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Indian Muslims: Political Ideology and interreligious harmony

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Abstract:-
The present study about the Muslims of India takes an interdisciplinary approach. It weaves together history, politics, culture, and sociology in a series of sections, each focused on a theme or question related to current issues, such as religious and national identity, political participation, violence and extremism, and social and economic disadvantage. In the spirit of the Regional Voices program, we chose to approach this topic in as holistic a manner as possible, recognizing that many factors are at play simultaneously, and cause-and-effect relationships are often hard to discern. We hope that this nonlinear, three-dimensional approach will bring to life the richness and complexity of the topic of India's Muslims..

Keywords:- Religious and National Identity, Madarssa Reform, Two Nation's mentality, Concept of minority, Religious Rioting, Violence, Extremism, and the State, Political Participation, Social and Economic Disadvantage, Education, Identity, and Empowerment, Cultural, Ideological, and Social Diversity, Conclusion

Introduction:-
The stereotype of Muslim Indians has long been that they are a relatively quiescent minority that has made its peace with the larger non-Muslim context of contemporary India. Non-Indian Muslims may sometimes scoff at the perceived tameness of the Muslim voice in India or the assimilation of and into the wider secular but Hindu-influenced culture. They will at times profess solidarity with the trials of Muslim Indians. At other times they will note with satisfaction the Indian Muslim willingness to stand in solidarity with pan-Islamic causes such as Palestine. But they will rarely think of Muslim Indians as a force to be reckoned with in the ummah (the worldwide Muslim community).

Religious and National Identity:-

Although Muslims have always constituted a minority in the subcontinent as a whole, the India that was gradually taken under British control was largely ruled by Muslim elites; Muslims of various ethnicities (Turkish and Persian) and dynasties had ruled most of northern India for six or seven centuries in the form of the Delhi Sultanate and the Moghul Empire. In many areas (largely those that became Pakistan), Muslims came to constitute the majority, and the cultures of Hindus in those areas bore a particular stamp of Muslim intellectual and cultural influence. Even areas not directly under Muslim control showed a Muslim influence in the presence of individual Muslims among elites, Muslim minorities among their populations, and syncretic culture in food, arts, architecture, and even religious thought.

Secular nationalists, Hindu and Muslim, saw in the common and syncretic elements of Indian culture the basis of a national identity upon which to conduct an independence struggle and construct a national polity. These represented the overwhelming majority of Indian opinion. Hindu religious nationalists saw in national independence an opportunity to restore the greatness of Hindu civilization, and to stamp a Hindu character on the polity, on the grounds that the majority of Indians were Hindus. Muslims would be free to practice their religion but would live

Madarssa Reform in contemporary India include both trained ulema, products of madarssas, as well as men who have been educated in modern schools. Some of them studied in madarssas and have then gone on to receive higher education in regular universities. While all of them seem agreed on the importance of the madarssas as institutions geared towards preserving and promoting Islamic knowledge and Muslim identity, there is considerable variation in their approaches to the nature and extent of the reform they advocate. There seems, however, a consensus that the core of the reform project should consist of modification in the madarssa syllabus and the methods of teaching.

Two Nation's mentality:-

The country's politics and socio-religious reality vindicates Guruji's prescription. The Indian polity has been facing challenges from within: whether secular judiciary of Islamic court; whether secular education in Madarsa; whether competition-based admission in educational institutions and jobs whether the Vande Mataram is a national song for all Indians. These are the same old questions with similar arguments once used by the Muslim League and now being replayed by the 'Muslim India'. The Muslim vote bank tactically and shrewdly has been used to affect the secular politics of the country. It has been increasingly revolving round the decrees of Mosques rather than the spirit of the Indian constitution.

Guruji Says, "The Indian Muslims have yet to converge into Indian culture and its people. The problem would cease to exist once they will feel and speak that this is their motherland and the people are their own people. It is a matter to entrench such desirable changes in their psychology." 5) When he uses the term danger of 'internal subversion' he also means the Muslims defiance to the state. Guruji has been vindicated by events, which took place after his death. In 1985, the Supreme Court favoured the formulation and implementation of the Uniform Civil Code in the Shah Bano case. It evoked protest among the Muslims. Minister of State for was the creed of the Indian Muslims. He lambasted the SC on December 20, 1985 for trying to interpret the Muslim Personal Law.

