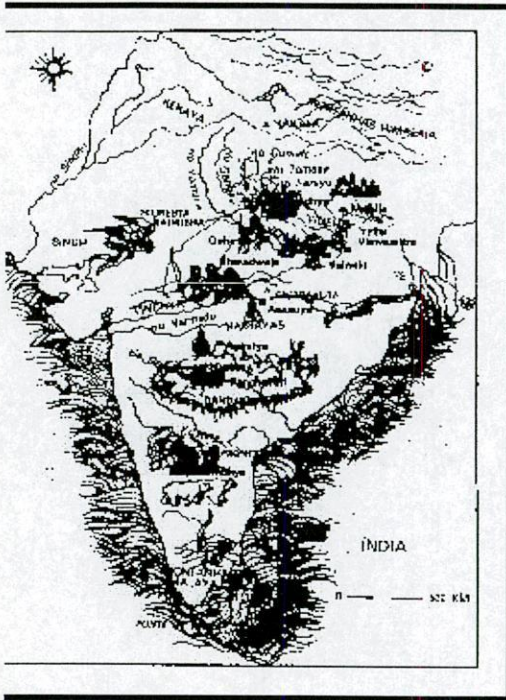


Some Frequently Asked Questions
on
Shri Rama Janmabhoomi
of Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, India

1. What is the significance of Ayodhya the city?

It is the birthplace of Rama the God incarnate and the Hero who became the fountainhead of Hindu Culture. The Ancient Hindu Scripture *Brahma Purana* [4.4.91] cites Ayodhya as the premier city of the six holy cities — (the other being Mathura, Haridvar, Kashi, Kanchi and Ujjain). The great Saint-Poet Tulsidas commenced the writing of his *Ramayana* (*Shri Rama Charit Manas*) in Ayodhya, in 1574.



2. Was Shri Rama a person or a mythical figure?

Rama is a very real figure. Hundreds of ancient monuments along the route that he had taken from Ayodhya to Lanka are strewn all over and bear sacred testimony to his presence even to this day. A photo/image provided by the US Space Agency shows a photo of the remains of the 'Setu' (bridge) between India and Lanka. Shri Rama's temples abound in every nook and corner of not only India but also in the whole of Aryavart of yore, which included Indonesia, Thailand, and Cambodia, etc. Several of the events mentioned in *Valmiki Ramayana* have been authenticated by recent archaeological findings. His presence dates back to over 9323 years as per the astronomical configurations described by Sage Valmiki in his *Ramayana*. A very interesting painter's image (map) of India, during the time of Shri Rama, has been published in Brazilian Portuguese *Ramayana* written by Octavio Mendes Cajado, and published by Editora Cultrix Ltda, Sao Paulo, Brazil, 1976. A copy of this map is printed alongside.

3. Why is Shri Rama called a Maryada Purushottam?

He personifies the highest of Human Values, never deviating from the virtuous path in thought, or action, even in the direst of circumstances. His renouncing of the mighty throne of Ayodhya to keep the word of his father, his infinite love for his brothers and the unflagging love and respect for Kaikeyee, the mother who banished him to the jungles, establish the paramaouncy of love, truth and sincerity over the greatest possible worldly acquisitions. The entire cosmos is sustained by dharma (i.e., prescribed discipline or

maryada). Having epitomized the highest discipline expected of Humans, he is called Maryada Purushottam (i.e., the Finest Specimen of a disciplined Human Being).

4. How long in antiquity is the belief in Shri Rama?

The antiquity of Ayodhya and Shri Rama is cited in the *Faizabad Gazetteer* (vol. XLIII, 1905 by H.R. Nevill, ICS). *Valmiki Ramayana* describes the celestial configuration of the *grahas* (planets) and *nakshatras* (stars) at the time of various important events such as the birth time of Rama, the meeting of Shri Hanuman, etc. Recent calculations, performed by many noted researchers, including Saurabh Kwatra, place the birthday of Shri Rama during the year 7323 BCE.

For many millennia, the tradition of veneration to Shri Rama has existed in the Hindu society in one form or another. The earliest known inscription to testify to this is found in the Nasik cave inscription dating back to CE 150. The evolution of the tradition of Shri Rama worship at least from CE 300 is established by the early shrines surviving at ancient Ramagiri hills, 30 km from Nagpur. Paintings depicting episodes of Shri Rama's life have adorned the walls of numerous temples in India and outside — from the famous Deogarh temple in Madhya Pradesh to Angkor Vat in Cambodia. The Grand Palace in Bangkok has a pictorial depiction of the complete *Ramayana* along the inner part of the compound wall.

5. Is there any archaeological evidence to establish the genuineness of the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi site?

The most clinching Palaeographic evidence emerged from the inscription on the thick stone slab (shown on the cover page) that the debris of the demolished structure yielded on 6th December, 1992. Over 265 pieces of artifacts were recovered that day. All of them have been identified as being part of the ancient temple. The inscription has 20 lines, 30 *shlokas* (verses), and is composed in chaste Sanskrit written in Nagari script. The 'Nagari Lipi' (a form of Sanskrit script) was prevalent in the eleventh and twelfth century. The crucial part of its message as deciphered by a team of experts {world class Epigraphists and Sanskrit scholars, Historians and Archaeologists} which includes Prof. A.M. Shastri, Dr. K.V. Ramaesh, Dr. T.P. Verma, Prof. B.R. Grover, Dr. A.K. Sinha, Dr. Sudha Malaiya, Dr. D.P. Dubey and Dr. G.C. Tripathi is given on the cover page of this booklet. It is reproduced below in English:

The first twenty verses are the praises of the king Govind Chandra Gharhwal (CE 1114 to 1154) and his dynasty while the twenty-first verse says the following:

For the salvation of his soul the (King Govind Chandra Gharhwal) after paying his obeisance at the little feet of Vamana Avatar (the incarnation of God as a midget Brahmana) went about constructing a wondrous temple for Vishnu Hari (Shri Rama) with marvellous pillars and structure of stone reaching the skies and culminating in a superb top with a massive sphere of gold and projecting shafts in the sky — a temple so grand that no other King in the History of the nation had ever built before.

It further states that this astounding temple (*ati-adbhutam*) was built in the temple-city of Ayodhya. Line 19 describes god Vishnu (Shri Rama) as destroying king Bali (brother of Sugreeva) and the ten-headed Dashanana (Ravana).

It is to be noted that King Govind Chandra Gharhwal reconstructed this temple after Salar Massood had destroyed it when he had invaded Ayodhya earlier.

Even so, between 1975-80 the Archaeological Survey of India had carried out extensive excavations at various sites cited in *Ramayana*. The excavations at the site contiguous to the Rama Janmabhoomi Mandir mound comprehensively established sets of pillars at that spot which continued till the last point that was considered safe for the structure. The presumption is that if the excavations were to be continued, those formations of pillars could be found existing right beneath the disputed structure. Those archaeological finds date back to seventh century BCE.

6. Is there any proof of destruction of a Mandir in honor of Shri Rama at Ayodhya in 1528 CE?

Emphatically yes. Historical, archaeological, eye-witness accounts of ancient travellers, revenue records, and entries in the District gazetteers of Faizabad, Sultanpur and Delhi of the nineteenth century exist as irrevocable evidence. In the first flush of success in the 1857 war of Independence that was fought shoulder to shoulder by Hindus and Muslims, Amir Ali had decided to hand over the temple to the Hindus and thus put an end to the root cause of Hindu-Muslim differences. The incident finds mention on page 134 of the *Delhi Gazetteer* published in 1883-4, revised 1907-9 and published in 1912. Then revised completely and published in 1976. In the words of Col. Martin:

The news that Muslims have agreed to voluntarily hand over the Babri Masjid to the Hindus created a wave of panic in our ranks and it was felt that the British shall be vanquished.

