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*Megha Middha, is working as an Assistant Professor of Law in Mody University of Science and Technology, Lakshmangarh, Sikar (Rajasthan). She has an experience in the teaching of almost 3 years. She has completed her graduation in BBA LL.B (H) from Amity University, Rajasthan (Gold Medalist) and did her post-graduation (LL.M in Business Laws) from NLSIU, Bengaluru. Currently, she is enrolled in a Ph.D. course in the Department of Law at Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur (Rajasthan). She wishes to excel in academics and research and contribute as much as she can to society. Through her interactions with the students, she tries to inculcate a sense of deep thinking power in her students and enlighten and guide them to the fact how they can bring a change to the society*

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## **Avinash Kumar**



*Avinash Kumar has completed his Ph.D. in International Investment Law from the Dept. of Law & Governance, Central University of South Bihar. His research work is on "International Investment Agreement and State's right to regulate Foreign Investment." He qualified UGC-NET and has been selected for the prestigious ICSSR Doctoral Fellowship. He is an alumnus of the Faculty of Law, University of Delhi. Formerly he has been elected as Students Union President of Law Centre-1, University of Delhi. Moreover, he completed his LL.M. from the University of Delhi (2014-16), dissertation on "Cross-border Merger & Acquisition"; LL.B. from the University of Delhi (2011-14), and B.A. (Hons.) from Maharaja Agrasen College, University of Delhi. He has also obtained P.G. Diploma in IPR from the Indian Society of International Law, New Delhi. He has qualified UGC - NET examination and has been awarded ICSSR - Doctoral Fellowship. He has published six-plus articles and presented 9 plus papers in national and international seminars/conferences. He participated in several workshops on research methodology and teaching and learning.*

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# **COMMUNAL RIOTS IN INDIA AND ITS SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF MUZAFFARNAGAR AND GUJARAT RIOTS.**

AUTHORED BY - DR VRINDA MOHAN P

Assistant Professor, KPMSOL, NMIMS Deemed to be University, Mumbai

CO-AUTHOR - AKSHAT

4<sup>th</sup> Year BALLB(Hons), KPM SOL, NMIMS Deemed to be University, Mumbai

## **ABSTARCT**

*India, second country in the world with the largest number of populations, has a varied cultural identity and diversity across the different religious lines and secularism is an essential aspect enshrined in the Constitution of India. It is also true that Indian culture is certainly very complex but despite all these aspects it is known for its Unity in Diversity and promoting peace and harmony among the people. But the instances of riots and communal violence are one of these situations and issues that hamper this peace and harmony. Riots and communal violence is not a new phenomenon in India but these incidents has a significant impact on the lives of the people either directly or indirectly. The paper tries to find out the probable causes and consequences of the riots. The Gujarat Riots of 2002 and the Muzaffarnagar Riots of 2013 are two different riots, and the research examines their parallels and contrasts. Hindu-Muslim riots are persistent in India, however these acts of violence reached unprecedented heights of terror and ferocity among citizens.*

**KEYWORDS:** Riots, Communal Violence, Gujarat Riots, Muzaffarnagar riots, Conflicts.

## **INTRODUCTION**

India, the largest democracy in the world, is certainly a symbol of unity around the world where Secularism is the backbone and cornerstone of the constitution and where since from the inception of knowledge in the child it is fended in the pledge that, “All Indians are my brothers and sisters”. In addition, despite being one of the most populous counties in the world it has a varied cultural identity and diversity across the different religious lines. It is also true that Indian

