the last fourteen hundred years. Demolitions of more than 3,000 temples, fraudulent or forceful conversion of crores of Hindus were the main tactics of these forces. Bajrang Dal endeavors to put up resistance by democratic means against these forces. It is however observed that of late the anti-Hindu forces are increasingly getting involved in a hate campaign against Bajrang Dal to malign its image. (...) [Source: <http://www.hinduunity.org/bajrangdal.html>]

The VHP & Bajrang Dal: Their Evolution and Role

(...) **8.2.** The VHP was born in 1964, when the RSS chief, Shri Golwalkar, met a select group of *sanyasis* and heads of religious organisations in Mumbai with the aim of launching a new organisation to unite all Hindu religious sects under a single umbrella. During the first ten years of its existence, the VHP worked largely in the north-eastern states, proselytising against the Christian missionaries. But following the **mass conversion of Dalits to Islam in Meenakshipuram (Tamil Nadu) in 1981, it shifted its focus** and turned against Muslims. In this new phase, it sought to enlarge and formalise the institutional links between the high priests of Hinduism across the country. Two apex bodies were created for this purpose – the *Marg Darshak Mandal*, which meets once or twice annually, and the *Dharam Sansad*, which meets only when needed. The Shankaracharyas, all heads of top *maths*, were given a prominent role within them and most of them became closely identified with VHP politics.

8.3. In legal terms, the VHP was conceived of as a trust, with a 100-member board of trustees and a 51-strong governing council. (...)

8.4. In a relatively short span of time, the trust has **developed eighteen departments**. These include the *Dharma Anusthan* department, which organises *kirtans* and *bhajans* in temples. Another branch looks after *dharma prachar* (missionary work) geared towards *ghar vapasi* (reconversion, or literally, return to home) of Christians and Muslims. Yet another is the *Acharya Vibhag*, which trains *pujaris* (priests) for the VHP as well as for other non-VHP run temples. The *Parva Samanuyaya* department co-ordinates common festivals with non-VHP temple committees.

8.5. Since the early '80s the VHP has become politically visible with its aggressive '*Ramjanmabhoomi Andolan*'. The declared aim was to 'reclaim' the 'birthplace of Lord Ram' in Ayodhya on which the Babri Masjid stood and to build a Ram temple in its place. Among other things, the campaign involved a series of national mobilisations – the ***Ekatma Yajna (1983), Shri Ramjanaki Janmabhoomi Yatra (1984), other rath yatras (1985-89), Shilapoojan and Shilanyas ceremonies at Ayodhya (1989), and finally, Shri Advani's rath yatra (1990)***. All these, except the last one, which was organised under the BJP banner, were conceived and organised by the VHP.

8.6. While some of these *yatras* were for 'consciousness-raising', **others required active contributions from everyone – a brick, a rupee, or the sale of a bottle of Ganga water in each village of the country**. The mobilisations were a means to claiming and, to an extent, creating 'Hindu unity' under the VHP's auspices.

8.7. Of the myriad texts that exist for the eclectic faith of Hinduism, it is curious that *Manusmriti* and *Arthashastra* are treated as central by the ideologues of *Hindu Rashtra*. It is interesting to remember that the *Manusmriti* prescribes a rigidly stratified caste and gender hierarchy, while the *Arthashastra* recommends a police state under a single despotic head.

8.8. In retrospect, the core concern behind the formation of the VHP was the desire to forge 'unity' in a society fragmented by the rigidities of caste. Beginning with the tribals of the north-east, VHP activities then extended to Delhi, Karnataka, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, MP, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Kerala, UP and Bihar. The

'Hinduisation' of exploited social groups became urgent, particularly after the Meenakshipuram incident. In UP, the VHP has been **wooing the forest-dwelling Kol tribes**. The nature of the VHP's activities among such groups reveals that their inspiration is drawn entirely from the RSS worldview. On paper, the VHP is engaged mainly in educational work: setting up of libraries, *yogashramas*, *balwadis*, student hostels and child *samskar* centres for the development of the knowledge of Hindu texts and Hindu national heroes. But the central thrust – though the VHP seldom describes it as such – is clearly the 'conversion' of tribals and Dalits to *Hindutva*-approved forms of worship. Raghunandan Prasad Sharma's *VHP: Aims, Activities and Achievements* advises the spread of the 'chief religious *samskaras*' among '*vanvasis*, *girijans* and *harijans*'. Clearly these are meant to replace existing beliefs and practices among tribals and ensure a homogenised version of religion.

8.9. The **Bajrang Dal** (...) looks after the **training of young boys**. It calls itself by different names in different parts of the country. In Bengal, for instance, it is known as the **Vivekananda Vahini**. (...)

8.12. The **Durga Vahini wing of the VHP works among young girls and women**.

8.13. Centres of the BD are often located at Hanuman *mandirs* where they organise weekly *satsangs* (prayer meetings). The BD was largely instrumental in recruiting urban youths for the '*kar seva*' at Ayodhya.

8.14. The distortion of Indian history, in a bid to project a 'Hindu history' of a people who for centuries were victims of Muslim marauders and Christian design, is at the heart of the mobilisation of these outfits. School textbooks and every other forum of public discourse are used for this purpose.

8.15. During the Ramjanmabhoomi movement between 1989-1992, Sadhvi Rithambara (an incendiary VHP protégé), frequently proclaimed an all-out war: '*Khoon kharaba hota hai to ek bar hone do*' ("If there has to be bloodshed, let it happen once and for all"). The call for blood was sufficient to instigate cadres into violence against Muslims in Meerut, Maliana, Bhagalpur, Ahmedabad, Varanasi, Kanpur, Jaipur, Hubli, Ahmedabad, Surat, and Mumbai.

8.16. “*Angry Hindu! Yes. Why not? Why are Hindus in the Dock?*” An RSS booklet by that title celebrated manufactured rage as the saving grace for the community. A *Hindu Jagaran Manch* leaflet from Khurja, published during the same period, evoked the image of divine vengeance, seeking Muslim blood, elevating *Hindutva*’s blood-thirst to divine desire: “*Ranchandi khali khappar liye gali gali vichar rahi hain*” (“The goddess of war is roaming the streets thirsting for blood”). The open call for bloody revenge underpins the thinking of these organisations.

8.17. A distinct component of the VHP strategy to evolve an ‘all-Hindu reality’ is to mobilise Dalits to do their job so that caste Hindus can avoid getting blood on their own hands. Thus the **Valmiki (Dalits)** were deployed in communal conflicts in Nizamuddin (New Delhi) in 1983 and during the riots in Delhi’s walled city in 1987. **A more fundamental motive seems to be the assimilation (‘Hinduisation’) of Dalits after their ‘trial by fire’ in Ram’s name. Dalits are invited to embrace the ideal of ‘Hindu unity’ even as discrimination against them and their exploitation remains a harsh reality. A Harijan was thus given the great privilege of laying the first foundation stone at the Ram temple site in Ayodhya in 1989.**

8.18. The VHP’s promotion of the Valmiki group, in particular, is significant. It coordinates with the Valmiki temple committees for its festivals and **VHP literature pays glowing tributes to Valmiki and Ravi Das as ‘Hindu’ religious leaders.** The association between Valmiki and Ram is striking. It is also significant that in Delhi, Valmiki temples abound and constitute practically the only visible activity of the VHP among the low caste groups. The strategy is to recruit the traditionally neglected and exploited tribals and Valmikis to defend the high caste Hindu cause, by glorifying them even while showing little concern for their socio-economic status. (...) [Source: *Concerned Citizens Tribunal – Gujarat 2002, An inquiry into the carnage in Gujarat; www.sabrang.com/tribunal/vol2/prepvio.html; accessed 30.08.04*]

Hindu Jagaran Manch:

To keep a vigilant eye on the activities of anti-national elements like intrusion, disturbance, abduction, rioting etc., Manch have been created in various states. Some of the examples are ‘Hindu Manch’ in Delhi, ‘Hindu Munani’ in Tamilnadu, ‘Hindu Ekjut’ in

Maharashtra etc. These Manch organize some programs also for the cause of nationalism.
[Source: www.rss.org/New_RSS/Parivaar/History.jsp; accessed 12.08.04]

Akhil Bharatiya Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram (ABVKA):

Formed in 1952 by the late Balasaheb Deshpande with the objective to build a nationalistic leadership among Janjatis and bring all-round development of them, the Akhil Bharatiya Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram (ABVKS) has **now spread throughout the country in 264 of the total 321 Janjati districts, having contacts with 47,000 Janjati villages.** During the golden jubilee year, the Kalyan Ashram activists have **established contacts in 46,284 Janjati villages. They distributed posters of Bharat Mata among 13,51,000 families in forest and hilly areas.** The Kalyan activists are on the contact drive **in 681 towns** of the country seeking support for the Janjatis. **A total of 11,530 service projects** are being run by Kalyan Ashram all over the country.

A remarkable feature of Kalyan Ashram's work is that **nearly 52 per cent of its full-time workers come from the Janjati areas.** Their unusual methodology of grooming the local leadership is bound to have a snowball effect in fulfilling all their ambitious expansion proposals. (...) Kalyan Ashram, through its service projects, has achieved success in infusing nationalistic feeling in the north-east region including Sikkim, Nagaland and Mizoram. Students of Tenning and Vishwema of Kohima districts are today proudly singing Jan gan man..., Chandan hai is desh ki mati..., Janani janmabhoomi swarga se mahan hai.... Recently at a village development camp held in Pune, Sarsanghchhalak K.S. Sudarshanji met the activists from the north-east and expressed happiness on the performance of Kalyan Ashram workers there.

Kalyan Ashram has also started educational and health projects among primitive Pahari Korwas Janjatis. (...)

Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand are the states with the maximum number of Vanvasis. The Kalyan Ashram activists have constructed roads and dug wells for drinking and irrigation purposes. (...)

With the efforts of Kalyan Ashram, the Reang community of Mizoram, which was displaced from Mizoram by the Mizos, will now have a prestigious retreat in Mizoram.

The Kalyan Ashram activists not only served them meals, and provided health care for five years, but also filed their complaints to the Union Home Ministry and NHRC. It also fought their cases in the Supreme Court. It is known to everybody that the Reangs are Sanatanis and are not in the grip of churches. They are the only primitive tribe in the north-east. (...)

Apart from four full-time senior women activists who regularly tour the country, a large number of women in Assam, Manipur, Arunachal, Jharkhand, Jhabua (MP) are working for social change, elimination of social evils and for women empowerment. (...)
[Source: The Organiser, 15.08.2004]

Vidya Bharati:

In order to formulate and develop a national system of education in India, Vidya Bharati Akhil Bharatiya Shiksha Sansthan was founded in 1977. The ideological basis of education of Vidya Bharati is Indian philosophy, culture and values. (...)

At present, Vidya Bharati is running 20,933 educational institutions, in which 26,41,224 boys and girls are studying under the guidance of 1,16,833 teachers. The institutions of Vidya Bharati are working in all the administrative units (28 states and 7 union territories) of India.

Vidya Bharati, the largest voluntary organisation in the field of education in India, has established Indian Educational Research Institute with its headquarters in Lucknow for identifying the changes in the system of education required according to time and need. Vidya Bharati receives educational guidance from time to time from 500 national educationists of All India Academic Council established in 1980, which has made the work of Vidya Bharati effective and result-oriented.

Vidya Bharati has made its main field of work among educationally-deprived sections of the society. It has constituted a separate department called Department of Education for Underprivileged Areas. (...)

Vidya Bharati runs **three types** of institutions. **(1) Balvari or Bal Gokulam:** The centres dedicated to the early childhood care and education of the underprivileged, deprived, neglected and helpless children of age group of 3 to 6 years are being run in

Gujarat, Maharashtra and Kerala by this name. **(2) Saraswati Sanskar Kendra:** In remote villages, slums and Janjati areas, two hours' free education centres are being run by the teachers and boys-girls of higher classes of formal schools of Vidya Bharati under the scheme 'One School – One Sanskar Kendra' in Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Punjab. **(3) Ekal Acharya Vidyalaya (Single-Teacher School):** In forest and border areas, three hours' single-teacher schools are functioning in the north-east states, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Uttaranchal, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Andaman & Nicobar, Sikkim, Leh and Laddakh. (...)

Schools being run by Vidya Bharati

Institutions	Number of Students		
Rural Schools	10,347	Boys & Girls	10,15,227
Girls Schools	175	Girls	61,224
Sanskar Kendras in slums and deprived habitat	2,457	Boys & Girls	60,224
Single-Teacher Schools in forest areas	2,506	Boys & Girls	66,500

[Source: The Organiser, 15.08.2004]

Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation:

(...) Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation of India, a frontal organisational in the field of education, has taken up the onerous task of making the Janjati and rural masses literate and healthy. The Foundation is running **more than 10,000 one-teacher schools** in the remote areas of Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka and West Bengal. **The Foundation has fixed a target of running one lakh one-teacher schools by the year 2011.**

The Foundation selects a local youth, who is enthusiastic and is properly trained, for transacting effectively the curriculum developed by the Friends of Tribal Society (FTS). In Ekal Vidyalayas the centre of attraction for the village is the teacher, who acts as a catalyst of change and character building. The teacher would also be responsible to restore and develop the rich traditional and cultural heritage of the Janjatis, says Shyamji Gupta, General Secretary, Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation, while talking to Organiser. The school runs for three to four hours a day, at a time convenient to the villagers. The children, who

attend the schools are of the age group ranging from 5 to 14 years and there are about 40 to 45 children in each school. All the study materials are provided freely by the schools. The organisers of the Foundation informed that they spent around Rs 15,000 a year to run a one-teacher school. What is encouraging is that the local people support the one-teacher schools in their own way and this also binds them emotionally. In some villages people have taken care of the Vidyalayas as their own home, says an organiser of the Foundation. At some places the makeshift classrooms of the Vidyalayas are also used as the cultural centres for the villagers. The Foundation organiser says that they receive donations/contributions to bear the burden of expenditures of the schools. (...) [Source: *The Organiser*, 15.08.2004]

Akhil Bharatiya Itihas Sankalan Yojana (History):

(...) The aim of the Yojana is to rewrite the history of Bharat, right from the time of beginning of creation to the present period. This writing will be in accordance with the chronology of the Bharatiya kalaganana of the yugas, based on correct, true and impartial facts and figures, devoid of any prejudices whatsoever. Further, this rewriting will be in the light of modern scientific research and new archaeological findings to present a truly integrated and comprehensive history of Bharat, highlighting the social, cultural, religious, spiritual, economic, political and all other aspects of life.

Yojana's Network

The Yojana, for a better functioning of its organisational setup, has divided the country into 13 regions, 46 states, 101 universities and 850 districts. A regional organiser has been appointed in all the 13 regions; out of the forty-six states, 38 states have Samitis of the Yojana and four states have co-ordinators. Thus **the Yojana conducts its work in 42 states. Out of the 101 universities, the Yojana has work in 65. Out of 850 districts it has Samitis in about 600 districts.** The Yojana and its Samitis have **so far published about 500 books, booklets, etc.**

History writing project: The first and the main project of the Yojana is to rewrite the history of Bharat. The history of this country, according to Bharatiya kalaganana, is about 1,97,46,87,101-years old. This long span of time is divided into seven manvantaras and 28 mahayugas, which has been divided for the purpose of writing history by ancient

Hindu historians into four periods — Devayuga, Brahmayuga, Ksatrayuga and Kaliyuga. The architects of the Yojana have selected the present Kaliyuga with 28th mahayugas of Bharatiya kalaganana for its first history-writing project, the present era of Kaliyuga being 5106 yugabda. As regards the remaining three periods, the Yojana has decided to collect data, hold discussions and debates, symposiums and seminars on various aspects of the history of remote periods.

Vedic Saraswati Nadi Sodha Abhiyana: This project has been launched to re-establish the antiquity of our history. Workers and scholars of the Yojana through their constant and indefatigable efforts have been successful in locating the glacier to confirm Saraswati's origin and surveyed and traced its course from Adibadri to Somnath where it joined the sea. On the basis of the material collected, it has been proved, as mentioned in the Rigveda, that the lost Saraswati used to flow in full steam 10,000 years ago. The Vedas were compiled on its banks. Thus the theory that the Vedas were written in 1500 b.c. has been set at nought and the great antiquity of our existence has been proved.

Myth of the origin of Aryans: The Yojana through its seminars, symposiums and debates **has proved beyond doubt that the Aryans were the original inhabitants of Bharat. The hypothesis that the Aryans came to Bharat from Central Asia has been proved false.** Apart from organising seminars, the Yojana has published important treatises on this issue. (...) [*Source: The Organiser, 15.08.2004*]

Rashtriya ShaiKshik Mahasangh (Teachers):

The Akhil Bharatiya Rashtriya Shaikshik Mahasangh (ABRSM) is the only nationalist teachers' organisation for **'pre-primary to college level'** teachers throughout the country. **It has 32 affiliated state teachers' organisations** with teachers drawn from primary, secondary and college levels. The ABRSM has **active contact with 82 universities and its total membership in the country is nearly 6 lakh.** The ABRSM is playing an exemplary role in the field of education and for welfare of the teaching community with its developmental activities.

(...) Now, under the banner of Shiksha Bachao Andolan Samiti, the ABRSM, along with other organisations, is actively participating in exposing the injustice shown by

Union HRD Minister to the NCERT curriculum, for acting at the behest of some communist ideologues.

“It is only through Bharatiya education alone that India can achieve its goals for which God has created this nation, i.e. for world brotherhood and peace. The whole world is one family and let us make the whole world cultured. This is our concept of globalisation and it is our world mission. Should we not save ourselves from the evil designs of the 3Ms (Marx, Macaulay, madarasa) after so many years of Independence? It is a challenge for the ABRSM. (...) [Source: *The Organiser*, 15.08.2004]

Rashtra Sevika Samiti:

Founded by late Smt. Lakshmibai Kelkar (Mausiji) at Wardha in the year 1936, the Rashtra Sevika Samiti is a cultural organisation of Hindu women. **The Rashtra Sevika Samiti is committed to the cause of the glorious Hindu rashtra.** Being an all-India organisation, it has over **3,500 branches**. The Rashtra Sevika Samiti is organising Hindu women since 1936, creating in them a sense of awareness regarding their role in the family, and in the social and national life. Creating awareness among women regarding their cultural and social responsibilities is the principal theme of the works of the Samiti. In addition to the regular features on shakha sthal, inspiring them for devotion and dedication to Bharat mata, the Samiti has undertaken projects and programmes, rallies and campaigns only with the view to strengthen the sense of patriotism. (...)

The Samiti is running free hostels for girls of various Janjatis in different states. One of the unique projects is the Rugnapayogi Sahitya Seva Kendra, which supplies many useful articles required during the convalescent stage, on a nominal rent. The amount collected is utilised for buying new articles or helping some needy persons who require medical treatment. (...)

The Samiti also organises rallies or campaigns on important subjects like exodus of Hindus from Jammu and Kashmir, religious conversion, cultural invasion by media, etc. to create awareness by giving useful information on these problems.

The main theme behind all the programmes is to maintain our cultural and national identity and integrity, which is at stake at present due to various reasons. [Source: *The Organiser*, 15.08.2004]

Sewa Vibhag:

The Sewa Vibhag of RSS was founded in 1990 to coordinate the service activities being run by Swayamsevaks and different Sangh-associated organisations like VHP, Kalyan Ashram, Deendayal Research Institute, Bharat Vikas Parishad, Rashtra Sevika Samiti, ABVP, etc., in various parts of the country. (...)

What was the objective behind starting service projects by Sangh Swayamsevaks?

Although the Sangh work has been going on for 79 years, we realised that there is a major section of the society that finds it difficult to come to the shakha. **The Sangh's dream of uniting the entire Hindu society cannot be fulfilled without taking all the sections together. This section generally lives in neglected localities, which the Sangh has named as Sewa bastis.** However, the Sangh Swayamsevaks have always been in the forefront to render relief in all natural and man-made calamities. But with a view to bringing social harmony and self-reliance among people of all such bastis, the Sangh decided to start service projects on a regular basis in 1978. The first project, Bal Samskar Kendra, was started in a Sewa basti of Delhi. It was considered to be necessary to establish a live contact with these people.

Now in most of the Prants, work is carried out under the banner of Sewa Bharati. In Maharashtra, it is run in the names of Jankalyan Samiti and Lok Kalyan Samiti. But the objective of all the organisations is one, i.e. to convey the Sangh's message of social harmony to all the people.

Which type of service activities are run by Swayamsevaks?

People of such bastis are being exploited by certain foreign forces in the name of service. They have not only changed their way of worship, but have also misguided them against their own Hindu brethren. We feel that until a hungry, sick or a person deprived of clothes is not provided with food, medicines or clothes, he will not listen to any discourse. Therefore, we have started these projects as per the needs of the bastis and the people. (...)

All our projects can be summed as seven 'S', sewa (service), shiksha (education), samskars, swasthya (health) samarasata (harmony), swawlamban (self-reliance) and suraksha (security). **Today we have more than 43,000 service projects including 23,802 educational, 8,574 health care, 8,765 social, 2,245 self-reliance and 3,149 rural development projects all over the country. A team of 51,339 selfless workers is serving people in 43,386 Sewa bastis. It includes 20,500 Janjati villages, 8,568 general villages, 9,356 Seva bastis and 4,692 general bastis.**

Nearly 20 other local organisations, run by Sangh Swayamsevaks in different states (...).

What changes have been brought in the society by these service projects?

Our basic objective behind running these projects is to raise self-confidence among the people and in that sense we have achieved success. The neglected sections of the society are mingling with the mainstream society and their misconceptions about the RSS have been removed. Both the prabudhjan and the abhavgrast have started living in harmony and also share each other's happiness and sorrows. There is a tradition of **Kanaypoojan** during Navaratri in northern states. This year over **48,000 girls** of the Sewa bastis were worshipped by the prabudhjan of Delhi. Not only this, the **girls of over 300 rich families were also worshipped** by the families of Sewa bastis. This presented a unique example of **social harmony**. Similarly, the **Self-Help Groups (SHGs)** created in some of the villages of southern states have brought the women of all classes together, presenting a strong power that has brought positive changes in the villages. (...)

Our objective is not to start more and more projects but to create harmony between the rich and the poor. We encourage the rich to look after the children living in his nearest Sewa bastis. We propagate the concept: mera ghar — apana ghar, meri basti — apani basti (my home is our home, my neighbourhood is our neighbourhood)

What are the future targets of the Sewa Vibhag?

Sewa is the medium through which we can successfully remove the differences or feeling of jealousy due to caste, religion, political differences in the society. That is why **we have decided to increase the number of service projects from 43,000 to one lakh by the year 2006**, which is also the birth centenary year of Shri Guruji. Today we carry on work in all the districts, but by 2006 we want to **spread it to all the blocks** involving all ways of worship and communities. (...) [Source: *The Organiser*, 15.08.2004]

Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS):

With the emergence of the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), a few hitherto unknown symbols of Bharatiyata, forgotten or ignored in the labour field by the trade union organisations already existed, were introduced. The symbols were accepted by the workers and subsequently established in the field. Thereafter, the complexion of the entire trade union movement stood completely changed.

Inspired by the Bharatiya Darshan, the pioneers of new labour movement later known as BMS started their onward march under the guidance and leadership of Shri Dattopant Thengadi. The BMS exhibited full confidence in the ability of Bharatiya national genius to evolve new social systems and philosophical formula. It sought to free its countrymen from intellectual slavery of Western concepts, terminologies and ideologies. **The BMS leadership was opposed to the crude materialism as well as communism.** It felt that in the absence of Bharatiya spiritual values and cultural heritage, it was impossible to evolve any healthy social structure free from internal dissensions and strife. It had implicit faith in the scientific character and ultimate victory of the Bharatiya social order upon the tenets of integral humanism. (...)

Trade unions were teeth in jaw of communism; but BMS not only uprooted the teeth but also defeated the Left ideology on each front thereby checking the advancement of red forces, who once thought of unfurling the red flag on the Red Fort. Their dream never turned into a reality and saffron flag of BMS rose high in the sky.

During those days, the red flag symbolising the Left ideology with its international background of class conflict and party dictatorship was presumed to represent the aspirations of the working class. The tri-colour of INTUC symbolised, rightly or wrongly,

in the workers' mind, the subservience of the workers' cause to that of the Establishment. The BMS unfurled the saffron, which has been a traditional symbol of universal love, renunciation and self-sacrifice.

The extent of indifference, if not callousness, of the trade union leadership to the problem of raising the level of national consciousness among workers can very well be imagined from the fact that before the advent of BMS, **Bharat Mata ki jai was a slogan quite alien to the Indian labour field. Workers were taken by surprise when BMS first introduced this slogan** and thus tried to bridge the gulf between the sectional and the national viewpoints. Being essentially patriotic, **workers adopted this slogan outrightly.**

In 1955, the wide-spread slogan was: 'Workers of the world, unite'. It was hardly realised that, carried to its logical conclusion, this would divide every nation or society horizontally. Thus, in reality, this was a slogan of all-round disruption. Therefore, BMS rejected it, and **replaced it with its own slogan: 'Workers, unite the world.'**

What is National Labour Day is not May Day, which is based on hatred and class conflict, but Vishwakarma Jayanti. It was a matter of great concern that even after its existence for more than three decades, the Indian Labour Movement had not found out or conceived of the National Labour Day. Even in the United States, which happens to be the birthplace of the International Labour Day, the workers celebrate their own National Labour Day on the first Monday of every September. In our country, **Vishwakarma Day** is being observed as National Labour Day from times immemorial. Even today workers belonging to different religions and even European employees at Jamshedpur and other places worship their machinery on this auspicious day. **BMS boldly introduced this Day, which received wide acceptability from the workers.** (...) [Source: *The Organiser*, 15.08.2004]

Bharatiya Kisan Sangh (BKS):

The Bharatiya Kisan Sangh was formed on March 4, 1979 with the objective to organise farmers, including the tillers, landowners, agro-labourers and those connected with allied pursuits. This section of the society forms 70 per cent of the population of the

country. The ideology which the BKS wants to infuse among the farmers is that the nation is our mother. It is not simply a geographical area, but a living entity.

The BKS feels that all persons, who regard this land as their motherland are brothers and no artificial divide of rural and urban can be thought of. It is of the opinion that the progress of 70 per cent of the society means the progress of the nation. For making the country self-sufficient, the agricultural sector, the BKS feels, should be self-sufficient with no intrusion by any power, which wants to exploit the sector for their selfish gains, should be allowed. (...)

(...) [T]he BKS is the only farmers' organisation in the country **having its network in all the states, 434 districts, 5,773 development blocks and 39,861 villages.** A number of programmes have been planned to further strengthen and spread the organisation in this silver jubilee year. [Source: *The Organiser*, 15.08.2004]

Akhil Bharatiya Adhivakta Parishad (Lawyers):

Aimed at reviving Bharatiya values and inculcating idealism amongst the law professionals across the country, the Akhil Bharatiya Adhivakta Parishad (ABAP) came into existence in 1992. **At present, the Parishad has local units up to the district level in almost every state in the country. Twenty-five state units are affiliated** with the Parishad, which is pursuing the goal of improving the standards of both the Bar and the Bench with a missionary zeal. Besides Public Interest Litigation and Free Legal Aid, etc., the Parishad is also engaged in various academic and intellectual exercises like publishing a quarterly journal, Nyaypravah and holding at regular intervals conferences, symposia and lectures. For the benefit of young members of the Bar, the Parishad conducts study circles in almost every district unit under the title 'Continuous Education Programme', (...). [Source: *The Organiser*, 15.08.2004]

Poorva Sainik Seva Parishad:

The aim of Poorva Sainik Seva Parishad (PSSP) is to harness the collective power potential of ex-servicemen for constructive nation-building activities. During the service, they imbibe a high sense of patriotism and discipline and acquire a wide-range of abilities, skills and competencies. After playing their innings in the armed forces in various positions, they return to civil mainstream to render their services to the society. Presently,

over 20 lakh ex-servicemen are settled all over the country and approximately 50,000 join them every year.

Ex-servicemen have formed a number of organisations that raise their resettlement problems and demands from the Central and state governments to redress them. The PSSP is a non-political organisation, which places the national and societal interests prior to the interests of the ex-servicemen, albeit families of martyrs and deceased soldiers are high on its agenda.

Starting from Uttar Pradesh in 1993, the PSSP attained its all-India level status in 1998 as a registered body with affiliated registered units functioning in various states and Union Territories.

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose is the icon and 'nation first' is the credo of the organisation.

India's victory in the 1971 war made the nation proud, but for 25 years the event had not been included in the national calendar of celebrations. It was in 1996, on the occasion of silver jubilee of the event, and on the initiative of the PSSP, that the then President of India, the late Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma, paid homage for the first time, to the martyrs of the war at the Amar Jawan Jyoti at India Gate in New Delhi. Since then, **December 16 is celebrated with due pomp and dignity throughout the country.** The Parishad organises public functions on this day where recipients of the gallantry awards are felicitated.

Since most of the bravest of the braves of Indian armed forces come from villages, the Parishad has initiated a scheme to bring these remote and underdeveloped villages under focus so that constructive programmes in the form of roads, schools and community centres could be started there. (...)

The Parishad has also established a Sainik Parivar Kalyan Nyas after the Kargil war. A hostel for boys has been built up in Seekar (Rajasthan) for the children of soldiers martyred in the war. Financial assistance is also extended to girls studying in an institution in Jammu. A merit-cum-means scholarship scheme has also been initiated for the XIth and the XIIth-class students of all ex-servicemen. *[Source: The Organiser, 15.08.2004]*

Prachar Vibhag of RSS:

Today the Prachar Vibhag **runs 32 media centres**, known as Vishwa Samvad Kendras (VSKs), which are spread all over the country — from Kerala and Tamil Nadu to Jammu & Kashmir and from Gujarat to Assam. Almost every VSK is equipped with modern equipments of information technology, manned by dedicated workers. There are **40 tabloids**, fortnightly and monthly, known as Jagaran Patrikas, published in almost all prominent Indian languages, except a few. Over **6,31,347 copies** of Jagaran Patrikas, published without any advertisement and with no aim to earn profit, **reach 2,06,329 places** all over the country. This proves their popularity in society, especially villages, and if we take 10 people as the number of readers of one copy of the periodicals, **about 63,13,470 people read them in India**. About 30,000 copies of the Jagaran Patrikas reach Nepal at 889 places.