Thereafter on 18th March, 1857 when Amir Ali and Rama Chandra Das were publicly hanged, Col. Martin said:

After this the back of the Faizabad Revolutionaries was broken and in the entire District of Faizabad our authority was restored.

In yet another reference, the Faizabad District Judge on a plaint filed by Mahant Raghubar Das gave a judgement on 18th March, 1886. Though the plaint was dismissed, yet the judgement brought out two points very clearly in the following words:

I found that the Masjid built by Emperor Babar stands on the border of the town of Ayodhya. . . . It is most unfortunate that Masjid should have been built on land specially held sacred by the Hindus, but as that event occurred 358 years ago it is too late now to remedy the grievance. All that can be done is to maintain the parties in status quo. In such a case as the present one any innovation would cause more harm and derangement of order than benefit.

This judgement brought out two points: (i) that it was built by Babar and (ii) that it was built on the land held sacred by the Hindus. .

The Muslims all along have been conscious of the vandalization of the Rama Temple and its conversion into a Mosque. The consciousness of this wrong is alive even today. It is therefore that the Muslim community by and large has little objection to it going to the Hindus. It is the Muslim and Hindu political leaders lusting for the Muslim vote-bank that are obstructing an amicable settlement.

The truth is that during Prime Minister Chandrashekar's period when the Babri Masjid Action Committee (BMAC) had been deluged with irrefutable evidence of prior presence of Rama Temple at that site, the BMAC unilaterally withdrew from parleys refusing to counter any piece of a mountain of evidence put forth by VHP.

7. How can one say that Babar destroyed a Mandir in Ayodhya?

There is irrevocable evidence that Mir Baqi had built the mosque on the order of Babar, as available in the form of inscriptions on the stone slabs that existed before the structure was destroyed on 06 December 1992. The material evidence cited below confirms this.

Before the structure got demolished a slab of stone measuring 19.2" by 27.2" was found built on the southern side of the pulpit. Inscribed on it were three lines containing six Persian verses. The actual inscription is reproduced below [Figure 4.3-5]:

۱. بفرموده شاه بابر که عدلش	* بنایست تا کاخ گردون ملاق
۲. بنا کرد این مهبط قنسیان	* امیر سعادت نشان میر باقی
۳. بود خیر باقی جو سال بنایش	* عیان شد که گفتم بود خیر باقی

In brief, the inscription reads: "By the order of the Emperor Babar - this descending place of the Angels was built by the noble Mir Baqi. It will remain an everlasting bounty. (A.H. 935/ CE 1528-29) "

Further to the above is the *Faizabad Gazetteer* (pages 172-3 of vol. XLIII, 1905 by Mr. H.R. Neville, ICS) which says:

- It was still regarded as the holy spot by the Hindus is clear from the fact of its desecration by Babar and Aurangzeb. [page 172]
- The Janmasthan was in Rama Kot and marked the birthplace of Rama. In 1528 CE Babar came to Ayodhya and halted here for a week. He destroyed the ancient temple and on its site built a mosque, still known as Babar's Mosque. The materials of the old structure were largely employed and many of the Columns are in good preservation. [Page 173]

The fact of the recovery of 265 artifacts (all fragments and parts of an erstwhile temple) on 6th December, 1992 provide the clinching evidence allaying all doubts that the mosque was built after destroying Shri Rama temple.

8. Was the Babri structure deliberately built over ruins of a temple in Ayodhya?

Undoubtedly yes. Shri Sita Rama Goel, an eminent Historian, in his book *Hindu Temples: What happened to them* has provided the detailed proof about the Hindu, Buddha, Jain, etc., temples that were destroyed and mosques built over the very spot. This was considered a sacred duty as per the edicts of Quran. The concept of *Jihad*,

*For Islam's sake, I wandered in the wilds,
Prepared for war with Pagans and Hindus,
Resolved myself to meet the martyr's death,
Thanks be to God! a Ghazi I became.*

Kafirs, and *Ghazis* in the Quran provided to the invaders the ultimate sanction to carry out such destruction. The construction of mosques on the foundations of destroyed

temples was meant to proclaim the Muslim Supremacy over the Hindus. The Babri structure was no exception. The following statement of Babar in *Babar Nama* as translated in English confirms this mindset.

[According to Islamic theology, a 'momin' (believer) becomes a mujahid (holy warrior) when he wages wars against the infidels and becomes a "Ghazi" when he kills them.]

In the English translation of the Persian diary of *Babar Nama*, Annette Beveridge (1922) specifically mentions the destruction of this Janmasthan temple. She says that "Babar, a devout Muslim, was impressed by the dignity and sanctity of the ancient Hindu Shrine at the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi" and goes on to say that "as an obedient follower of Muhammad, Babar regarded the substitution of the temple by a mosque as a dutiful and worthy action". Annette Beveridge wrote "Presumably the order for building the mosque" was given during Babar's stay in Oudh (Ayodhya) and she attributes intolerance to Prophet Muhammad and says that, as a follower of Islam, Babar "would regard the substitution of a temple by a mosque as dutiful". Babar's attitude towards unbelievers has already been quoted above.

9. It is said that the act of destruction by Babar was not a religious one, but had a political motive? Please comment.

The Rama Janmabhoomi had been vandalized on orders of the Muslim Political Head of the State. Mounting a mosque on half demolished temples of Ayodhya, Kashi and Mathura was a diabolical political stratagem to strangulate the Hindu psyche and extinguish their will to fight back. They knew that these three temples attracted millions of Hindu pilgrims from all corners of the country and this message went right across the country through this ocular demonstration. As a result even a man of the stature of Nehru had to write that he "was a Hindu by birth" as though apologising that he got born as a Hindu. The slogan "*Garva Se Kaho Hum Hindu Hain*" (Proudly proclaim you are a Hindu) was coined primarily to secure the release of the strangulated Hindu psyche. That this slogan had to be resorted to after forty years of Independence epitomizes the success of this Islamic psychological ploy.

There can be absolutely no doubt that half demolishing the temple and mounting a mosque on top of it was an act of physical outrage — an unadulterated Political Act to drive home in an offensive manner the supremacy of Muslims over Hindu India. Religious urges of the Muslims could as well have been fulfilled if mosques had been built elsewhere on all the enormous empty grounds that were freely available in those times. **So long as the concept of Jihad, Kafirs and Ghazi remains a part of the Quran, whatever is religious inevitably must have political consequences while what is done**

in pursuit of political objectives cannot but yield religious dividends. Remember, when Moors converted Spain they converted the entire population to Islam. Of course the Spaniards did the same when Spanish Christians won back Spain. **The mix of Politics and Religion is inherent in Islam.** Little wonder that government in Islamic countries is run on Islamic tenets.

10. Has it never occurred to the Hindu Protagonists that mixing religion with politics is a lethal mixture for the health of the Nation and that it should be eschewed totally?

It is most undoubtedly a lethal mix. But it did not emanate from the Hindus. The mix is inherent in Islam. The concept of Jihad and its execution yields political consequences. Jihad is being practiced in India even today. Similarly, the concept of 'Kufr', Kafirs and 'Ghazi' followed to their logical conclusions produce political consequences. It is not that the Hindu kings did not fight battles for political expansion of their kingdoms before the advent of Muslim invaders. But those battles had no trace of religion in them. They were purely political. Fighting a battle for religious purposes is unknown to Hinduism. The Hindu protagonists never politicized even the Rama temple issue. They had continued to fight their religious battles only in the courts. It is the politicians who moved into the realm of religion in pursuit of their vote-bank politics. If this lethal mix has to be eradicated then one will have to go to the clerics of Islam for amending the Quran and also approach the politicians to eschew religious issues. There is absolutely no validity to pontificate before the Hindu Protagonists reminding them about the lethality of mixing politics with religion. If the Hindus really had plans to use the lethal mix, they would not have waited from 1949 to 1986 for doing so. **Just as the mix is inherent in Islam, the insulation of religion from politics is inherent in Hinduism.**

Is there any political party in India, which has the courage to even suggest to the Muslims to interpret the tenets of Quran in keeping with the tenets of secularism? It is an irony that the Muslim leaders swear by secularism most frequently and most loudly even while their politics is enmeshed in religion. The Shah Bano case and consequent Constitutional Amendments, the terrorism in Kashmir or even the insurgencies in North-Eastern States are classic examples of this lethal mix in action.