culture is certainly very complex but despite all these aspects it is known for its Unity in Diversity and promoting peace and harmony among the people. But with the passage of time, it is found that there are certain instances that poses a threat to this unity and harmony among its population. Riots and communal violence are one of these situations and issues that hamper this peace and harmony. Between Hindus and Muslims, there have occasionally been intercommunal confrontations during the time of British control. They have been occurring frequently lately. During the independence fight, the Indian National Congress and Muslim League's disagreements produced racial tensions that the British exploited. The animosity between these two populations led to the partition of the subcontinent in 1947. It is discovered that during the previous few decades, increasing trends towards communal fury and riots have been seen throughout India. Thousands of lives have been lost, and even those who were only marginally impacted have had long-lasting effects. One of India's post-independence ideals of forming a society where practitioners of all faiths may live and exercise freely is largely seen by Indians as largely been fulfilled after more than 70 years after the nation became independent from colonial power. India has a sizable population that is both diverse and deeply religious. The majority of the world's Muslims, together with numerous millions of Christians and Buddhists, reside in India. In addition, India is the birthplace of four main world religions: Jainism, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Although India has a long tradition of religious tolerance and non-violence, fundamentalism, communal turmoil, and other forms of violence have recently increased. Despite India's secular and religiously tolerant constitution, the country's large religious population, Minorities Commission as well as Human Rights Commission of India, along with the non-governmental organisations working on the ground, sporadic and occasionally serious acts of discrimination still occur. Furthermore, Religious violence encompasses acts of physical harm committed by members of one religion against members and institutions of another religion, sometimes in the form of riots. Hindus and Muslims have often been the targets of religious violence in India. Rioting is a type of ferocity that occurs across usually communal lines, with the violent parties feeling a sense of solidarity for their own communities and victims are targeted based on group identity. Conflicts or riots involving any type of violence relating groups of various religious backgrounds are included in this phrase. The term "communal violence" can also refer to any sort of conflict or violence between members of the same religious group, sections or tribes of the same religion, clans, ethnic groups, or countries of origin. Communal massacre is a threatening and a dreadful phenomenon and a ordeal for society. Religious or communal -related rioting is a type of rioting covered under 16 types of riots given by NCRB. These riots and communal violence not only end up in loss of

lives and assets, but it also splits and separates the people and leads to numerous political debates.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, rioting is demarcated under Section 146 of The Indian Penal Code which conditions that, “Whenever force or violence is used by an unlawful assembly, or by any member thereof, in prosecution of the common object of such assembly, every member of such assembly is guilty of the offence of rioting.” An "unlawful assembly" of no fewer than five people who use violence in pursuit of their common objective is referred to in law as a riot. The legal interpretations of "riot" and "rioter," is that have been created by states to enable them to file criminal proceedings over even a small number of people who seemed to be a threat to the peace and state control, typically vary significantly beyond what is meant of these terms in ordinary usage. At the time, a riot was extensively viewed under English common law as an unlawful gathering of three or more people. For instance, the 1716 British Riot Act defined a riot as a group of twelve or more people interrupting the peace of an area for a common purpose. However, "rioters" are detained and later found convicted of being deliberately an element of a throng. Historically, the interaction between Hindus and Muslims in India is unstable. Conflicts between these religious groups led to the establishment of the autonomous Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the partition of India in 1947. Currently, sporadic riots and assaults on places of worship clearly characterise the relationship between Hindus and Muslims and other religions in India. It may be said that communal violence has been observed to occasionally increase and occasionally decrease, but it is still present on a significant scale throughout the entire Indian culture. People are therefore dealing with it across the nation. While riots and acts of terrorism that involve community violence catch our attention, the root and long-term source of violence is the growth of communalism. Some instances that gave a way to these hatred and fear are Gujarat Riots of 2002 and the Muzaffarnagar riots of 2013. There are certain causes behind the inception of these riots and the consequences of these riots are believed to be quantitative but eternal.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

India has a varied cultural identity and diversity across the different religious lines and secularism is an essential aspect enshrined in the Constitution of India. With such a large

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<sup>1</sup> Wilichowski, Tracy. ‘Premeditated Causes of the 2002 Gujarat Pogrom: A Comprehensive Analysis of Contributing Factors That Led to the Manifestation of the Riots’, Oshkosh Scholar December 2012: 128-144

population and with a diversity among the population, it is essential that peace and harmony should be maintained among the people of the country, otherwise the strong or the majority will prey on the weak or the minority. Harmony and synchronisation can bring a calm and stability to society, and they are essential for the persistence and progress of mankind. But there are certain instances which hamper this peace and harmony among the people. Riots and communal violence are among such instances. Religious riots account for a large fraction of all riots that have taken place in India throughout history and even more recently. The biggest atrocities against a religious minority after Independence occurred in Gujarat, the home of the Mahatma, when religion was used for political purposes. When it comes to racial unrest, Gujarat has a horrific history. The riots in Gujarat in 2002 are an example of this. There are many factors that lead to such riots such as insecurity or sense of fear with respect to the other party, provocations from the religious leaders or from the political parties for their personal gains and so on. The effects of the riots are complex in the same manner as their origin but, however, in some riots the situation is found to be such that even the sole reason behind the riots is unknown, e.g., in the case of Muzaffarnagar riots of 2013. But one thing that can be said is that effects of these riots mainly include the destruction of the property, loss of lives at a significant level, etc. These consequences have a detrimental effect on the lives of the other peoples in the vicinity either directly or indirectly. It will be interesting to know the probable causes and consequences of the riots as well as to critically evaluate the similarities and differences between the Gujarat Riots of 2002 and the Muzaffarnagar riots of 2013.