There are **19 publishing institutes**, which publish different categories of literature, such as biographies, novel, stories, poetry, etc., in different languages. Prachar Vibhag is instrumental in holding various types of symposiums, seminars, lecture series, courses and workshops in journalism. (...)

Apart from the Jagaran Patrikas, there are **six daily newspapers, 12 weeklies and seven monthly periodicals**. These figures do not include the publications of various outfits associated with RSS, such as BJP, BMS, Sahitya Parishad, ABVP, Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram, VHP and many others of RSS sympathisers and friends in India and abroad. [*Source: The Organiser, 15.08.2004*]

[This is a huge network which permeates into every nook and corner of the population. This network coupled with ultra-reactionary ideology and fascist outlook organised murderous militia in several parts of the country. – *Update*]

Making of Gujarat: An Overview

“Godhra happened on February 27 and the next day, 50 lakh Hindus were on the streets. We were successful in our experiment of raising Hindu consciousness, which will be repeated all over the country now.”

[Vishwa Hindu Parishad international working president Ashok Singhal, The Indian Express, 04.09.2002]

“What happened in Gujarat after the Godhra carnage had the blessings of Lord Rama,”

[Ashok Singhal told the open session of the VHP at Kolkata, Times News Network, 03.07.2004]

[In the ‘laboratory of Gujarat’, the fascist projects of Sangh Parivar had been testified & verified by the mindless looting, burning and killing of the Muslims. In *Update 8*, we portrayed this fascist projects elaborately. The Gujarat experiment of Sangh Parivar had several features which can be summed up as follows: **1.** It was not a communal riot. It was a genocide of Muslim people. **2.** It was not a spontaneous outburst of ‘Hindus’. It was orchestrated with utmost precision by a mob organised beforehand. Several programmes had been organised before the carnage to arm the people. **3.** The organisation of the murderous mob was accomplished utilising the despair, poverty and contradictions developed within the *society*. The unemployed and retrenched people had been organised. And also rich people were seen to take part in loot and burning. **4.** Series of attacks had been masterminded on the Christian churches and missionaries since 1998. Special attention was devoted on the Tribals & Dalits to saffronise/intoxicate them by *Hindutvavadi* projects. Rural areas were not spared. **5.** The businesses, properties etc. of the Muslims were precisely targeted resulting in economic ruin of the prosperous Muslims. Calls for economic boycotts of the Muslims were vigorously propagated. **6.** The machineries of the government and administration are deeply communalised and/or saffronised. The carnage was perpetrated with the utter complicity of the police, administration the MLAs.

Hence, Gujarat is a model where Parivar tested and verified its fascist projects with utmost ferocity. This fascist preparation of the '**Making of Gujarat**' is to be studied to comprehend the whole methodology of Parivar. – *Update*]

What Happened in Gujarat before the Burning of Sabarmati Express?

- As far back as November 2001, the magazine Communalism Combat reported that **4,00,000 'trishuls'** (three-pronged spears associated with Hindu mythology) – **lethal Rampuri knives** disguised as religious symbols – were distributed by the Bajrang Dal countrywide. The *trishul*, like the *kirpan* (Dagger) for Sikhs is exempt from the provisions of the Indian Arms Act. Before the campaign for construction of the temple, the VHP, Bajrang Dal and the RSS had distributed thousands of *talwars* (swords) and *trishuls*. The BJP functionaries also participated in all *talwar-trishul* ceremonies, in which processions were organized in towns and rural areas. Training camps in firearms were also reportedly conducted in many places.
- It is claimed that for some two weeks before February 28th, LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas) cylinders were in short supply in Ahmedabad city, so much so that middle class consumers had to book them far in advance and there was a long line of people waiting to procure them. The rioters however were adequately armed with thousands of LPG cylinders, obviously collected in advance, with which they blew up Muslim commercial establishments.
- In the town of Jhalod, Dahod District (where the town of Godhra is located), it was reported that **all Hindu houses were marked with saffron flags before the 27th of February itself**. This was done the day before *Id* (Muslim Festival) that was on 22nd February. Further, in the evening there was a rally of around 100-150 VHP/Bajrang Dal supporters, and meetings were held at various places following this.
- In Limkheda, the district sub division of Dahod District, about six to eight weeks before 27th February, **a list of all Muslim households and**

properties was prepared. A VHP leader who is a development officer in LIC (Life Insurance Corporation), Limkheda, had begun instigating people by saying things like, “These Muslims do not allow the *mandir* (temple). They should be killed.”

- In five districts of Gujarat, Muslims said that a few months prior to the attacks, **a household survey was conducted by women activists of the VHP to find out details of Muslim properties.** The revision of the electoral rolls during the same period seems to have come in handy in distinguishing Muslims from others. Victims also pointed out that **some TV cable operators had helped in identifying houses and other Muslim establishments.** Furthermore, there are newspaper reports quoting VHP leaders as saying that they had a “list” ready.
- In Sanjeli village, Dahod District, three months prior to the attack, there were huge meetings in which VHP, and the Bajrang Dal had announced, “Sanjeli will burn” and burn it did. In Pandarwada village, Panchmahals District, in mid-February, meetings were held where the BJP/VHP/Bajrang Dal leaders made provocative statements from loud speakers to frighten Muslims and to instigate Hindus to arm themselves to confront the Muslims.
- Reports also indicate that the mob had prior information about Muslim-owned establishments; **in a secret circular to the police the Gujarat Government had asked them to furnish details of Muslim organizations in their area.** This information was collected as far back as 1st February 1999.
- It is also claimed that some 8 months prior to the attack, the **Gujarati language newspaper, *Sandesh* had published an article in which it listed many Muslim owned establishments, which were not widely known as these had non-Muslim names or were only partly owned by Muslims.** It would appear therefore that the rioters had access to Government records from the Sales tax/Excise departments and the like, which are not normally available. (...)

[Source: *Threatened Existence: A Feminist Analysis of the Genocide in Gujarat, Report by the International Initiative for Justice (IIJ), December 2003, Annexure I; www.sabrang.com]*

Years of BJP Rule in Gujarat

There is evidence to show that Gujarat was and is being treated as a laboratory by the *Hindutva* forces. One of the first things that the BJP did when it came to power in 1995 was to saffronise major cities and villages. Saffron flags, banners, posters and hoardings became the norm. **In cities and villages, boards that said ‘Hindu Rashtra’s xxxx region welcomes you’ were put up in every significant corner. Small and big temples (many of them painted saffron) mushroomed in every nook and corner.** All along the state highways in particular, huge temples were constructed. **Most government offices began to sport temples in their compounds where *pujas* were being done everyday.** In effect, what the state witnessed was the transformation of public space into a saffronised Hindu area of activity.

There has been a drastic increase in RSS *shakhas* in Gujarat, and according to newspaper reports, at the *sankalp shibir* (resolution camp) held in Ahmedabad on January 7, 2000 the **RSS had pledged to open a *shakha* in every village in Gujarat by 2005.** (*Asian Age, January 7, 2000*) Interestingly, on January 7, 2000 a *sankalp shibir* was also held in Naroda, (*Times of India, January 9, 2000*) one of the worst affected areas in the recent violence.

RSS members have infiltrated the bureaucracy making it easy for them to gain access to electoral records, to conduct religion based census (almost immediately after the attack on Christians in the Dangs in 1998) to get information about Muslim and Christian schools and then to cancel their grants (1999-2000), to manipulate school curriculum, in short, to manipulate the State machinery towards the goal of *Hindutva*. In the year 2000, close on the heels of the RSS *sankalp shibir* on Jan 7, 2000, **a 14-year old ban on government officials joining the RSS was lifted.** This move was ominous as it opened up the RSS floodgates right into the heart of the bureaucracy in Gujarat.

Educational institutions have particularly been targeted. Christian missionary schools and schools with Muslim managements have been singled out. In 2000 the government came out with a roster of blacklisted schools, which were first asked to furnish their financial details and then their grants were either cancelled or cut down drastically throwing the school managements into a quandary. Christian missionary schools were at one point made the target of a vicious campaign where they were accused of forcible conversions of Hindu girls.

The student wing of the BJP, the *Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad* (ABVP) was particularly active in this. ABVP activists terrorised school girls from missionary schools into wearing *bindis* and bangles, thereby introducing a dress code. Similarly from time to time the ABVP has issued injunctions to girl students in colleges in Ahmedabad and Baroda to refrain from wearing Western dresses like trousers, jeans or skirts.

In 1998 in Baroda, the *Bajrang Dal* led a protest against a fashion show leading to the mob physically attacking the models. The ABVP in 1999 tried to pressurise the university authorities to introduce a dress code for girl students. Similarly a reported incident of molestation in the M.S. University was crudely exploited for political gains. The ABVP began a campaign against Muslim students saying that they were responsible for luring young Hindu girls into fraudulent marriages. The campaign went further and stated that because Muslim boys are used to eating meat, and have no respect for Hindu girls (read culture), they molest or rape them.

In July-August 1998, the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* launched a vicious campaign on interreligious marriages in towns and villages like Bodeli, Sanjeli and other *Adivasi* areas in Panchmahals, attacking couples who had married across religious lines, and terrorizing Muslim residents, in one case forcing them to flee the village. Following this campaign, the BJP-led state government set up a cell to monitor inter-religious marriages, which would be responsible for 'rescuing' Hindu girls from such so-called 'forcible' marriages. [Source: *Ibid*, Annexure V]

[May the readers be well acquainted with the above facts cited by two annexures. In *Update 8*, we have covered some of these facts. Due to the importance and gravity of the 'Gujarat Model' which is threatening to be repeated elsewhere in the country we are forced

to publish some of these facts. Now follow the next excerpt which reveals how the fascist murderous forces were prepared & trained in Gujarat for years.]

Gujarat: Training of Fascist Forces

(...) **2.4.** The Tribunal [Concened Citizens Tribunal – Gujarat 2002: *Update*] has led specific and detailed evidence on the method of mobilisation and training adopted by the VHP and Bajrang Dal from four recruits/former recruits. This explains the phenomenon whereby huge mobs surfaced so promptly all over the state during the carnage. It also explains the ability of these organisations to collect youngsters, indoctrinated with misconceptions and with hatred in their hearts, who were available at a signal from their leaders to commit murder, loot, arson and rape, and defy all laws, secure in the conviction that with the BJP in power, they would have full protection and need have no fear of the law and order machinery.

2.5. Reproduced here is the gist of the testimony of the four recruits/former recruits mentioned above, which provides a clear picture of the BD's and the VHP's mobilisation techniques. **The enrolment fee for a new entrant to a BD *shakha* (cell) is Rs. 55.** Once admitted, you are expected to attend meetings held around 8 p.m. every night, mostly on private premises, sometimes in small temples. Secret meetings for the more select are held once a week, later at night, around 10 p.m. Enrolment to the *shakha* entitles the volunteer to a card identifying him as a Bajrang Dal *karyakarta* (activist). **If you help recruit 10 more youth, you are made a 'VHP Mantri'. You are given a *trishul* the moment you enrol.** You are told that *trishuls* were not meant to be kept inside a temple and worshipped but to be used to protect the Hindu faith. You are also told that the *trishul* should not be used to kill one's 'brothers', but to save 'our' religion.

2.6. At the weekly meetings, **members are told, more explicitly, that the *trishuls* are to be used against Muslims whenever there is a riot or a fight. If you killed Muslims, the organisation was there to protect you from penal consequences.** If something happened to you, the organisation was there to take care of your family. **If you did get arrested during the riots, all you had to do was to**

show your Bajrang dal membership card and the police was sure to let you go.

2.7. The *VHP Mantris* are assigned the responsibility of training 60-70 boys each day. What did the training involve? The training primarily involved compiling an exhaustive list of all Muslims living in the area. Members had to collect information about Muslim places of residence, property, businesses, family, etc. in the locality: Who lived where, how much they were worth, how many children they had, etc. All the information so gathered was to be passed on in the form of a written report that was maintained by the *Mantri*. (...)

2.9. Apart from the detailed account of the four recruits/former recruits to the Bajrang Dal, other witnesses from Naroda, near Ahmedabad, and from Kheda, Bharuch and Panchmahal districts also gave evidence before the Tribunal about training camps being organised in their neighbourhoods. In all these cases, an intensive training of the BD/VHP volunteers began after September 2001. An advertisement encouraging youngsters to join the Bajrang Dal in large numbers had appeared in the Gujarat daily, *Sandesh* in August last year. (...)

2.12. The constant invocation of caste Hindu symbols, militant and aggressive posturing, the possession of *trishuls* and swords and regular weapons' training were elements of the methodical preparation of these cadres. **Young men were told that Bajrang Dal workers should always greet each other with 'Jai Shri Ram!' to identify themselves.** One of the centres used for physical training was at a theatre beyond Adalaj on the Gandhinagar road outside Ahmedabad. While *trishuls* were often distributed on payment of enrolment fees, **members were asked to pay Rs. 310 for a sword. They were assured at the secret weekly training sessions that the swords were 'legal'. They were also told that if ever the police found them, all they had to do was tell them that it was a Bajrang Dal sword, and no one would say anything.** Swords were sold to the recruits quite openly and instructions on how to use them were given at the secret meetings.

2.13. At the advanced stage of training, the more seasoned members were told **they would have to participate in fights or riots (*ladhai-jhagda, danga-fasaad*)**

whenever necessary. They said that, as Bajrang Dal leaders, they would, necessarily, be the most active, but young men, too, should always be prepared. They might be woken up in the middle of the night and should be ready to participate. The recruits were promised that when they participated in a riot, the organisation would pay them double the money that they lost in regular wages. Young men were also assured that if ever they were injured or killed during a riot, their families would receive adequate compensation.

2.14. The speeches at these meetings followed a basic pattern. Leaders would be brought in to brainwash the young members against Muslims. The single point agenda, evidence before the Tribunal has recorded, indicates that the desire was to demonise the Muslim community as also to create an armed cadre of young men, indoctrinated, full of hatred in their hearts, and sufficiently trained to perpetrate the grossest forms of physical abuse on their victims.

2.15. The Tribunal collected concrete information about the kind of mental training and brainwashing imparted to young men at the secret, weekly meetings – “We were told that until now it is the Muslims who have been harassing Hindus. “They have molested Hindu sisters and Hindu daughters. In Hindi films today, all the top heroes are Muslims, but there are no Muslim heroines. It is Muslims who are forging ahead in our country. They don’t let their daughters out in public but they spoil our Hindu daughters. Muslims are the ones who always use force. Our country was once a Hindu nation. The Muslims invaded us by force, married our mothers and our daughters and converted us to Islam.”

2.16. According to the witnesses, in the Bajrang Dal camps, young men are told: “Under the pretext of prayers [*namaaz*], Muslims gather at 2 p.m. every day and *maulvis* instruct them in several activities. They specially employ young men, pay them a salary and send them to college to spoil Hindu girls. Muslims are involved in several such nefarious activities.” They said that they wanted to start a similar practice amongst Hindus. That was what the secret 10 p.m. meetings were meant for. Here the members would all band together, worship/invoke Hanuman and prepare “to give Muslims a fitting reply.” The secret meetings – *gupt shakhas* – also gave special training in the use of arms.
(...)

2.20. Reports in credible national dailies and periodicals show that the VHP and the Bajrang Dal have been regularly conducting arms training camps in different parts of the country, for the last two years at least. From the statements on record, the objective behind these camps is evident, as are the objectives of their organisers and the instructors who conduct them: to spread venom against the minorities, especially Muslims and Christians, and to prepare a band of heavily indoctrinated, well-trained youth ready at a moment's notice to pounce on the minorities. **“We are preparing these able-bodied persons to fight any eventuality. With the ISI spreading its tentacles, these people are being trained to challenge the anti-Hindu forces... It is not the gun that matters, but self-confidence.”** (Ved Prakash Sachchan, joint convenor of the UP unit of the Bajrang Dal, in an interview to *The Times of India*, June 13, 2001.) Such are the declared activities at these camps. The Tribunal has on its record, details of such arms training by these outfits in different states all over the country. (...)

2.23. In August 2001, the VHP and the Bajrang Dal had organised a VHP *Bharti* (Join VHP) programme. Nearly one lakh people marched through the streets of Ahmedabad even though curfew was declared. This went on until September. One of the main programmes was held at the VHP's Vanikar Bhavan, Paldi. Their main *avahan* (call) was, *“Muslim ko nasht kar do!”* (“Destroy the Muslims!”) Advertisements were also released, asking for membership. [Source: *Concerned Citizens Tribunal – Gujarat 2002, An inquiry into the carnage in Gujarat; www.sabrang.com*]

[Above excerpt points out several glaring aspects of the making of the militant forces of Parivar. **Firstly**, systematic well-designed indoctrination had been done. **Secondly**, hatred to the ‘enemies’ were perfectly imbued within their followers. And **lastly**, numerous militant camps were organised in making the armed forces. Interestingly, an article published in June 2003, reported same type of training camps in Gujarat. **The article also reports that same type of training camps are being organised all over the country.** Several of these campaign for arming are: **rifle-shooting, sword distribution, ‘trishul’ distribution** including the learning of use of those arms. – Update]

At a Hindutva Factory

The gates to the empty school were wide open. But inside there was a bamboo barricade. Two rifle-toting Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) workers, in trademark khaki shorts, patrolled the entrance.

The sound of gunshots greeted us as we drove in. Rifle training was under way.

I asked if I could take some photographs. That enthused the instructors. Suddenly, they stood steady and shouted instructions in a more authoritative manner. But soon the 'seniors' intervened. "Why do you want to take pictures?" asked one of the organisers, whose hair and moustache were cropped close, in military style. "All you people from the English press want to give us a bad name. Next, you will publish these pictures and say we are running a terrorist camp," he said. My denial fell on deaf ears. "It is girls like you from the English press who have made us notorious. Except some, others have short hair, and are very modern. They don't respect Bharatiya culture. Show me your visiting card. I want to know where you are coming from," he said.

He was a bit perplexed when he saw "The Hindu" written on the card.

"See, we are on the same side," I joked. But he was not convinced.

"Who is your editor?" he demanded.

"His name is N. Ram. *Dekho, hum dono Ram ki seva karte hain* (Both of us are working in the name of Ram)," I told him. Finally, he smiled, and said: "Come, meet our leader."

I was ushered in to meet 'the leader' from Delhi, Surendra Jain. "So, you are from *The Hindu*. We have asked that newspaper to change its name. It always criticises us," he said. Immediately, the others were on guard. "Let them keep writing. It's good to know what our detractors think. The more they write, the more we go forward," he boasted. "It's thanks to the bashing that Modi won the Gujarat elections. People felt that it wasn't correct. We reacted in such a quiet way. Yet, we got so many abuses," he continued.

I changed the topic and tried to get some information about the camps. "For the past 13 years, we have been running these camps. The basic aim is to prepare workers who are

‘desh bhakts’, to organise the youth to protect the country and the religion. This summer, such camps are being run in 35 places across the country,” Surendra Jain explained. “It’s not the duty of just the state to protect the country. It’s also the duty of all citizens. No one looks at all the social work we do. We did rehabilitation work during the Kutch earthquake. We have opened cow shelters all over the country. We are not anti-Muslim. We are the enemy of any person who hates India,” he asserted.

After that, ‘the leader’ spoke to the young trainees on “the uniqueness of the Hindu religion”. A good part of his speech was composed of put-downs of other religions. (...)

“Christians and Muslims have killed crores of people and destroyed cultures in the name of religion. The history of their religions is tainted with blood. Hinduism is the only tolerant religion. Both Christianity and Islam say that non-believers have no right to live. They can launch *jihad* against them. Finish them off,” he said.

Then came the call for action. “In Gujarat, you have shown the way forward to the rest of the world. You have shown us the path to deal with *jehadis*. It was a victory of our religion,” he said. “The concept of ‘ahimsa’ has been interpreted wrongly. It doesn’t mean cowardice. It doesn’t mean we don’t respond when attacked. To bear injustices is not written in the Hindu religion... We are the ones who believe in the immortality of the soul. Yet, we are the ones most afraid of death. The jehadis have no fear of death. They learn this at an early age in the madrassas [religious schools]. We must also end our fear of death.”

(...) Finally, I got a chance to speak to the participants. Who are these boys? Where do they come from? What draws them to the camp?

Prajapati Hargovandas (20) joined the camp after a colleague introduced him into the Bajrang Dal. An engineering student, Prajapati works in Gandhinagar in a company that manufactures weighing scales. His father is a farmer-cum-moneylender. “After attending this camp, I feel all Hindus should sign up to protect our religion against Muslims. I will go back to my village and invite the Bajrang Dal to do a *trishul* distribution ceremony there,” he said.

But what is the need for a *trishul*?

“We should have weapons to protect our religion and our country. Muslims should be removed. They are spreading terrorism, communal violence and anti-social activities.”

What did he learn at the camp?

“We learn yoga, judo, karate, obstacle courses. There are discussions on religion and national issues. We are taught how to protect our country, and if there is a conflict between Hindus and Muslims, on how to deal with it. How to respect elders. What to do in a mandir. What to do if an earthquake strikes.”

But what is the need to learn rifle shooting, judo?

“It is necessary for self-defence. If there is a riot, and if the Bajrang Dal sends us to fight terrorists, we should know how to fight and use weapons.”

Said Manubhai Satvara (26), a marginal farmer and casual labourer from Sami in Patan district: “In our village, some Muslim boys teased a Hindu boy while he was praying in school. A fight broke out. After that, I was told to join the Bajrang Dal. All Hindus should unite – whether they are Patels, Thakurs or any other caste.” (...)

Some of the camp trainers are full-time VHP members. They live in the local *shakha* and work without any pay. The Sangh looks after their basic needs such as food and shelter. “I live in the *shakha* headquarters and travel in surrounding villages to recruit new members,” says Devraj Desai (22), a rifle-training instructor, from Dhansura village in Sabarkantha district. “I was in the Army for one year. One of my uncles died while serving in the Army and another lost his leg. After that, my family asked me to leave the Army. I always wanted to work for the nation, so I joined the Bajrang Dal in 1999,” Devraj recalled. (...)

The boys had to sit through another ‘knowledge’ session, which I was not allowed to attend. I tried to listen, catch snatches of the enlightened discourse. The speaker was telling the boys how to prepare for emergencies such as a riot or an earthquake. One of the organisers observed that I was listening. “He is telling them what they should do in case there is any civil disturbance,” he said.

The organisers told me that they had changed their plans. Instead of the evening physical training session, there would be a march through the town to make people aware

of the VHP's public demonstration and *trishul* distribution ceremony the next day. Soon, I was asked to leave. "We have let you stay here for long enough. It is time that you left," said the organiser, who had initially interrogated me. After being treated to such a generous helping of VHP-style Bharatiya culture, I did not persist. I left immediately. As we drove out, the guards at the gate had put down their rifles and were taking a nap, oblivious of the 'awakening' that was happening within. [Source: by Dionne Bunsha, *Frontline*, June 7-20, 2003]

[We have mentioned earlier that the 'Gujarat Model' is emulated and practised all over the country. In fact, the indoctrination of the **tribals and dalits** by Parivar had been started in **Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh** (formerly part of MP) and **Jharkhand** (formerly part of Bihar) well before **Gujarat**. This fact may not be known many readers/activists. In fact, after the Gujarat pogrom an important question strongly surfaced how an upper-casteist *Hindutvavadi* outfit like Sangh Parivar had been able to rally the tribals and dalits to perpetrate the pogrom of Muslims. In many places of the country the tribals and dalits were known to be saviours of the Muslims in many riots organised by the Parivar or Hindu communalist forces. In Gujarat also (a state infamous for communal riots for many years), this phenomenon has been observed by many analysts. This question is to be answered. The following excerpts may help readers/activists to understand the Parivar tactics in utilising the **tribals and dalits** as footsoldiers in Gujarat. Moreover, following excerpts amply reveal how the Parivar **utilised the social contradictions/conflicts/tensions** within the downtrodden, impoverished, helpless, and backward sections of the populace to organise & hinduise the tribals & dalits and thus making their fascist projects successful. – *Update*]

The Hindutva Experiment

(...) In a chapter in the book *Creating a Nationality*, social activist Achyut Yagnik attributes the rise of Hindutva in the State to the rise of the rapidly growing urban middle class in search of a new identity. Tracing the rise of the BJP from the 1980s, he illustrates how it has managed to mobilise Patels, Baniyas, the OBCs and Dalits under a common Hindutva banner in a span of 20 years. Yagnik points out that the Congress split in 1969 changed caste equations in the State. When the Congress (I) swept to power in 1980 using

the electoral combine of KHAM (Kshatriyas, Harijans, Adivasis and Muslims), the political clout of the upper castes and Patidars was eroded. “Between 1976 and 1980, the Congress(I) leadership in Gujarat virtually eliminated Brahmins, Banias and Patidars from core positions in the party. For the first time in history, not a single Patidar Minister was of Cabinet rank.” (The last 10 years have seen a Patidar resurgence in State politics.)

The backlash from Brahmins, Banias and Patidars took the form of an anti-reservation agitation in 1981. They objected to the reservation system that gave Dalits access to medical and engineering colleges. It led to riots in which Dalits were targeted in 18 of Gujarat’s 19 districts. During these riots, Muslims sheltered Dalits, in some instances. The second anti-reservation riots were in 1985. “Although the agitation was against the hike in job quotas for the OBCs in government and educational institutions, the victims were all Dalits,” says Yagnik.

However, by the mid-1980s, the BJP changed its stand towards Dalits in a bid to co-opt them. Realising the largeness of the number of Dalits and Scheduled Tribe and OBC persons in the State, who together account for **75 per cent** of the population, the BJP started attempts to unite all castes under the Hindutva plank. It corrected its anti-reservation stand and was able to reap the gains of this move. When riots broke out in 1986 during Ahmedabad’s annual Jagannath rath yatra, the BJP managed to garner the support of the OBCs and Dalits. This marked a shift in its support base.

When riots broke out all over Gujarat in 1990 during L.K. Advani’s rath yatra, Dalits and middle class Hindus were set against Muslims. The 1990 riots showed that the communal divide had deepened considerably, says Yagnik. Incidentally, the man who spearheaded the rath yatra campaign in Gujarat was none other than the present Chief Minister, Narendra Modi, who was then the general secretary of the State BJP. Also, it was after 1990 that the process of ghettoisation got under way in all three areas of Ahmedabad – the old walled city, the industrial mill areas and the new middle class and elite town. The 1992 riots after the demolition of the Babri Masjid ghettoised the city further. The current round of violence is likely to cause even further spatial segregation of the two communities.

Another explanation for Hindutva's growing base in Gujarat is offered by labour researcher Jan Bremen, who attributes it to globalisation and the manner in which capitalism has grown in the State. **The informalisation of Ahmedabad's workforce following the closure of its textile mills resulted in the pauperisation of the workers. Sections among these marginalised workers, mainly Dalits, are part of the Sangh Parivar's lumpen elements. (...)**

While the recent communal violence has often been portrayed as a Dalit vs. Muslim one, Martin Macwan, director of the Navsarjan Dalit network, points out that this is not necessarily true. **People from all castes and classes participated in the rioting, including the elite, who looted shopping centres.** He adds that since Dalits and Muslims (who comprise the poorest sections of the working class) are often neighbours, situations of insecurity and tension are perceived as those in which the two communities are pitted against each other. "The image of Dalits and Muslims as warring factions is well calculated to benefit Hindu dominance," he says. Since the Dalit movement is now in a political vacuum, the Sangh Parivar has exploited the frustration of the Dalit youth to mobilise for its Hindutva campaigns, Macwan adds.

In the Adivasi areas of Panchmahal, Dahod and Sabarkantha, the Bajrang Dal and the VHP introduced their communal politics with the Ram temple campaign in 1990. Just before the violence broke out, they had organised mass "Trishul campaigns" and "Adivasi reconversions" in these areas. It comes as no surprise, then, that in many places **Bhil Adivasi** mobs were instigated to attack. (...) [*Source: by Dionne Bunsha, The Frontline, May 11-24, 2002*]

[A noted columnist, **Asghar Ali Engineer** illustrated this tribal/dalits vs Muslim phenomenon just after the genocide began in Gujarat.]

Gujarat: Laboratory of Hindutva

(...) The BJP had chosen Gujarat from beginning as the laboratory of Hindutva. The question is of course why Gujarat was chosen? There could be number of reasons for this. **Gujarat is predominantly state of traders where neither left movement had ever in influence nor any movement by lower castes, particularly the Dalit**

movement. Dalit movement acts as a countervailing force for communal movement. Gujarat never witnessed such a movement. Neither there was any Mahatma Phule there nor any Ambedkar.

The socialist movement was also very weak. No social reform movement as in Maharashtra ever took place in Gujarat. The reform movement called Swami Narayan movement attracted mainly trading classes, particularly the Patels in its fold. It never attacked the caste system. Also Gujarat, including Saurashtra, has the largest number of princely states and feudal influence was very strong and since independence the Jansangh allied with Swatantra party which was set up by Rajaji and which was joined in a large number by the princes.

It is, therefore, not very surprising that earlier the Jan Sangh and now the BJP, has systematically used the dalit masses to advance its own political agenda and also have always used them for attacking minorities. The poor dalit youth are always in the forefront of all the riots. The dalit leadership, itself very weak, finds itself almost helpless in controlling the dalit youth to perpetrate communal violence. The job of killing is done usually by dalit youth and upper caste followers of the BJP keep themselves away from this 'dirty job'.

The middle castes are extremely conservative and unhesitatingly align themselves with the BJP and most of the NRIs in the UK and USA also belong to these castes which help the Sangh Parivar generously. The NRI money has greatly helped the Sangh Parivar financially. They have really helped make Gujarat the laboratory of Hindutva. (...)