11. What was the significance of Rama Chabootra and Sita-ki-Rasoi?

These were built during the time of Akbar, that is within fifty years of the destruction of the Rama temple in CE 1528. The "Sita-ki-Rasoi" [Sita's kitchen] was of course built at its original site. The "Rama Chabootra" (platform) was built contiguous to the structure that housed the "Garbha Griha" [sanctum-sanctorum] of the original temple. Hindus accepted this as a second best option, because they did not want to give up their claim on the site, and wanted to establish their right by their continuous presence there. This is a clear indication of the depth of attachment the Hindus had for the place where Shri Rama was born.

Right from the time the Rama Chabootra was created "*Akhanda Keertan*" (continuous prayers) of Shri Rama has been going on at that place. There are numerous recorded accounts of *Rama Navami* (Shri Rama's birthday) being celebrated at Rama Chabootra from the year 1700 onwards even during the rule of the mightiest Mogul kings.

Celebrations of *Rama Navami* at the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi temple however date back to ancient time.

12. If the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi site is so important, why was it not recovered earlier?

Right from the time of the destruction of the temple in CE 1528, continuous efforts have gone on to recover the site. Throughout the past five centuries since 1528, not one century passed in which this temple did not change hands. In spite of a relatively strong Muslim presence in the area, Hindu kings used every opportunity to liberate the site. Prior to 1947, there have been a total of 77 recorded attempts to recover the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi from the Muslims, but every time it was retaken by the superior military might of the Mogul kings. Tens of thousands of people have sacrificed their lives in these repeated attempts at wresting this temple at Shri Rama Janmabhoomi.

The insistence of construction of the Rama Chabootra and Sita-ki-Rasoi within the precincts of the Babri structure, was intended to act as a constant reminder to all coming generations about the continuing Hindu claim over the sacred site.

13. During the time of British rule, were there attempts at peaceful recovery of the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi site?

Yes. Even though the Hindus were still not their own masters, at least an option of seeking the return through the judicial process became available to them. Plaint was filed in 1885. The judgement given by the District Judge on 18th March, 1886 is available in the answer to question #6. The judgement however decided three vital issues:

- That the Masjid was built by Emperor Babar.
- That the Masjid was “built” on land specially sacred to the Hindus.
- To keep status quo evidently to woo the Muslims against Hindus and deter any chance of Hindu-Muslim unity again in the future. (Hindu-Muslim unity in 1857 had frightened the British Rulers.)

14. Were there attempts at peaceful recovery of the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi site in the post-independence period?

Absolutely yes! Cases were filed in the court for recovery of the site. After December 1949, when the idols of Shree Rama appeared in the Babri structure, the courts permitted continuous ‘*Pooja*’ (worship) by the Hindus within the structure. The courts also dismissed the plea of Muslims for the removal of the idols and prohibited Muslims from interfering with the Hindu worship. In February 1986 during the Prime Ministership of Shree Rajiv Gandhi, it was on court orders that the locks at the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi were removed, giving full access to the Hindus to worship Shri Rama Lala.

One would have thought that the monuments of slavery would have no place in a free India. But in the name of secularism Hindu sentiments have been repeatedly trampled upon to uphold the sentiments of Muslim leadership just because they are the controllers of the Muslim vote-bank. Even the Supreme Court has lost its impartiality. One has only

to compare the lightning speed with which the Supreme Court acted in November 1992 on Muslim petitions, against the pace of progress in the temple case languishing in the Allahabad High Court for over fifty years now.

In addition, the VHP participated in various discussions, organized by the Government of India, during the reign of three Prime Ministers — Shri V P Singh, Shri Chandrashekar, and Shri Narasimha Rao. Deluged by overwhelming and authentic evidence the BMAC unilaterally withdrew from the dialogue during Shri Chandrashekar's time. However, the malicious trickery of Politics touched its nadir in July 1992. About 300,000 Kar Sevaks had assembled in Ayodhya determined to perform Kar Seva. At this juncture, Shri Narasimha Rao promised that all court cases shall be brought together in the Supreme Court and day-to-day hearing shall be conducted to get the court judgement within three months, latest four months provided the Kar Sevaks withdrew from Ayodhya. The unsuspecting Dharmagurus believing in the Prime Minister, and seeing the possibility of a peaceful solution withdrew the Kar Sevaks. But nothing of the kind promised by the Prime Minister was done at all. That a Prime Minister can betray his own people so brazenly will ever remain a matter of national shame. It was clear that the entire stratagem was a deliberate ploy to humiliate the great sages of this country besides the entire Hindu community. It seems that Shri Rao even forgot that this movement had the formal written support of over 97 million citizens of this country.

15. Has the evidence to establish the destruction of the Shri Rama Mandir in CE 1528 been presented to the Government of India?

Most emphatically YES. In December 1990, when the Chandrashekar government organized the meetings to discuss the history of Shri Rama Janmabhoomi site, VHP gave written submissions, with overwhelming supporting material to establish the authenticity. The VHP has since published this evidence. Many people have written about it. These documents are available for those who may like to study and conduct research.

These submissions covered all the aspects relating to literary, historical, revenue, judicial and archaeological records. All these had clearly proved the stand of the Hindus that a temple in honor of Shri Rama was deliberately destroyed in CE 1528 when the Babri structure was built on the same foundations.

The government did acknowledge the receipt of this information. The relevant minutes of the VHP-BMAC meeting of the time read as follows:

The VHP submitted the rejoinder in which it tried to refute claims of the AIBMAC point wise. The AIBMAC did not react to the evidence put forward by the VHP. Instead it submitted photocopies of more evidence in support of its claims. Since the AIBMAC did not give comments on the evidence put forward by the VHP, it is not possible for the government to decide the areas of agreement and disagreement.

In this we must mention that Shri Naresh Chandra, chief of the special Ayodhya cell, must have made a report but the same has not been made public yet. However, the following points are noteworthy in regard to the Government of India's White Paper, which was drafted by Shri Naresh Chandra's cell:

The entire White Paper is conspicuously silent as to why Narasimha Rao announced on TV in the evening of 6th December, 1992 that “Babri Masjid has been destroyed” when the structure that got destroyed was no mosque, but a functioning temple since 1949. If it was indeed a mosque then why was it not called a mosque in the Government White Paper,

- On its part, government White Paper has variously called that structure “the disputed structure”, “the disputed shrine”, “the RJB-BM Complex” but could not call it Babri Masjid even once,
- The reason is simple. Because calling a structure a mosque in a Government White Paper, when in fact it had not been a mosque for the past 58 years would have caused a breach of privilege of the Parliament where no false information can be furnished in any official document without attracting a privilege motion.

16. Is the demand for the return of the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi site to the Hindus a forerunner to demand for the return of the thousands of vandalized temple sites?

Most Certainly Not. The demand is for the return of only three of the holiest of the holy sites and not all the rest of the thousands of vandalized sites. This has been clearly stated by the VHP as far back as January 1991. In its written submission to the government, VHP said:

We do not even demand the return of the thousands of places of worship that have been forcibly replaced with mosques. . . . We merely want three places back, three age-old sacred places. And we would prefer getting them back from the Muslim community to getting them back by an official decree. . . . Muslims should understand what kind of message they are sending by insisting on continuing the occupation of our sacred places, an occupation started by fanatics and mass-murderers like Babar and Aurangzeb. We do not like to think of our Muslim compatriots as heirs and followers of such invaders and tyrants. It is up to them to make a gesture that will signify a formal break with that painful past.