Concept of minority:-

The biggest absurdity of Indian secularism is legitimacy to the concept of minority. The classification of the people on the basis of mode of worship and its application in the principle of governance militates against our own historical experiences. Guruji says, 'History bears testimony to the fact that Bharat, the cradle land of religious generosity has always welcomed and assured all religious groups a free, honourable and secure life.' He further argues that in India there is no question of majority and minority." His submission has again and again been attacked by the secularists (Red-Green club) as anti Muslim tirade. For decades both Guruji and his critics ceaselessly made their respective proposition. And the Indian judiciary finally endorsed Guruji's The Supreme Court of India in a landmark

Judgement on August 10, 2005 said that the National Commission for Minority (NCM) "should suggest ways and means to help create social conditions where the list of notified minorities is gradually reduced and done away altogether." 6) Moreover three-member bench of the Court consisting of Justice R. C. Lahoti, Justice D. M. Dharmadhikari and Justice P. K. Balasubramanyam gave their equally important observation, "The objective of a democratic society ought to be to eliminate majority and minority. 7)

Religious Rioting versus General Rioting:-

It might be argued that a rise in Muslim expenditures (controlling for Hindu expenditures), or more generally a rise in the ratio of Muslim to Hindu expenditures, is just a proxy for overall Hindu stagnation, which could be associated with an increase in social unrest quite generally, and not just in Hindu-Muslim conflict. This argument would maintain that a concomitant rise in Hindu-Muslim conflict is just a by-product of this overall uptick in social unease and could therefore not be interpretable as directed violence against a specific community.

Violence, Extremism, and the State:-

In Gujarat state in western India in 2002, Muslims suffered a vicious and systematic series of mob attacks, with gruesome deaths such as burning alive and dismemberment, rape, and widespread destruction of property, mosques, and shrines. The chain of events leading up to this has been described and debated in great detail, and with some controversy. Rightwing Hindu activists had engaged in abuse and violence against Muslims and others on a railway platform at Godhra, the train carrying them had been set on fire, resulting in death and injury, and Hindu mobs went on a rampage against Muslims in Godhra and elsewhere.

Political Participation:-

Muslims committed to a wider Indian sense of nationality were an integral part of the independence movement. After partition, they provided leadership and representation for Muslims within the context of a secular mass politics of coalitions of distinct interests. Their diminished numbers, and the association of separate Muslim organizing with the violence of partition and the trauma of Muslim families divided, fostered the practice of coalition politics. However, over the course of time, the intermediaries between the state and Muslim citizens came increasingly to articulate the distinct elements of Muslim interests and aspirations in terms of cultural identity, such as a separate family and inheritance law, rather than those social and economic interests that Muslims shared with non-Muslim Indians. There was always a rumble of discontent about the Muslims being treated as a "vote bank" by Congress. Muslims felt taken for granted and felt that they received only token concessions, while elements of Hindu opinion within and outside Congress saw appeasement and special treatment. With the dissolution of the Congress political monopoly, Muslim voters and leaders explored the prospects of coalitions for the purpose of maximizing Muslim power and influence. However, the instability of party politics has, if anything, divided and weakened Muslim leadership and representation. 11)

The exception to these long-standing patterns has been found in Communist-ruled states and those where Communist parties are a powerful presence, such as West Bengal and Kerala. While Communist parties and governments have accommodated Muslim interests more effectively than others, recent discourse has noted that senior Muslim leaders have not appeared in mainstream politics in commensurate proportions, and that Communists have practiced the politics of tokenism just like other Indian politicians. In recent years Communists have been accused of seeking electoral advantage by flirting with extreme religious, antiseccular, and divisive Muslim political movements and leaders, such as Abdul Nasser Madani of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Kerala.