This time a concerted effort was also made to systematically destroy the economy of Muslims in Gujarat. Incidentally Gujarat is the only state where three trading communities of Gujarati Muslims have flourished over a period of time i.e. the Bohras, Khojas and Memons. All these trading communities are peaceful and almost a-political. They generally do not take part in political movements, let alone in any communal violence. Yet these communities are increasingly suffering in the Gujarat riots and this time it was very systematic destruction of their factories, godowns and shops.

Because of the Sangh Parivar's intense activities in Gujarat all sections of Gujarat civil society and state organs have been thoroughly communalised. Even judiciary is no

exception. When Babri Masjid was demolished in 1992 twenty judges, out of twenty three, according to a lawyer of Ahmedabad High Court, felt happy; only three said that they felt sad. No wonder that in all these riots over 33 years since 1969 hardly any culprit belonging to the majority community has been punished.

The police and civil servants are no exceptions. Whenever riots break out in Gujarat they spread very fast as entire administrative machinery either looks the other way or even helps the marauding mobs. In the carnage which broke out after the Godhra incident even minority judges and police officers of the rank of Inspector General of Police were targeted. High court judges belonging to the minority community had to flee from their houses and their plea to the authorities fell on deaf ears. *[Source: by Asgarh Ali Engineer, March 2002, <http://www.dawoodi-bohras.com/spotlight/riots.htm>; accessed 29.08.04]*

[In the above excerpt also points out how the judiciary, police and administration in Gujarat is highly contaminated by the Parivar. It also points out the attacks (of fascist nature) on the wealthy Muslim communities. Now, a sociologist **Jan Bremen**, whose comments on this carnage are already cited in one of the above excerpts, writes:]

Devil's Workshop

(...) The recurrent riots in Ahmedabad towards the end of the 20th century cannot be understood merely as an upsurge of Hindu nationalism under high-caste leadership, planned and organised from a Hindutva perspective. The high tide of communalism is engineered by the promotion of a political economy which seeks to keep the working classes fragmented and in a state of dependency in order to reduce the price of their labour to the lowest possible level. At the end of February and in early March 2002, violence once again erupted in Ahmedabad — on a scale and intensity that far surpassed that of previous years. It is much too facile to suggest a direct causation between the looting, burning, a kill, which reached its climax in the industrial localities of the city, and massive impoverishment due to the collapse of the textile mills in the preceding quarter of a century.

A major difference with the earlier communal riots was that this time the search and destroy operation was not a spontaneous outburst of discontent and rivalry among people living at the bottom of the urban economy but well planned in advance and carried out with brutal precision.

The residents of the slum localities were not only the victims of communal rage and hatred, but also responded en masse to the call to eliminate the members of the opposing group. The main targets of the violence were Muslims, many hundred of whom — men, women and children — were killed, often in the most horrific ways. The pogrom made it clear that the Sangh parivar organisations had succeeded in inciting the lumpen army of unemployed and semi-unemployed youth in the industrial district to murder, looting and arson. **In an early report on these events, I made a link between the mass redundancies that accompanied the closure of the mills, the impoverishment and degradation of the industrial neighbourhoods and the pogroms which took place largely in this milieu. The social cohesion that once existed has gone.**

This close-knit community feeling which used to exist, lives on in the narratives about what has been lost. They are memories of visits to one's neighbour, to take part in the joys and sorrows of family life, to pay their respects or to show each other hospitality on festive occasions, to share the burden of everyday problems. This mesh of social cohesion that transcended the separate identity niches broke down once the mill had closed, the TLA started to fade away, and municipal agencies, due to lack of funding, ceased or drastically curtailed their welfare activities, which were also meeting points. (...) [Source: by Jan Breman, *The Hindustan Times*, 18.10.2003]

[Thus, Parivar exploited the socio-economic position of the dominated classes to recruit them as their footsoldiers. The next excerpt sums up the on-going vigorous activities of the Parivar within the adivasis in Gujarat. This excerpt may serve as a **prelude** to our next section: '**March of Sangh Parivar**'. – *Update*]

The Militant Hinduization of the *Adivasis*

(...) Actually, the spontaneous involvement of the *adivasis* in the rioting reflects the Hinduization of their culture under the influence of a campaign led by the RSS, VHP, BJP and especially the Vanavasi Seva Sangh (Vanavasi Service Association).

This organization is one of the regional branches of the Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram created in 1952. The very name of this “ashram” for the organization of “forest (*vana*) dwellers” translates both the vision that Hindu nationalists have of tribals and the strategy they have developed towards them. Hindu nationalists refer to tribals as “those who live in the forest” (*vanavasis*) rather than “those who were there first” (*adivasis*), simply because to them, “first” among the people of India can only be Hindus. But the *vanavasis* are nevertheless a target group, for the Hindu nationalists are determined to increase their numbers in proportion to their true enemies, the Muslims and the Christians.

They first sought to pit tribals against Christians to counter the latter’s evangelizing efforts of these animist tribes, which had met with a degree of success since the 19th century: the conversion rate of tribals to Christianity was particularly high in the Chhattisgarh tribal belt where the RSS set up the Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram in 1952. Its strategy of gaining access to the tribes was simply to imitate the Christian missionaries’ approach, which owed its popularity to its social work, most commonly in the form of free schooling and access to medical care by opening dispensaries. **The VKA duplicated this technique by attempting to inculcate nationalist Hindu ideology in schools it opened in Chhattisgarh and later elsewhere.** The organization in fact set up branches in nearly all states in India over the years, a development confirmed by the name change to Bharatiya Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram in 1977.

In Gujarat, this movement was known as Vanavasi Seva Sangh (*Vanavasis* Service Association). The name well reflects its primary vocation: social work. There, as in other places, the VSS strove to attract tribals by duplicating the missionaries’ charity strategies, at the same time stigmatizing Christians all the better to Hinduize them. Their most ordinary form of Hinduization involved free distribution of statuettes of **Lord Ganesh**, to encourage the tribals to worship him.

Another, more conflictual strategy was to build temples devoted to Hanuman. In the end, Devy is obliged to remark that “*the VSS and the BJP have achieved a measure of success in providing the tribals a political agenda of hatred...*” So tribal culture has indeed been altered under the influence of Hindu nationalist propaganda. D. Gupta [Economic & Political Weekly, 16.11.02] also underscores the receptivity of certain Bhils to Hindu nationalists ideas in the districts of Panchmahals and Sabarkantha, through propaganda from the RSS and its sister organizations. As a matter of fact, other tribes refer to these tribals somewhat ironically as “*Ramayana Bhils*,” a name coined from the great classic in Hindu literature, the *Ramayana*.

The last communal violence is bound to accentuate this trend, not only because Muslims – from whom tribals used to borrow funds – do not trust Adivasis as much as before, but also because these Adivasis have realised that they could draw dividends from riots in terms of looting and exerting power. (N. Lobo, Adivasis, Hindutva and Post-Godhra Riots in Gujarat, *EPW*, 30.11.02) For Lobo, the Adivasis are even more attracted to Hindutva than before, and their culture has been irreversibly affected. (...) [Source: *Communal Riots in Gujarat: The State at Risk? By Christophe Jaffrelot, Working Paper No. 17, July 2003, South Asia Institute, Department of Political Science, University of Heidelberg*]

[Thus the Gujarat was made as a laboratory of Hindutva where the fascist experiments were tested and verified. Now we have to note that the same type of preparation is going all over India.]

March of Sangh Parivar (–2003)

“All Hindutva opponents will get death sentence and we will leave it to the people to carry this out”

[Praveen Togadia, VHP secretary, 17.12.02

<http://www.hinduonnet.com/stories/2002121805260100.htm>]

“The *jehadis* are at large everywhere. If the government fails to declare war on Pakistan, there will be civil war in every Indian village. From Srinagar to Bhopal to Delhi, Hindus are being challenged. When we go to temples, we get bullets instead of *prasad*,” Togadia said [after the murder of Haren Pandya in Gujarat]. He gave some prescriptions, too. • Declare war on Pakistan before the country erupts in civil war. • Arm every Hindu youth with an AK-47 rifle to counter *jehadis*. • Raise the new Khalsa (purified ones) to defend Hindustan. • He promised to get one crore youth for the task. • Ban all *madrassas*. • Give land for the Ram temple. • Hand over the disputed areas in Ayodhya, Mathura and Kashi or Hindus will “liberate” 30,000 mosques.

[26.03.2003, [http://](http://www.telegraphindia.com/1030327/asp/nation/story_1811971.asp)

www.telegraphindia.com/1030327/asp/nation/story_1811971.asp]

[Not getting demoralised at all at the debacle in last general elections, BJP/Sangh Parivar are taking various programmes with vigour. **Firstly**, they stalled the whole proceedings of the Parliament to show their potency. **Secondly**, they have taken resolutions at Mumbai meet ratifying their ‘*Hindutvavadi*’ agenda most clearly and unambiguously. **Thirdly**, they have taken the issues like ‘*Savarkar*’ to flame *Hindutvavadi* fervour. **Fourthly**, Parivar (in the form of VHP) now want to demolish the Afzal Tomb and muster the fascist forces with vengeance. And **lastly** (& probably not finally), they are portraying ‘Uma Bharati’ as martyr and are thus trying to foment communal frenzy without any hesitation. Moreover, they are not losing their tempo though **indicted repeatedly by the Supreme Court** against the complicity of the Gujarat government in delaying/sabotaging the criminal cases of genocide. Also, they are not disturbed at all at the **revealing depositions of the police officials pointing fingers at the ‘celebrated’ mantris of the Gujarat govt.** before the Nanavati commission (enquiring the Godhra and Gujarat massacre). In fact, after losing power at

the centre Parivar has never lost their nerves. Reports flashing in the newspapers reveal they are moving with their fascist agenda with same speed as before the elections.

We have already noted earlier that Parivar has taken massive programmes along fascist lines all over the country – even where they are out of power or are yet to capture power. They are taking their fascist programmes almost everywhere in grassroot levels. In states like **Gujarat, Jharkhand or Uttaranchal** they have advantage of holding powers at the governments in proliferating their organisation, projects and ideology. But in states like **Orissa, Kerala or north-eastern states** also they are advancing tremendously. In states like **Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh & Uttaranchal**, they are preparing the fascist militant forces long before elected in the governments. Particularly, the **tribals and dalits** are targeted as they comprise 40-45% in some states. In the above discussion it is revealed how have they given so much importance to lay a strong foothold in these sections. In this part, we are publishing a few more excerpts/articles which will explicitly depict total design of Parivar in propagating & proliferating all over India.

In the same tune of the quotations cited above, Praveen Togadia, the ‘firebrand’ leader of VHP alias Sangh Parivar declared just after the Gujarat elections in December 2002 as follows. – *Update*]

‘Just as It Was Done in Germany’

After the “successful” experiment in the Hindutva laboratory of Gujarat, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) plans to make the whole country a laboratory to establish “Hindu supremacy” in India.

“We will make a laboratory of the whole country. This is our promise and our resolve.” (...)
VHP leader Praveen Bhai Togadia said in a press conference here on Sunday.

“I cannot waste even two days in building the laboratory. Rajasthan has already become the laboratory of Hindutva,” he said. The VHP leader said that Gujarat would be repeated in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and other states.

“The people of Gujarat have paid their tributes to the Ram *Bhaktas* of Godhra. Gujarat has become the graveyard of secular ideology and we will extend it to Delhi via Jaipur.”

The VHP promised to change the “history of India and geography of Pakistan” in two years. And Acharya Dharmendra had the whole methodology planned: “Just as it was done in India in 1947 and in Germany before that.”

The VHP leaders said that the journey of Hindutva, which stopped in 1992–93, has now resumed from Gujarat. “We will go to each corner to bring the country towards Hindu politics. Gujarat elections would change the ideology, colour and composition of all political parties,” said Togadia. [Source: 15.12.2002; www.hindustantimes.com/news/print-edition/]

[Immediately after this speech delivered, Togadia thundered at Pune:]

‘Secular India’s Days Numbered’

(...) Addressing the *dharma sabha* in Pune this evening, Togadia said: “Those who want to rule India will have to accept the concept of Hindu *rashtra*, a saffron flag and Vande Mataram.”

“We don’t wish to recreate Gujarat in Maharashtra, but wish to reinstate Chhatrapati Shivaji’s rule at the Red Fort,” he said. (...)

Togadia drew parallels between *Lankadahan*, the burning of Lanka by Lord Hanuman in the Ramayana and the post-Godhra riots.

VHP international working president, Ashok Singhal, who also attended the meet said Muslims should no longer stake their claim on Ayodhya, Kashi and Mathura. Singhal said the *dharma sansad* scheduled in Delhi between February 22–25 could take “harsher steps”. He said that **the days of secularism are numbered in the country.** [Source: 29.12.2002; www.indianexpress.com/full_story.php?content_id=15732]

[Throughout the year 2003, Parivar leaders made such speeches full of venoms and hatred (coated with warnings). In June 2003, in preparation of another assembly in

Ayodhya, Togadia hurled war-cry at Raipur: **“It shall be final battle not just for the Ram mandir but also for Hindu pride, supremacy and for a Hindu Rashtra.... (W)e want to saffronise Indian polity. Even the Congress will be saffronised.”** (*The Hindu*, 26.06.03) How much the Congress is saffronised is a different question and will not be dealt here. But the comments of Togadia is very much interesting as they are striving to change the ‘Indian polity’. In October 2003 at New Delhi, Togadia thundered again: **“Our patience is running out. There is pressure on us to convert the Ram temple movement into a wider movement for the return of 30,000 temples destroyed during the Mughal period. ...(E)very village will be battleground... there will be complete polarisation”** (*The Hindu*, 08.10.03) Interestingly, this type of speech was delivered not only at 2002-03; It was also delivered well after the last general elections in July even in the ‘left-bastion’ West Bengal: **“What happened in Gujarat after the Godhra carnage had the blessings of Lord Rama.”** (*Times News Network*, 03.07.04) In fact, this declaration or the determination of the Parivar is ratified by its fascist projects taken within the whole gamut of population including **tribals & dalits**. Next excerpt focussing on **Rajasthan** gives us a picture how these projects are being organised. – *Update*]

Distribution of Arms in the State of Rajasthan

After the successful victory of the VHP brand of the BJP in Gujarat the next target is Rajasthan. Facts related to distribution of trishuls not only show that **after the carnage in Gujarat in 2002 more than six thousand trishuls were distributed in the State but after the victory in Gujarat the pace of arming people has increased. In less than thirty five days of the year 2003 more than 2600 people were armed with trishuls. In the next twenty days, nine ceremonies have been planned which are expected to arm about five thousand people with more than a thousand only in Dausa district.**

The VHP was earlier moving with a strategy of arming people in those areas which have competitive communalism like Ajmer. All three religions the Hindus, Muslims and the Christians have a strong presence in this region and have been competing with each other for more than seventy five years. The VHP also selected areas where the RSS or

Banvasi Kalyan Parshad have had a base for many years like in the districts of southern Rajasthan or the districts of Kota, Baran in East Rajasthan. The VHP also moved with trishuls after a riot happened in order to assert hindutva by arming a group of hindus. But now it has decided to spread its net of trishuls in the entire State. This year, it is moving westwards to areas like Sikar, Nagaur and Bikaner where the hindutva forces are weak. Todate trishul distribution has happened in 13 districts of the States but in the next twenty days they will have moved to four new districts and subsequently the rest of the State.

While the VHP states that more than **seventy thousand trishuls** have been distributed in last five years, according to Government sources the distribution totals to about ten thousand since 1998 till February, 2003. In the first week of February during the distribution ceremony in Sikar district, the **VHP announced that they would arm 3 lac people in the State and only in Alwar and the Meo belt they would be arming a lac people.** (...)

These developments in Rajasthan become particularly alarming when viewed in the light of the Gujarat experience. It may be recalled that the regions where trishuls were distributed in large numbers in Gujarat saw the worst killings. The year 2002 saw 21 incidents of communal violence and riots in Rajasthan as compared to 5 in the earlier year. The timing and selection of place by VHP for trishul distribution in 2001 & 2002 has had a relationship with communal incidents/tensions in the area. (...)

That the eyes of the VHP is on the dalits can be clearly seen through the trishul distribution event in Phagi, Jaipur district, held on the 5th of January, 2002. **It was organised to crush the emergence of the dalit identity in the area who were demanding rights to equal citizenship after the Chakwara incident of dalits being prevented bathing rights in the village pond. The banners pasted all over the pandaal said “all hindus are one”.** The VHP tried killing two birds with one stone, they not only made the “untouchables” feel important that day but the Manuwadi hindu big brothers armed them, a right traditionally not possessed by them. It may be recalled that in Gujarat the VHP army were the dalits. (...) *[Source: Summary Report of PUCL, Rajasthan, April 2003; www.pucl.org/Topics/Religion-communalism/2003/trishul.html; accessed 20.05.04]*

[This distribution of arms occurred in **Rajasthan** when it was ruled by Congress. Even the **women** were armed with *'trishuls'*]

Now, 'Trishul Diksha' for Women?

(...) [T]he Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) today announced it would old “trishul diksha” for women in the State next month. Sadhvi Ritambhara will hold the initiation ceremony and distribute the icon of Lord Shiva to women here during ‘Navratra’ next month, the State convener of the Durga Vahini Matri Shakti Sangathan, women’s wing of the VHP, Niranjana Soni, told reporters here. *[Source: The Hindu, 06.03.2003]*

[This type of aggressive arming of the population immediately inflamed the cities and villages of **Rajasthan**. Next excerpt will reveal this clearly.]

Bajrang Dal Makes a Village Muslim-free

Aklera (Rajasthan): It couldn’t be less subtle. **A bright saffron board welcomes you to the “Ideal Hindu Village”**, Mishroli. Nestled in picturesque green surroundings, the village has acquired this tag just this month.

The past 10 days have seen armed Bajrang Dal activists on the rampage, driving out about 25 Muslim families from their homes, ransacking their houses and setting them on fire.

“This was never a Hindu village but they will make sure it becomes one,” says a distressed Iqbal Hussain as he tries to salvage the medicines in his Ayurveda dispensary. “Nobody wants to come back here, not after what we have been through.”

Mishroli is at the epicentre of communal violence that has seen around 70 Muslim families of seven villages in Aklera leave their homes and migrate to neighbouring districts and Madhya Pradesh.

Bajrang Dal Suraksha Prabhari for Kota, Bharat Bhushan Sharma, warns: “We will create these Hindu villages which will run in accordance with our traditions and there will be full overall development here. They will surround Muslim-dominated pockets and if the Muslims create any public

nuisance, they will have to pay the price. If they want to co-exist, they will have to live by our rules.”

It all began on September 17. That morning, on a 45-odd-km stretch on National Highway 12, a ‘chakka jam’ by Bajrang Dal activists, angry at police arresting some people for not buying bus tickets, threw traffic out of gear. As police and the district administration desperately tried to manoeuvre their way through the streets, angry mobs walked down narrow village lanes in Aklera, identifying Muslim houses and tearing them down. (...) [Source: By Anuradha Nagaraj, *Indian Express*, 29.09.2003]

[In this communal violence the fascist outfits utilised the conflicts/contradictions among the local populace to their fascist ends. Follow the next excerpt.]

Violence in Rajasthan

(...) From September 17-19, 2003 Muslims were attacked by Bajrang Dal, VHP, BJP and RSS activists in Aklera town of Jhalawar district and nearby villages of Gehunkheri, Misroli, Kokhera-Lala. Kokhera-Abaad, Arania, Ratanpura, Naya Gaon and Phaphela. They ransacked houses, looted motorcycles, jeeps, cattle and poultry and also razed to the ground the *masjid* in Gehunkheri village. Copies of the Koran were desecrated in the vandalised *masjids* as also in Muslim houses that were attacked.

Fearing for their lives and not wanting a repeat of rapes and murders as in Gujarat last year, several Muslims hid in the fields and later fled the villages and moved in with their relatives in Aklera and Jhalawar towns. Some even went away to places as far as Mandsaur in MP. Terror persists in these villages even today. (...)

In many places, women and children have not returned. In some of the villages, Muslims go to Aklera to sleep every night. Those who have returned to their villages are facing a severe boycott. Nobody sells milk to them, their goats cannot graze on common land, and sharing the village *chaupal* and *bidi-hukah* is out of the question. Children have stopped going to school both out of fear and due to enforced boycott.

Events leading to the attack on Muslims

What is significant is that the Muslims had nothing to do with the immediate cause of the attacks on them. The attacks were part of the *sangh parivar* and the BJP's well thought out strategy to turn a head-on confrontation with the local authorities (over the BJP and other *sangh* workers breaking the law) into an all-out attack on Muslims and their properties. **Preceding these immediate developments was a systematic hate campaign built up by *sangh* organisations like the RSS, the VHP and the Bajrang Dal among the Bhil-Meena community against the Mansuri Muslim traders.** It was a sinister campaign similar to the polarisation caused among Gujarat's tribals and Muslim traders prior to the carnage in that state in early 2002.

Said DK Singh in his report of September 26 in *Hindustan Times*: **“As in Gujarat, economic interests were said to be at stake in these Jhalawar villages, which witnessed the demolition of a mosque and looting and arson of the properties belonging to the minority community. Although agriculture is the main source of livelihood of villagers including the minority community in these areas, some Mansuri Muslims are prosperous and are engaged in lending money to the majority tribals.”**

According to Rustam Khan, president of Muslim Community Development, Aklera, some Muslims had lent around Rs. 17 lakh to the tribals in Kathpala and Gehunkheri villages, for which the tribals mortgaged their land. The violence started from Gehunkheri, a village where Muslims had reportedly lent around Rs. 10 lakh to the tribals. “It is possible that the tribals did not want to return the money. **Economic interests could be the reason for the recent incidents,**” according to BL Kothari, CEO, Jhalawar Zila Parishad, who was in Gehunkheri on a ‘peace mission’.

Rustam Khan alleged that **tribals had their eyes on the land owned by the minority community in Gehunkheri.** “Their land has suddenly become precious because it falls in the catchment area of Chhapi dam, which would start functioning shortly. Hindu villagers had earlier asked some Muslims to sell the land to them,” said Khan. Around 10 shops belonging to the minority community were burnt near Arania bus stand. “Tribals and Muslims had some differences for the last six months or so over business transactions,” said Aklera's Shehr Qazi, Hafiz Lal Mohammad.” (...)

According to Raja Ram of the PUCL, it is important to also take cognisance of the manner in which **the dominant Meena community, a Scheduled Tribe, is trying to woo the Bhil-Meena tribal community. Recently, at a *sammelan* organised in Udaipur, the dominant Meenas had given a call to their caste members to accept the Bhil-Meenas as their own and establish “*roti and beti rishta*” (enter into inter-dining and inter-marrying relations) with them. (...)**

According to journalist DK Singh and the joint fact-finding team representing several organisations that visited the area, Muslims from Aklera were being harassed by activists belonging to different outfits of the *sangh parivar* for the past nine months. Though these groups have been active in this area for many years, their activities have received an impetus after the recent carnage in Gujarat.

The PUCL report quotes Siraj of Gehunkheri as saying that **video-cassettes from Gujarat on the burning of a train compartment at Godhra and the subsequent Gujarat carnage were regularly shown in Aklera and neighbouring villages and a call to boycott the Muslims was given at these meetings.** Muslims were refused water from the public hand-pumps, nobody would come to their flour-mills to get wheat ground or to buy flour. The terrorised Muslims had complained in writing to the police but the latter took no action.

On March 14 this year, the RSS organised a *path sanchalan* (march past) during which anti-Muslim speeches were made. No action was taken against the hate speech. On March 15, when a local *urs* was being organised in Aklera, a *trishul* distribution was also organised in bizarre competition and there was resultant tension in the area. (...)

On September 8, the Bajrang Dal and the VHP took out an over 10,000-strong victory procession in celebration of earlier behaviour. On September 12, the Bajrang Dal took out a second victory procession in Gehunkheri and Katphala. They collected Rs. 100 and 10 kg of grain from each household. The VHP *pradhan* from Jhalara, Patam Amit Jain also came. After several hate-filled speeches, the mob moved towards the *masjid*. The police cordoned off the *masjid* and prevented the mob from attacking it. **It was after this *sammelan* that saffron flags marked all Hindu houses.** (...). [Source: by Kavita

Srivastava, PUCL; Communalism Combat, October 2003; www.sabrang.com; accessed 30.10.03]

[The reports/excerpts cited above are from **Rajasthan**. This arming of the population and perpetrating of the communal violence occurred well before the Parivar capture power in Rajasthan in December 2003. Moreover, it is revealed from the reports that particularly the **tribals & dalits** are targeted to be organised against the Muslims as in Gujarat also. In a similar fashion Parivar has organised same type of activities in states like **Madhya Pradesh and Chhattishgarh** where they are out of power before the elections in 2003. *Frontline* writes:]

MP: Saffronising the Tribal Heartland

(...) Adivasis – members of indigenous tribes such as Bhil, Bhilala and Patiliya – form the bulk of Jhabuas’s 14-lakh-strong population. The RSS draws them into its pan-Hindu worldview by pitching this as a capacious, welcoming faith. Says RSS spokesman Ram Madhav: “**Vanvasis (forest dwellers) are very much part of our wide cultural canopy.**” **The vanvasis are positioned as true bearers of the Hindu essence, who preserved and practised Hindu traditions in the forest.**

(...) **Today, Jhabua bristles with Hindu symbols. Small shrines and saffron banners are visible everywhere and the RSS version of Hindu culture has seeped into the very spirit of tribal life. Even a community festival like the pre-Holi bhagoria, where Adivasis choose their mates, is now becoming an RSS-run affair.** “We do not seek to change their culture but rid it of the perversions that have crept in,” said RSS organiser Mahesh G. Sharma at a celebration in Para. “For example, this very *bhagoria* festival is projected by the media as a *pranayaparva* (a festival of love) to defame these people. We will teach such media a lesson soon enough,” he added pointedly.

Sharma traces the tipping point back to the mid-1990s when the RSS launched a focussed campaign in Jhabua. “Door-to-door, man-to-man, heart-to-heart,” is how Milind Dandekar, who coordinates the Indore base of the RSS, sums up the organisation’s approach. **“We had 4,000 activists who lived with every tribal family for about**

seven days. We arranged for a picture of a Hindu god in every home and got Hanuman-lockets for every individual,” explains Sharma.

When the campaign reached fever-pitch, the Sangh organised a massive Hindu Mahasangam in January 2002, where Vishwa Hindu Parishad leaders such as Pravin Togadia and Sadhvi Ritambara were star guests. (...) **[M]ore than 2.5 lakh people attended the rally.** The steady influence of activists and preachers from Gujarat has also affected mindscapes in Jhabua.

The spread of the organisation and the commitment it commands is formidable. **Its comprehensive network follows a five-tiered structure of villages, mandals, khands, sankuls and jilas, parallel to the two-tiered government model. Through institutions such as the Sewa Bharati and the Vanvasi Kalyan Parishad, the RSS runs schools, medical centres and self-help groups in the region.** “Mother Teresa’s organisation runs 400 projects and reaches one lakh people by the most generous estimate. In comparison, we run 24,600 such projects and yet we don’t publicise our impact,” says Dandekar. The most integral part of RSS activity is *dharma jagaran*, the awakening of faith, says Naval Kishore, a member of the RSS *shakha* (branch unit) in Dhar. **“They tell us about the Ramayana and the story of Shabari and remind us we are all Hindus,”** says Bhumsingh Pachaya, a shy young man from the Bhil community who studied at a Sewa Bharati school and now teaches small children at a Saraswati Shishu Kendra.

Clearly, the RSS has tapped into the deep wells of alienation and insecurity among Adivasis. To counter the exploitative and insensitive state, it offers a sense of organic connection and Hindu pride. **“Swaabhiman ki baat hai (it is a matter of self-respect), why should we let the bureaucrats, the kachra (trash) with no links to the earth, lord over us?”** asks Sharma to an appreciative circle of Bhils. This new chest-thumping, assertive ethos, is directly linked to their new-found identity as Hindus and their place in the social order.

The gritty reality of RSS work is couched in the language of collective action and utopia. **“We teach them that they are the real masters and should not supplicate the officials who are answerable to them,”** says Sharma. By

harping on the rift between the people and the small governing elite, the RSS uses an assortment of training schemes based on age and literacy to impart skills and ‘values’. Through focussed pedagogical effort, these people are prepared for a future where Hindus would claim true control of their destiny and country. **If the Sangh is to be believed, the Jhabua experiment is a preview of the shape of things to come. “Whether they are in the media, the administration or education, it is the beginning of the end for those who oppose Hindutva. We will teach them a lesson in the next two or three years,” proclaims Sharma.**

While the RSS seeks a core cultural transformation and grandly dismisses electoral politics, it acknowledges that the BJP’s ride to power was propelled by Sangh activity. “Seven years back, if you mentioned the *phoolwali* party (the BJP, whose symbol is the lotus flower), you would get beaten up. Today, our work has been recognised and when the Congress(I) linked the BJP with us, people responded by bringing the BJP back to power with a resounding majority,” says an RSS activist in Jhabua. (...)

Significantly, the efforts of the RSS and the missionaries have centred around education and health and testify to the inadequacy of the state as a credible provider of social services. The stunning success of the RSS points to the failure of the dominant ‘development’ discourse and the more progressive political fronts to establish a meaningful bond with Adivasis.

Whether it is because of its organisational skill or ideological persuasiveness, the RSS is now way ahead in Operation Hearts and Minds. [*Source: By Amulya Gopalakrishnan; Frontline, 13-26 March 2004*]

[One of the main planks of Parivar in these regions is **re-conversion** (**‘ghar vapasi’/‘home coming’**). Massive re-conversion projects have been taken in these areas. Moreover, it is noted that huge campaign is being organised to make belief the **tribals (& dalits)** are integral part of *Hindutva*. Another excerpt confirms the above report.]

Myth of Conversions

The much-publicised **“Operation Home Coming” (Operation Ghar Vapasi)**, spear-headed (...) is an attempt **to bring back those tribals (and Dalits)** who had

been converted to Christianity **into the Hindu fold**. The functions include washing of their feet by Shri Dilip Singh Judeo, a former Raja of Raigarh state. But, such acts have hardly resulted in a large-scale return of converts to the Hindu fold and each attempt leads to controversy, **when many re-converted to Hinduism publicly claim that they had never been converted to Christianity**.