Ten years ago VHP had made this unequivocal statement about its position on the return of only the three sites. In asking for the return of only three sites, which have a special significance to the Hindus, it is clear that they are not seeking revenge.

17. Could the Babri structure have been moved from the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi site and built somewhere else?

At one point of time this was an option that was offered to the Muslim community. It was done with an intention of showing the essence of Hindu tolerance and generosity in arriving at a negotiated solution. This is a clear indication that the Hindus had no intention of seeking any revenge on the Muslims. In fact the Shia Muttawali is on record having requested for the shifting of the structure to his village Sahanwa so that the site could revert to the Hindus.

In the light of multi-storied buildings being shifted in USA, it was felt that the proposal should be technologically feasible and a sincere offer had been made. This was however summarily rejected by BMAC.

18. Why has a Rama temple to be built only at the site of the disputed site?

The More Logical Question Is “WHY SHOULD A GRAND TEMPLE OF RAMA NOT BE REBUILT AT HIS BIRTHPLACE?”

Shri Rama, as Maryada Purushottam, epitomizes all that is great and grand in any human being. Grudging a grand temple at his birthplace is in fact contempt of humanity. Let it not be forgotten that when Ramayana serial was being telecast in India, the roads in Lahore wore the same deserted look as the roads in Delhi. Reading the story of Rama daily draws out the finest in every human being, irrespective of his religious inclinations.

Constructing a temple at his birthplace is something that we owe not only to the Hindus of the world but to the entire humanity.

There are many temples in the world dedicated to Shri Rama. But there can be only one place considered as Shri Rama's Janmasthan (birthplace) and that was Ayodhya and at that very place a beautiful Shri Rama temple had existed but was destroyed. Dr. Narain has brought to light a document known as 'Muraqqah-I-Khusrawi', also known as 'Tarikh-I-Awadh', completed in 1869, by Shaik Azmat Ali Kakorawi Nami. The document states that “— the Babri Masjid was built in 923 A.H. under the patronage of Sayyid Musa Ashiquan in the 'Butkhane Janmasthan Mein (inside Janmasthan temple) in Faizabad-Awadh, which was a great place of worship and capital of Rama's father—”. Thus even a Muslim writer in 1869 called this “Janmasthan” site. Naturally, it is the duty of Shri Rama's followers to build a grand temple on the very spot where he was born.

When the birthplace of lesser mortals like Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel, Jawaharlal Nehru, Jai Prakash Narain, etc., can be converted into National Monuments by what logic at all can anyone question the validity of building a Shri Rama temple at his birthplace?

19. What is actually at the root of the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi movement?

The Rama Janmabhoomi Movement seeks the release of the Hindu psyche, which has remained strangulated for centuries. The country witnessed the educated and sophisticated Hindus fighting shy in proudly proclaiming themselves Hindus. Nothing can be more humiliating for any race or community. The temple movement is essentially the awakening of the self-esteem, self-respect, the removal of a continuing ocular demonstration of Hindu humiliation and validation of pride in being a Hindu.

The basic ethos of the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi movement is to restore the honor of the Hindu Samaj (society) and Hindu culture. It is not just an issue of bricks and mortar.

Given the response received from the masses in India and other places in the world for the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi movement, Shri Rama is clearly at the heart of our civilization and a major unifying force. There is no section, no region, of the Hindu Samaj that does not exhibit a deep attachment to Shri Rama. This empathy is strongly exhibited not only in other lands where Hindus have settled, but also where the indigenous people accepted Hindu culture, as in the entire Southeast Asia.

To understand the true ethos of the entire Rama Janmabhoomi Movement, it would be pertinent to quote Noble Laureate Shri Vidiadhar Naipaul, the great thinker and

litterateur whose literary genius, ruthless objectivity and deep perspective of history has been acclaimed the world-over.

He was interviewed by Dilip Padgaonkar published in the Times of India, on 18th July, 1993, under the caption "An area of Awakening", and again by Rahul Singh published in Times of India on 25th January, 1998 under the caption "Hindus, Muslims have lived together without understanding each other's faith", and by Sadanand Menon published in The Hindu under the caption "The truth governs writing". The portions of the three interviews relevant to this point are reproduced below:

"An area of awakening"

Interview by
Dilip Padgaonkar
The Times of India
18 July 1993

Padgaonkar (P): *The collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent rise of Islamic nations in Central Asia, the Salman Rushdie affair, similar harassment by fundamentalists of liberal Muslim intellectuals in India: all these factors taken together persuaded some forces to argue that a divided Hindu society cannot counteract Islamic fundamentalism.*

Naipaul (N): *I don't see it quite in that way. The things you mentioned are quite superficial. What is happening in India is a new, historical awakening. Gandhi used religion in a way as to marshal people for the independence cause. People who entered the independence movement did it because they felt they would earn individual merit.*

Today, it seems to me that Indians are becoming alive to their history. Romila Thapar's book on Indian history is a Marxist attitude to history, which in substance says: there is a higher truth behind the invasions, feudalism and all that. The correct truth is the way the invaders looked at their actions. They were conquering, they were subjugating. And they were in a country where people never understood this. Only now are the people beginning to understand that there has been a great vandalizing of India. Because of the nature of the conquest and the nature of Hindu society such understanding had eluded Indians before.

What is happening in India is a mighty creative process. Indian intellectuals, who want to be secure in their liberal beliefs, may not understand what is going on, especially if these intellectuals happen to be in the United States. But every other Indian knows precisely what is happening: deep down he knows that a larger response is emerging even if at times this response appears in his eyes to be threatening.

However, we are aware of one of the more cynical forms of liberalism: it admits that one fundamentalism is all right in the world. This is the fundamentalism they are really frightened of: Islamic fundamentalism. Its source is Arab money. It is not intellectually to be taken seriously etc. I don't see the Hindu reaction purely in terms of one

fundamentalism pitted against another. The reaction is a much larger response. . . . Mohammedan fundamentalism is essentially negative, a protection against a world it desperately wishes to join. It is a last ditch fight against the world.

*But the sense of history that the Hindus are now developing is a new thing. Some Indians speak about a synthetic culture: **this is what a defeated people always speak about.** The synthesis may be culturally true. But to stress it could also be a form of response to intense persecution.*

(P): *How did you react to the Ayodhya incident?*

(N): *Not as badly, as the others did, I am afraid. The people who say that there was no temple there are missing the point. Babar, you must understand, had contempt for the country (that) he had conquered. And his building of that mosque was an act of contempt for the country.*

In Turkey, they turned the Church of Santa Sophia into a mosque. In Nicosia churches were converted into mosques too. The Spaniards spent many centuries reconquering their land from Muslim invaders. So these things have happened before and elsewhere.

In Ayodhya the construction of a mosque on a spot regarded as sacred by the conquered population was meant as an insult. It was meant as an insult to an ancient idea, the idea of Rama, which was two or three thousand years old.