## **RIOTS: NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS**

The occurrence of riots is a global phenomenon. The riots have huge impact on the lives of the people around the globe. There are several factors which contribute to the occurrence of these riots. As well as there can be any specific reason for the occurrence of the riots. Even the riots can occur because of global food prices as it was in the case of South African Riots. Food-related protests and riots have also been seen in Argentina and Haiti (before Hurricane Sandy's effects). The South African Riots, which are a result of the global food crisis and the US drought, terribly affected the life of large masses (Y Bar-Yam's 2015). Food riots have broken out because of the high and unstable global food prices, which were a key cause of the recent Arab Spring revolutions. They stayed in a situation where riots and revolutions were most likely to happen during the autumn.

The impact of any type of community violence on society is substantial. This violence has a significant impact on children and adolescents. Even primary school children can witness the adverse consequences of Riots where they experience high prevalence of distress symptoms (Dhavale 2002). While the BJP's ascent is sometimes blamed for the spike in violence, there were many other variables involved in the Gujarat massacre of 2002. An examination of first-person reports obtained from witnesses and secondary research carried out by specialists in the subject demonstrates most factors unrelated to the presence of the BJP (Wilichowski 2012). The main causes of the violence's growth in Gujarat were the state's political instability, which was accompanied by a general lack of progressivism, educational inequality, and a heightened influence of globalisation policies. State Power and Production of Marginality along with the factor that governmental authority was used to fabricate "truth" statements about the rioting that followed the Godhra event in Gujarat in 2002. An examination of factual reporting created by members of civil society, analyses of film and poetry narratives, and examinations of public opinion have all been placed side by side with this (Bakshi 2015). Each of them has been the subject of much more thorough examination on its own, reveals a communally tensed environment, it is important to comprehend the way in which some truths are manipulated which subsequently leads to the marginalisation of the people. Many times, it happens that the political parties were found to have a sole motive behind the occurrence of these riots in sense that they wanted to get benefited out of these riots.

In India, there have been numerous fatal religious riots since 1950, where riots are not a brand-new event. Ethnic violence on electoral results provides useful insights into voter behaviour in democratic societies. There are a few studies of the effect of racial tension on electoral politics, notwithstanding the reality that a number of scholars have discussed the link between riots and politics, particularly within the case of India. It's a reality that always there is influence of riots between Hindus and Muslims in India that affected the results of election polls. It has been discovered that the chance of a riot increases when a Hindu festival falls on a Friday, special weekly prayers are offered in mosques. Thus, Hindu celebrations which occur on Fridays might end in disputes over public spaces. This makes it possible to identify the factor that caused rioting to effect election results. To increase their vote totals in the elections, the political parties use the scenarios (Iyer and Shrivastava 2015).

In India riots affect the peace and harmony of the populations and have a devastating impact on the lives of the people one of such riots is Gujarat riots. The consistency with which communal

pogroms have occurred in India indicates that there is a huge flaw in both our secular governance and governing political system. Bloodshed in Gujarat did not come overnight or solely because of what transpired in Godhra. It is the outcome of numerous strong reasons that have fed the fire throughout time. It has gradually changed the perspectives of the communities, who now perceive themselves as liberal and secular and view other opposing communities as fanatic and extremist in addition to doubting their allegiance to India. Gujarat was communally quite sensitive even before the BJP came to power. So, the other motivating factors also plays an important role in the happening of the incident (Engineer 2016). For many believers, religion is very relevant to their personal lives. in many cases, religion gives people a feeling of purpose and direction that elevates their lives by making promises of salvation. Thus, being exposed to diverse faiths may pose an identity danger to people inside the country. Considering that religion impacts almost every part of life, conflicts between people of differing religious beliefs may arise in a variety of ways. Furthermore, it is also important to note that the interaction of the many faiths that coexist in the same country is a key factor in determining whether there is religious tolerance or intolerance. Gebert, Boerner, and Chatterjee (2011) adopted a quantitative study approach to examine the relationship between dysfunctional intergroup disputes and religious differences (i.e., religious diversity and tolerance diversity). It has been found that dysfunctional intergroup disputes have nothing to do with religious diversity, or the distribution of different religious affiliations inside an organisation. On the other side, dysfunctional disputes are positively correlated with tolerance diversity, which is the plurality of organisational members' attitudes about how closely religious regulations should be followed.