Serious questions remain unanswered as to whether the “tribals” could be categorised as Hindus since they are followers of religions like “Sarna”, etc., (anthropologists place them in the category of “animists”, following local village deities or worshipping nature); or where they would be placed after their return in the Hindu hierarchy of the caste system after “Operation Home Coming”. **Since by all counts the majority of the re-converts are tribals and Dalits, they continue to be subjugated to age-old caste discrimination, not even being allowed to enter temples. Nor has it resulted in building up the basic relationship of “Roti aur Beti” (meaning sharing of bread and daughter in marriage). (...)**

The socio-cultural factor that resulted in resistance to missionary activities by the ‘elite’ of Hindu society in Madhya Pradesh was the fact that it had a significant tribal population (18 per cent in 1950), which went up to 23.22 per cent in 1994. Chhattisgarh also has a considerably large proportion of tribes, i.e. 10.52 per cent of scheduled tribes, and 35.41 per cent of scheduled castes.

Yet another political factor that led to an increased demand by the dominant classes to curtail the freedom of the Christian missionaries was the uprising of tribals who demanded a separate state for themselves called Jharkhand. It covered the adjoining districts of Raigarh (in MP), Ranchi (in Bihar) and Sundergarh (in Orissa), which witnessed a high growth in the Christian population. Although Christians form less than one per cent of the population in the entire region, and their absolute numbers amount to just about 3 lakhs, Christians form about 14.5 per cent of the population of these three districts.

The high rate of conversion among the tribals in this area was also regarded with suspicion by the Hindutva forces because of the political demand for Jharkhand. **Any form of a people’s movement in assertion of their political and cultural**

identity, and self-hood (sometimes, the right to self-determination), has always been opposed by the dominant classes/castes in India. It is another matter that in later years the demand for a separate state for Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand was politically cashed in on by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), as it conceded to the popular demand in the year 2000.

The resistance to missionary activities in Madhya Pradesh (including Chhattisgarh) was not merely because of the increase in the Christian population in the area **but mainly due to the state's particular socio-political background.** [Source: By Rajendra K Sail, *Communalism Combat*, December 2003; www.sabrang.com; accessed 31.12.03]

[Riding on this wave of *Hindutvavadi* projects and re-conversion programmes, Parivar is able to mobilise **tribals & dalits** in each of their communal programmes. In **MP** they claim **Bhojshala (Dhar)**. Lot of reports have been published in the media regarding this **Bhojshala** controversy. In **Bhojshala** they have successfully mobilised the **tribals & dalits** in large number. Here we publish two excerpts.]

Bhojshala: Togadia Threatens Ayodhya Repeat

Dhar (Madhya Pradesh): The Vishwa Hindu Parishad's Praveen Togadia today **presided over a saffron show of strength in the tribal town**, threatening the country's leadership with "Ayodhya-like consequences" if it did not reinstate the right of Hindus over a disputed shrine.

"My message is clear. Hand over Ram Janmabhoomi land in Ayodhya, the Kashi and Mathura temples and Bhojshala at Dhar voluntarily or we will fight to get 30,000 temples across the country which have been converted into masjids," Togadia said in a hard-hitting speech (...).

Dhar remained peaceful, but the gathering of a belligerent crowd running into 30,000 **despite the administration's efforts to thwart the show** was a clear signal that the Hindutva wave was gaining on Madhya Pradesh from adjoining Gujarat. (...)

Bhojshala, a Sanskrit university of the 11th century, was thrown open to Hindus today for Saraswati puja on the Archaeological Survey of India's directive. Muslims can pray at the shrine every Friday, but Hindus have access to it once a year.

The Muslims claim Bhojshala is the dargah of Sufi Kamal Pasha. Togadia and the Manch contend it was forcibly converted into a mosque when Dhar came under the Muslim rule in 1334. The podium in Bhojshala from where the imam delivers the sermon faces west, the direction in which Muslims have to pray. The Manch claims a Saraswati idol, now in a London museum, was placed on that podium. "We understand that Muslims are not expected to pray where an idol is placed. So please vacate," Togadia said. (...) [Source: By Rasheed Kidwai, The Telegraph, 07.02.2003]

Sangh Eyes Bhojshala....

(...) The focal point of the campaign is the Bhojshala/Kamal Maula masjid issue, for which the Manch was set up to carry out an agitation for the monument's 'liberation' in early 2003. The agitation had peaked in February and had seen a solution, still unacceptable to the Muslim community in Dhar, enforced by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). Under this, Muslims continued to exercise rights to namaz every Friday while Hindus gained access every Tuesday.

A jan jagran being organised by the HJM [Hindu Jagaran Manch—**Update**] began on November 1 and will continue till November 15. During the event – apart from a dharam samagam planned in Dhar tomorrow which happens to be a Tuesday – pamphlets are being distributed to voters in the state. HJM state chief Radheshyam Yadav said: "Each district will see its own version of the handbill. This is part of our attempt to ensure the voter makes the right choice." (...)

But it is no secret that even Radheshyam Yadav is just a RSS puppet. He does not even know the name of his Bhopal chief coordinating distribution in the city, but it is being done by RSS workers. The pamphlets distributed in Bhopal leave no doubts about the campaign's aim.

The cover page has a picture of a semi-automatic wielding man with the statement 'Madhya Pradesh mein jehadi atankvaad kab tak? (How long will jehadi terror continue

in MP?)’ printed across. The pamphlet is titled, “Gau hathyaron ko puraskar, Hinduwon par atyachar (Cow slaughterers are rewarded, Hindus tortured)” and adds ‘vote aur note ke lalach mein Hinduwon par chot kab tak (how long will Hindus be victims of the greed for notes and votes)’.

Under the banner – ‘yeh kaisa shashan yeh kaisa nyay (what kind of administration is this what kind of justice is this)?’ are photographs of the Bhojshala/Kamal Maula masjid monument, one titled ‘mandir mein namaz (namaz in a temple)’ and the other showing police clashing with HJM activists inside the temple titled ‘Hinduwon pe atyachar (atrocities on Hindus)’. (...) [Source: By Hartosh Singh Bal, Indian Express, 05.11.2003]

[In the above excerpts, it is mentioned that the gathering of huge crowd occurred ‘despite the administration’s efforts to thwart the show’. In fact, it will be seen in many occasions that the saffron masses gathered at the call of Parivar thwarting the administrative bans, prohibitions etc. These incidents reveal the vigorous extra-parliamentary push of the Parivar reminding again of their fascist nature of activities. Thus in **Madhya Pradesh and Chhattishgarh**, during last few years before the polls in December 2003, the fascist and/or communal projects of Parivar had been moving in full swing. It is the massive organisations built within the tribal districts of several states deliver the Parivar the great advantage. We have published earlier in this issue a few excerpts/articles on massive projects organised by Sangh among the tribals. In this respect, the work of **Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram** (an outfit of VHP) is to be studied with particular attention to comprehend their design in full. Follow the next article depicting the massive network of **VKA**. – Update]

Tribals Shifting Loyalties

(...) **Persuading the tribals to go back to their roots in Hindu culture, the RSS had first set up Vanvasi Kalyan Ashrams in over 32 districts in central India covering more than 32,000 villages and nearly 70,000 families, according to Sangh Parivar sources.** RSS organisations have also started opening ‘Satsang Kendras’ in villages.

On the lines of the RSS Vanvasi Kalyan Ashrams, VHP has been engaged in the task of setting up ‘Ekal Vidyalayas’ — a single-teacher primary school where tribal students are imparted lessons on Hindu culture and religion along with normal academic curricula. (...)

Buoyed by the success of the network established by them, (...) **the VHP and the RSS have decided to provide tribals with four ‘A’s’ — akshar (education), anna (foodgrains), arogya (healthcare) and aradhana sthal (place of worship) on the pattern of the Christian missionaries.**

So much so, that the tribals are made to celebrate Ganesh festival, hold Ramlila celebrations, conduct Geeta Paath and use ‘Ram Ram’ to greet each other.

Chhattisgarh has caught the fancy of the Sangh Parivar in view of the large number of conversions, admitted a VHP activist in Kanker district in the naxalite-infested Bastar region bordering Andhra Pradesh where the People War (PW) ultras are very active.

It is interesting as to how the ‘Hindutva’ sentiment is inculcated among the tribals. **‘Katha Vachaks’ (story-tellers) try to ‘mould’ the minds of the simple tribals by narrating tales of Ramayana after sunset every day.**

The listeners are told that Lord Ram spent 14 years in banishment from kingdom in this place, part of Dandakaranya, and that Hanuman is a “vanvasi” (forest inhabitant) who stood by him in his exile.

Whether or not the villagers get the political message, the narrators of the story hope they do and thus, a silent saffron surge, is underway.

Carrying a copy of ‘Ramcharit Manas’, these story-tellers have been criss-crossing the entire state for the past couple of years.

“We are some **1,000 volunteers** who go from village to village and preach Hindutva by telling stories from the Ramcharit Manas after sunset,” Sant Agocharanand ‘Gorakshak’, a VHP pracharak explained.

The programme, being implemented by the VHP, involves a two-month training to the volunteers at the district level and a six-month stay in Ayodhya.

With conversion to Christianity prevalent in some tribal areas, the katha vachaks, aimed at least to help check it. (...)

Most story-tellers hail from the RSS-run Vanvasi Kalyan Ashrams or Ekal Vidyalayas and are trained to narrate the story in local dialect to make it easier for the tribals to follow.

Girls too undertake the task of story-telling, but they are not many in number and remain restricted to 'safer' areas, while boys are sent to extremist-infested areas for the purpose. [Source: *The Hindu*, 26.04.2004]

[*The Organiser*, mouthpiece of the RSS further elaborates their projects:]

Ekal Vidyalaya: Revolutionising Literacy in Remote Rural India

'Where there is a will there is a way' has been **the mantra of the Ekal Vidyalaya (one-teacher school) movement that has been running more than 9,000 Ekal Vidyalayas in Rajasthan, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, the northeastern states, Bihar, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.** The Ekal Vidyalaya movement has a vision for India's forgotten children and hopes to wipe out the curse of illiteracy from the face of Vanvasi India, by providing free non-formal education for five years. (...)

It is a unique concept where primary education is provided to those who have no access to formal schools. It is completely a people's movement with no capital investment required. As education is the key to unity, community and harmony, Ekal Vidyalayas focus on providing basic literacy and primary arithmetic in a learning environment that emphasises on health, sanitation and character building. The classes are held under a tree in gurukul style, where the blackboard attached to a tree and a pick of chalk are the only tools used. The local unemployed youths engaged in teaching the children have taken this task as a mission to educate their fellow villagers. Ekal Vidyalayas have the responsibility to provide training, school materials and other consistent support structures to the teachers while its full-time karyakartas monitor the working of the Vidyalayas. The

curriculum is in accordance with the local customs and culture and is chalked out in a framework developed by reputed educators and local villagers.

Approximately 80 million non-literate Vanvasis live in over 100,000 villages across our country. Among them, a staggering 85 per cent of men and 95 per cent of women are illiterate. Their villages also do not have any access to basic medical facilities. (...)

The literacy movement started by Ekal Vidyalayas in the remote villages of India contributes to reducing social problems and exploitation of the poor. Only when one visits the villages where the Ekal Vidyalayas have started their projects can one feel the improvement in their living standards. Taking inspiration from the karyakartas of the Ekal Vidyalaya movement, in many places villagers on their own have started building classrooms that have become centres for community activities, health camps and environmental awareness programmes. **In other words, Ekal Vidyalayas are in the process of transforming the social and economic landscape of rural India** in accordance with the vision held by Mahatma Gandhi. *[Source: The Organiser, 23.05.2004]*

[Thus Parivar have been utilising the poverty, illiteracy, destituteness of the tribals to make their fascist projects successful. We are now going to focus a state like **Orissa** where the Parivar is never in power. In this state the gruesome murder of **Graham Staines** had been executed in 1999. It is a state where **tribal** people habituates in large number (**22%** of the population according to the Census 2001). Following articles/excerpts narrate the huge network of Parivar established in **Orissa**. – *Update*]

Orissa: A Gujarat in the Making

(...) **Orissa is Hindutva's next laboratory. (...) Western Orissa, dominated by upper caste landholders and traders, is a hotbed for the promulgation of Hindu militancy, while Adivasi areas are besieged with aggressive Hinduisation through conversion.** Praveen Togadia, international general secretary of the VHP, visited Orissa in January and August 2003 to rally Hindu extremists. He advocated that Orissa join Hindutva in its movement for a Hindu state in India. '*Ram Rajya*', he promised, would come.

In Orissa, the *sangh parivar* is targeting Christians, Adivasis, Muslims, Dalits and other marginalised peoples. The network divides its energies between charitable, political and recruitment work. It aims at men, women and youth through religious and popular institutions. The *sangh* has set up various trusts in Orissa to enable fund raising, such as the **Friends of Tribal Society, Samarpan Charitable Trust, Yasodha Sadan, and Odisha International Centre.**

There are around 30 dominant *sangh* organisations in Orissa. This formidable mobilisation is the largest base of organised volunteers in the state. The RSS, (...) operates 2,500 *shakhas* in Orissa with a 1,00,000 strong cadre. The VHP, created in 1964, has a membership of 60,000 in the state. Born in 1984, at the onset of the Ramjamanbhoomi movement, banned and reinstated since the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992, the Bajrang Dal has 20,000 members working in 200 *akharas* in the state.

Membership of the BJP stands at 4,50,000. The Bharatiya Mazdoor *sangh* manages 171 trade unions with a cadre of 1,82,000. The 30,000 strong Bharatiya Kisan *sangh* functions in 100 blocks. The Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad, an RSS inspired student body, functions in 299 colleges with 20,000 members. The Rashtriya Sevika Samiti, the RSS women's wing, has 80 centres. The Durga Vahini, with centres for women's training and empowerment, has 7,000 outfits in 117 sites in Orissa.

Intent on constructing the 'ideal' woman who decries the 'loose morals' of feminism, the *sangh* seeks to train Hindu women to confront the 'undesirable' sexual behaviour "*endemic*" to Muslims and Christians. Such training endorses 'masculinisation' of the Hindu male looking to protect the fictively threatened Hindu woman.

In October 2002, a Shiv Sena unit in Balasore district in Orissa declared that it had formed the first Hindu 'suicide squad'. Responding to Bal Thackeray's call, over 100 young men and women signed up to fight 'Islamic terrorism'. The Shiv Sena appealed to every Hindu family in the state to contribute to its cadre. Squad members, it is speculated, will receive training at Shiv Sena nerve centres in Mumbai and elsewhere.

Why Orissa? The state is in disarray, the leadership labours to sustain a coalition government headed by the Biju Janata Dal and the BJP. The government is shrouded in saffron. As the *sangh* infiltrates into civic and political institutions seeking to 'repeat' Gujarat not many are paying attention. For the 36.7 million who reside in Orissa, Hindutva's predatory advance aggravates and capitalises on social panic in a land haunted by inequity.

Orissa houses 5,77,775 Muslims and 6,20,000 Christians, **5.1 million Dalits from 93 caste groups, and over 7 million Adivasis from 62 tribes. Around 87 percent of Orissa's population live in villages. Nearly half the population (47.15 percent) lives in poverty, with a very large mass of rural poor. Almost a quarter of the state's population (24 percent) is Adivasi, of which 68.9 percent is impoverished, 66 percent illiterate and only 2 percent have completed a college education. 54.9 percent of the Dalits live in poverty. Concentrated in Cuttack, Jagasinhapur and Puri districts, 70 percent of the Muslims are poor. (...)**

Consecutive governments, including the present coalition, have failed to address entrenched gender and class oppressions as exploitative relations endure between the poverty-stricken and a coterie of moneylenders, government officials, police and politicians in Orissa, perpetuating displacement, land alienation, and untouchability. Floods have affected three million in 2003. Agricultural labourers are faced with serious food shortages with no alternative means for income generation. Scarcity has led to starvation deaths and people have committed suicide. Infant mortality, 236 in 1000, is the highest in the Union.

In the recent past, Rayagada district has witnessed despairing efforts to survive—the sale of children by families. In Jajpur district, a mother, a daily wage earner in a stone quarry, sold her 45-day-old child for Rs. 60 this July. These measures have not evoked reflection and commitment on the part of the State. Rather, unconscionable attempts have been made to show that such action is emblematic of Adivasi and Dalit cultures. (...)

The absence of adequate social reform, the disasters of dominant development, economic liberalisation and corporate globalisation further

antagonise already overburdened minority and disenfranchised groups, pitting them against each other. Hindutva targets the religion and culture of the disempowered as globalisation abuses their labour and livelihood resources. Such conditions produce the contexts in which marginalised peoples embrace identity-based oppositional movements.

The *sangh* exploits the fabric of inequity and poverty deviously to weave solidarity built on tales of a mythic Hindu past. Hindutva defames history, speaking of Muslims as the ‘fallen traitors’ among Hindus who converted to Islam. This revisionist history obfuscates the severity of inequity within Hindu society that led to conversions historically. Alternatively, Hindutva misrepresents Muslims as ‘terrorists’ and ‘foreigners’, Christians as ‘polluted’. Adivasis are falsely presented as Hindus who must be ‘reconnected’ to Hinduism through Hindutva. Dalit and lower caste people are raw material for manufacturing foot soldiers of dissension. (...)

In witch hunting for the ‘enemy within’ to blame for India’s befallen present, the *sangh* demands absolute loyalty to its tyranny, requiring an unequivocal display of obedience. The *sangh* dictates the rightful gods to worship, prayers to recite, legacies to remember. Hindutva imagines its actions above the law. It makes the unification of Hindus central to its mission. To do so, it organises Hindus to fulfil their ‘manifest destiny’, fabricating Hinduism as monolithic across the immense diversity of India.

Grassroots movements in resistance to the debacle of nation making are combating the *sangh*. Where Dalits, Adivasis and others are allied in subaltern struggles for land rights and sustenance, Hindutva intervenes, seeking to divide them. Grassroots democracy threatens upper-caste Hindu dominance and contradicts elite aspirations. To domesticate dissent, the *sangh* invigorates militant nationalism. In village Orissa, emulating Gujarat, the *sangh* works to create enmity between Dalits, Adivasis, Muslims and Christians. (...)

In January 1999, as the vehicle with Australian missionary Graham Staines and his two sons, Philip and Timothy, was torched in Keonjhar district, the mob’s homage to *Jai*

Bajrang Bali!' pierced the state. Then followed the murder of Catholic priest Arul Das and the destruction of churches in Phulbani district. (...)

The Bajrang Dal continues its virulent onslaught in Orissa. In June 2003, the Dal announced that it would organise 'trishul diksha' (trident distribution), (...). Praveen Togadia planned on launching the *trishul* distribution campaign in Banamalipur in Korda district to provoke an area with a significant Muslim population. The Bajrang Dal plans to present *trishuls* to 5,000 as part of the Janasampark Abhiyan (mass contact programme) that anticipates reaching 100 million people in 2,00,000 villages throughout India.

The objective? To spread aggression. **Between July and September 2003, the Bajrang Dal organised intensive programs in Bhubaneswar, Sundergarh and Jajpur. Aimed at securing a 1,50,000 membership in Orissa, this is part of a larger campaign that targets Gajapati, Phulbani, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Koraput, and Nabarangpur districts.**

In Orissa today, the *sangh* mobilises for a Ram temple among people for whom Ayodhya is a tale from afar. **By 2006, the birth centenary of RSS architect Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar, *sangh* organisations promise that Orissa will be a poster state for Hindutva.** The *sangh's* considerable advance in rural and urban Orissa has helped the BJP consolidate its position in the state, reflected in its gains in the state Assembly from one seat in 1985 to 41 presently. (...)

Development and education are key vehicles through which conscription into Hindu extremism is taking place. **After the cyclone of 1999, relief work undertaken in a sectarian manner by RSS organisations granted the *sangh* a foothold through which to strengthen enrolment. Today, the Utkal Bipannya Sahayata Samiti works on disaster mitigation with facilities in 32 villages. The Dhayantari Shasthya Pratisthan manages four hospitals and six mobile centres.**

In offering social services and carrying out rural development work, the *sangh* makes itself indispensable to its cadre as a pseudo-moral and reformist force. This continues the *sangh parivar's* long history of implementing sectarian development. Targeting the

livelihood of the 'other' is a technique of saffronisation. The Bajrang Dal has been strident in stopping cow slaughter in Orissa, an important source of income for poor Muslims who trade in meat and leather. Muslims have been beaten and threatened by Hindutva mobs. In India, amid the staggering poverty in which 350 million live, the participation of government agencies in debating a ban on cow slaughter is contemptible. This debate is not about animal rights. It arrogantly contravenes the separation of religion and state. It is anti-Muslim, anti-Dalit, anti-Christian and anti-poor.

In Orissa, egregious infringements of human rights are taking place with the disintegration of Adivasi and other non-Hindu cultures through their hostile incorporation into dominant Hinduism. Sectarian education campaigns undertaken by RSS organisations demonise minorities through the teaching of fundamentalist curricula. **There are 391 Shishu Mandir schools with 111,000 students in the state, preparing for future leadership.** Training camps in Bhadrak and Berhampur aim at Adivasi youth.

Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram runs 1,534 projects and schools in 21 Adivasi districts. The *sangh* has initiated 730 Ekal Vidyalayas in 10 districts in Orissa, one teacher schools that target Adivasis. The primary purpose of the schools is to indoctrinate villages into Hindutva. The teachers are offered Rs. 150-200 per month as honoraria, no salaries. The schools are free, supported through donations from organisations like the India Development Relief Fund. For Adivasi peoples, this facilitates cultural genocide that imperils self-determination movements struggling against a violent history of assimilation. The *sangh* asserts Adivasi political emancipation is a process of 'tribalism' that jeopardises the nation.

The *sangh* drives spiritual centres that use religious scriptures to incite sectarianism among Hindus. **Vivekananda Kendras and Hindu Jagran Manch are active in Orissa together with Harikatha Yojana centres in 780 villages and 1,940 Satsang Kendras. There are 1,700 Bhagabat Tungis in Orissa, cultural reform centres run by the *sangh* that aim at Hindus and Christians.** Another line of attack is to forcibly convert Christians into Hinduism. Churches and members of the Christian clergy are apprehensive. In Gajapati and Koraput, Christians have sought state protection in the past.

In Gajapati district, RSS and BJP workers torched 150 homes and the village church in October 1999. A Dalit Christian activist said, “RSS workers tell me that Christianity brought colonialism to India, and I am responsible for that legacy. How am I responsible? Feudalism, imperialism, post-colonial betrayal. That is written across our bodies. How am I responsible?” In June 2002, the VHP coerced 143 tribal Christians into converting to Hinduism in Sundargarh district. The Dharma Prasar Bibhag claims to have converted 5,000 people to Hinduism in 2002.

(...) **In 1999, Orissa enacted a state order prohibiting religious conversions without prior permission of local police and district magistrates.** Hindu fundamentalists diligently manipulate these provisions to intimidate religious minorities. *Sangh* organisations work with sympathetic police cadre to ensure that Hindu’s do not convert.

The *sangh* purposefully confuses the distinction between the right to proselytise and the use of religion to cultivate hate. Hindutva propaganda accuses Christian communities of the former and labels it a crime. The *sangh* justifies its use of the latter in the interests of a higher truth, the ‘righteous’ action of reuniting Hindus. ‘Reconversion’ is working well among the Christian community in Orissa, Subash Chouhan says, but not with Muslims. “Muslim reconversions are going slowly because *mullahs*, *maulvis* have created mosques and *madrassas* in village after village, and guard their children like chickens. That is the kind of people they are and that is why it is not so easy to get them back.” For Muslims, the Bajrang Dal anticipates a different approach. Mr. Chouhan said that the Dal would engage in militancy if needed to “get the job done”. (...) [Source: By Angana Chatterji, *Communalism Combat*, October 2003; www.sabrang.com; accessed 30.10.03]

[A magazine *India Today* provides a few more data on the Sangh network. These data are not identical to what presented in the above article. In spite of this, the database depicts the massive network of the fascists in **Orissa**.]

Orissa: Spread of Saffron

(...) “The Parivar is well-established in Orissa and we are now unstoppable,” claims Dharmendra Pradhan, a young Orissa legislator who is also the national secretary of the BJP. **“Orissa is much more than a Hindutva laboratory,” explains Rabi Das, editor of the Oriya daily Paryabekshyak. “The state is also a showcase of the Sangh Parivar’s secretive strengths and structures.”** (...)

“Which political party benefits does not bother us,” insists Gopal Mohapatra, joint secretary of the RSS in Orissa. “Our sole concern is the social emancipation of Bharatiya society.” The Parivar already has an elaborate empire in place in the state to realise its goal. **The RSS is at the top of the pyramid with over 2,500 shakhas and a lakh swayamsevaks dedicated to the cause of “building human character”. Below it are no less than 30 big and small organisations, the most noteworthy of them being the VHP, BJP, ABVP, BMS, the Banabasi Kalyan Ashram, the Utkal Bipannya Sahayata Samiti and the Hindu Jagran Samukhya. Some of the bodies even have sub-organisations: the VHP itself has 30, giving it unparalleled reach. Much to the BJP’s delight, the Parivar is probably reaching out to a million people every day.** (...)

The Parivar has had most success in taking rural Orissa under its sweep. A whole range of organisations have been nurtured. Some like the **Seva Dhanyantari Shasthya Pratisthan** do social work by running hospitals, while others like the **1,940 Satsang Kendras** – where Hindu scriptures are read-see to rekindle religious sentiments. The **Shishu Mandir schools** run by the Parivar fill a social need and groom talent. Last year, four out of the top 10 students in the state-level high-school certificate examination were from these institutions.

But it isn’t the students alone who are faring well. The results have been startling for the Parivar too. “We have been growing at a very rapid pace over the past few years,” admits Sudhangshu Mohan Patnaik, organising secretary of the state VHP. **In about three years time, the RSS has increased its members from 70,000 to one lakh. The Bajrang Dal has extended its number of akharas from 50 to 200**

while the VHP's strength has gone up from 22,000 to 60,000 members in the same period. (...)

Far and Wide: The Reach of the Parivar in Orissa

RSS: At the pop, it has 2,500 shakhas, 167 full-time pracharaks and one lakh swayamsevaks

Some of the 30 organisations under the RSS:

- **VHP:** Strength – 60,000.
- **Banabasi Kalyan Ashram:** Its 1,534 projects include schools in 21 tribal districts.
- **ABVP:** Has a presence in 299 colleges; strength 20,000.
- **Sikh Bikash Parishad:** Runs 391 Shishu Mandir schools; Student strength: 1.11 lakh.
- **Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh:** Has 171 trade unions; Number of members 1.82 lakh.
- **BJP:** 4.5 lakh members.
- **Bharatiya Kisan Sangh:** Present in 100 blocks; 30,000 members.
- **Utkal Bipannya Sahayata Samiti:** Works throughout Orissa for disaster mitigation Runs medical facilities in 32 villages.
- **Rashtriya Sevika Samiti:** Women's counterpart of the RSS, is active in 80 places.
- **Sub-organisations: There are 30 organisations under the VHP in Orissa –**
- **Ekal Vidyalaya:** Runs 730 schools in 10 districts.
- **Harikatha Yojana:** Active in 780 places.
- **Dhanyantari Shasthya Seva:** Runs four hospitals and six mobile centers, each visiting 10 villages daily.
- **Yasodha Sadan:** Runs three orphanages.
- **Bajrang Dal:** Runs 200 akharas; Members 20,000.
- **Satsang Kendras:** In 1,940 places.

- **Dharma Prasar Bibhag:** Reconverted 5,000 people to Hinduism last year.
- **Durga Vahini:** Has 7,000 centres in 117 places also runs 33 Bal Vikash Kendras. [Source: By Ruben Banerjee, India Today, 27.01.2003; www.geocities.com/bharatvarsha1947/Feb_2003/SpreadSaffron.htm; accessed 13.05.04]

[The excerpts cited above explicitly reveal the work of Parivar among the **tribals in Orissa**. It is also to be noted that this huge network and indoctrination often help Parivar in fomenting communal violences. Particularly, the **Christians** are intimidated frequently. And **Muslims** are not spared also. Angana Chatterji, a researcher making a thorough work in the tribal belts in Orissa writes next excerpt. – Update]

Hindu Nationalism and Orissa: Minorities as Other

(...) Subash Chouhan, state convenor for the Bajrang Dal, the paramilitary wing of Hindutva, claims, *“In the country, Orissa is the second Hindu Rajya [state]. Today, Sai [Christian] missionary and Islam, they both want to convert the entire pradesh [state] into Sai and Islam. In the Tribal belt they have been planning to convert the people into Christians and Harijans into Muslims. This work is moving with force in Orissa. This is the reason the Bajrang Dal and VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad] have taken up the task of consolidating Hindu shakti in Orissa. In the entire state we have selected some [key] districts, such as Sai based Sundargarh district, Gajapati zilla, Phulbani, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Koraput, Nabarangpur districts – we are undertaking seva [service] work here, hospitals, one-teacher schools, Hari Katha Yojana, orphanage, these types of jojona and seva work are being undertaken all over the state.”* (...)

Throughout Orissa, land reform movements, Adivasi and Dalit organisation for self-determination, and resistance movements confronting the devastation of dominant development and globalisation act as a bulwark against the escalation of the *sangh parivar*. Adivasi and Dalit self-determination exists in opposition to the State. Adivasis and Dalits, within politicised contexts, do not identify as Hindus and resist their incorporation into the Brahminical (and elite) social order. In a Hindu majority state in

India, Brahminism enforces the supremacy of 'Hinduness', and defines norms, values, ethics and morality. Ethnic, minority and marginalised groups are subject to the political and economic violence of Brahminism via which they are forced to frame their political and cultural aspirations.

[A] secular activist [says], "*[In retaliation] the sangh parivar is consolidating its position in the mining belt and in all sensitive and Tribal areas in Orissa, where there are popular Dalit or Adivasi struggles for self-determination, trying to undercut them. Several developments are taking place on the mining front, where the sangh divides poor people, who, driven out by corporations, are organising to resist.*" In Nayagarh district, Dalit communities watch Hindutva's voracious march. They speak of malignant fictions circulated by the Hindutvavadis that Christian missionary activity is placing Hinduism at risk. Dalits, Adivasis, Christians, Hindus and Muslims speak of how their villages and watersheds intertwine, and how crops are dependent on the run-off water from each other's lands. They say that they cannot afford to hate each other.