(P): *The people who climbed on top of these domes and broke them were not bearded people wearing saffron robes and with ash on their foreheads. They were young people clad in jeans and tee shirts.*

(N): *One needs to understand the passion that took them on top of the domes. The jeans and the tee shirts are superficial. The passion alone is real. You can't dismiss it. You have to try to harness it.*

*Hitherto in India the thinking has come from the top. I spoke earlier about the state of the country: destitute, trampled upon, crushed. You then had the Bengali renaissance, the thinkers of the nineteenth century. But all this came from the top. What is happening now is different. **The movement is now from below.***

(P): *My colleague, the cartoonist, Mr. R K Laxman, and I recently traveled thousands of miles in Maharashtra. In many places we found that noses and breasts had been chopped off from the statues of female deities. Quite evidently this was a sign of conquest. The Hindutva forces point to this too to stir up emotions. The problem is how do you prevent these stirred-up emotions from spilling over and creating fresh tensions?*

(N): *I understand. But it is not enough to abuse them or to use that fashionable word from Europe: fascism. There is a big, historical development going on in India. Wise men should understand it and ensure that it does not remain in the hands of fanatics. Rather they should use it for the intellectual transformation of India.*

Excerpt from an Interview
by Rahul Singh

The Times of India, 23 January 1998

(R): *You gave an interview to the **Times of India**, which was interpreted by the BJP as supporting them in the destruction (of the Babri structure). Do you think you were misunderstood?*

(N): *I can see how what I said then could be misinterpreted. I was talking about history; I was talking about a historical process that had to come. I think India has lived with one major extended event, that began about CE 1000, the Muslim invasion. It meant the cracking open and partial wrecking of what was a complete cultural, religious world until that invasion. I don't think the people of India have been able to come to terms with that wrecking. I don't think they understand what really happened. It's too painful. And I think this BJP movement and that Masjid business is part of a new sense of history, a new idea of what happened. It might be misguided, it might be wrong to misuse it politically, but I think it is part of a historical process. **And to simply abuse it as Fascist is to fail to understand why it finds an answer in so many hearts in India.***

“The truth governs writing”

an interview by
Sadanand Menon
The Hindu
5 July 1998

(M): *You have given some signals during your visit here this time about your — it may be a wrong word — your “happiness” with the emergence and consolidation of some kind of parasitic Hindu political order here. How do you sustain such a thesis?*

(N): *No. I have not done that actually. I have talked about history. And I have talked about this movement. I have not gone on to say I would like Hindu religious rule here. All that I have said is that Islam is here in a big way. There is a reason for that and we cannot hide from what the reasons were. The great invasions spread very far South, spreading to, you know, even to Mysore. I think when you see so many Hindu temples of the tenth century or earlier time disfigured, defaced, you know that they were not just defaced for fun: that something terrible happened. I feel that the civilization of that closed world was mortally wounded by those invasions. And I would like people, as it were, to be more reverential towards the past, to try to understand it; to preserve it; instead of living in its ruins. The Old World is destroyed. That has to be understood. The ancient Hindu India was destroyed.*

(M): *Many things changed and many things overlapped in Indian history due to many diverse interventions. But do such processes over time justify the line of “historic revenge” with retrospective effect? Does it make that inevitable? What do you see unfolding before your eyes here today?*

(N): *No. I do not think so. It need not happen. If people just acknowledged history, certain deep emotions of shame and defeat would not be driven underground and would not find this rather nasty and violent expression. As people become more secure in India, as middle and lower middle-class begins to grow; they will feel this emotion more and more. And it is in these people that deep things are stirred by what was, clearly, a very bad defeat. The guides who take people around the temples of Belur and Halebid are*

talking about this all the time. I do not think they were talking about it like that when I was there last, which is about 20 something years ago. So new people come up and they begin to look at their world and from being great acceptors, they have become questioners. And I think we should simply try to understand this passion. It is not an ignoble passion at all. It is men trying to understand themselves. Do not dismiss them. Treat them seriously. Talk to them.

(M): *But don't you think this tendency is only going to increase — this tendency to whimsically and freely interpret religion or history at the street level?*

(N): *I think it will keep on increasing as long as you keep on saying it is wicked and that they are wicked people. And if we wish to draw the battle-line, then of course, you get to battle. If you try to understand what they are saying, things will calm down.*

20. What is the rationale of the people who make a case that there was no destruction of a temple at Ayodhya while constructing the Babri-Structure?

The primary objective of such uninformed stand is perhaps to obfuscate and confuse the issue and thus cause confusion in the Hindu ranks. This is a despicable tactic frequently employed by people who cannot justify their cause. For example, Mr. Shahabuddin, the most visible and vocal spokesman of Babri Masjid Action Committee (BMAC) is on record to state that he would be the first person to lay the first brick for constructing the Rama Temple, if only it could be proved that the structure stands on the remains of a temple. However when that was indisputably proved that the structure of a mosque was made after half demolishing an ancient Rama Temple, he simply wriggled out of his commitment by demanding that it should be established beyond doubt that Rama actually took birth at that place. He conveniently overlooks the historical truth that the *Rama Navami* has been celebrated exactly at that place for thousands of years — even during the harshest Mogul rule. If that is not proof enough what other proof is possible. No person in the world today can prove exactly where his great grandfather was born even if that event had been just 150 years old. To raise the same question about Shri Rama, who was born some 10,000 years go, is not only absurd but also mischievous.

Of course the rationale keeps varying as per the needs of the situation. It seems that the ultimate objective is to create and maintain a particular level of confusion. First, the historicity of Shri Rama is questioned. When that is proved, the concept of Maryada Purushottam as applicable to Shri Rama is denied, it is said that he was an ordinary person, without attributing any special importance to him. When that is proved, it is denied that he was born in Ayodhya. When that is proved, it is denied that the Ayodhya where he was born is not where the present-day Ayodhya is. When that is proved, it is denied he was born at the spot where the Hindus have a continuous recorded tradition of more than 3000 years. And so on.

As to the rationale of the opponents of the temple movement, as former PM Shri Chandrashekar himself discovered, “they are totally unwilling to even attempt to demolish the evidence furnished to them by the VHP and thus project some semblance of rationale for the opposition”. The VHP have most earnestly and sincerely tried to know their rationale but have drawn a total blank.

21. Is the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi a political movement?

Certainly Not. It is a remarkable aspect of the Hindu religion that in its known-recorded history of the past 3000 years, for all the Hindu rulers and kings; religion remained insulated from politics. Even where kings changed religion it had no impact on their politics.

There was no political motivation at all in the past seventy-seven attempts to wrest the Rama Temple from the Muslims even while the recapture of the site was done repeatedly by Muslim Rulers of the day.

It was and it remained a religious battle all along even during the freedom struggle years when Rama Lala appeared in the temple. Hindu Mahants and Muslim leaders were fighting the battles in courts and they were making their respective claims without political backing from either side.

However the movement got drawn into the vortex of politics when former PM Rajiv Gandhi, fearing a massive backlash to his succumbing to the fundamentalist Muslims in the Shah Bano judgement, made an attempt to assuage the Hindu Community by opening the locks of the temple. It was this that created a **political aspect in what was essentially a religious movement**. The rest, of course is history.

But the fact remains that for the Hindus; a temple at the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi is not an issue of mere bricks and mortar. It is an issue of Hindu cultural resurgence and identity, where Shri Rama, as Maryada Purushottam has a prime place. The movement is an expression of the collective consciousness of the Hindu ethos. On 9th November, 1947, **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel** (Deputy Prime Minister of India), accompanied by another cabinet Minister **Shri N.V. Gadgil**, declared in a public meeting his resolve to reinstall the Jyotirlinga at the very same **Somnath Temple** which was ravaged, looted, and ransacked repeatedly by the invaders from Mahmud Ghazni to Aurangzeb. **This was a classic example of the expression of collective consciousness of a nation.**

That same day, Sardar Patel declared

The Hindu sentiment in regard to this temple is both strong and widespread. In the present conditions, it is unlikely that the sentiment will be satisfied by mere restoration of the temple or by prolonging its life. The restoration of the idol would be a point of honor and sentiment with the Hindu public.

Hence, for the Hindus, Shri Rama Janmabhoomi movement is not political, but an issue of national honor and sentiment. It is also the unfinished work of the great Sardar.

22. Prime Minister Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee said that there is no point in redeeming a 350 years old wrong now. Any comments?