## **RIOTS IN INDIA: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES**

In India, riots are primarily referred in the provisions of section 146 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), that stipulates "every person of such assembly is guilty of the offence of rioting when brutality or force is utilised by an unlawful assembly, or by any member thereof, in pursuing such assembly's common object." And anybody convicted guilty of rioting risks a maximum term of two years in jail, a fine, or a combination of the two. The 16 categories into which the NCRB divides rioting cases include sectarian, caste conflict, agrarian, industrial, student, political, family dispute, money dispute, water dispute, property dispute, enmity/rivalry, rioting while participating in Angolans or marches, rioting/attacks on police personnel or government servants, and other rioting. Despite the categories, the 'other riots' category has accounted for the most instances (21,766 cases), or 42.2% of all rioting incidents, and more interestingly, the

NCRB even doesn't specify what kind of riots fall under this category. In all, 71,107 offences against public peace were registered in the states and UTs in 2020. Rallies accounted for more over half of these instances (72.6%), or precisely 51,606 instances. In 2020, there were 12.4% more instances linked to offences against public tranquillity than there were in 2019. In the meantime, 4,437 instances of violations against public tranquillity were reported in metropolitan regions under various sections of the IPC.<sup>2</sup> with populations under 2 million people in 2020, similarly the rioting cases accounted for 51.0% or 2264 cases of all such cases. A similar trend was found between the number of cases registered in 2019 and 2020 as the number of offences against public tranquillity has grown up by 14.0% from 2019 to 2020.<sup>3</sup> Recent riots reported 2023 includes Manipur riots and Haryana riots.

Bihar had the reported most of these instances, followed by Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh. Religious or communal related riots affects people on a large scale is a threat for even internal security as the consequences of these riots fatal. Gujarat Riots of 2002 and the Muzaffarnagar riots of 2013 are the one of such riots which have a significant impact on the society at large. There are many factors that leads to such riots such as insecurity or sense of fear with respect to the other party, provocations from the religious leaders or from the political parties for their personal gains and so on.

**i) Causes of Riots:** Communal tendencies thrive in an atmosphere of mutual distrust and feeds on enmity and hatred towards the other religions to survive. The following factors lead to the formation and enhancement of the situations:

a) **Vote Bank Politics:** Politicians often ends up in provoking a communal disturbance in order to affiliate themselves with a specific community or to dislodge the voters from an opposing party for the purpose of larger vote bank.

b. **Provocative statements by party leaders and religious leaders:** Religious leaders from various faiths and often various sects of the same religion start conflicts and incite people to defend their religious practises and religious ideology. The aggressive statements given by the local leaders and the different rumours circulated by certain anti-social individuals are perceived as motivating factor for the people. Sometimes it is also seen that for their personal political gain, a

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<sup>2</sup>(19 Metropolitan Cities: Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Coimbatore, Delhi, Ghaziabad, Hyderabad, Indore, Jaipur, Kanpur, Kochi, Kolkata, Kozhikode, Lucknow, Mumbai, Nagpur, Patna, Pune and Surat)

<sup>3</sup>Crime in India 2020 | National Crime Records Bureau, <https://ncrb.gov.in/en/Crime-in-India-2020>

number of these people from various castes incited riots among the people.

c. Threats to religion or religious ideologies predicated on rumours or reports: Examples of this include setting their religious buildings on fire. Similarly, during the Hindu-Muslim riots in Muzzafarnagar, Hindu groups were accused of coercively converting a number of Muslims to Hinduism. During the Gujarat Riots, people went on the rampage against Muslims, blaming them for the train incident. As a result of these tensions in the community, rumour and fake threats plays a significant part in igniting the riots. The recent example of this fact can be taken from the Udaipur killings of a tailor which created the atmosphere of tension in the area.