In a massive mobilisation drive in the mid 1980s, the Jagannath Rath Yatra passed through Hindu, Christian, Dalit and Adivasi villages across Orissa. The Yatra traversed a thousand sites between March 1986 and May 1988, drawing 3-4,000 people in each place. Local people met expenses totalling 2-4 million rupees. As an outcome of this process, 1,600 permanent mobilisation units managed by 500 committees were set up. The VHP and Vanavasi Kalyan Ashrams run these units, carrying out their mission via Kirtan Mandals, Satsangs and Yuvak Kendras.

Today, the annual Jagannath Yatra and other Hindutva organised religio-nationalist spectacles continue across the state. Muslims, and Adivasi and Dalit groups connected to self-determination movements in dissent to the *sangh parivar*, are afraid as thundering mobs engulf their villages. On April 11, 2003, communal tensions spiralled in Rajgangapur, an industrial town 400 kilometres from Bhubaneswar, during a procession for Hanuman on Ramnavmi. Two people were killed in police firing.

Over the last decade, the *sangh* has amassed 30 major organisations including political, charitable, militant and educational groups, trade and

students unions, women's groups, with a massive base of a few million, the largest volunteer enlistment in the state. The Prakalpa Samanvaya Samiti is a pivotal *sangh* organisation synchronising the activities of various faith and welfare outfits. The Prakalpa Samiti operates a school at Chakapad, three student hostels, 20 weekly *balwadis*, and 300 night schools. It attends to 20,000 patients each month through medicine distribution centres and three mobile vans. The Prakalpa Samiti acts to drive Christians to Hinduism. (...)

The *sangh's* voracious assault organises the disenfranchised into a vicious political economy structured by the caste system. RSS cadres working in Sambalpur district stress how critical it is that Adivasis and Dalits are converted to Hinduism. **They organise Adivasi rallies where 'Garbh se kaho hum Hindu hai' (say with pride that I am a Hindu) pierces the air.** Badal Satpaty, an RSS office bearer, stresses the importance of Adivasi conversions for Orissa. ***"Vanavasis [derogatory term for Adivasis] are given land by the government. If Vanavasis see themselves as outside Hinduism, then their lands too are non-Hindu lands that are anti-development and cannot be used for the betterment of the nation. Bharat is a Hindu nation, and these people and their lands are anti-national."***

Whose nation? Adivasis are 8.01 per cent of the nation's inhabitants, yet 40 per cent of the displaced population. The Transfer of Immovable Property (by Scheduled Tribes) Regulation of 1956 provides against land transfers in Scheduled Areas. Outside Scheduled Areas, the Orissa Land Reforms Act of 1960 and subsequent amendments guard against Tribal land alienation. In practice, an extensive 'land grab' has resulted from debt bondage and indenture related to land leasing and mortgage of Adivasi and Dalit lands to large farmers and moneylenders, consolidation of land holdings, strategic marriage alliances and corruption.

Adivasis living in forest villages are often evicted; their right to land dismissed by the state's insistence on 'evidence' of ownership and residency. Such demands evince the betrayal of old claims with new boundaries, maps, roads, checkpoints that insert violence into the everyday life of the Adivasi. Tribal testimonies are converted into 'lies' by the apparatus of the state. (...)

State sponsored development in Orissa forces the incorporation of the poor into the dominant order. The *sangh parivar* conspires with the Biju Janata Dal-BJP coalition government in Bhubaneswar to enable this inequitable amalgamation. *Sangh* activists have **infiltrated deep into state run development agencies such as the Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART)**, an autonomous institution that works to create rural development partnerships between voluntary organisations and the government. CAPART supports numerous RSS activities in Orissa diverting funds for Hindutva.

Badal Satpaty of the RSS says, "It is because these people [Dalits, Adivasis] refuse to integrate that all these problems arise. Why do they ask for special rights? The motherland is good to us all. These people are lazy, they live in filth, they are illiterate. How can we take them seriously without civilising them? The RSS seeks to help in this mission, for the betterment of the poor. **The RSS is working with, first, the Hindu Dalits to mobilise them and tell them about the dangers of defection. Then, we are bringing Christian Dalits and Adivasis back to the Hindu fold through education and re-conversion. We are also helping them economically.**" (...)

I spoke with a Dalit RSS worker who said: "***The RSS is helping us build a Hindu samaj. We are poor, we have no assistance, we are fighting Christians and Muslims for development money. The Christians, they have foreign missionary money, what do we Hindu Dalits have? The Sai [Christians] are also converting our people to their religion. They eat meat, they touch leather, they have bad morals. I am scared for my children. We are thankful that the RSS has sworn to protect us.***" AC [Angana Chatterji—the writer]: "*Have you seen these Christian missionaries?*" Dalit RSS worker: "*No, but I have heard that they are nearby.*" AC: "*How many Hindus have been converted in your village, or in any of the neighbouring villages?*" Dalit RSS worker: "*Nobody yet, but the RSS tells us that they [the missionaries] might come soon. That is why we go to the RSS meetings, to become informed about the troubles facing us, and how we can be strong and protect ourselves, to become an army against these foreigners.*" Dalits continue to suffer social ostracism and economic deprivation. They are manipulated into joining the very Hindutva forces that have historically deprived Dalits of equity in order to use them against other mistreated communities.

At a 15,000 strong Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram organised rally in Bhubaneswar in December 2003, Dilip Singh Bhuria, chairperson, National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, commended the BJP for its pro-Adivasi policies. Adivasis have historically voted for the Congress party in Orissa and have not benefited from this loyalty. Mr. Bhuria said, “We are passing through a governance similar to Ram Rajya,” posing Ram as the god, and BJP as the party, of Adivasis. Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram president, Jagadev Ram Oram insisted that Adivasis converting to Christianity should not be allowed to access the benefits of reservation. Through espousing another religion, he said, Adivasis no longer retain their Tribal status. Speakers condemned Christian conversions declaring ‘all Tribals are Hindus’.

Adivasis are taught by Ekal Vidyalayas about the ‘origins’ of Jagannath in Hinduism, as Jagannath, the famed Tribal god of Orissa, is Hinduised. Since the inception of Saraswati Shishu Mandirs, the Janata Dal, Congress and other political parties have endorsed the *sangh parivar’s* network of educational organisations, interpreting Hindutva education as secular. Consecutive governments have abdicated state responsibility in building a quality education system in the state. High levels of illiteracy among Dalits and Adivasis proliferate simultaneous to the denigration of non-Hindu traditions and cultures.

In the absence of viable educational institutions, Hindutva education offers a free, widely available and rigorous curriculum. (...)

The adverse effects of the *sangh parivar* on the social and economic health of Muslim communities are apparent. Samshul Amin, a Muslim man from Bhadrak says, “*We trade in leather. We always have. The RSS and Bajrang Dal tell lies about how we slaughter cows to shame Hindus. That we kill and send the cows to Muslims in Bangladesh.*” A Muslim businessman in Jagatsinghpur town confirms, “*They threaten and at times beat Muslims on the road, starting from Bhadrak, from Balesore, onwards up to Calcutta, where the Bajrang Dal has a strong presence, there they are violent. They stop cow transportation on Jajpur road.*”

Subash Chouhan, Bajrang Dal state convenor, indicts, *“There is so much cow slaughter, for example in Sundargarh, Bhadrak, thousands of cows. Every day about 200 trucks leave with cows for Bangladesh. We believe that the cow is our mother, but they want to kill the cow. Also, if the cow stays, it is a financial security for the home. So, if necessary we will use a suicide squad. To save the country and its sanskriti [culture], we will do whatever is necessary.”* (...)

Hindutva corroborates the impairment of women’s rights that are already structurally limited in Orissa, together with women’s access to land, livelihood and well-being resources. **A host of xenophobic women’s organisations are in place, including the BJP Mohila Morcha and the Rashtriya Sevika Samiti.** Established in 1936, the Rashtriya Sevika Samiti has been active in the crusade against cow slaughter in Orissa. The Samiti organises state and district level meetings, as well as daily and weekly *sakha* and prayer meets in villages, towns and cities *“to encourage physical education, intellectual development, mental acumen”*.

Bidyut Lata Raja, leader of the Rashtriya Sevika Samiti, says that the *parivar* helps discipline the mind and weans people from ‘pointless’ activity. She says that the *parivar* functions as a family, each taking care of the other. *“The parivar seeks to create unity. Dalits and Adivasis say that Hindus are outsiders. How can that be? We must create consciousness that we are all one.”* They seek to complement economic development with building moral character to unite India through shared nationalism. **The Samiti supervises Balmandirs and Udyog Mandirs**, celebrates the anniversaries of influential *sangh* leaders and religious festivals, hosts classes on culture and ethics, organises Bhajan and Kirtan recitals, and runs women’s schools and hostels. The Samiti concentrates its volunteer-based social work services in Adivasi areas, seeking to bring ‘enlightenment’.

The Rashtriya Sevika Samiti seeks to organise and train women in self-defence, “to increase their physical and mental capacity to encourage them to protect their nation, dharma and culture”. Stringently heterosexist and mired in sexism, the Samiti is dedicated to supporting women in their youth, in marriage and motherhood, work, and leadership, indoctrinating the practice of Hindutva as patriotic,

the saffron flag as the national emblem, insisting on the loyalty of its followers to their husbands, families and the Hindutva leadership. (...)

The actions of *sangh* organisations are often triangulated, with parallel components for edification, mobilisation and service. For example, **Vidya Bharati (known as Shiksha Vikas Samiti) directs 391 Saraswati Shishu Mandir schools in Orissa.** *Sangh* students are inducted into the cadre via a formal curriculum that emphasises Hindu nationalism, along with informal training in cultural values and defence. In addition, these students and their families are expected to volunteer in mobilisation and developmental work, in local fund-raising. They are even expected to participate in temple inaugurations.

Religion, development, polity and education are used by *sangh parivar* organisations to facilitate recruitment into Hindu extremism. An army of *parivar* organisations fund-raise abroad as registered charities to support sectarian development in India. Funds from the US and UK amounting to millions of dollars were raised by *sangh* organisations during the Gujarat earthquake and Orissa cyclone, substantially aiding the expansion of *sangh* networks in both states. (...)

RSS cadres mobilise *sakhas* around minority villages in Orissa. Each *sakha* begins with an organiser and a few members who meticulously monitor the area, teaching people to describe themselves as ‘communal’, a new identity that denotes Hindu cultural pride. Minorities worry as, under the watchful eye of the RSS, cricket conflicts, harmless fracas between children’s winning and losing teams, turn into communal skirmishes. Green flags of stars and crescent used by *madrassas* are depicted as adhering to Pakistan, linked to terrorism and the Inter Services Intelligence. (...)

Subash Chouhan of the Bajrang Dal resumes, **“We in the VHP believe that this country belongs to the Hindus. It is not a dharamsala [guesthouse] and people cannot just come here and settle down and do whatever they want. That is not going to happen. We will not let that happen. Whatever happens here will happen with the consent of the Hindus. If you come to another’s house and live as a guest and then start doing what you please, that is not going to happen. Whatever happens here, say politics happen, it will have to be Hindutva politics, with**

Hindutva's consent. India is a world power, what is in India is nowhere else, and we want to create India nicely in the image of Ram Rajya.” (...) [Source: By Angana Chatterji, Communalism Combat, February-March 2004; www.sabrang.com, accessed 01.04.04]

[After this long discussion on Orissa we are now shifting focus on other states such as **Kerala, Maharashtra, North Eastern states** etc. Some of the leaders of Parivar are calling **Kerala as the next laboratory of Hindutva!** Note that in **Kerala**, Parivar failed to garner single seat in the last Loksabha elections. The readers/activists who are well informed may recollect the gory communal violences in Marad (Kerala) in last year. This Marad violence show that the Parivar is in march in Kerala also. – *Update*]

Kerala: A Switch in Strategy

(...) Recently, the Sangh Parivar announced an ambitious target for such men and women: **of spreading the activities of the Parivar to all regions in the State by 2006**, the birth centenary year of RSS leader Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar. **The focus of its recent activities has been on extending its influence among all sections of Hindus, especially Dalits, fisherfolk and Adivasis, and gaining acceptance in the State through persistent socio-cultural interventions.**

In Kerala, the RSS-led growth of the Sangh Parivar has overshadowed the activities of its political arm, the BJP, especially in the years since the demolition of the Babri Masjid. **The number of RSS ‘shakhas’ has increased from 4,300 in 2001 to 4,800.** Its organisers claim that the ‘Sangh’ is active in all the 14 districts of the State, the weakest links being the Christian belt of the high-range Idukki and Wayanad districts and the predominantly Muslim areas of north Kerala. **According to RSS activists, over 10,000 locations have been “identified” for active work and in 1,329 of them daily drills and discussions take place for an hour each in the morning, evening and night.**

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), too, has established its organisational network in all parts of the State, resorting to emotive actions such as the **distribution of tridents and the controversial construction of a temple within the Idukki dam area.**

More important, a myriad RSS-backed socio-cultural organisations promoting communal ideas in the field of education, literature, theatre, science and arts and actively involved in the renovation and protection of temples have made a visible presence in the State within a short period.

The Kshetra Samrakshana Samiti, a Parivar unit with the declared aim of “building a temple-based organised society” and a “temple-based way of life”, actively promotes the renovation of small family temples dotting the State and has gained control of the management of the day-to-day affairs and conduct of festivals of a number of big ones. ‘Balagokulam’, a mass organisation for children with over 1,300 units in the State, organises the high-visibility “Srikrishna Jayanti rally and celebrations” in various cities and towns every year. Thousands of children participate in the event. In addition, it runs Balasamskara Kendras (children’s cultural centres) at five centres; ‘Sowrakshika’, an organisation for the protection of children’s rights; *Mayilpeeli*, a magazine; and ‘Amrita Bharati Vidya Peetom’, a centre for the promotion of Sanskrit and Hindu culture.

Balagokulam claims a membership of over 26,000 children, who attend weekly catch-them-young classes. The aim is to groom them as leadership material for other Hindutva activities. As part of its 30th anniversary, Balagokulam has announced the establishment of an ‘International Sri Krishna Centre’ in Kerala, to be developed as a Sri Krishna pilgrimage centre in the State. (...)

Perhaps the most prominent and effective Sangh Parivar organisation is the one that is involved in education, the **Bharatiya Vidya Niketan. It runs about 375 schools in all the districts** with no government support and purely on the initiative of the local Parivar cadre. (...)

Teachers are required to undergo special training under a five-point programme, which includes physical education, Sanskrit, yoga, value education and art and culture, all meant to acquaint them, and eventually their pupils, “with the Hindu way of life”. Key organisers in such schools are from the RSS, even though the organisation does not have any direct involvement in its running.

In addition to *Janmabhoomi*, a daily newspaper, and *Kesari*, a weekly, the Parivar has 10 regular publications in the State. The Swadesi Science Movement, which has as its declared objective the development of an “Indian approach to science” (it recently organised an international conference on Ayurveda), and ‘Tapasya’, an organisation promoting art and culture, are also prominent Sangh Parivar “recruitment agencies”.

In the past few years, the Hindutva combine’s voluntary activity has had a **new focus: the tribal and coastal areas of Kerala**. Providing free medical aid and education and running informal, single-teacher schools for tribal children are some of the activities it undertakes there. A 33-bed hospital at Kalpetta in the predominantly tribal Wayanad district, for example, offers free food, medicines, in-patient facility and diagnostic services to the tribal people. **The Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram has established its units in 52 tribal areas of the State** and is now engaged in meeting the “challenge” of Christian missionary activity in those areas, offering competitive healthcare and educational facilities.

(...) Early last year, the attack on an American missionary, Joseph William Cooper, in Thiruvananthapuram, almost coincided with the two-day ‘Vanavasi Sangamom’ organised by the Sangh Parivar at Mananthavadi in Wayanad district, to promote the all-India game plan of “Hinduising” tribal people. The high-profile conference, attended by top Sangh Parivar leaders, was itself preceded by events orchestrated by the VHP and other Hindutva organisations to “celebrate the reconversion of (a few) Adivasis to Hinduism”. The **Matsya Pravartaka Sanghom**, another RSS family unit, recently started a mobilisation initiative, organising ‘**Sagara poojas**’ (worshipping the sea) and Hindu *maha sammelans* at select centres in the coastal areas and near freshwater lakes.

This is but an example of the vast infrastructure the RSS-led Hindutva organisations have established in Kerala, which it considers a sunrise region for interventions tailored to bring about a fundamentalist shift in the thinking of Hindus. (...) [Source: By R Krishnakumar, *Frontline*, April 10-23, 2004]

[**Kerala** is home to 9.8% tribals (according to the last Census). In this state the **Christian missionaries** have works within the tribal belt for long. Now **Parivar** targets these Christian tribals with huge re-conversion programmes.]

VHP to Launch Reconversion Drive in Kerala

Encouraged by the overwhelming response to its reconversion drive in some North Indian States, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad is all set to attempt a similar movement in Kerala.

‘Dharma Prasar,’ a VHP outfit which spearheaded the drive in selected states, will chalk out its Kerala strategies at its three-day national meet slated to begin here on August 29.

A communiqué detailing the project has been sent to NSS, SNDP and Devaswom Boards. Sources said the initial feedback from the Devaswom Board has been quite encouraging.

Meanwhile, the Dharma Prasar has made elaborate groundwork in Kerala as a prelude to its drive in line with the modus operandi of Christian missionaries. Its “missionaries” have already begun their works in Idukki district, one of the most potential areas identified by its research team.

According to Dr Puthezhathu Ramachandran, the VHP’s national vice-president, they have already deputed six missionaries in the interiors of Idukki who regularly hold Sunday gatherings at Pampanar Sri Subramania Temple in Peermedu.

“We have also plans to open **“Ekal Vidyalayas”** in selected districts in the State, in addition to launching several social service projects, including opening of orphanages across the State,” he said.

Maintaining that the movement was not aimed at reconversion but to facilitate “home coming” of the “transgressed sect,” Dr Ramachandran said “there is a demand for self-preservation of the Hindu society from the grassroots. The Kochi meet will prepare a blueprint of Kerala operations.” (...)

The VHP has already opened its missionary training centre at Peermedu. “Our idea is to train at least 10 missionaries every six months. We know our mission requires large resources. But going by the initial response we feel that funds would not be a constraint to carry out the agenda. Several religious institutions, including all Devaswom Boards, have offered their total co-operation to our historic venture,” said another top VHP leader.

“Like any other State in India, a major section of Dalit Christians in Kerala feels that it is being discriminated by the Church. The promises given to it by the Churches have not been fulfilled. The Dalits feel cheated. The Kochi meet will chalk out strategies that would enable them to embrace their ancestral tradition,” said Mohan Joshi, VHP’s central secretary who is here to attend the meet. (...) [Source: 28.08.2003, www.newindpress.com/Newsitems.asp]

[According to *The Organiser* (the mouthpiece of RSS), the Kerala is going to be the next ‘laboratory of *Hindutva*’.]

Huge State-level RSS Camp in Kerala

There is a wellknown saying in Kerala: “Those who go to Kollam do not want to return home”. This came true for the **15,000 odd swayamsevaks** and the State-level, district-level leaders of Sangh-inspired organisations, who had assembled at the sprawling Ashramam Maidan in Kollam from January 24 to 26, to attend a State-level camp. The mood of the participants was so upbeat and emotionally high-strung that nobody was willing to return home. (...)

[In this camp] **Speaking about Christians and Muslims of Bharat, Shri Sudarshan said that Hindus never considered them minorities. The real minorities, he said, are people who had come from outside like the Jews and the Parsis.** But they have merged into Bharat like sugar into milk. The Muslims from Bharat going to Mecca are called Hindus and the Catholics going to Vatican are called Catholic Hindus. Citing the examples of Maulana Illias, President of the All India Organisation of Muslim Mosques, recently stating that he was a Rajput since his ancestors were Rajputs, and a church in Kerala celebrating Vijayadashami and celebrating vidyarambha (initiation into learning) for children, **he emphasised that if such an**

attitude was cultivated, Bharat would have no problem. Similarly, there would be no problem in rebuilding temples at Ayodhya, Kashi and Mathura, as the Muslims of Bharat would realise that they were descendants of Lord Rama and not of the invader Babur. He said that Hindutva was on the forward march and ultimately victory would come to it, as, like in the Mahabharata, Dharma was on its side. (...)

Shri P. Parameswaran said that Kerala was a laboratory to find solutions to all the problems faced by Hindus in Bharat. The large Christian and Muslim population and the Marxist dominance had made Hinduism weak, but, he said, the Sangh has made the Hindus strong and that there is all-round revival, rejuvenation and awakening. He said that this was manifest in the unprecedented social, spiritual and religious awakening among all sections of Hindus in Kerala. He firmly believed that Kerala had an important role to play in the country's future. "On the remains of the failed ideologies of the West and Communism, Kerala is looking to the Sangh for its progress and uplift," he said, and called upon the swayamsevaks to put Kerala on the vanguard of the national forward march. (...) [Source: *The Organiser*, 08.02.2004]

[**Kerala** is ruled by Congress, the so-called secular party. In this state also **clandestine survey of the minorities** had been done in 2003 in a similar fashion like Gujarat, Rajasthan etc.]

Clandestine Survey Of Christians And Muslims In Kerala

The reports about **Central government's clandestine survey of the minorities and their worship houses have come as a shock.** The hugely secretive survey which has been on going for some time and is continuing. **The survey is reportedly conducted with the collusion and collaboration of the state chief minister, A. K. Antony who has been playing a soft Hindutva politics ever since he assumed office.**

The Home department of the central government has employed the revenue authorities as opposed to the general census which is conducted by the Census department.

The survey is restricted to two communities of Kerala, Christians and Muslims, their churches, mosques and the related institutions like schools or orphanages. There are no reports that the survey extends to the Sikh, Jain, Buddhist, Parsi or Jewish communities.

Strange questions such as 'how many people attend the church' have been included. There is also a drive to identify the churches or mosques 'constructed in the 20th century'. The village officers have been directed to make on the spot visits, without raising any suspicions, collect and tabulate the data with all urgency and forward them to the central government with no loss of time.

The survey has been going on for several months. The survey in the 'Nedunkantom' Taluq of the Idukki District has been over three months back! This has been admitted by the Taluq officers. The report has been given to the Central government authorities. (...)

The clandestine anti-minority survey has begun in the Palghat district also. The survey has begun in the Taluqs of Palakkad, Mannarkad, Chittur, Ottappalam, and Alathur. The directives in this regard issued by the 'Kerala Directorate of Census' located at Trivandrum under the sign of Sheila Thomas IAS has reached the Palakkad Collectorate.

In another shocking revelation, it was clarified that both the 'Special Branch' of the police (spy wing) and the **'Intelligence Bureau' has been engaged in the clandestine survey.** (...)

One is left to wonder why there has been a discriminative survey of some of the minorities in the state. The minority leaders have questioned the rationale behind this highly selective sampling and ponder why there is no survey on the majority community's houses of worship or other institutions. There are apprehensions that the plot is part of the larger 'Gujaratisation plan for India or the Modi-fication of India'. Such clandestine surveys signify the destructive and un-secular path the national government is treading

right now. (...) [Source: 03.07.2003; www.countercurrents.org/comm-survey030703.htm; accessed 08.06.04]

Box: 'RSS Pamphlet' Has Jharkhand Police Worried

Pamphlets seized by the Special Branch of the Jharkhand police suggest that the **RSS is on a secret "cleansing drive" in Jharkhand's Chotanagpur and Santhal Paragana divisions.**

These pamphlets, allegedly brought out by the RSS, are **titled 'RSS's Latest Battle Policies to Wipe Out Christian Adivasis in Chotanagpur and Santhal Paragana'.**

The pamphlet terms the drive the RSS's "last effort" at motivating youngsters to join the outfit. **It is especially tough on the Sarnas, a Santhali-speaking tribal group, and calls for the tribe to be "wiped" out.**

The pamphlet, which the Special Branch has distributed to all district police chiefs, **spews venom on the Munda, Oraon, Kharia and Santhali tribes since they "do not agree to join the Hindus – the nation's mainstream."** The outfit calls for "luring their youth with money and liquor." This, the pamphlet says, has to be started by targeting college students. (...)

The Special Branch letter says, "As per information, RSS activists have launched a secret public awareness and membership drive in Bokaro and have distributed pamphlets in this regard." But police sources said that the pamphlets were distributed last year. (...)

The pamphlet also calls for the tribals to be displaced from their lands and if necessary, "take resort to deceitful means..., even power." The State has reported numerous cases of encroachment of tribal land.

The pamphlet has also incorporated "the 20-point agenda which senior RSS leader Ramaswamy had come out with while praying for an awareness among Hindus in the Madurai Temple".

The 20-point agenda calls for each Hindu to become a member of organisations such as the RSS, Hindu Forward Block, Hindu Mandir Suraksha Sansthan, VHP, Arya Samaj and Hindu Mahasabha.

It also asks Hindus "not to allow any Christian or Muslim processions in their areas".

The agenda also includes, among others, a seizure of all Christian literature spread in the Hindu areas and **ensuring that every Hindu is a member of any of its aforementioned organisations.**

[Source: 29.04.2002; www.hindustantimes.com]

[**Maharashtra** is a state where the Sangh Parivar-Shiv Sena nexus has strongholds for long. It was in **Maharashtra**, where the gruesome riots/genocide occurred after the demolition of Babri Masjid in 2002 & 2003. It was the **Maharashtra**, where the riots or communal disturbances can be masterminded on any flimsy ground. It was the **Maharashtra**, where the police, administration and government machineries are utterly communalised. **The fascist projects of Sangh Parivar & Shiv Sena are always alive in Maharashtra.** Several hateful fascist projects of these *Hindutvavadi* forces are going on here with full steam. Lot of reports have been published in this regard in the media and the readers/activists are more or less aware of these reports. Hence, we are not focussing too much on this state. In January 2003, Togadia (the VHP secretary) toured this state with '*Trishul-Diksha*' programme and "**said the outfit had mobilised 30 lakh youths and distributed three lakh trishuls, 'not to harm anyone but to boost the morale of Hindus.'**" (*Indian Express, 30.01.2003*) In this state also Parivar has taken re-conversion programme among the tribals through the VHP/VKA. Now follow the next excerpt. – *Update*]

Maharashtra: A 'Polarised State'

"We are doing a lot of work in the education and health sectors, particularly in the slums and tribal and rural areas. There are approximately **18,000 volunteers** working with us on various projects," says Shankar Gaykar, joint secretary of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) in Maharashtra.

"Our single-point agenda is to build up national spirit. We do this by creating good personalities through character building and other activities," says B.N. Tambe, Mumbai city secretary of the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS). "In fact, our training has become so popular and our ideology so inspirational that we are falling short of people to train new recruits."

These seemingly altruistic activities of organisations that are part of the Sangh Parivar are perhaps the most dangerous ways of communalisation, according to Dr. Ram Punyani, an anti-communal activist and Professor at the Indian Institute of Technology in Mumbai. "If you look at a time frame of the past five years, the spread of saffronisation

in Maharashtra has not been obvious. But it is happening and quite rampantly so.” The spread and mobilisation is taking place through social and economic routes. For instance, the **Ekal Vidyalyayas** (single-teacher schools) run by VHP or RSS members are centres for recruiting youth into the Hindutva ideology. “In Maharashtra you can call it ‘practical Hindutva,’” says Punyani. The RSS, through its affiliates, has increasingly infiltrated small towns and villages across the State and is actively propagating the Hindutva agenda. The **VHP** has for some time been **working in tribal areas**. Its reach too is growing. The **Bajrang Dal** has a strong presence in several small towns. So does the **Shiv Sena**, which once concentrated its activities in Mumbai. **These organisations seek out, recruit and pay poor unemployed poor youth for spreading their message.**

The Hindutva agenda is no longer flaunted. The Bharatiya Janata Party has found far more insidious ways of polarising communities. “In fact, over the past five years we have found that the divide in communities on religious grounds has only been widening,” Punyani told *Frontline*. **One of the tactics employed by the BJP to pursue its communal agenda has been to float non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Small organisations have mushroomed in the development, labour, education and health sectors in Maharashtra in recent years, most of them run by RSS *pracharaks*.** Punyani says that the advantage of running an NGO is that **it can secure grants from abroad and from the Central government.** However, the NGO route is not a new phenomenon. There are organisations such as the **Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram (VKA)**, which is largely supported by the non-resident Indian community and has been involved in development work since 1952. (...)

A unique feature of Maharashtra is its military schools. Run primarily by RSS members, such schools have been around since the time the RSS **came into existence in the 1920s**. In recent years many more have sprung up, and there are hardly any check on what goes on in such establishments. Since the RSS defines itself as a group that upholds Indian cultural values, much of the Hindutva ideology gets concealed under this guise. Says Punyani: “And there is a difference between teaching Hinduism and Hindutva. The latter spreads anti-minority feelings and hate politics – that is what is being taught here. Not the former.” (...)

“We do not have any political agenda,” argues Tambe. “Our mission is to improve society by building men of character, contribute to the community as well as uphold our traditional and cultural values.” According to Tambe, the RSS trains its recruits, who are then inspired by the RSS ideology to do charitable work. “We have a holistic approach to looking at society. It is not just about creating wealth. We impart training to build our national spirit. Obviously, our message is spreading. We get thousands of recruits every year. Besides, when our members do charitable and voluntary work our reach increases.” Tambe said that the **Nana Palkar Rugna Samiti**, a voluntary organisation in Mumbai, is **run by an RSS pracharak**. “In accordance with the RSS’ policy of serving the community, this organisation provides medical treatment for patients from across the country. The **Jana Kalyan Samiti** is another organisation run by an RSS man, which works in slums. There are **30 organisations** like these at the national level and almost **1,000 at the local level** run by RSS-trained men,” says Tambe.