As PM he owes a responsibility to the NDA agenda and may be he had that in mind if and when he said this. But if this logic were to be accepted, then the entire Independence Movement could as well be dubbed as a futile exercise in trying to redeem a “**250 year old wrong of slavery**” by becoming free. Where the honor and self-esteem of a Nation is involved, time — even centuries and millennia — lose relevance.

In this context given below is the excerpt of a letter Shri K.M. Munshi wrote to Nehru during the controversy surrounding the President inaugurating Somanath temple:

Yesterday you referred to Hindu revivalism — I cannot value freedom if it deprives us of the Bhagavad Gita or uproots our millions from the faith with which they look upon our temples and thereby destroy the texture of our lives.

Reconstruction of the sacred Somnath Temple was an expression of National Sentiments. One can find the same sentiment among the Hindus world over. Babri structure was a monument of our slavery. No self-respecting independent nation, which seeks to rise to glory, can tolerate such a structure on its land. Lastly, it is erroneous to call it a 358-year-old wrong. It did start centuries ago, but the humiliation, in the words of Sir Arnold Toynbee, “by the ocular demonstration of supremacy over Hindu’s holy of holies” is as hurting today as it was when it was perpetrated.

23. Will the Rama Janmabhoomi Movement not create communal hatred and destroy the Secular fabric of India and make a mockery of the country being defined as a Secular country in our own Constitution?

On the contrary, this Movement at this point of our Nation’s history provides the greatest opportunity to bring about an abiding and unprecedented degree of communal amity between Hindus and Muslims of India.

Speaking at a huge congregation assembled at the Punya Tithi of his mother, in 1984, Shri Ashok Singhal of the VHP, had publicly declared unequivocally:

The great opportunity that Providence has offered to this nation for not only communal amity, but of creating deep and abiding bonds of love and understanding between the two communities.

He elaborated the point by stating:

If the Muslims were to quit their claim over the three sacred-most sites of Ayodhya, Kashi and Mathura with love and understanding, and sincerely develop deep respect for Hindu sentiments and feelings, then, though Islam may vanish from every other land, it shall remain alive and vibrant in India till the Hindus exist in this land.

It is ironical that the self-seeking Muslim leadership miserably failed to grasp this opportunity. There is yet time to capture this opportunity and the Muslims of the country need to ponder and decide the nature of relationship they aspire to have with the Hindus. It will be a folly to think that the VHP Pariwar represents only a small section of Hindu society. They had better recall that the RSS/VHP Pariwar had collected over 97.7 million signatures supporting the demand that the Rama Mandir should be built at the same spot. A body that can marshal close to 100 million signatures and submit that massive demand of the country’s citizens to the President eminently deserves to be recognized as the true representative of the Hindus. Admittedly, the leftist news reporters and columnists and the pseudo-secularists were not in this 97.7 million figure.

As for the Constitutional description of the Indian polity being Secular, **it is to be noted that the founding fathers never inserted this word.** They were aware that both

Islam and Christianity were duty bound to actively convert all of mankind to their religious faith as per their respective religious edicts and therefore the complexion of the Indian polity could possibly not remain secular. On the other hand, as enormous bitterness had followed the partition, they went out of their way by providing to the minorities the right to preach and propagate their religions, etc. (Articles 25, 26 & 30 of the Constitution). In the eyes of the founding fathers, those provisions were thought to be adequate to wipe out the bitterness as well as allay the fears of Muslims who had chosen to stay on in India. Indira Gandhi inserted the word 'Secular' later as a Constitutional amendment, purely as a camouflage to cover her downright communal (pro-Muslim) vote-bank politics.

It was a gimmick for the Muslim vote-bank. Even she could possibly not have been blind to the religious MANDATE in their respective religious faiths. Secularism in action being impossibility, it took the shape of out and out pro-Muslim and anti-Hindu stance in Government policies. For example:

- Government contribution to the Waqf funds for paying the salaries on a Supreme Court prescribed pay scale to the Imams, Naib, Imams, Moazzins, etc., employed in all Mosques aggregating an expense in excess of 6 billion Rs. annually while Granthis and Pujaris are languishing in destitution in the Gurudwaras and temples.
- Subsidising Haj pilgrims costing Government an amount of Rs.30,000 per Haj Pilgrim and while doing nothing for the Hindus who have to pay Rs.30,000 for Amarnath Yatra and Rs.40,000 for Mansarovar.
- Doling out Rs.3 million (by Indira Gandhi) and Rs.4 million (by V.P. Singh) to the Imam of Jama Masjid for the repairs of the Jama Masjid as against not only even a paisa (Indian penny) for repairs of far more ancient temples of Badrinath and Kedarnath but also taking over all major Hindu temples and appropriating the personal contributions of millions of worshippers through the Government appointed Administrators. All major Hindu temples have been taken over by the government but the government dare not take over the Hazratbal mosque or Chirare Sharif in Kashmir even when they were used as hideouts by the terrorists.

These are merely three samples of the scores and scores of similar Government actions to show what utter nonsense has been made of the word 'Secular' by Governments after Governments. **Secularism has never been practiced in India. Yes! this word did succeed in reducing Hindus to second class citizens in their own land.** Where two aggressive major world religions, having access to billions of dollars, are avowedly bent upon converting all the Hindus of India into their respective religious folds, what chance indeed do the non-aggressive Hindu religionists have even for their survival? **None! 'Secularism' in action in this country means appeasement of the minority and adoption of anti-Hindu policies no matter which government is in power.** The word secularism was thus already a dead letter even before it was introduced in the Constitution.

24. Is it necessary to correct a wrong done in medieval times, when vandalising holy sites of the conquered people was a norm?

There was no such NORM in the history of India. Any number of Hindu Kings expanded their kingdom but no such desecration of places of worship was done by the order of the conquering King. Yes! It became a norm for Islamic invaders and Christian crusaders, because their religious edicts not only ordained them to do so but also promised tremendous dividends in the lives hereafter.

In fact, by that reckoning, the entire independence movement from 1857 till 1947 would have to also get classified as a wrong act to correct a medieval wrong. After all, a lot of blood letting was done in the entire Freedom Movement also. Even the wholesale removal of huge statues of British monarchs after independence would get classified as a morally wrong act.

When the Moors occupied Spain in the twelfth century, they not only demolished all the Churches, but also converted the entire population into Muslims. However, when the Spaniards won back freedom in the sixteenth century, they not only demolished all the Mosques and erected Churches, but also de-converted the entire population back to Christianity. No historian has ever commented adversely on this, much less called it wrong. When the Polish people won freedom in 1915 after about a hundred years of Russian slavery, they, (even though they themselves were Christians), promptly demolished the massive Gothic Cathedral that was built by the Russians in the Square of Warsaw. The Poles looked upon it as a monument of Russian victory and not as a place of worship.

On the other hand, no Mosques were destroyed nor any Muslim de-converted back to Hinduism when Shivaji wrested his Kingdom from the Mogul rulers. No, Destruction of the structure on 6th December, 1992 when it was not even a mosque for the past 58 years cannot be equated with vandalizing of religious sites. When this country was dismembered under British Supervision, a whole Nation of Pakistan was created on a two-Nation theory purely on religious basis. It is ironical that some Muslim leaders (and *not* the entire Muslim community as such) should grudge the Hindus the Construction of a grand temple at Ayodhya or the temples of Kashi or Mathura. Is this the way to express their gratitude for having been saved from the trauma of being uprooted and sent to Pakistan where their similar brethren are living as second class citizens? They seem to have ignored their own Quran, which declares “INGRATITUDE” as the greatest of all sins.

Let it be not forgotten that in the case of Ayodhya temple, the Hindus have made serious attempts to get back the sacred site by peaceful means — through negotiations and the judiciary. These attempts were frustrated for no fault of the Hindus.