d. Irresponsible Media Coverage: Media often airs sensitive, unsubstantiated, and frequently biased news on television program in an effort to sensationalise the story and boost their TRP. As a result, tensions between the two groups often worsen as the minority group feels endangered and the dominant group feels victimised.

e. Fears that the religion is being targeted: People often gather together to present a united front in order to maintain their relevance in what seems to be a very biased system. They think that their race or religion is vehemently attacked, thus they try to establish their credibility in the society.

f. Increasing Intolerance Levels and a Sense of Threat: The ordinary man has become tense, restless, and intolerant, and he reacts at the slightest provocation because of social fears brought on by a life of fear and mistrust for everyone around him from the other communities.

g. Belief that the government favours a certain religion: Due to the BJP administration's strong relationship with the RSS, many government actions are now in the spotlight. Unfortunately, the government is ambiguous about where it stands on number of these problems. As a result, the problem becomes worse as the anti-social elements benefit from it.

**ii) Consequences of Riots:** The riots' aftermath is also fatal. The victims of these violence and confrontations who suffer the most are the helpless ordinary people who gets entangled in situations which are not in their control. As a result, numerous reports of rapes, sexual assaults, and gang rapes were lodged after the confrontations. Both a loss of preventable death and harm to vital public property occur. Most of the time, the circumstance is benefited by criminal

elements, political groups, and even religious leaders who instigates these activities only for their own benefit. The anti-national forces have opportunities to incite anti-national sentiment and seek to tear apart the integrity of our society. As a result, the climate of unpredictability and domestic unrest discourages international businesspeople from opening offices in India, which inevitably has an impact on India's foreign policy. As a result of these riots, communities feel threatened by and insecure towards other communities and religions, which ultimately destroys the peace and harmony in society. As a result, the social fabric or cohesion of the society suffers irreparable injury, and the climate of mistrust acts as a spark for further disputes based on spurious justifications. The country's divisive forces take advantage of the lawlessness that results from intercommunal strife, which disturbs internal security risks. Lot of people gets displaced from their homes and forced to migrate to other place for the rest of their lives and their lives become limited to these relief camps with inadequate food and other necessities of life. In many cases, they did not get adequate relief funds and support, therefore, they are forced to die out of hunger. People with a communal mindset can sow the seeds of communal hatred and nurture them until the bitter fruit of communal violence reaps on the community's ready-tilled soil. Hindu-Muslim riots are not unusual in India, but the unrest in Gujarat and Muzaffarnagar reached unprecedented heights of cruelty and savagery.

## **BRIEF ABOUT MUZAFFARNAGAR RIOTS**

The communal riot in the Muzaffarnagar is dubbed as "the worst violence in the recent history of the state of Uttar Pradesh, prompting the army to be deployed in the state of Uttar Pradesh for the first time in the last 20 years". These communal conflicts took place between August 27 and September 17, 2013, among the peoples of the Hindu community and the Muslim community in the Muzaffarnagar district. In this incident, a minimum of 62 individuals was killed, comprising of 42 people of Muslim community and 20 people of Hindu community, as well as 93 peoples were injured and over 50 thousand people were displaced. The beginning of the incident is felt when the Muzaffarnagar police lodged complaints against 150 individuals and took 14 people into custody after communal disturbances were reported on August 21, 2013. On August 27, 2013, tensions between Hindus and Muslims in Shamli and Muzaffarnagar escalated. According to assertions made by both the parties which primarily included the impacted neighbourhoods, the primary reason for the riots is under question However, it is believed that the riots are caused because of a traffic accident and a case of eve teasing. As per one story, the reason was a small traffic accident among teenagers of both communities, which subsequently spiralled out of