Cultural, Ideological, and Social Diversity of Muslims:-

Regions of India vary significantly in history, cultural configuration, demography, the economic condition of Muslims, and the condition of Hindu-Muslim relations. The differences in

perspective resulting from this were clearly reflected in the group discussions and interviews. Social stratification within the community on the basis of education, caste, class, and other factors has also resulted in variant perspectives. Finally, the Muslim community, like any other, benefits from a rich variety of philosophical, ideological, and religious perspectives which lend it a complexity that challenges generalization.

One of the fundamental questions raised is whether it is any more accurate to speak of "Muslim community" in India or to generalize about the experience and concerns of "Muslim Indians" than it would be to do so about Hindu Indians. Should we perhaps refer instead to "Muslim communities of India"? Rather than thinking of these as homogeneous communities even in the plural, is it more accurate to speak in terms of the particularly defined experiences of Muslims as citizens of India, as individuals, in particular localities, and of certain social classes? The variegated character of the Muslim community in India reflects the rich sociological, historical, and cultural variety characteristic of Indian society as a whole.

Conclusion:-

One community hates another. One community is in the majority, the other is in the minority. Consequently the two communities are at loggerheads, living in a atmosphere of conflict and acrimony. Mahesh Dattani's rare look at the socio-political problem defines all 'final solutions'. In the view of Dattani, Hindus and Muslims are not just two cardboard communities. They clash when a procession is stoned, a pooja is disrupted, a Masjid is dismantled these for them are just the jagged tips of an ominous iceberg .one that threaten to freeze the entire landscape into polarized communities that live by intolerance and hate in place of harmony.

More important is the iceberg an amorphous mass that glorifies the credo of unity in diversity without actually understanding the meaning of diversity. The play looks in to the heart of fundamentalist and the liberal and tears down the prototypes. 'Final solution' touches us. The past begins to determine the outlook of the present and thus the earlier contradictions re-emerge. No concrete solutions are provided in the play to the problem of communalism but it raises questions on secularism pseudo secularism. It forces us to look at ourselves in relation to the attitudes that are persisting in the society. Since it is an experiment in time and space and related to memory, it is a play, which involves a lot of introspection on the part of the characters in the play and thus induces similar introspections in the viewers.

The physical insecurity of Muslims has led them to acquiesce in increasing physical and cultural separation from non-Muslims, and the term "apartheid" is sometimes used to describe this situation. Muslim localities suffer from very poor or nonexistent water, sanitation, public transport links, and banking services; this situation is particularly acute in the 93 Indian districts with Muslim majorities. Rural Muslims who had hitherto enjoyed relative security and relatively cordial relations with Hindus now find themselves increasingly subject to the effects of 'Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh' and other 'Hindutva' organizations expanding their reach into villages.

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Sayyed Abul Hasan 'Ali Nadwi, 'Ilm Ka Muqam Aur Ahl-i-'ilm Ki Zimmedariyan (The place of knowledge and the responsibilities of the intellectuals) (Lucknow: Majlis Tahqiqat-o-Nashriyat ul-Islam, 1997), 7.

With Editors of national dailies in Delhi on 11 June 1970

Indian Express, August 11, 2005

Ibid.

It is important to note that this data set does not have specific information regarding Hindu-Muslim violence.

R. B. Sreekumar, the Additional Director General of the Gujarat Police and responsible for intelligence at the time of the riots, later filed an affidavit with one of the official commissions charged with investigating them. In the affidavit to the Nanavati Commission, he said: "These riots were conceived, designed, planned, organized, prepared, and perpetrated by the higher stations of the ruling party. There is no doubt."

Amit A For a detailed account, see Paul R. Brass, "The Gujarat Pogrom of 2002," *Contemporary Conflicts* (Social Science Research Council, 2004); <http://conconflicts.ssrc.org/archives/gujarat/brass/> (accessed March 29, 2010)

Pandya, *Muslim Indians Struggle for Inclusion*. P- 7.

These processes are occurring at the same time as global cultural communication, as well as integration of economies, institutions, and communication technologies, which has led to the rapid transnational transmission of ideas, ideologies, and senses of shared identity and interests among co-religionists, including Muslims worldwide. In the past, Muslim and non-Muslim Indians, like Muslims and their non-Muslim compatriots elsewhere, would have assumed that the national cultures that united across religious divides would be more significant than the transnational religious identities that divide within nations.

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