“Our only objective is to do `seva’,” says Gaykar of the VHP. “It is the media that has ruined our image and made us look like monsters.” Gaykar says that the VHP has been working in some of the remotest areas of Maharashtra, providing assistance in medical treatment, education and housing for orphaned children, destitute women and aged people. “No one is barred from seeking our service. Religion is not important in our mission,” he says. However, Gaykar says the VHP’s main objection is to Christian missionaries and their “conversion agenda”. (...)

“Conversion is our biggest problem. We need to stop pampering to this minority community. And we need to be able to combat it with our strength,” says Gaykar. “We need to make them understand that though Hindustan is a secular country, 85 percent of the population is Hindu. They should not try and change this. We may allow them to drink our water, but we will not tolerate this blatant threat to our religion.” While speaking about the VHP’s services, Gaykar lets slip that volunteers distribute Hindu religious paraphernalia while visiting these areas. When questioned, he retorts: “People must know about the religion of the country they live in.”

“Hindutva is something that suits the Shiv Sena,” says Nikhil Wagle, Editor of *Mahanagar*, an evening paper based in Mumbai. Wagle, who for more than a decade has taken on the Sena, believes that the only reason it has attached itself to the Hindutva

agenda is **that it is compatible with its `Mumbai or Maharashtra is for Maharashtrians' slogan. "Maharashtrians = Hindu = Hindutva."** More important, it seemed to have helped the Sena come to power in the State for the first time. Essentially, the Shiv Sena is a parochial and chauvinistic body whose main plank has been protecting the Marathi community's interests. The party, led by Bal Thackeray, first earned notoriety when it attacked South Indian and Gujarati establishments in Mumbai (then Bombay) in the 1960s and 1970s. It gained further strength after it broke the Left-led trade union movement in the mill area of Mumbai. Although it allied with the BJP in 1984 over the Ram Mandir issue, it evolved into a major political party when it came to power after winning the 1995 Assembly elections in alliance with the BJP. "The alliance is convenient for both of them. For the Sena it helps secure seats. For the BJP, the Sena's reach among the backward classes is essential to further its agenda. Moreover, the Sena's infrastructure is most helpful to them," says Wagle. **In Mumbai alone there are 230 Sena shakhas and each one has 50 to 70 workers.**

After it began sharing power with the BJP, there has been a shift of emphasis in the Sena's ideology. Now seen as the upholders of Hindutva, the Sena uses religion to widen its net. (...) Over the years the Sena has used popular occasions such as the **Ganesh and Navaratri festivals** as a means to reach out to common people. The party sponsors many of the **3,000 Ganesh mandals** across Mumbai. Most of the mandals make clear political and provocative statements in their decorations and props, often attempting to rouse jingoistic sentiments. Last year, following the bomb blasts in Mumbai, one of the mandals depicted the scene of the blast at the Gateway of India, complete with a blown up taxi and dummy dead bodies. In another attempt at generating nationalist feelings, the BJP and Sena resurrected the '**maha arti**'. The *artis* were conducted soon after the blasts, ostensibly "for the people of Mumbai". This form of worship became popular after the 1993 serial bomb blasts when Hindu fundamentalist parties used it as a tool of intimidation.

Often associated with violence, the Sena is notorious for its involvement in the 1992-93 post-Babri Masjid demolition riots that raged through Mumbai killing thousands of people, mostly Muslims. Although neither Mumbai nor the rest of the State has had to witness violence at such a scale again, there have been a fair number of incidents to

indicate that communal forces are mischievously working at various levels in the State. According to Asghar Ali Engineer, noted scholar and writer associated with the Centre for Study of Society and Secularism, **since the 1992-93 riots there has not been a single year in which a riot has not taken place in the State.** (...) [Source: By Anupam Katakam, *Frontline*, March 13-26, 2004]

[Once anti-Dalit, the **Shiv Sena of Maharashtra** now tries to lure them with new formula. Follow the next excerpt:]

Shiv Sena Dangles Carrot for Dalits

Last few months have seen the politics in Maharashtra taking an interesting turn. The Ambedkar baiter Shiv Sena has turned 180 degrees and offered to ally with dalits. **It has put forward as an attractive formulation, Shiv Shakti + Bhim Shakti = Deshbhakti (Shiv Power + Bhims Power = Patriotism, Shiv Senas clout + Dalits clout =Patriotism).** Initially it sounded as a big joke as to how can Dalits even think of going along with Shiv Sena, which in the past has been at the forefront of Anti-Dalit tirades in the form of anti-Namantar movement (The agitation for change of name of Marathwada University to Dr. Ambedkar university), Riddles controversy (Shiv Senas opposition to publication of Dr. Ambedkars book Riddles of Hinduism), it had opposed Mandal commission implementation and what have you. But it seems the Shiv Senas heir apparent Uddhav Thackeray, who mooted this idea was not totally shooting in the dark. there are elements in the dalit movement who do favor this alliance.

The coming in of this proposal at precisely this juncture is very curious. It is a time when Shiv Sena, an unshakable ally of BJP, who in turn is the handmaiden of RSS and its Hindu Rashtra project, is going to face the assembly elections. The BJP-Shiv Sena alliance is trying to break new grounds to come to power next time around in assembly elections, which is not too far. It is also at a time when the most prominent dalit party Bahujan samaj in UP is sitting in the lap of BJP for short-term gains of power. It is also the time when the stalwarts of Sangh Parivar are using Dr. Ambedkar for their Hate propaganda by saying that Amdekar was anti Muslim etc. Can, should these two streams come together for political purpose? (...)

Shiv Sena came up in Mumbai in the 1970s on the principle of Sons of the soil. Its first major target was the South Indians. It simultaneously attacked the left trade unions and helped the managements to crush the rights of workers. Its unions became handmaidens of managements and colluded with them to wipe out the genuine aspirations of workers. Later it turned its attention against Gujaratis and North Indians. With the implementation of Mandal commission it found itself in a strange position. It opposed Mandal tooth and nail. It was the time it allied with BJP and accepted the goal of Hindu Rashtra and the politics of Hindutva. It gloated over the fact that if Babri was demolished by Shiv Sainiks, it is a matter of pride for the party. It went on to lead the anti-Muslim pogrom in Mumbai in 92-93. It has been firm ally of BJP since then and has been talking of Hindutva and Hindu Rashtra. Its mouthpiece Saamna has the byline, promoter of radical Hindutva.

As a junior partner of Hindu Rashtra project, **Shiv Sena is basically against the process of caste and gender rights, against the concept of social and gender equality. It targets against the minorities in a more aggressive and menacing way. It has ruled the streets of Mumbai by sheer hooliganism and patronage of the powers that be from behind the scene. What is its political vision and goal? What can it deliver for the Dalit masses, the Bhim Shakti?**

Today Dalit movement is in the throes of crisis as never before. The challenges of last two decades have put immense pressure on the Dalit masses. The closure of mills, factories have affected their employment. The Govt and public sector jobs are no more available with the various sorts of ceilings and impact of globalization. The private sector does not much encourage the employment of Dalits for various reasons. And of course there is no provision of reservations in the private sector. The land reforms are stagnant, barring few pockets the land issue dogs the Dalit masses and rural poverty is on the rise, with Dalits as the main victims.

The Hindutva movement in a way came to tide over the social crisis posed by the **new economic needs of the elite and upper castes**. It began with anti-Dalit violence in Gujarat and later changed tracks to target the Muslims and Christians. In the process it did come up with the brilliant strategy of co-opting an upwardly mobile section of Dalits,

and on the other came to recruit the poor Dalit masses as its foot soldiers, as witnessed in Gujarat carnage. Co-option of Mayawatis and Bangaru Laxmans for BJP has been the greatest achievement of Hindutva politics. **To co-opt the real victim and to unleash it upon the imaginary outer enemy, Muslims in this case, is a clever move on the part of Hindutva.** While the Sangh Parivar is playing its strategy in a deft and clever manner, the dalit leadership, gripped by myopia has become easy prey for the designs of the politics of status quo. Vinay Katiyar concoction that Ambedkar was against Muslims symbolizes the fusion of the two trends of RSS politics. **On one hand it aims to appropriate Dalit symbols on the other it aims to use it against the outer enemy.** The real idea being to sustain an atmosphere of Hate and social terror where the issues of social transformation are stalled in the din of emotional issues like Ram Temple or Godhra. (...) [*Source: By Ram Puniyani; www.countercurrents.org/dalit-puniyani 290803.htm; accessed 08.06.04*]

[Sangh Parivar are building its presence strongly in **North-Eastern states** also. **North-Eastern states including Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura** etc are the homes of overwhelming number of **tribals**. And most of these tribals are **Christians** for generation. Hence, these states are also targeted by Parivar. Here we publish a few reports.]

Trishuls and its New Territory—the Northeast

Forget the AK-47 rifles of militant groups. **It is now the Vishwa Hindu Parishad's (VHP's) trishuls that are emerging as the weapons of contention in the northeast.**

VHP international general secretary Praveen Togadia's two visits to the region in recent weeks, and his announcement that **100,000 Assamese youth** would be given trishuls in a sort of initiation rite, has evoked controversy. (...)

The VHP has been active for decades now, **especially in Assam and Tripura**, with the Church remaining its focus of attention. But with the **increase in the Muslim population** thanks to the **influx from Bangladesh**, the VHP now has **another front** to fight on.

“The northeast,” says Arabinda Bhattacharjee, a VHP veteran in the region for three decades, “is facing **two major dangers, the Muslim migrants from Bangladesh and the increased conversion by the Church.** But in Assam alone we have been able to **reconvert over 3,600 persons to Hinduism.**”

It is ironical that the Hindu body that adopted the methods of the Christians it opposes. **The Church “enters” a remote place with a school and some health facilities, the VHP too has adopted a similar strategy.** That is why it has set up schools in the farflung areas of, for instance, Mizoram, Nagaland and Meghalaya, the three states with the highest concentration of Christians in the country.

Sensing the tribal groups are a key target, the VHP uses frontal organisations like the **Vanvasi Kalyan Samiti** and the **Adim Jati Sewa Sangha** to provide educational facilities to tribal students and thereby win recruits.

In regard to Bangladeshi Muslims in Assam, Togadia has tapped into local sentiment with his trishul project. **The campaign to distribute 100,000 trishuls will be completed on November 24,** birth anniversary of Lachit Barphukan, the 18th century Ahom general who thwarted the final Mughal attempt to annex Assam. In keeping with its propagation of a militant Hinduism, the **Parishad talks of setting up one Bajrang unit in every block.** (...)

Ways of Wooing: The VHP tries various steps to make its presence felt in the northeast —

- **Assam:** Aims to distribute 100,000 trishuls, focus on Bangladeshi infiltration, co-opt Vaishnob sects.
- **Nagaland:** Countering missionary influence on Liangmei, Rongmei and Zemi tribal communities.
- **Mizoram:** Works through Chakma and Reang tribals.
- **Tripura:** Plans a school in every village, runs hostels. [*Source: 15.06.2003; www.newindpress.com/Newsitems.asp*]

[*The Organiser* writes:]

RSS Activities in North-Eastern States

(...) The Sangh work in the North-East began in the late forties and the region had been treated as a single province since 1994. With a view to spreading the Sangh activities to the hitherto untouched areas, the region was divided into two states—North Assam and South Assam in 1995. South Assam consists of Barak valley (Hailakandi, Karimganj and Cachar districts) and North Cachar hill districts, as well as Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura and Mizoram. North Assam consists of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya as well as Karbi Anglong and Brahmaputra valley. South Assam's Sangh headquarters lies in Silchar. **Thirty-two Pracharaks, six Vistaraks and 20 Vidyarthi Karyakartas are engaged in Sangh work with a view to strengthening the society.**

These **full-time workers**, with the help of **thousands of grihasth karyakartas**, **run dozens of schools in urban and rural areas as also hundreds of single-teacher schools in the remote areas especially in the tea gardens.** Free medical treatment centres are being run by **more than a hundred Arogyarakshaks.** Some village development projects and self-help groups have also come up to assist. A few registered societies like **Keshav Smarak Samiti, Janajati Vikas Samiti, Keshav Smarak Sanskritik Surabhi, Seva Bharati** have been serving the people of the region for fulfilling the ideal of service to man, service to God. As a result, a sizeable section of the Hindu society has united against the spread of crime, infiltration and proselytisation.

It is a known fact now that a large number of insurgent groups are active in this region and they are mainly backed by the Christian missionaries. (...)

Nearly **160 service projects** are directly run by the RSS and another **518 service projects** are being run by other organisations through the Swayamsevaks. With a view to making people of rural areas and tea-gardens aware of the Hindu culture and dharma, **72 Ramkathakars are working as full-time workers.** Every year thousands of Vanvasis assemble in a number of rallies organised by the Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram.

When certain segments of the Hindu society feel threatened the swayamsevaks are found first in discharging their duty. Last year due to ethnic clashes between the Hindu

Dimasas and Christian Hmars, more than 2,000 Dimasas were rendered homeless. They are still living in relief camps in Cachar district. Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Keshav Smarak Samiti, Kalyan Ashram and Rashtra Sevika Samiti came forward to rehabilitate them with the active help and cooperation of the Hindu society in general and the swayamsevaks in particular. (...)

As a result of these activities, the dormant Hindu feelings are being reawakened and the society appears ready to accept the challenge posed by the missionaries. **Small groups of Vanvasis are now convinced that the whole Hindu society is behind them** and they are not alone in their endeavour to resist the proselytising moves of the Christian missionaries. [Source: *Organiser*, 21.03.2004]

Box: Empowering Women, The VHP Way

This all-girls' summer camp at Juhu, Mumbai is, well, different. The afternoon sun catches the glint on the swords. The air whooshes as three girls bring their lathis down. In a formation, a batch of 20 stands to attention-each holding up a wicked-looking **dagger**. **The Vishwa Hindu Parishad is teaching them how to defend their religious and social rights.**

It's got great attendance. There are 71 girls and women between the ages of 15 and 35. One 18-year-old has travelled all the way from Goa-alone. **A camp for boys is being run by the Bajrang Dal at Dombivili.**

Last year's controversy over a **suicide camp run by a retired Colonel in Ambernath** (65 km from Mumbai) and the subsequent training camps is not even a blip on this camp's radar.

The Vidyanidhi High School at Juhu Scheme is on vacation. Within the premises the **Durgavahini Camp**, named after the VHP's women's wing, is in full swing.

For Baby Gopal Naik, a Class XII student from Goa, this is the first time. "I learnt about this camp from a friend and after undergoing it, I realised my own potential. I've come alone by train from Goa, something I could never do before." Quite a few of the participants come over and over again.

Like Manisha Pilankar, an electronics engineer from Sindhudurg: "I attended this camp three years ago **and am now teaching the use of swords to others.** The camp has made me brave and confident and **I can today train around 200 girls at a time.**" (...)

Kishoritai Kolekar, a coordinator, has been training girls in these camps for the last five years. When asked why the use of weapons has not been excluded after the uproar a year ago, she said: "There has been no opposition to this camp from any quarter and the girls have been selected from various districts from those with a genuine urge to be trained. Besides, **the weapons used, like 'khadga' (swords), 'churika' (daggers) and 'dand' (lathis) are only for self-defence, not for attack.**"

The swords and daggers are not sharp and are mere dummies, she admitted, **adding that they are used only to prepare the girls to handle emergencies.**

Pallavi Balekar, a commerce graduate from Thane, and an expert in wielding a **dand**, gives her testimony: "The camp has made me extremely brave and confident. I have no problems interacting with people now and I am confident of defending myself." [Source: *By Hubert Vaz, Indian Express*, 21.05.2004]

[In **Assam**, Parivar outfits have taken organised programmes to ‘push back’ the **Bangladeshi ‘infiltrators’** on several occasions. In February 2003, it was reported by **The Telegraph** quoting Giriraj Kishore, the vice-president of VHP: **“We are committed to the task of pushing back identified infiltrators into Bangladesh. We will go ahead with the campaign, come what may.”** It was reported by the same newspaper that **VHP had taken survey among people of Assam.**

The arming of the population (or so-called **‘trishul-diksha’** programme) by VHP was taken almost in all the states of the country. It was taken in **Tamil Nadu (*The Hindu, 27.10.2003*)**, in **Karnataka** and so on. In fact, in states like **West Bengal** the *shakhas* of RSS are mushrooming. The activities of Parivar are being taken massively in the border-districts of the WB. – *Update*]

RSS on Mission Morning Bengal

The state BJP leadership has been asked by the RSS chief to concentrate on strengthening morning shakhas. After two rounds of discussions with state BJP leaders, Mr KS Sudarshan told them that the number of morning shakhas should be increased as it would help build a strong cadre base. Front-ranking state BJP leaders, including chief Mr Tathagata Roy, were present at yesterday’s and today’s meetings with Mr Sudarshan, who will leave for Durgapur and Raiganj tomorrow. Reports of organisational activity in the past few months were submitted at the meeting. The RSS Sarsanghachalak reviewed the activities of the **35 associate and fraternal organisations**, and party sources said he has asked state BJP leaders to be more active in the districts because recent RSS activities in rural areas have “yielded results”. The upshot of the meeting was, however, instructions from the RSS chief to strengthen shakhas and rope in as many “like-minded” people as possible to combat the Communists. Persuasion will centre around ideology rather than public issues. The BJP has been asked to mobilise people for shakhas primarily through individual contacts and influences. Besides this, the state BJP leadership has been asked to review organisational achievements and lapses and to monitor the party’s growth in the city and districts through weekly meetings. It is learnt that Mr Sudarshan has asked the state BJP leadership to use the mouthpiece Jagaran to

reawaken Hindus in Bengal. The BJP, in fact, has already cranked up the propaganda machine — **Bengal’s RSS unit has grown in the last three years “from 1,100 shakhas in 1999 to 1,445 now”, the state unit claims.** [Source: *The Statesman*, 24.01.2003]

[Till now, we are discussing the fascist projects of Sangh Parivar executed before the Assembly elections held in December 2003. In these elections, Parivar captured power in three states: Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh & Chhattishgarh. After the formation of BJP/Parivar governments in those states, Parivar has intensified its sinister projects with great strides. Moreover, it is also noted by *Update* earlier that after the last Loksabha elections, the fascist march of Parivar gained momentum with new vigour. Just after the elections, Vajpayee declared: **“I do not want to be in opposition for five years.”** (*The Pioneer*, 02.06.04) Jaswant Singh, another leader of Parivar, announced: **“We will come back to power. The question is how do we do it and that has to be assessed.”** (*Ibid*) Whether Parivar can regain the power at the centre or not is a different question. In spite of all main course of their march will be along extra-parliamentary path which was exhibited by them in the past. In fact, Parivar is moving ahead with successive programmes to flare the communal frenzy with neat/systematic planning and design. In the next section these projects will be discussed in short.— *Update*]

Sangh Parivar in 2004

“I have spoken to Modiji and asked him to take 10 wickets for every one wicket from our side. Mark your houses with saffron flags and count the Muslims in your neighbourhood. We may need to do something soon.... I want Muslim votes too, but wash them in *Gangajal* first.”

[Yogi Adityanath of BJP at Gorakhpur, Indian Express, 21.04.2004]

[In this section, *Update* is going to present before the readers/activists the projects/programmes taken by Parivar in brief. This section may reveal the same designs followed by Parivar in the post assembly elections period (beginning from the present year 2004) in several states (where they are in power) & also all over the country. Moreover, this section provided reports in brief the vigorous activities of Parivar after the last general elections. All the projects/programmes have been taken by Parivar in those period in a very disciplined, systematic and planned method. – *Update*]

Sangh Governments & Saffron Agenda

Uma appoints a RSS pracharak as its political advisor:

The RSS has decided Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Uma Bharti also needs a vibhag pracharak, Anil Dave, as her political advisor, with Cabinet rank. It is for the first time that the RSS — which insists it is a “non-political” organisation — has directly “loaned” one of its cadres for a government appointment. While sources close to the CM say the move is to ensure better coordination between the Sangh and government, it is being seen as measure by the RSS to exercise greater control over the Uma administration. (...)

[Source: Indian Express, 12.02.2004]

Ban on cow slaughter:

Madhya Pradesh: There has been a spurt of “holy” decisions in the last fortnight. The government last week brought an ordinance to enforce a **complete ban on slaughter of cows, calves, oxen and bulls**. Though cow slaughter ban was already in place, the

ordinance bans slaughter of all members of the entire bovine family, including the aged and diseased. No person can now slaughter his cow, nor could he get it done by others. **If found guilty, he will be awarded three years' imprisonment or a fine of Rs 10,000 or both.** Any crime related to cow slaughter has been made **non-bailable.** (...)

[Source: *The Statesman*, 30.01.2004]

Chhattisgarh: The Raman Singh government has got cracking with the BJP's pet theme — cow slaughter. The Chief Minister announced a total ban on cow slaughter in the state after the first Cabinet meeting today. Singh also set up a Cabinet sub-committee to oversee the implementation of the party manifesto which among other things **promises distribution of cows to every adivasi family.** (...) [Source: *Indian Express*, 18.12.2003]

Madhya Pradesh is now a 'Gaushala':

The new chief minister, (...) agreed to implement her vision of Madhya Pradesh as a cow state. The proposals adopted today provide for a *gaushala* (cowshed) **for every cluster of 10-12 villages.** The state has approximately **52,000 villages.** These *gaushalas* would stand on government aid though a task force has promised to make the project “self-reliant” in three months. The task force has made several recommendations, **like deploying thousands of daily wagers as *gau sevaks* (caretakers).** The agro-based products from the *gaushalas* would be exempted from taxes. (...) Uma said these *gaushalas* would be established on the banks of rivers and would help promote heritage tourism. (...) Her associates said India is no stranger to a “cow-based economy”. The cow is the foundation of one of the greatest economies in the world, said the policy paper of the new regime pointing out that almost all basic necessities of life can be met by cattle. In the rural areas of Madhya Pradesh, for instance, the bullock pulls the plough, manures the land with its dung and feeds on the leftover stalks of cereal crops. Without them, Madhya Pradesh would need lakhs of tractors — in place of only the thousands it has — to bring all its acres of arable land under mechanised farming.

Moreover, the problem of farming does not solve itself by employing tractors. Fewer bullocks mean less manure and a need for tonnes of fertilisers. This demand can be met

by increasing the bovine population, which in 1997 stood at around one crore sixty-seven lakh. Uma has already ordered a fresh headcount.

Turning to food, the protagonists of a cow-based economy said the government spends huge amounts of money on insecticides, pesticides and even air-conditioned godowns to preserve foodgrain. Still, the results are often far below expectation.

They pointed out that the cheapest and most secure method of food preservation is to mix equal quantities of the ash of cow-dung cakes and foodgrain and store it in containers. Cow dung ash is germicidal and absorbs moisture.

Thus, if there are enough cows and rationing and controls are removed, people can store foodgrain for almost two years by themselves, solving the food preservation problem.

The serious implementation of a cow-based economy would reflect on housing and employment too. The choice of a house depends on several considerations like finance and climate. Therefore, a practical way would be to provide cowdung reinforced mud-dwellings that are more suited to the climate, necessities and, most important, the finances of the people.

While cement structures demand costly repairs in about five years, the only maintenance the dung-mud dwellings need is a fresh coating of the mixture. Yet, such structures built two to three hundred years ago stand today.

Similarly, the severe power crisis in the state can be easily overcome if biogas plants are given a fresh impetus. There are over 1,200 villages in the state that do not have electricity and given their consumption pattern, biogas plants can meet their needs. *[Source: The Telegraph, 25.01.2004]*

Holy cities in MP:

The state Cabinet yesterday decided to declare **Maheshwar and Amarkantak as “holy cities”**. Mahakaleshwar town in Ujjain already enjoys this status. While Maheshwar is famous for its Lord Shiva temple, Amarkantak’s claim to fame is the Narmada, which originates in the city.

Miss Bharati took her entire Cabinet to Maheshwar, where the ministers took the “holy” decisions. (...) A source in the Cabinet said the Narmada banks provided a perfect setting for the “holy deliberations”.

The conferring of the “holy status” on Maheshwar and Amarkantak would mean **banning of sale of liquor, meat, fish, eggs and other non-vegetarian food in the two city areas**. In Ujjain, however, the restrictions will apply in the notified areas only because of the sizeable Muslim population in the district. (...) [*Source: The Statesman, 30.01.2004*]

Sing Vande Mataram – New Rajasthan govt’s first decision:

[O]ne of the first decisions her [Vasundhara Raje] government has made is to order government school hostels **to start the day with Vande Mataram**.

Old Bajrang Dal hand and new Social Welfare Minister Madan Dilawar, who issued the order, has his own reasons: “Why not? It is a prayer praising the motherland and it is important that children recite it. We have reversed the Congress order and **any hostel found violating this direction will be penalised**.” Dilawar’s decision echoes the views of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad which has not wasted time in charting for the new government “its duties towards its Hindu votebank”.

“We are only reminding the new government of its duties because their victory is a victory of Hindu ideology,” says VHP’s Acharya Dharmendra. “They have won with such big majority because of the work put in by us and other affiliated organisations. (...)”

High on their list of demands is a rollback of the Gehlot government’s decision to ban trishuls. (...) Vasundhara is also facing some pressure from within. **Of her 120 newly elected MLAs, 60 are committed workers of the Sangh**. They also want the ban to be lifted. [*Source: Indian Express, 13.12.2003*]

BJP rule in Rajasthan – Going the Gujarat way:

The return to power of the BJP has already seen extra-constitutional control over levers of power in the state and hegemony in the social sphere by the RSS and its front organisations, particularly the VHP, Banvasi Kalyan Parishad, Bajrang Dal, etc. (...) From

December 25, 2003, the BKP launched its campaign **distributing lockets of Hanuman or Shiv, saffron flags with “Om” painted on and maps of “Mother India” with pictures of Mama Baleshwar, Govind Guru and Ambedkar** [within the tribals]. (...)

The BKP (...) set up their local headquarters (consisting of a school, hostel and a training centre) 15 years ago in Mokhampura (Kushalgarh), Banswara, directly opposite a Roman Catholic Church campus, which has been running a school and a hostel for over 75 years. According to the nuns of this church, ever since Ashok Singhal visited Banswara in the first week of December 2003, stone throwing incidents on them increased. The children studying in these schools were harassed and bullied by members of the VHP.

Ever since a VHP-BKP camp was organised from December 25 to January 1, 2004, the local atmosphere has undergone a change and the nuns do not feel safe moving around in the area. Presidents of Yuva Mandals from nearby villages threatened them, saying that they would stop them from entering their villages. They were further intimidated by the fact that **the boys had organised judo and karate camps at which threats were made to beat up nuns and compounders**. Nuns and other workers from Christian institutions have been frequently taunted in buses and they feel unsafe travelling around with the cross they wear displayed openly. **They hide the cross under their clothes and no longer feel that they can worship freely**. Local police have started making regular visits to the church, visits which, instead of offering protection, make the nuns and priests feel intimidated.

(...) According to him [Fr. James], students from hostels run by the social welfare department run an RSS *shakha* every evening. Since January 1, 2004, the children from these government hostels have been going to nearby villages like Timera and Badwaas and distributing lockets and flags after collecting Rs. 5 from each family. In Tambesra, Kushalgarh, about 20 students distribute lockets and flags on cycles after school. When they enter Christian dominated villages, **they bully younger children to put up saffron flags on their rooftops and force them to wear lockets. The Banvasi Kalyan Parishad has a target to distribute more than one lakh lockets and flags in this area. It is clear that in the villages they can now identify which**

household is Christian and which is not. The locket, which is being used in opposition to the cross, will help them identify the Tribal who is non-Christian. (...)

On January 8, 2004, minister of Tribal area development, Kanak Mal Katara issued instructions to officials from the irrigation and other departments in Udaipur that **all Tribals who had undergone conversion to Christianity would have their names struck off the ST list.** (...) Reports from the ground in southern Rajasthan indicate that even though a formal change in the ST category cannot be brought by the local government, 'sentiments' of the functionaries in the BJP government have already resulted in instructions to government departments at the district level to exclude Christian Tribals from benefits of reservation under the ST category. (...) [Source: By Kavita Srivastava, general secretary of PUCL; accessed from www.sabrang.com]

VHP begins *trishul diksha* in Rajasthan:

With a BJP govt. in the state, the VHP has resumed the *trishul diksha* (trident distribution) banned by the previous Congress govt. (...) in April 2003. The VHP leader Dr. Praveen Togadia, was also arrested (...) during such programme.

But now the VHP plans **to distribute one lakh tridents** all over the state in the coming months. As a start, at least six functions were organised on Samkalp Diwas (...) and 351 activists were given tridents. (...) VHP sources said the state govt. was consulted before the drive and the BJP has given a go-ahead. (...) [Source: *The Statesman*, 17.08.2004]

Rajasthan – a favour for Sangh Parivar outfits:

It is an open secret that the main organisers of the Trishul Diksha events – Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal – have many sympathisers in the present Government. Ever since the VHP and Bajrang Dal resumed the programme in several towns across the State this past week, **there were regular reports of the BJP's MLAs and local leaders participating in them.**

While police were waiting for green signal from the Government for taking action, the **Government was mulling over the demand for lifting the ban on Trishul Diksha and revoking the cases registered against the VHP and Bajrang Dal**

activists earlier. (...) The Government's decision has come as the last straw after a series of actions favouring the Sangh Parivar outfits, **such as selective withdrawal of 122 riot cases of 2002 against the VHP activists in Banswara, protection to tribals who attacked Muslims in Sarada in Udaipur district recently, and giving a clean chit to the Bajrang Dal activists who attacked the tribal Christians in Chittaurgarh.** (...) In its renewed campaign, the VHP has distributed trishuls in Jaipur, Karauli, Kotputli, Bharatpur, Jhunjhunu and Sikar. Emboldened by the Government's move, both the VHP and Bajrang Dal are now planning to extend the programme to other towns and expand their activities. *[Source: The Hindu, 19.08.2004]*

Madhya Pradesh – terror in Jhabua:

When Uma Bharati took over the reins of Madhya Pradesh, little did the Christian community in Jhabua, a district whose population is predominantly tribal, know that it would be the beginning of a nightmare. In the second week of January, just a little over a month since the formation of a Bharatiya Janata Party government in the State, (...) the RSS and its frontal organisations have been trying hard to “reconvert” the Christian tribal people of Jhabua to Hinduism.