Not pressing the claim for the thousands of recorded temples that were demolished and on which Mosques are standing today is a generous enough concession to the Indian Muslims, who chose to stay on in India. Expecting the Hindus to give up their claims on the Rama temple at Ayodhya or the half-demolished temples of Kashi and Mathura is tantamount to conceding to barbarism when it was at its very worst.

25. Does the destruction of the Babri structure not mean that the concept that ‘two wrongs make a right’ is accepted?

Vandalizing the Shri Rama temple was doubtlessly the first wrong. But what was the **second** wrong?

Undoing any wrong is an act of justice and is essentially a noble act. Just as tearing down the British yoke of slavery was the undoing of the wrong done by the British masters, so was the tearing down of the Babri structure (a symbol of Mogul supremacy) the undoing of a continuing wrong that was started in 1528. It is preposterous to equate barbaric vandalization of the sacred-most Shri Rama temple with an act that restored the honor of a humiliated Hindu nation. Yes, if the Jama Masjid of Delhi, the Dargah of Ajmer or the Mosque at Hazratbal had been demolished, then doubtlessly it could be counted as an equitable second wrong. Not even the most knowledgeable *ulemas* (clerics) can call any building a mosque wherein worship of Rama has been going on for over four decades. **What got destroyed on 6th December 1992 at Ayodhya was no mosque and no second wrong was ever committed.**

26. In destroying the Babri structure, does it not mean that the present-day Muslims are being asked to pay a price for the mistakes of those who indulged in vandalism and destruction?

Pray, what price have the Muslims paid? What have they lost at all? The structure that was destroyed in 1992 housed a temple functioning under Court orders upheld by the High Court continuously for the past over 42 years. The Privy Council has already ruled in the case of the Lahore Masjid when it had been in disuse for just 14 years that its status as mosque could not be restored. (See Case Law reports AIR 1940 p.116; 1940 ALJ p.552; 1940 OWR 1280; ILR 1940, p. 493). In this structure, **no *namaz* (Muslim prayers) had been conducted for the past 57 years. Of course, for the past 42 years it had been a functioning temple.**

An impression has been created that Kar Sevaks destroyed a Masjid purely because of the canard spread by Narasimha Rao on the TV in the evening of 6th December that “Babri Masjid has been destroyed.” If indeed it was Babri Masjid, how is it that the White Paper prepared by Narasimha Rao’s own Government never even once called it “Babri Masjid” throughout its 122-page text?

Nawab Wajid Ali Shah (1847-1856) attempted to end the dispute. He appointed a 3-member commission. One Hindu, one Muslim and the third one a representative of ‘Company Sahib’ (the British). The commission arrived at the conclusions that

Mir Baqi had erected this structure after demolishing an existing building because, on the plaque it is clearly written that this is a place where angels descend. It contains the debris of the earlier structure.

— This commission did not call it any “Mosque”.

The Muslims never lost anything. It is only their self-seeking leaders who lost face when the myth of continuing to call that structure Babri Masjid got exposed.

Even so, the heirs of Mir Baqi, the hereditary Shia Muttawalli Shri Javvad Hussain, s/o Sahanwa, of the once upon a time Babri Masjid has already gone on record demanding the transfer of the Mosque to Sahanwa so that the site could peacefully revert to the Hindus. Incidentally, the Office Note dated 21st November, 1948, sent to Javvad

Hussain by the Sunni Waqf Board, U.P. the Waqf Board also acknowledges the Muttawalliship of Javvad Hussain as the one valid Muttawalli.

Besides, Babar was an invader and no Muslim living in India today has ever been heard to say that what Babar did in 1528 was right. So to say that Muslims paid a price on 6th December 1992 is a highly erroneous perception.

27. Has the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi Movement disturbed the communal atmosphere in the country?

After 1857, Hindu-Muslim unity was anathema to the British rulers. The communal strife reached its nadir during partition days. Riots — sometimes very vicious riots, — have constantly dogged this country, especially UP, year after year. Rama Lala had appeared in the sanctum sanctorum of the Babri structure in 1949; yet no communal disturbance took place. **Not one single riot had occurred throughout the route taken by Advani's Rath Yatra. There are videotapes of swarms of Muslims greeting Advani's Rath Yatra. There were NO riots anywhere in the entire route. Yet, continuous propaganda is still being made that Advani's Rath Yatra left a trail of Hindu-Muslim riots. It is canards such as these that vitiate the communal atmosphere. The Hindus have all the right to reconstruct their old temple. If this causes communal tension the fault lies with those who resist the exercising of this wholly legitimate right.**

The communal atmosphere however, did get vitiated when some self-seeking Muslim leaders saw this Movement offering a great opportunity to get recognized as National level leaders of the Muslim community and some Hindu leaders saw in it as an opportunity to garner the Muslim vote-bank. In other words, communal atmosphere was vitiated only when this Movement was sought to be politicized. In this, Rajiv Gandhi stands out as the first in starting its politicization. This politicization reached its climax when Narasimha Rao spoke the greatest lie on Doordarshan on 6th December 1992, by calling a functioning temple as the 'Babri Masjid' and then reaping the political harvest of dismissing governments in all four BJP-ruled States. The mischief was caused by the Prime Minister's lie and not by the Hindus.

Had this movement remained what it genuinely was — a religious movement, it had the potential of becoming an instrument of abiding communal amity (see answer to Q. No. 23).

28. Why are those who oppose the construction of the Mandir at the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi site called "Babar ki aulad" (descendants of Babar)?

One has to first determine how one views the Babri structure. Some of those opposed to the construction of the Mandir at the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi say that the Babri structure was a place of worship for the Muslims. Some others argue that it was a monument of our secular tradition. Any interpretation of the Babri structure, other than that it was a monument of our slavery, would clearly indicate that the Hindus are being asked to persist with the feeling of humiliation that Babar had inflicted on them, as the conquered people.

The Babri structure was built after destroying the Shri Rama temple. Thus, those who oppose the restoration of the temple evidently wish to hold on to the memory of Babar.

As Hindus feel proud to be the descendants of Rama and the inheritors of the culture and human values symbolized by Rama, it was only logical to presume that the protectors of the Babri structure ought to be feeling equally proud in considering themselves the descendents of Babar and inheritors of the culture and values that Babar represented. It was therefore; perhaps, that the opponents of the Rama Temple began to be called "Descendants of Babar, i.e., Babar ki Aulad".

If for any reason, the opponents consider this epithet as abusive or derogatory, they should come forward and condemn Babar and his barbarous acts and begin taking pride in the destruction of the structure he had created to humiliate the Hindus. But for this, they have to believe firmly in the absolute truth that the structure that got destroyed was no mosque at all since 42 years prior to its destruction. The Muslims anger would have been fully understandable had that building really been a mosque when it was destroyed.

29. Would the construction of a temple in honor of Shri Rama create a confrontation with the Government in power?

The conclusive legitimacy of the demand for the construction of a temple in honor of Shri Rama is the one that has to be decided first. The justification for the construction has been made on the basis of historical, literary, legal, revenue and archaeological records. This has been presented to all sections of society, including the Government of India and even to those opposed to the construction of the temple. Time and again, the Hindus have made sincere efforts to find a negotiated solution by proving the facts to the hilt. These were frustrated for no fault of the Hindus. All the relevant information is in public domain.

Therefore, under the circumstances, and given the just merit of the demand for the construction, we do not see any reason for any kind of confrontation with any party in power. The people who are seeking a confrontation are those who do not wish to recognize the validity of the strong sentiments of the Hindus for their holy sites. Hence, the fault will not lie with the Hindus in this case even if a confrontational situation is forced on them. Hindu humiliation during the Mogul and British times was unbearable enough. But, continued humiliation in a free India is simply too much to expect from Hindu tolerance.

30. What will be the reaction of the Islamic oil producing countries if the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi temple is rebuilt?