control when religious overtones emerged.<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, the reason according to the second story was that a Muslim youngster harassed a girl belonging to the Hindu Jat community living in Kawal village. In revenge, Sachin Singh and Gaurav Singh murdered Shahnawaz Qureshi. When the two brothers tried to flee, they were killed by a Muslim mob. The news of the deaths causes the situation of unrest in the area and the people from both the community attacked each other. The authorities also sent troops from the Provincial Armed Constabulary to Kawal. On August 30, despite a ban on large meetings, the Muslim community gathered after Friday prayers, and several local Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and Congress leaders broke into the gathering. In addition to making inflammatory comments, these officials demanded justice for the Kawal catastrophe. Additionally on August 31, a BJP leader is said to have made an inflammatory statement that incited Hindu farmers. On their way home, the farmers were assaulted and massacred by a mob having assault rifles and weapons. The incident that adds the fuel to this fire happened on September 7 when The Beti Bachao Mahapanchayat, which drew thousands of people, proved provocative because it was permitted despite the enforcement of Section 144 of the CrPC in the area. The event occurred near the Jauli Canal when a mob comprising the people of the Muslim community attacked around 2,000 Jats coming back from the Panchayat with assault rifles and other advanced weapons. According to an eyewitness, the corpses were allegedly thrown into the canal. Even though six bodies had been discovered, dozens more were believed to be missing. The Jauli Canal event enraged Jats, who went on a rampage against Muslims, accusing them of being behind the deaths. This sparked riots, which claimed the lives of 43 people of the Muslim community and 20 people of the Hindu community (which includes a news reporter and a photographer). As a result, the Army troops were sent to the Muzaffarnagar and the Shamli region, and a curfew was enforced. The confrontations, however, persisted for the following three days. The aftermath of the riots was also fatal. Following the clashes, the first incidence of gang rape was reported in the Fugana region in Jogiya Kheda. In October, two more rape cases were reported. On November 15, 2013, it was announced that 13 rape and sexual harassment charges had been recorded in the two months of riots, with 111 persons identified in the events.<sup>5</sup> On 30 October, three persons were murdered, and one was injured in a scuffle between two groups in Mohammadpur Raisingh region of Muzaffarnagar. Police was deployed, and the entire

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<sup>4</sup>Kirpal, Raman. "How SP, BJP, BSP politicians gave their blessings as Muzaffarnagar burned", First Post, 5 November 2013.

<sup>5</sup>Siddiqui, Furqan Ameen, "UP turns its back on Muzaffarnagar's gang-rape victims", Hindustan Times, 7 December 2013, Accessed on 19 June, 2021

district was put on high alert. Relief camps made by the state government in Muzaffarnagar and Shamli districts for 9,000 victim families comprising of almost 50,000 people. The Supreme Court of India ruled the Akhilesh Yadav-led Samajwadi Party prima facie guilty of negligence in averting the riots when hearing petitions connected to the riots and ordered that all individuals responsible, regardless of party affiliation, be jailed immediately. The Court also found that the central government was to blame for the state government's failure to provide timely intelligence inputs to the Samajwadi Party-led administration.<sup>6</sup> In 2021, the court ordered the BJP administration led by Yogi Adityanath to drop all charges against BJP officials implicated in the rioting.

## **BRIEF ABOUT GUJARAT RIOTS**

The beginning of the tragedy was marked with incident when the Sabarmati Express was hauled at the railway station at Godhra, a tiny town in the western Indian state of Gujarat, on February 27, 2002. The various Hindu right cadres (karsevaks) were travelling in Sabarmati Express from Ayodhya, where they had gone to show their active support for constructing a Ram temple at a disputed place at both legal and political level. At Godhra, it seems that there was a fight at the railway station between members of the Muslim and Hindu communities. In response, the emergency cord was pulled as the train left the station after its predetermined stop. As a consequence, the train halted in a neighbourhood that was mostly Muslim, where it is claimed that a Muslim mob stormed the train. In the confrontation, two of the train's coaches were burnt down. Around 58 passengers died in the fire that broke out in the train coaches, many of them were women and children. However, what occurred at the railway station and shortly after is still concealed by conflicting stories.<sup>7</sup>

There was a massacre in retaliation in several areas of the state following this tragedy. In a violent outburst that lasts for more than two months, gangs of Hindus riot and murder while blaming Muslims for the deaths of the pilgrims. Fathers are chopped to bits, mothers are stabbed, and kids are burned with fire. There are around 1,000 fatalities, predominantly Muslims. 360 religious institutions, 20,000 Muslim homes and businesses, and almost 150,000

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<sup>6</sup>Anand, Utkarsh, "SC holds Akhilesh govt guilty of negligence, orders arrest of all Muzaffarnagar accused", The Indian Express, 8 April 2014, Accessed on 15 June 2021