From January 14 to 17, the minorities were systematically targeted – their homes were burnt, their property was looted and vandalised and their religious effects desecrated – with the primary objective of teaching the Christian community a lesson. As the looters ran amok, raising slogans of “Jai Shri Ram”, the police, in most cases, just stood watching. There have been some suspensions and transfers of police and administrative officials but little action has been taken against BJP legislators – at least two of them – who led unruly mobs. (...) *[Source: Frontline, February 14-27, 2004]*

MP – Parivar brings flame to feed Bhojshala fire:

An “eternal” flame from the Maihar Devi temple was today installed adjacent to the Bhojshala/Kamal Maula Masjid.

The Sangh proposes to keep the flame burning till the **Hindu Jagran Manch succeeds in obtaining the return of a Saraswati idol purportedly belonging to the Bhojshala from a museum in London.**

The *yatra* was timed to enter Dhar on Tuesday, a day when Hindu devotees are allowed to enter the shrine to offer *puja*, apart from flowers and a fistful of rice. Inside the monument, RSS sevak Subhash Patel guided the devotees. Every Tuesday a different RSS volunteer gives visitors a tour of the monument, but their story basically boils down to blaming Muslims and the “secular” intellectuals for “the fall of Bhojshala”. (...) [Source: *Indian Express*, 21.01.2004]

Face the Music of Sangh Parivar

VHP to triple its service projects in Vanvasi areas:

The VHP has decided **to triple its service projects** in Vanvasi areas of the country in the coming three years. “Today **10,000 projects** are in full swing and by the year 2006, which is also the birth centenary year of the second RSS Sarsanghchak, M.S. Golwalkar, popularly known as Shri Guruji, the number of service projects **will be increased to 30,000,**” informed Shyam Gupt, central joint secretary general of VHP and in-charge of single-teacher school project, being run in Vanvasi areas. (...) Shri Shyam Gupt pointed out that the VHP had decided **to create a group of service projects in at least one lakh Vanvasi villages by the year 2011.** He added that VHP projects were based on four-point formula — primary education, health, economic progress and self-respect. Today the VHP has its projects running in 10,000 Vanvasi villages of the country, excluding Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir. (...) [Source: *The Organiser*, 20.06.2004]

VHP rath rolls towards N-E:

In a bid to keep the temple issue alive and take Hindutva to tribal and backward areas, VHP will hold ‘road shows’ by organising *rath yatras* all over the country, particularly in troubled North-East.

About two dozen modern *ram raths*, equipped with latest audio-video gizmos, are being readied to roll out by October end in *vanasthali* (tribal) and backward areas of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura, Manipur, Uttatanchal, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattishgarh, and other states.

The saffron-hued Ram-Krishna *raths* would carry verses of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharat* and depict different aspects of Ram and Krishna's life, particularly in tribal areas where Ram has a big following. For the first time, VHP will also Krishna for its Hindutva plank. With *Janmashtami* round the corner, all *raths* will also carry cut-outs of Krishna and sketches from *Mahabharat* and exhort Hindu tribals to fight another battle to save their cultural heritage. A training camp is underway in Kaesewakpuram in Ayodhya to train VHP leaders and workers who would accompany the *rath*.

VHP has also placed orders for printing pamphlets and booklets depicting Ram and Krishna as role models for every Hindu. Special films on both gods would be shown on screens erected on every *rath*. VHP discretely admits that its main aim is to reach out in areas where it has little presence. "The next two years are crucial for VHP as we are in the process of increasing our cadre and support base to strengthen the organisation. Naturally, our plan is to take the organisation to areas which were never penetrated before," confided a senior VHP leader to TOI. (...) [Source: *Times of India*, 02.09.2004]

VHP plans civil defence committees (read private militia):

The VHP will set up **parallel civil defence committees all over the country** in near future to counter "jehadi" elements. A manual for the committees was being prepared by senior retired police personnel, the VHP leader, Praveen Togadia, disclosed here today.

"The idea is to fight terrorism on the Israeli pattern. We are planning to set up thousands of such committees by May as politicians in this country have neither the will power nor the inclination to fight terror," Dr. Togadia said addressing mediapersons at Bharat Mata Mandir. **"The members of the committee will tip off the security agencies on the activities of 'jehadi' elements."** (...) [Source: *The Hindu*, 11.03.2004]

Shiv Sena to train cadre in trident-handling:

Shiv Sena has decided **to train its volunteers in “effective way of trishul-handling” for “self-defence” purposes** so that they can face all the “hurdles coming in the way of construction of Ram temple”.

The training will start with trishul puja that will be held all over the state at the all district units of Shiv Sena on August 23.

During the puja, Shiv Sainiks will impart trishul training to thousands of volunteers across the state. Vijay Tiwari, chief of party’s state unit, has issued directives to all the district units in this regard.

His deputy Ajay Katiyar said during the puja, the Shiv Sainiks will pray to God to give them strength to over come all hurdles and face bravely those who are “creating obstructions” on their way in building the temple.

Katiyar said that through trishul puja programme, Sena wants to convey the message to the public that “there is a bunch of politicians and few groups of minorities who do not want the temple to take shape.

Even the government of the country was manipulating the innocent public by describing the site of temple in Ayodhya to be in dispute.” (...) [Source: *Indian Express*, 19.08.2004]

Sangh to develop ideal villages in every district:

“Ideal villages will be developed in every district of the country with the efforts of RSS. Under the project certain economical, social, educational and moral goals will be fixed and efforts would be made to achieve them. **In the ideal villages, nobody will go hungry, unemployed, or become an addict or left uneducated.** Gradually the Sangh will try to take the scheme to every village of the country,” said Akhil Bharatiya Sah-Seva Pramukh of RSS, Surendra Singh Chauhan.

“Under the scheme a total of **80 villages** in Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Kerala, Assam and Rajasthan have **already been developed as ideal villages. Now another 556 villages have been selected and work has already begun there.** They have been named as a ‘**Kiran village**’. The result of our

work has become visible in about **172 villages**. In the coming two years the villages that will come into the developed category will be named as **Uday village**,” Shri Chauhan said. (...) [*Source: The Organiser, 28.03.2004*]

Sangh puts globalisation over god – new tricks of VKA:

The RSS is holding a major conference – intended to be a show of organisational strength – of its tribal wing, the Akhil Bharatiya Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram (ABVKA), in Delhi. (...) Most interestingly, the **conference will not focus**, RSS leaders said, **on conversion**, considered the pet issue of the Sangh as far as tribal affairs go. **The emphasis instead will be on economy and livelihood questions** and “mainstream” history ignoring the role of tribals in political movements. This is usually the theme of Left wing and/or subaltern history that accuses mainstream historiography of a conscious or unconscious anti-tribal bias.

Senior Sangh leaders said that after “detailed assessments”, they had come to the conclusion that there was a need for an image change – from anti-conversion agitationists to activists **focussing on “broad tribal interests”**. “We do not want to be seen as rabble rousers,” a senior ABVKA leader said.

(...) The delegates will discuss the themes **“Impact of globalisation on tribals”** and **“How history has ignored the contribution of tribals in nation building.”** Preparatory work for the conference include printing 15 lakh calendars and an equal number of lockets. These carry images of various “tribal heroes”. The calendars and lockets have been distributed in **47,000 villages** in the country. ABVKA’s leaders are preparing a draft that will initiate discussions on how “every government has ignored tribal concerns”. “There will be detailed discussions, **especially on the impact of WTO pacts on tribals**,” said an ABVKA functionary. (...) [*Source: The Statesman, 06.08.2004*]

Godhra & Gujarat—the Aftermath

“In fact, Hindus of Gujarat had broken all barriers, of caste, creed and politics, to rise as one,” Togadia said, to the thunderous applause of the audience. He estimated that about 50 lakh Hindus in Gujarat had come out on the street as a violent reaction to the Godhra carnage.

[Hindu Voice, Sept. 2002, www.hvk.org/articles/0902/114.html]

[The cold-blooded, pre-planned carnage in Gujarat had been orchestrated by the Sangh Parivar accusing the Muslims for Godhra burning. In *Update 8*, we have questioned the theories behind the Godhra massacre. The **first theory** was aired instantaneously after the Godhra incident by Narendra Modi (the CM of Gujarat) and other siblings of Sangh Parivar. They argued that the Godhra killings were handiwork of the ‘anti-national’ Muslims and/or the Pakistani-based ISI. The **second theory** was propagated by several media that the Godhra incident was a spontaneous outburst of the Muslims as the *karsevaks* returning from Ayodhya vandalised and misbehaved with the Muslim women and vendors at several stations en route including Godhra. **The second theory de facto justified the carnage of Gujarat** and made the arguments of Narendra Modi & Co. stronger that the ‘Gujarat has happened in reaction to the incident of Godhra.’ Before the last general elections the Advani reiterated the same argument: **“The BJP believes, Vajpayee-ji believes, I believe, if Godhra had not taken place, the subsequent riots would have not taken place.”** (*Advani blames Muslims for Gujarat riots, 13.03.04, [www. webindia123.com](http://www.webindia123.com)*) Hence, the onus of the Gujarat carnage was cleverly delivered on the shoulders of the Muslims.

In *Update 8*, we had questioned this theory. Now, after two-and-half years of the Godhra incident, many reports & investigations are published in newspapers which in fact corroborated our suspicions. It is now almost revealed that there was no ‘foreign hands’ behind Godhra incident. Moreover, the investigative agencies have questioned the theory that Muslims put fire in the train in Godhra. Even the police officers in their depositions before Nanavati Commission are now disclosing several ‘mysteries’ which should be noted also. After several months of the Godhra incident, the **Forensic Science Laboratory** of Gujarat govt. delivered its report on it. – *Update*]

Godhra Bogie was Burnt from Inside: Report

The mystery over the burning of the S-6 compartment of Sabarmati Express at Godhra on February 27, which killed 59 passengers and set off an unprecedented spate of communal frenzy all over Gujarat, has turned deeper with the forensic report on the incident discounting the possibility of the mob throwing inflammable liquid from outside and then setting the bogie on fire.

Investigations made by the Ahmedabad-based Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) have now shown that almost 60 litres of inflammable material was poured from inside the compartment before it was set on fire.

A report by the FSL's Assistant Director Dr M S Dahiya, which is part of the charge-sheet filed in the Godhra case about a month back, is based on a study of the pattern of the burns in the compartment and a simulated exercise conducted on May 3 to recreate the incident. The report contradicts the view held so far that the mob which attacked the train threw inflammable liquid at the train using buckets and cans from a distance, even while the passengers had shut all the windows and doors of the compartment.

To recreate how the crime must have been committed, a train bogie was placed at the same spot. Using a variety of different containers, it was doused with liquid for experimental observation.

The report said the height of the window of the bogie was found to be seven feet. In these circumstances, it was not possible to throw inflammable liquids into the bogie from the outside with the help of a bucket or a jerry-can because by this method most of the liquid fell outside the bogie.

At the spot of the incident, at about a distance of 14 feet, there was a mound of gravel-stones about 3 feet high. It was spread parallel to the bogie for a long distance. The FSL officials, standing on the mound, threw water on the windows of the bogie, of which only about 10 to 15 per cent entered the bogie. The rest fell on the outside. Since, a major portion of the inflammable liquid fell on the tracks and around it, would have caused damage on the outside of the bogie and under it. The report says, "after inspecting the bogie and the tracks, it was found that there is no effect of fire below the windows. Taking

this fact into account and the burning pattern on the outside of the bogie, the conclusion is that no inflammable liquid was thrown into the bogie from the outside”. It further says, “it also does not look possible that inflammable liquid was thrown in from the doors of the bogie”.

As a next step, using a bucket, about 60 litres of water was thrown into the passage of the compartment from one side and then a large part of the bogie was covered. Water thrown like this went only in one direction, no part of it flowed outside from the open doors or in the direction of the latrine.

“On the basis of this experimental observation, the conclusion is that standing in the passage of the compartment near seat number 72, using a container with a wide opening, about 60 litres of inflammable liquid has been poured and then immediately a fire has been started in the bogie,” the report says.

The FSL report further says that “it appears that three of the four doors of the compartment were open when it was burning while all the windows were shut. The pattern of burning (allegatoring pattern) shows that the intensity of the heat was four times more towards the eastern side towards seat no. 72 of the bogies”. [*Source: Times News Network, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>, 03.07.2002*]

[Hence, the plot thickens. Now, the deposition of several police officers of Gujarat and eye-witnesses (including *'karsevaks'* returning from Ayodhya) before the Nanavati Commission (which is enquiring the Godhra massacre) also strongly question the Sangh theory that the bogies of Sabarmati express had been burnt outside by some Muslim miscreants and/or ISI. Moreover these depositions throw new lights on the 'mystery' of Godhra. Before going into these depositions in detail, we will observe how the govt. of Gujarat tried their best to justify their concocted theory but subsequently failed to do so. They also took repressive measures against Muslim people on flimsy grounds. – *Update*]

Godhra 'Witness' was 25 km Away!

Dilipbhai Ujamsinh Dasadiya was supposed to be a key witness in the Godhra train carnage case. He is mentioned in the police records and the charge-sheet as an active Viswa Hindu Parishad worker of Godhra who was present at the Godhra railway station

to serve tea and refreshments to kar sevaks on February 27 morning when all hell broke loose.

On February 28, police sub-inspector took his statement in which he gave graphic details of how he saw “a mob of 3,000 persons armed with deadly weapons and shouting slogans attack the train”. He even heard them shouting Allah-o-Akbar and *Saale Hinduon ko kaat dalo* (kill those bloody Hindus). He identified five persons in the mob (...).

The police couldn't have asked for more from a witness. Except that **Dasadiya now says that he was not present in Godhra at all at the time of attack on the train.**

A teacher, he was in his school 25 kilometers away and the school's attendance record proves this. More importantly, he says the police never took his statement in the first place! Quite obviously, the investigators into the Godhra massacre don't know what was hit them. In his “eye witness account”, which is signed only by PSI Jhala and not by Dasadiya, he is quoted as saying that after the mob of around 1,000 persons set the compartment on fire and police drove them away, the mob returned again – this time 3,000 strong – in an attempt to free some of those who had been detained by police. This time, he heard them saying *maro, kapo* (kill them, cut them).

Dasadiya, who works as a teacher in a trust-run in Paruna village, has in fact, **given an affidavit before a magistrate saying that he was never present at the site of crime and the police never took his statement.** (...) [Source: *Times of India*, 29.08.2002]

[The police of Gujarat found many of these ‘eye-witnesses’ to concoct the Godhra theory and framed charges under the draconian POTA against Muslim people numbering more than hundred! They are still languishing in jails though their ‘crime’ cannot be proved. After many “twists and turns” in this Godhra investigation done by the police of Narendra Modi's Gujarat, the cops now deposed before the Nanavati commission which revealed more twisting and turning news. The deposition of retired Deputy SP K.C. Bave projected some interesting flashes on this issue. – *Update*]

No Conspiracy in Godhra Train Fire, Says Probe Officer

After two days of grilling, the tightlipped investigator of the Godhra carnage, retired deputy SP K.C. Bave told the G.T. Nanavati and K.G. Shah commission that no traces of petroleum hydrocarbon could be determined by forensic experts in the exhibits collected two months after the incident, on May 1, 2002, he said (...)

When questioned by (...) lawyer Mukul Sinha, Bave **confirmed that his investigations had found no evidence of either a conspiracy or a “foreign hand” behind the carnage** which claimed the lives of 59 persons, including kar sevaks, aboard the Sabarmati Express (...).

But he failed to explain why the victim’s bodies were not sent for forensic examination to determine what caused the burning. Bave also feigned ignorance about crucial facts like why no pictures of the coach were taken with the bodies in it or whether the statements of survivors of S-6 coach were recorded or not.

(...) **Bave admitted that there was a contradiction in the findings** in that while the floor part of the coach was badly burnt indicating that the fire was from the bottom, the injury reports of the 70 survivors showed burn injuries above the waist.

He could not explain how the people who died were completely charred and those injured had no burn injuries on their feet. *[Source: Times of India, 01.07.2004]*

[Based on the Forensic Report Parivar alias BJP now claims that the Muslims entered the Sabarmati Express and put fire inside. But the depositions before the Nanavati Commission clearly reject this theory.]

‘There Was No Waiting Mob’

(...) The burning of the two coaches of the Sabarmati Express on February 27, 2002, in which 58 people including kar sevaks returning from Ayodhya were killed, has been repeatedly described by the Gujarat government as a premeditated effort by local Muslims who worked in connivance with other members of the minority community in Godhra. The state railway police chargesheet, filed after the incident, went along much the same track.

Eyewitnesses saw no waiting mob; people gathered only later in groups of 10 or 15. But the depositions before the G.T. Nanavati Commission probing the Godhra incident (as sourced by Outlook) reveal that things were not as black and white as they have been made out to be, they are overlaid by confusing shades of grey.

The statements by railway authorities, police officials, eyewitnesses, and kar sevaks who were aboard the train sharply contradict the latest police chargesheet filed in the case in 2003. As per the police version, the train was torched by a Muslim mob from the Signal Falia colony outside Godhra station. **The depositions before the commission paint a different picture and contradict the police account. Here is how.**

The police chargesheet claims eight jerrycans of petrol were poured on the floor of the S-6 compartment by as many as seven people. It says the petrol was stocked in the Muslim-dominated Signal Falia area, a little outside the Godhra station, and used to torch the train.

However, depositions before the commission say there was no fire on the floor, nobody saw anyone entering the coach or pouring petrol. Significantly, burn injuries suffered by surviving passengers were all above the waist. This could not have happened if the fire was on the floor of the compartment.

For instance, Raju Bishankumar Bhargava, the then SP of Godhra, says in his deposition, “I reached the burning coach at about 8.30 am. I saw people with black (charred) faces and with some burn injuries on the head coming out of the coach. I saw ten to twelve passengers coming out of the coach. The injuries which I had noticed on the passengers were on the **upper part** of their bodies. I did not notice any injury **below their waists. I did not see any flames rising in that area of the coach which I could see from the door. I saw only smoke there. I did not notice any flames on the floor of the area between the two doors. I also did not smell any inflammable fuel like petrol, kerosene or diesel. I did not see any person from the Muslim community preventing the passengers in S-6 and S-7 from coming out of their coaches.”**

Passengers on the Sabarmati Express confirm this in their respective depositions. **Says kar sevak** Mahesh Chaudhary, who was returning from Ayodhya, “Before jumping out of the coach, **I did not see any fluid on the floor of the coach. I did not see any flames** while I was **inside the train. I saw only smoke.**” Savitaben Sadhu, Babubhai Patel and Dwarkabhai Patel, also passengers on the train, depose likewise.

Savitaben **did not recall** seeing “any person coming inside the coach from outside and pouring any fluid”. Similarly, Babubhai remembers neither seeing any person in a Muslim dress or with beard inside the coach nor any such Muslim rushing inside the coach. Dwarkabhai too “did not see any flames” when he was inside the coach. “I (also) did not notice any fluid being poured inside (when I was in the coach),” he has told the commission in his testimony. **“I had not seen any person sprinkling any fluid or putting fire to the coach.”**

The police present the Godhra incident as a pre-planned conspiracy, as part of which a mob waited in and around the station to attack the train. **Depositions by railway officials say there was no such mob; people gathered only later in small groups of 10 or 15.**

For instance, assistant station master Rajendraprasad Misrilal Meena, who was on duty at Godhra and was an eyewitness, says, “I could see from the cabin that the train had stopped (when the chain was pulled). At that time, no crowd was seen between the cabin and the train. **When it (train) reached near cabin A, some five to six minutes later, there was still no crowd. But soon a crowd started collecting. Even so, they did not come together, they came in tens and fifteens; women and children were among them too.**”

The police ‘investigation’ also says that people from outside pelted stones at the S-6 compartment, **while several others hopped on to the train, ruptured the rubber vestibule and burnt the coach.**

However, railway officials who were eyewitnesses have made **depositions to the contrary**, saying the stone-pelting was from both sides, from the train and from outside, and this was probably the result of the altercation between kar sevaks and the hawkers at the station.

Mohan Jagdish Yadav, Railway Protection Force constable on duty and yet another eyewitness, records, “The passengers shouting and throwing stones were going towards the wall (which separates Signal Falia from the station area). The people who were throwing stones from Signal Falia were doing so from behind the wall and some of them were trying to jump over the wall. **The passengers who were throwing stones were shouting Jai Shri Ram.**”

The police had earlier said a mob splashed petrol from jerrycans into the compartment, hurled burning rags and set the S-6 bogie on fire. There was no mention of the fire being ignited by someone inside.

However, a report by the government’s own Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL), which recreated the scene using water in different types of containers and throwing it from outside into the coach, concluded it was impossible to burn a coach like that from the outside. (...)

What did happen then? Going by the evidence, senior railway officials suggest that it was probably the rubber vestibule between the two coaches that caught fire and caused the smoke. Since the doors and windows were shut, this may have led to a sharp depletion in oxygen levels. What caused this fire is still a mystery. **What is clear is that in all likelihood Muslim mobs outside Godhra station did not rush to the Sabarmati Express and torch it as the police chargesheet would have us believe.** (...) [Source: By Darshan Desai, 03.07.2004, Outlook; retrieved from www.countercurrents.org/guj-desai030704.htm; accessed 21.07.04]

[From the above excerpts/articles it is revealed that the theory of the Sangh Parivar and Gujarat govt. is quite untenable. Even the police officers investigating the Godhra case cannot provide satisfactory depositions which may save the skin of the Sangh or Modi. The statements of “eye witness” are going to be proved fabricated or tailor-made. The “eye witnesses” are taking back statements furnishing fresh affidavits. Still, we are not sure at all whether real truths behind this gory incident will be uncovered or not. **Firstly**, there are several complaints against the judges of the Commission such as GT Nanavati or KG Shah with strong anti-minority bias. **Secondly**, there are several reports

that the “eye witnesses” of the Godhra incident are being coerced and pressurised by the VHP and BJP leaders. Follow the next excerpt. – *Update*]

Godhra Victims Allege BJP ‘Pressure’

In an embarrassing development for the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party in Gujarat, **some relatives of the Godhra train carnage** on Sunday **alleged being ‘pressurised’ by party and Vishwa Hindu Parishad workers**. They also demanded shifting of the Nanavati Commission of inquiry outside the state, as they had ‘no faith’ in the Narendra Modi government.

Addressing mediapersons in Mumbai, the relatives, (...) alleged that BJP and VHP had ‘used’ them for political gains and said they felt abandoned.

“The BJP had taken our family members to Ayodhya and assured of bringing them back safely. Why were they sent back without none of the BJP members accompanying them?” asked 82-year-old Dr Girish Rawal, whose wife Sudha was killed in the carnage and son Ashwin was stabbed in post-Godhra violence.

Asked if he felt that the Muslims were involved in the burning of the coach S-6, Dr Rawal said, “We cannot say that who was involved. We don’t want to blame a particular community for that incident. We can only say that anti-social elements have done this act. They did this to disturb the peace of Gujarat.”

After the death of his wife, he lost his son Ashwin Rawal in the riots that followed the tragedy. Ashwin was a local Bajrang Dal president.

“I just want to appeal to everyone. Forget about the past and let all of us live in peace in this country. I don’t want to blame any particular community for the death of my wife and my child. I just want to say that anti-social elements are involved in these incidents and they have got nothing to do with their religion. Their only aim is to disturb peace in our country,” said Dr Rawal. (...)

Sharad Mhatre, whose wife Malabehn too died, said, “When I look back at the horrific incident, I feel that not a single VHP leader died in the incident. They had booked their train tickets from Ayodhya two days later. What was the reason to do so? I still don’t

understand.” (...) **“We are being told by the VHP leaders on what to say and what not to say in front of the Justice Nanavati commission.** This is unacceptable to us. We are therefore demanding that Godhra inquiry and also other inquiries like the Naroda Pattiya and Gulberg massacres should be conducted outside Gujarat,” said Bharatbhai. (...) [Source: by Syed Firdaus Ashraf, 05.10.2003. <http://in.rediff.com/news/2003/oct/05godh.htm>]

[Identical reports have been published by several media such as *Times News Network* (05.10.03) & *The Hindu* (06.10.03) etc. Whether the truth behind the Godhra incident will be uncovered or not, one can perceive the sinister designs made to mastermind the genocide of Gujarat. In recent times, Godhra has taken again the centre-stage, thanks to the parliamentary politics of Laloo Prasad Yadav who has ordered enquiry on the Godhra incident on behalf of the department of Railways. The decision of the Railway minister made noises within the Sangh Parivar who thunderously threatened: **“We had warned that the probe would recoil and would lead to polarisation, which is not in national interest”**. (*Times News Network*, 20.07.04) Two messages are clearly revealed from this threat. **Firstly**, “probe will recoil” and **secondly**, that “would lead to polarisation”. In fact, after the Gujarat carnage the Sangh Parivar never backtracks from its original position that **“it is an experiment which will be testified elsewhere.”** In the recently concluded open session of the national meet of VHP, Ashok Singhal told: **“What happened in Gujarat after the Godhra carnage had the blessings of lord Rama”**. (03.07.04, www.expressindia.com/fullstory.php) Now, the police officers at their depositions before the Nanavati Commission flash out a few ‘*andar ki bat*’ of the Gujarat genocide. They indict the Parivar leaders and Gujarat govt. in this carnage. – Update]

Gujarat: Former Intelligence Top Cop Blows Modi’s Cover

A former head of the intelligence wing of the Gujarat police has sent a shudder across the establishment by filing an explosive affidavit before the judicial commission probing the post-Godhra riots.

A copy of the 172-page affidavit filed by additional director general of police R B Sreekumar has been procured by *The Times of India* officially from the commission. **It lists instances of complicity of the police and politicians in the post-Godhra violence which rocked the state two-and-a-half years ago. It cites specific instances of police subversion in controlling the riots and manipulating investigations to help the perpetrators.**

The affidavit annexes an analytical note sent to the then additional chief secretary (home) Ashok Narayan, on April 24, 2002, quoting senior police officers on “officers at the decisive rung of the hierarchical ladder, like inspectors in charge of police stations, ignoring the specific instructions from the official hierarchy **on account of their getting direct verbal instructions from the senior political leaders of the ruling party.**”

Sreekumar says in the affidavit, “Such officers have become quite adept in doing the art of deceptive law enforcement **for the benefit of their political friends**, who ensure their placement and continuance in their choicest executive posts, at the cost of the spirit and letter of the laws of the land.” The jitters caused by the affidavit are already evident. The Narendra Modi government says it is “highly sensitive” and “should not be made public.”

Sreekumar, who became additional DGP (intelligence), about 40 days after the riots started, was later transferred from the intelligence department **because the political leadership suspected his role in the leakage to the media of the infamous Modi tapes.** Now in-charge of police reforms and modernisation, Sreekumar cites specific intelligence reports about **how a sarpanch owing allegiance to Shiv Sena led a conspiracy to incite communal disturbance even in the relatively peaceful Kutch to deter riot-affected Muslims in other parts of the state from migrating here.**

There is also a departmental order forwarded to the then Ahmedabad police commissioner P C Pande and DGP K Chakravarthi, (dated April 26, 2002) **talking about “Bajrang Dal (BD) leaders likely to distribute lethal weapons like swords, daggers, acid bulbs, petrol bombs on Hanuman Jayanti to their workers.”**

The affidavit also talks about possible attacks, led by named VHP leaders, on Muslim pockets in several areas of Ahmedabad. [Source: By Leena Mishra, Times of India, 18.08.2004]

[These sensational depositions by the senior police officers, reveal more: “RB Sreekumar said that **members of the BJP in Gujarat made the police feel handicapped during Hindu-Muslim clashes.**” (BBC, 31.08.04) And more: “He (Sreekumar) claims that **police officers in Ahmedabad had mentioned the names of politicians who were giving orders to police inspectors directly on how to handle the rioting.** But the former intelligence chief refused to divulge the names of these politicians. His reason – it would harm his sources.” (31.08.04, www.ndtv.com) And more: ‘In a significant disclosure, a senior bureaucrat of Gujarat government (Additional Chief Secretary, Home, Ashok Narayan) today told the Godhra riots inquiry commission: “**This decision to bring the bodies of Kar Sevaks to Sola civil hospital from Godhra on February 27 itself was Modi’s,**” (The Hindu, 21.08.04) More reports may follow these disclosures. But, we have seen earlier in this issue that Parivar/BJP/Modi are quite unperturbed at these ‘disclosures’. They are moving with their fascist projects in full swing!

We are now going to present before the readers the conditions of Gujarat after the gruesome massacre in 2002. **Gujarat may be called now as a perfect ‘Hindu state’** where the Muslims are systematically cornered, threatened, ghettoised and often attacked. Hence the statements of the Parivar leaders that “**the probe will recoil**” or “**would lead to polarisation**” are not blank fire. In the next articles we will see the actual state of present Gujarat.

After few months of the carnage (August, 2002) the reporters found in Gujarat a perfect “**Hindu Rashtra**”. – Update]

Hindu Rashtra? It’s All over Gujarat

If you’re looking for signs that Gujarat’s the most saffronised of all states, take the highway. Better still, just roam around the congested streets of Ahmedabad. This is no hidden agenda of the Sangh Parivar. It’s all out in the open in Gujarat. **Signboards**

proclaiming India as a ‘Hindu Rashtra’ can be found all over the state and they don’t merit a second look from the authorities.

“Karnavati city of this Hindu Rashtra welcomes you”, proclaims a board painted in saffron **in the heart of Ahmedabad**. For those wondering what Karnavati is, it’s what the VHP chooses to call Ahmedabad. In Chhota Udepur, 200 km south of Ahmedabad, the signboard on the highway is more direct. It simply says: **“Welcome to Hindu Rashtra’s Chota Udepur town”**.

These signboards are one legacy of almost five years of BJP rule. While the party let’s it be known that it doesn’t have anything to do with the ‘hidden agenda’ of the Sangh Parivar, it has had no qualms in allowing scores of such boards to be put up all over Gujarat. (...)