<sup>7</sup>Engineer, Asghar Ali. 'Gujarat Riots in the Light of the History of Communal Violence'. Economic and Political Weekly 37, no. 50 (2002): 5047–54. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4412966>.

individuals are forced to relocate.<sup>8</sup>

The two deadliest massacres occur at Gulbarg Society, a Muslim housing complex, where a mob is sparked by a rumour spread by a World Hindu Council leader, and in Naroda Patiya, where more than 90 people were killed. In retaliation, many individuals were also slaughtered some of whom were burnt and chopped to pieces. After the riots, the Union Government made a 3.2 billion rupee (US\$80 million) relief package for the riot victims on May 23, 2008. In contrast, the Gujarat government allegedly failed to effectively fulfil its responsibility to give enough aid and provide proper rehabilitation to the survivors, according to Amnesty International's annual report on India from 2003. Local Muslims saw the Gujarat government's first compensation offers of 200,000 rupees to the families of those killed in the Godhra train fire and 100,000 rupees to the families of those killed in the ensuing rioting as being discriminatory.

Allegations arise that the World Hindu Council and the B.J.P. instigated the mob. Both the party and the council refuted the accusations. The Supreme Court established a special investigative team (SIT) in 2008 after the unrest, which lasted for almost three days until army soldiers intervened and brought things under control. The violence in Naroda Patiya, Naroda Gaam, and the Gulbarg Society case were among the nine significant cases that the SIT looked into. However, the bloodbath continued in different sections of the state during the next three to four months.

## **COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

Both the incidents of Gujarat Riots of 2002 and the Muzaffarnagar riots of 2013 took place between the peoples of the Hindu community and the Muslim community. In the case of case of Muzaffarnagar Riots, the primary reason for the riots is under question. On the other hand, in the case of Gujarat riots, the burning of the coaches of the Sabarmati Express triggered the violence, however, what exactly happened at the train station and soon thereafter remains trapped in different narratives. In both the incidents, the news of the deaths causes the situation of unrest in the area and the people from both the community attacked each other and went on a rampage against the police of other religion blaming them for the deaths. In both the incidents, the aftermaths were very fatal. These includes the loss of lives at a very large scale, destruction of

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<sup>8</sup>Jaffrelot, Christophe. 'Communal Riots in Gujarat: The State at Risk?', Heidelberg Papers in South Asian and Comparative Politics, 17 (2003). <https://doi.org/10.11588/HEIDOK.00004127>.

property and even temples and mosques were destroyed, displacement of people in large numbers, even the worst a lot of cases of crimes against women were reported like rape, sexual assault, and so on. Both the incidents witness the provocative speeches by the religious or political leaders just for the sake of their personal benefit and which incidentally are also provided to be very fatal. In the case of Muzaffarnagar riots, the Akhilesh Yadav-led Samajwadi Party was prima facie found guilty of negligence in averting the riots and similarly in the case of Gujarat riots, there are widespread allegations that the BJP were complicit and, in some cases, instigated the mobs. Failure of state machinery to avert the incident and to take timely actions to stop the riots is clearly visible from the facts of both the incidents.

## CONCLUSION

The Indian Constitution is built on the foundation of secularism and since from the dawn of civilization there is a belief in the principle of “vasudhaivakutumbakam” (the world is one family). But due to many factors, occasionally, one could witness communal conflicts between Hindus and Muslims from the days of British rule. Communal violence is not a new phenomenon in India; the partition in 1947 have resulted from hatred between these two communities. The communal spirit that pervades the country, as well as the communal tensions that have developed between different populations, are the root causes of all communal disturbances. In India, Hindu-Muslim riots are common, but these riots and violence plumbed new depths of horror and brutality. It was a humiliating embarrassment for everyone who believes in the secularism, peace, and harmony of Indian nationhood, a viewpoint enshrined in India's constitution, a viewpoint that accords equal weight to all religions in the country, with none being given preferential treatment. lives in the area, either directly or indirectly. It is possible to say that communal ideology and politics are the diseases, while communal violence is just the symptom of the disease. For the sake of humanity and the security of our great nation, we as an evolving community, particularly the youth, must unite to combat communal evils and rise above pettiness.

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