A freshly painted board on a crossroad outside Shahpur Gate proclaims the roundabout to be ‘Kashi Vishwanath Chowk’. Most billboards in the name of VHP, Bajrang Dal and Durga Vahini begin with their cause being dubbed variously as Dharamraksha, Rashtraraksha or Gauraksha. A board at Kalupur, while welcoming people to “Karnavati city of Hindu Rashtra”, goes a step further: “Garv Se Kaho Hum Hindu Hain”. (...)

In Vadodara, the boards say **“Hindu Rashtra welcomes you to Vadodara Nagar”**. “At present, Vadodara has about five to six boards at entry points to the city. We have now asked our workers to put up similar boards in localities that don’t have them,” says VHP’s Vadodara chief Ajay Pandya. (...)

The boards have come up in the rural areas of Vadodara along the highway which leads to Mumbai as well as other state highways. (...)

Apart from the VHP, there are also cases of locals painting walls with slogans. In Kasar Falia in the Kothi area of Vadodara, for instance, locals have painted a wall with a slogan in Marathi that reads: “Shivrayache ami santan, Desh amcha Hindustan, Khabardar yal pudhe tar, Ubharun taku kabarastan” **(We are children of Shivaji, Our country is Hindustan, Dare not come forward or we will send you to the graveyard)**. [Source: By Sanjay Pandey & Anoop Kayarat, Times of India, 18.08.2002.]

[In Gujarat now, the Christians are also continuously intimidated and threatened with dire consequences. We have seen in earlier discussions that in the tribal districts the wings of Sangh Parivar are working still vigorously. Harassment and warning of the Christians and missionaries are going on. Though ruled against by the High Court, the Gujarat govt. issued new orders to survey among the Christians. Here is a report.]

Census of Christians in Gujarat

For almost a week now, the Gujarat Police have been knocking on the doors of Christian institutions and families all over the State asking a series of high objectionable questions.

In almost every case, the police have been coming without any authorization and are at a loss to say who has sent them and for what the answers are required.

In the single instance (in Modasa, Sabarkantha District), the police with great difficulty furnished in writing (Gujarati – rather illegible) their questionnaire as follows:

“To: All Thana Amaldhar, In DPO, CPI, Himatnagar, No. L1B/M/03 dated 2/3/2003

Send information (between 1998 and 2003) about Christians of your area to this information centre or the State Government as per the paper (Patrak) by 3/3/2003 4.00 p.m.

- 1.
2. Year.
3. No. of Christians at the beginning of the year.
4. Change of religion, area or village.
5. No. of people increased during the year.
6. No. of natural births (No. of increase)
8. Marriage of Christians with people from other religion.
9. Reasons for people migrating to – from your district or area.
10. Total No. of Christians (approx. from A to B)

11. Special note.

The police (special branch, Ahmedabad) also visited our centre PRASHANT. Among the questions asked were: **a) who is the head of the institution? b) what are the activities of the institution? c) from where does the money come?** etc.

The police have also visited several Christian families all over and the questions related specifically to conversion and whether they were forcibly converted. In some families the police arrived there almost at midnight. Many of these families feel absolutely intimidated and harassed and are afraid even to speak about the trauma that they have gone through. In Modasa, a tribal Christian was called to the police station for long hours of interrogation.

Reports which keep coming in are from all parts of Gujarat... Sabarkantha, Banaskantha, Kutch, Rajkot, Ahmedabad, Baroda, Panchmahals and different parts of South Gujarat. This activity of the police is not merely discriminatory but highly unlawful and unconstitutional. In 1999, when the State Government decided to do a census on the Muslims and Christians, a suo moto order by Justice M. R. Calla of the Gujarat High Court very clearly stated that there cannot be a religion-wise or community-wise targeting of a particular group.

The Home Minister of Gujarat, Mr. Amit Shah in an interview to NDTV on March 10, 03 admitted that such a survey is taking place in Gujarat. (...) [Source: 10.03.2003., Fr. Cedric Prakash, Director, PRASHANT, Gujarat United Christian Forum for Human Rights; <http://www.sabrang.com/news/salert12apr.htm>; accessed 13.05.04]

Another 'Survey' of Christians

In total disregard of the Gujarat High Court's orders, the Patan district police have launched yet another "survey" of the Christians and the institutions run by the community even as the State authorities denied issuing any such instruction.

Not only are police virtually acting as the census officers enumerating the Christian families, they have also been asking the converts why and when they have embraced Christianity and the "source of income" of the Christian institutions undertaking welfare

schemes such as digging borewells in scarcity-hit villages. (...) [Source: By Manas Dasgupta, *The Hindu*, 27.05.2003]

[The Modi govt. of Gujarat enacted a new anti-conversion law called “**Gujarat Freedom of Religion Act 2003**” which bans the conversion of Hindus to any other religion though making the re-conversion to Hinduism lawful! These steps taken by the Gujarat govt. and the open activities of Sangh Parivar instigated threatening against the Christians. Follow the next excerpt.]

Christians may be Targeted Again in Gujarat

Pamphlets targeting Christians have surfaced in various parts of Gujarat in the run-up to Christmas and fears are being expressed about incidents similar to those of 1998, when several prayer halls in the South Gujarat district of Dangs were attacked by militant organisations.

The pamphleteering, say Christian organisations, has been synchronised with an attempt to generate heat on the conversions issue, particularly in tribal areas of the state, which have had a history of Hindu-Christian conflict in recent years.

A massive rally is being organised by the VHP in Vyara town of Surat district on Tuesday which will be attended by VHP’s international general secretary Pravin Togadia.

‘Yeh Hain Asaliyat’ (This is reality), a pamphlet in Hindi published by Ahmedabad-based Bharat Jagruti Morcha, talks about a missionary ‘invasion’ and cautions Hindus to take the Christian ‘threat’ seriously or else perish. “Hindus are in danger because of pseudo-secularists,” says the pamphlet. It accuses missionaries of abusing the Hindu religion and its places of worship. A story about a ‘swayamsevak’, who preferred his religion over money offered by Christian missionaries, has also been highlighted in the pamphlet, which ends with the slogan ‘Hindu jagega... rashtra jagega... rashtra jagega.. vishwa bachega’.

Another booklet published by the same house, ‘Bharat Ko Isai Banane Ka Shadyantra’ (A conspiracy to make India a Christian country) talks about the ‘Christian invasion’. (...) **The booklet warns that all the religions in the country, including Islam and Sikhism, will have to suffer if this ‘invasion’ is not checked.** A section of the

booklet 'Kuch Ghatit Satya Ghatanaye' talks about how Hindus have 'suffered' at the hands of Christians in Goa and how they were forced to remain spectators when around 280 temples were razed. (...)

In the end is a list of demands such as removing from textbooks sections on Babar, Taimur, Genghis Khan and Christian foreigners and banning English and other symbols of British slavery like western clothes, the western calendar year and even use of the word 'India'.

The other two booklets 'Hindu O! Ab to jaago...' and 'Ab samay nahin hai sone ka...' too contain similar attacks on missionaries. This pamphlet gives some figures about the rise in conversions in Arunachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Delhi. (...) [Source: by Harit Mehta, Times News Network, 23.12.2003.]

[This type of intimidation & threatening to the Christian people are continuing unabated in Gujarat. Few months ago the **Modi govt. banned the holiday on Good Friday** (*The Hindu*, 07.04.04). These reports clearly show that the fascist projects of Sangh Parivar are still going on a broad scale. In fact, the scale of this fascist projects is not only broad, it's enormous. Two & half years after the Gujarat carnage, the reports show that the whole of the Gujarat society is viciously polarised and divided between two communities. A wall has been crafted between the Hindu & Muslim communities. At the one side of the wall there are "**WE**" and at another side are "**THEY**". The ghettoisation of the Muslims in Gujarat started in the 80s. Now it takes a giant stride. The fear, sense of insecurity and alienation among the Muslims reach a new height. On the other side the Hindu people are silently alienating themselves from the Muslim community either voluntarily or at the veiled threat of the outfits of the Sangh Parivar. **It's a complete division. It's a perfect model of a Hindu Rashtra envisaged and programmed by the Sangh Parivar.** – Update]

Ahmedabad's Ghettos

They tore down the gates. And built walls instead. Towering brick walls topped with shreds of glass. We are at a 'border' in Vejalpur, Ahmedabad. A road separates the Hindu ghetto from the Muslim one. Besides the road, it is fear that keeps them apart. Last year's

communal pogrom has polarised Ahmedabad even further, pushing more people into ghettos. (...)

Divisions that started during the 1985 riots have become more pronounced after last year's communal violence. Several Muslim refugees have not returned to their homes. They seek safety in numbers. They feel safer living in Muslim ghettos like Juhapura on the outskirts of the city, or Shah Alam, closer to the heart of the city. Hindu families have moved to newer suburbs, on the western side of the Sabarmati river, like Naranpura and Satellite, or Maninagar in the eastern part of the city. After last year's communal carnage, Muslims – regardless of their social status – are being pushed further into ghettos. (...)

“Communities have always lived in groups. But they had friendly relations with each other. The idea of isolation didn't exist until 1985,” says Prof. Abid Shamsi, a retired university professor. With each subsequent riot, more refugees started moving to ghettos. Last year's violence added new dimensions to the marginalisation of Muslims, economically and educationally.

Nawab Ali Sayyed is one of thousands of refugees who have been pushed into confinement in Juhapura. “We don't have the nerve to go back to our house in Rakhial (a mixed industrial area). It was the first time riots took place there. Our house was near the border. We are safer here. It is a totally Muslim area. No one will attack us,” he says.

But, finding work is far more difficult in the ghetto. “Business is less here. I can't even get work for 10 days in a month. We are still living off loans from friends and relatives,” says Nawab Ali. “Our old home was closer to the city. I was a car dealer. My business is totally destroyed. My old Hindu associates don't do business with me any longer. We are all Indians first. It's only political leaders who have made us 'majority' and 'minority,’” he says.

Muslim businesses and workers are being edged out. Many small shops were burned. Owners had to shift operations from Hindu areas to Muslim localities. (...)

A survey in Juhapura (a Muslim ghetto) and Rakhial by Samerth, a non-governmental organisation, found that riot-affected people's incomes fell by more than a third, on average. More than 20 per cent had to change their occupation because they lost their

equipment in the riots [Read: 'Genocide' – *Update*] **Six of ten migrations to ghettos** took place after communal riots. Of those who shifted, 68 per cent were Muslim. The largest shift was during last year's riots. Of those who migrated to the ghettos since 1969, **43 per cent moved in 2002-03**. "Communities live separately in several cities, towns and villages. But the difference here is that it is not out of choice. People are forced to move," says Bhabani Das of Samerth.

Segregation is not confined to the poor and middle classes. **Even the elite areas of Ahmedabad are ghettoised. Muslims cannot buy an apartment in most middle-class or upper-class buildings.** "There are only a few buildings in areas like Paldi or Navrangpura that will allow Muslims. But in most other places like Satellite, C.G. Road, Drive In or Vastrapur, no one will sell an apartment or a shop to a Muslim," says Prof. Shamsi. **Property prices in elite areas are also higher for Muslims.** "The price for my house is double that of a flat in a Hindu building just around the corner. Space for Muslims is very limited. So there is a premium on it," he says. (...)

Another common prejudice amongst Hindus is: 'Muslims have pushed Hindus out of the old, walled city and taken over their houses'. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad is fuelling this myth. It recently protested against the sale of two Hindu shops to a Muslim in the walled city. Actually, both Hindu and Muslim families have moved out of the old city. Many have shifted in search of larger houses in the suburbs. "Several Hindu houses haven't been bought over by Muslims. In fact, Hindu traders have taken them over for shops or warehouses," says Hassan Pathan, a municipal corporator. "More Hindus may have moved out of the walled city because they can afford to. Muslims are poorer, so they can't shift out." (...)

Exclusion is breeding extremism on both sides. "The youth have strange misconceptions about 'the other' community. Right now, the older generation still have warm relations with their Muslim friends and clients. During the past three riots, my Hindu friends protected me in their homes. But in 10 years, that person-to-person contact may no longer exist," says Prof. Shamsi.

As the walls get higher, it is becoming more difficult to see 'the other side'. [*Source: by Dionne Bunsha, Frontline, Sept. 27-Oct. 10, 2003*]

When the Only Way to Get to the Other Side is to be Born There...

(...) Today, Ahmedabad is split into two. The old, walled city is almost completely Muslim, while the expanding new city on the other side of the Sabarmati river is completely Hindu — and the twain do not meet.

The two communities have separate lives, separate economies. “No Muslim can either rent or buy a house in the new city. It’s an unwritten law,” explained Father Cedric Prakash, who’s been engaged in social work for years. But the segregation is not restricted to residences; it also extends to businesses. **No Muslim will be sold land or premises to start a business in the new city unless he has a Hindu partner.** And Hindus have stopped coming to the old city unless it is absolutely unavoidable.

While the old city rots in congestion, narrow roads, dirt and stench thanks to the lack of civic facilities, the new Ahmedabad continues to grow with shopping malls, multiplexes, housing colonies and new roads constructed every day. **Even government offices are being shifted out of the old city into new buildings on the other side.** Muslims can only watch the development and yearn for it. They aren’t allowed to be a part of it.

Employment for Muslims in Hindu firms or businesses is out of the question, and those who dare to apply are often told that they are being rejected because “we do not tolerate absenteeism even during riots”. Most Muslims who worked in Hindu firms lost their jobs during the 2002 pogrom as they were either living under curfew or were unable to get to work due to the violence.

Segregation has made its insidious way into schools as well. Ahmedabad’s only convent school is St Xavier’s — all other good English-medium schools are owned or run by Hindu individuals or trusts. Muslim parents are now discouraged from applying for admissions in these Hindu-owned schools, that are all in the new city. The refusal is subtle to start with — “our school bus doesn’t go to the walled city”. When the parent offers to transport the child to school, the next statement is likely to be: “We expect 100 per cent attendance.” And when the hapless parent assures the school on that count, there’s a not-

so-gentle nudge — “we can’t guarantee your child’s security, why don’t you send him to a school in ‘your’ area where he will be safe.” The polarisation is complete. (...) [Source: by Sajeda Momin, *The Statesman*, 03.03.2004]

[Children are affected deeply at this ‘polarisation’. Even the Muslim people of upper classes have been hard-hit by this vicious atmosphere described above. Follow the next report.]

Lesser Children of Gujarat

If your name has a Quereshi, Alam, Hanif, Jamal or something similar in it and you live in Gujarat, chances are that you will hear about it one way or the other.

Like Aftabbhai Quereshi, who heard from his six-year-old son’s school, Don Bosco. “After the riots, we were told by the authorities in Don Bosco they would not be responsible for the security of our children. We didn’t have any option.”

Aftabbhai took out Ahmed from the school he so loved and put him in a “predominantly Muslim” institution called the National School. Ever since, precocious Ahmed has been wondering why. Don Bosco, that had 250 Muslim children on its rolls before the riots, which followed the February 27 Godhra train attack last year, today has none.

Welcome to Gujarat’s version of apartheid. Few, however, would dare to acknowledge it exists. Circumstances, most people would exclaim and say: “What can we do? We can’t help it.”

The blacklisting – of communities and localities – has reached alarming proportions.

Scores of Muslims say it is becoming increasingly difficult to get a house, a loan, a cellphone connection or almost anything that can be acquired only after verification – of name, address and source of income. A senior AT&T employee says the company received a circular from the home ministry asking it to strictly monitor what a Muslim customer does with his cellphone – who he talks to and what about.

Another directive, from the anti-terrorist squad, politely asks the company to try and “avoid” memberships of Muslims.

An executive at Hutch denied there was any discrimination”. But she said a prospective Hindu customer’s credentials would be verified by just one agent though a Muslim customer would get “three or four” agents after him. The documentation process, too, is more rigid for Muslims.

If cellphones have stopped ringing for some, loans and insurance cover are drying up for others. “IFFCO Tokyo flatly refused to go in for my insurance,” says Nayoombhai. “They told me I could do what I wanted but they just would not touch my case, even with a bargepole.”

Jaffer Alam’s monthly income of Rs 1 lakh is no enticement for credit card companies who prefer to keep their distance.

“I know of Standard Chartered Bank refusing to give credit cards to my friends,” he says. “The problem gets compounded if you stay in Muslim localities in the walled city.”

Localities like Sarkhej and Shah Alam, perceived to be “Muslim”, have been blacklisted by credit card companies.

“Sab cheez mushkil ho gayi hai (Everything is so difficult now),” says Hanif Lakdawala, a well-known social worker from Gujarat.

Lakdawala needed a flat to set up his office. But every time he said who he was, flat owners backed out. The founder-director of Sanchetna, a non-government organisation, then did what he knew would work. He told a flat owner one of his Hindu trustees wanted to buy the property. Within no time, the flat was his.

“It is true we couldn’t get a house in our name,” Lakdawala says. “So we got it registered in the name of Sanchetna and put up the name of one of our Hindu trustees.”

Autorickshaw driver Mukhtar Jamal, 30, can’t even cover his head now, not even on Fridays. “Topi pehenta hoon to Hindubhai log nahi chadte meri auto mein **(If I wear a fez, Hindus don’t board my auto),**” he says. **“Topi utardi phir (I did away with the fez).”** [Source: by Anand Soondas, *The Telegraph*, 13.03.2003]

[In the carnage of Gujarat, we have seen that the outfits of Sangh called upon to boycott the Muslims economically. Still, this economic boycott is going on in several forms. It is also observed that the “segregation & ghettoisation” are going on often by the concerted efforts of the Sangh Parivar. It is also observed in the next report that the children affected during the carnage still have deep scars in their mind. The Gujarat is now a completely polarised society, a society of hatred and disbelief. – *Update*]

Compounding Injustice

(...) In “*We Have No Orders to Save You*,” Human Rights Watch reported that a pamphlet calling for the economic boycott of Muslims had resurfaced in the state following the March 2002 attacks. (...) It called on its readers to institute a complete boycott of goods and services proffered by Muslims, adding that Muslims should not be hired in Hindu establishments and should not be allowed to rent property. It also cautioned Hindus to be “alert to ensure that [Hindus’] sisters-daughters do not fall into the ‘love-trap’ of Muslim boys” (...).

According to a February 2003 report in the Bombay-based periodical ***Communalism Combat***, a year after the beginning of the violence, **economic and social boycotts were still widespread in ten out of Gujarat’s twenty-four districts:**

In most areas of Ahmedabad and Vadodara and villages of Gandhinagar, Vadodara rural, Anand, Panchmahal, Mehsana, Kheda and Dahod, insidious economic and social boycott continues to cripple the Muslim minority that is still reeling from the effects of last year’s brutal violence. It is only the villages and areas that have a sizeable Muslim population that has built up a steely resistance to the politics of hatred and division through the security of numbers — ghettoisation is the stark solution in post-carnage Gujarat.

Many Muslims remain unable to farm their fields, sell their wares, return to their businesses, operate commercial vehicles, or retain their jobs, including in the public sector. Janvikas director Gagan Sethi explained the relevance of the illicit liquor trade in Gujarat — a dry state — to the violence, and the rationale behind the economic boycotts:

There is a Hindu mafia and a Muslim mafia in Gujarat. Muslims controlled illicit liquor trade in Gujarat until Latif was killed. When you control the liquor and the mafia, then you have money. So in previous riots both sides used to fight. In the past ten years, Muslims have been taken out of the liquor trade. Dalits have come up with active VHP-BJP support. So when this riot happened, it was the last bit, the Muslims were removed from their money and muscle. That's why it was one-sided.... The main liquor dens are in Ahmedabad and Baroda. From there the branches flow.... There are two ways to kill a trade. For example, Muslims dominate in the wholesale fruit trade. You can either kill the source in Ahmedabad or see to it that the retailers cannot sell them because of economic boycotts. Slowly, non-Muslims start to take over small trades in villages. What will and won't be boycotted is decided by the VHP at the local level where the VHP is the empowered economic goon. Ultimately, the independent fiefdom of VHP goons at the local level are run with blessings from the top.

Shah-e-Alam camp resident R. Bibi told Human Rights Watch that like many others, her two sons were having a hard time finding work because of their Muslim names:

They don't give business or employment to Muslims. Even now they're not giving work to anybody with a Muslim name. Even my own sons are unemployed and just roaming around here and there. They don't have any work to do. One of them used to do welding work, and the other one was a rickshaw driver, and even the one that was killed used to have a rickshaw. Now nobody is giving work. They are saying, "Go, there is no work for you." Even my son who has two young children doesn't have a job. Now he's gone to his in-laws' home, he doesn't know what else to do. And what is he supposed to do, where would he go? Where will we go? We even had shops in Naroda Patia, but they haven't opened them up yet. There's no public to go to the shops. How are they going to run the shops without a public there? They live in fear. They sleep in fear.

Afsara's family members were also finding it impossible to earn a living:

There's no work going on, we're just sitting here. We got a car, my husband got a car on loan and he's driving that, but there's no other employment. I used to do sewing work and kokhrikhati. But I can't do that work anymore, I can't go back there. And there's nobody else to work. (...)

As reported in "*We Have No Orders to Save You*," children's education certificates were destroyed together with other personal belongings when their homes were looted or

set on fire. The government did little to replace these certificates or facilitate the resumption of Muslim children's education following the violence. **Under financial constraint, many children have dropped out all together to become child laborers. The education of girls, already of low priority, is being given even less importance in dire financial times.**

Soon after the violence, principals of English-medium schools in Gujarat were threatened with violence by VHP members if they did not expel Muslim students from their institutions. According to one report, parents were told by school officials to remove their children from these schools on the grounds that their safety could not be guaranteed. **These tactics are helping to ensure that Muslim children are increasingly confined to *madrasas*,** or Muslim-run religious schools, where education is imparted in Hindi or Urdu — limiting severely the students' career prospects and effectively requiring them to have a religious rather than secular education.

Simultaneously, *sangh parivar*-run schools throughout Gujarat and other parts of India continue to impress upon Hindu children a message of religious intolerance. The end result could be toxic to relations between communities for generations to come.

In addition to the enormous impact on their health, education, and psychological well-being, children in relief camps also struggled with issues of identity. According to one study:

The impact of living like refugees in camps in subhuman conditions for months together increased the feeling of discrimination experienced by children at a time when most Hindu families they knew were safe in their homes. "We feel like outsiders, people who are not wanted," one child said. **The carnage impacted the children's sense of self-worth and created immense confusion in their minds about their identity: Are we insiders or outsiders, Indians or Pakistanis, citizens or criminals? Commonly used terms such as "We" and "They," "Us" and "Them" indicated the sharp divide between communities.**

Dr. Satchit Balsari, a research associate at the Program on Humanitarian Crises at the Francois-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights, Harvard University, made repeated visits to Gujarat between August and October 2002 to assess the mental health and education status of children affected by the violence. Balsari met with over one

hundred children in relief camps in Ahmedabad and Panchmahals district. A child psychologist from Delhi accompanied Balsari during his visits to Gujarat. Together they worked with children and facilitated the expression of their emotions through art. **Invariably the children's drawings were replete with images of bombs, guns, swords, burning homes and mosques, and mutilated bodies.** (...)

When Balsari asked Muslim children who they thought was responsible for what had happened to their lives they responded, "the Hindus did this. The Hindus are those that grow up to be *Bajrang Dalis* or police officers and kill Muslims." Balsari added:

The children remember the police firing at them. There were instances in which children approached the police for help but were turned away. All of them remembered that the police fired upon members of their community who were trying to defend their homes. They also recalled how the ambulances didn't come to their aid. They now see the state as an extension of the larger Hindu community and not as a non-partisan secular protective. Some wanted to grow up and become police officers so they could own a gun and kill the people who did this to them. They said they recognized the people who did this to them. Some were even their neighbors. (...) [Source: *Human Rights Watch, July 2003; <http://www.hrw.org>*]

[Parivar has taken vigorous projects to make belief that the Dalits are integral part of 'Hindutva'. These projects are elaborated in this issue of *Update*. But, in reality Parivar is an utter upper-castiest 'varna'-Hindu organisation. In fact, Parivar has **secret agenda** and/or motive for the **Dalits**. Here we publish two **secret circulars of RSS** which illustrate their secret agenda. – *Update*]

Excerpts from Secret Circular No. 411 Issued by the RSS

(...) Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes are to be recruited to the party so as to increase the volunteers to fight against the Ambedkarites and Mussalmans.

Hindutva should be preached with a vengeance among physicians and pharmacists so that, with their help, time expired (sic.) and spurious medicines might be distributed amongst the Scheduled Castes, Mussalmans and Scheduled Tribes. The newborn infants of Shudras, Ati-Shudras, Mussalmans, Christians and the like should be crippled by administering injections to them.

To this end, there should be a show of blood-donation camps.

Encouragement and instigation should be carried on (sic.) more vigorously so that the womenfolk of Scheduled Castes, Mussalmans and Christians live by prostitution.

Plans should be made more foolproof so that the people of the Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes, Musslamans and Christians, especially the Ambedkarites, become crippled by taking in (sic.) harmful eatables.

Special attention should be given to the students of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes so as to make them read the history written according to our dictates.

During riots the women of Mussalmans and Scheduled Castes should be gang-raped. Friends and acquaintances cannot be spared. The work should proceed on the Surat model.

Publication of writings against Mussalmans, Christians, Buddhists and Ambedkarites should be accelerated. Essays and writings should be published in such a way as to prove that Ashoka was opposed to the Aryans.

All literature opposed to Hindus and Brahmins are (sic.) to be destroyed. Dalits, Mussalmans, Christians and Ambedkarites should be searched out. Care should be taken to see that this literature do (sic.) not reach public places. Hindu literature is to apply (sic.) to the Backward Classes and Ambedkarites.

The demand by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for filling in the backlog vacancies in services shall by no means be met. Watch should be kept to see that their demands for entry and promotion in government, non-government or semi-government institutions are to be rejected and their service records are destroyed with damaging reports.

Measures should be taken to make the prejudices amongst Scheduled Castes and Backward people more deep-rooted. To this end, help must be taken from saints and ascetics.

Attacks should be started with vigour against equality, preaching communists (sic.), Ambedkarites, Islamic teachers, Christian missionaries and neighbours.

Assaults should be made on Ambedkar's statues with greater efforts.

Dalit and Muslim writers are to be recruited to the party and by them essays and literature opposed to the Dalits, Ambedkarites and Mussalmans written and preached (sic.). Attention is to be paid to see that these writings are properly edited and preached (sic.).

Those opposed to Hindutva are to be murdered through false encounters. For this work the help of the police and semi-military (sic.) forces should always be taken.”
[Source: Quoted in ‘Shyam Chand, Saffron Fascism, New Delhi, Unity Publishers, 2002, pp 143-44’; retrieved from ‘Hindutva and the Dalit-Bahujans: Dangerous Portents’, By Yoginder Sikand 23.02.03; www.countercurrents.org; accessed 08.06.04]

‘The Second Open Letter of True Ram Sevaks’

“Let the Ambedkarite Harijans who oppose the Hindutva ideology understand. We will not allow them (to) mix with even the soil of Hindustan. Today, time is in our hands. Hindutva is the ideology of true Hindus (and) it never accepts the Harijans who are the offspring of the untouchable Ambedkar. The Ambedkarite Harijans, Bhangis, Tribals and the untouchable Shudra castes who believe in Ambedkar do not have any right to give speeches or criticize the Hindutva ideology in Hindustan, because as a dog raises its leg and urinates whenever there is a question or discussion related to the Hindutva ideology these Ambedkarites, Harijans, Bhangis, Adivasis and other untouchable low castes sling their dirt on the Hindutva ideology or show their caste (their low birth) by speaking abusively about it.

Now Hindutva has become aware (sic.) and it is time to teach these Ambedkarite untouchable Harijans a lesson. Not even the Miyans (Muslims) can come to their aid now. Understanding the Hindutva ideology requires a large heart. What will these untouchable Ambedkarites, who raise their leg and urinate, understand of the Hindutva ideology?

The fact that the Honorable Narendra Modi has gained a large victory in Gujarat has been because of the Hindutva ideology, not because of the untouchable Harijans (or because of) the Ambedkarite ideology. Narendrabhai has gained victory single-handedly in Gujarat because he explained the true ideology of Hindutva (...). *[Source: VHP, 11 Mahalaxmi Society, Paldi, Karnavati-380007; retrieved from ‘Hindutva and the Dalit-*

*Bahujans: Dangerous Portents', By Yoginder Sikand 23.02.03;
www.countercurrents.org; accessed 08.06.04]*

[**'National Cattle Commission'** under the aegis of the BJP led NDA-govt. had proposed to the govt. that the 'cow-killers' should be booked under draconian POTA! – Update]

Pota for Eating Beef Sandwich....

The so called Hindu nationalists (rather anti-nationals) and their revivalist-fascist bedfellows have come up the ridiculous demands such as **imposition of POTA (prevention of terrorism act) against the killers of cows** (gau matha in their lingo). **Now their demand has even got a seal of authority by an appointed Commission** who gets paid from the taxes of even the beef lovers.

In what could be the sweetest music to the ears of the Hindutva forces, the **'National Cattle Commission' has made the following demands:**

- 1) Ban cow slaughter by an Act of Parliament.
- 2) Halt the transportation of cows across state borders.
- 3) Amend the Indian Constitution to take away the state's power regarding the subject and transfer the power to the Centre or include it in the concurrent list.
- 4) Declare the cow as the 'national animal'.
- 5) Impose total ban on slaughter of any type of cattle and not just cows.
- 6) Cow slaughter to be treated as a 'non-bailable offence' with the Sessions court alone having jurisdiction to try the case.
- 7) The burden to prove innocence to be on the accused alone. (the prosecution does not have to prove the guilt).
- 8) The offence to be punished with rigorous imprisonment (hard labour) from 3-10 years.

There are also many other proposals some of which include:

- 1) Arrest under POTA for those transporting cows.
- 2) The act of burning hay to be considered a criminal offence.
- 3) Ban import (and export) of any sort of meat items.

4) Ban cross-breeding of cattle with foreign breeds. (...)

[Source: www.countercurrents.org/comm-beefyahoo.htm; accessed 08.06.04]