Islamic countries do not have leaders with their own vested interests or leaders who need to garner any vote-bank. Hence, it is ridiculous to talk about reaction of Islamic oil producing countries. Serious efforts are being made to put across unadulterated truth regarding the whole affair and, once any foreign country, including Islamic countries, sees the Hindu stance objectively, absolutely no adverse reaction in Islamic countries shall be possible. Babri structure was no mosque, but in the History of Islam even a regular functioning mosque was ordered to be demolished when the site's ownership was disputed. Demolition of a regular functioning Mosque for ensuring justice is nothing new in Islam.

In Tariq-e-Islam (History of Islam), there is a recorded case of Damishk wherein the older of the two brothers had given a jointly owned land as Waqf for the construction of a Mosque. The Mosque had been functioning for several years when the elder brother died. Soon thereafter, the younger brother approached Khalifa Omar-bin-Abdul Aziz claiming his land back on the ground that his brother had not taken his consent while making the Waqf. After verifying the truth of his claim, the Khalifa ordered the demolition of the Mosque and restored the land to the surviving brother. This case occurred in the year 100 Hijri.

In the case of the Rama temple, however, the place had not been used as a Mosque since 1934 and actually **it was a functioning temple** since 22/23rd December 1949, a truth which is crucial in judging the validity of the Hindu program. All the four Schools of Muslim Jurisprudence have unanimously and unequivocally stated that no Mosque can be built on any land, which is not totally free from any doubt or dispute irrespective of the fact, whether the dispute occurred before or after the construction of the Mosque. In fact, as per Islamic theology, *namaz* performed in any disputed site is not acceptable to Allah. In the light of this, not only these sites, but even Kashi and Mathura have zero religious value for Muslims, even if ignorant *Namazis* keep thronging there.

The only important action to be taken is to project all the Truth and Truth alone and any adverse reaction could be totally ruled out.

31. Will the reconstruction of the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi temple in any way affect the position of India vis-à-vis Kashmir?

The Shri Rama Janmabhoomi movement is in no way directed against Muslims. It is a movement to redeem the honor and self-esteem of tens of millions of Hindus of a free India. It has absolutely no link with Kashmir whatsoever.

32. Are Hindu Organisations called fundamentalists in the crude sense? Will not the reconstruction of the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi temple make this charge valid?

Fundamentalism, like Secularism, is talked about glibly. Leave alone very senior politicians, even highly enlightened members of the Press get stumped when they are requested to define FUNDAMENTALISM. In our experience, none of the secularists have yet provided a definition. It is, therefore, important to first know who is a fundamentalist, and what are his traits.

FUNDAMENTALIST is one who believes:

- (1) That HIS religion is the ONLY religion through which any human soul can achieve salvation.
- (2) That his faith is governed by some set tenets written in a book on the basis of which that religion was founded and not one word of the text of his basic scripture can afford any change whatsoever. That no one except those authorized in his religion has any right to interpret the provisions of his scripture and once any interpretation has been given it is final and not open to any questioning or any challenge.

- (3) That if any person of his own faith or any other faith dares to question, challenge or seeks to provide an alternate interpretation, the top authorities of his religion possess a divine right to punish such individual including awarding of death penalty.
- (4) That the entire edifice of his faith can get threatened by anyone inflicting the slightest insult to his holy book or to its contents or to his place of worship and his entire community must rise as a body to avenge it.
- (5) That he has a religious obligation to despise and denigrate any and every other religious faith and hence a religious duty to articulate accordingly, specially while seeking to convert others to his faith.
- (6) That he has a Divine right granted to him by his religion to expand the number of followers of his faith by converting the followers of other faiths.
- (7) That by increasing the number of followers, he stands glorified in the eyes of his religion irrespective of whether such conversion is done by deceit, by offering material temptations, by exploiting their hapless plight, threats of force or by actually resorting to violence.
- (8) That he has a Divine right sanctified by his religion to desecrate and destroy the religious scriptures of other faiths.
- (9) That he has a Divine right to destroy the places of worship of other religious faiths and by so doing he stands glorified in the eyes of his Lord God.

By The very definition of A fundamentalist, NO HINDU CAN EVER BECOME A FUNDAMENTALIST. However, using the Goebellian tactics, by repeatedly calling the RSS, VHP or Bajrang Dal fundamentalists, they seek to create a perception in public that like Muslims and Christians, a Hindu also can be a fundamentalist. Fighting for restoration of Hindu honor not by Bombs or AK-47s, but by willing to lay down their lives has been dubbed as fundamentalism. In the case of a Hindu, even refusing to tolerate any further humiliation is labeled as fundamentalism.

Not even the most exalted Muslim *Ulema* can possibly accept that a spot where Rama Lala is being worshipped continuously since 1949 can be classified as a Mosque.

Commenting on the demand for the restoration of three temples, KONRAD ELST writes:

... any religion would demand that much of respect for its sacred places. There is nothing narrow-minded about demanding respect. (page 129 of Rama Janmabhoomi vs. Babri Masjid).

“The initiative now, as in the forties, lies principally with the Muslims,” wrote Giri Lal Jain just after the Shilanyas (*Sunday Mail*, of 12th September, 1989. It was the Muslim decision and violent insistence that brought about partition. Once again, it is the Muslims who will decide “whether one will move into the future as a reasonably united people or as a deeply divided people ready to cut each other’s throats at the slightest provocation”.

... In a fundamental sense, the issues are simple:

(a) *Whether the proposed Rama temple is to become a symbol of Hindu-Muslim amity or of discord, and*

(b) *Whether or not...Hindu search for self-respect is to develop along anti-Muslim lines.*

The Muslims have to make the choice between (a) and (b). The construction of Rama Temple at that spot is an imperative supported not only by all religious sections of Hindus, but by 100 million signatories who petitioned the President of India for this, besides clinching material evidence establishing the Hindu claim.

The question of whether by constructing the Rama Temple the Hindus will validate the charge of being fundamentalist is no issue at all. By the very nature of his faith, calling a Hindu a fundamentalist is a contradiction in terms.

33. In destroying the Babri structure, does it not go against the essence of tolerance in Hinduism?

When it is established beyond a shadow of doubt that the Babri structure was raised after half demolishing the Rama Temple, not redeeming it in FREE INDIA would be tantamount to validating the continued Hindu humiliation by Babar. The process of redeeming the four sacred-most temples had commenced with the reconstruction of Somanath, but was halted by Nehru. Had it not been halted, all four temples would have been redeemed without any controversy because of the feelings of deep gratitude that existed in the Muslims of that generation that had been granted protection and equality in Free India. Besides, the present-day Hindus are not the first batch of Hindus who are out to reconstruct the Rama Temple. The thousands of people who laid down their lives in the 77 earlier recorded attempts to liberate the temple were none other than Hindus. Those martyrs have showed us that unrelenting intolerance to such a humiliating ocular demonstration of the supremacy of barbarism was indeed an imperative duty.

One must distinguish between tolerance and capitulation. Claiming restoration of ONLY three temples against the several thousands of them that were destroyed is a magnanimous enough gesture of Hindu tolerance. It is important to mention that the sense of insult and humiliation is not the brainchild of so-called Hindu extremists.

In 1960, Sir Arnold Toynbee, the greatest (British) historian the twentieth century has produced, had delivered the Azad Memorial Lecture in Delhi (see: "*One World and India*" published by National Book Trust, pages 59-61). Finding little blame on the Polish people for pulling down in 1918 the Eastern orthodox Christian Cathedral in Central Warsaw that the Russians had built in 1814-15 after they captured Poland, he said:

The Russians had done this to give the Poles a continuous ocular demonstration that the Russians were now masters. . . . The purpose for which the Russians had built it had been not religious, but political and the purpose had also been intentionally offensive. I do greatly praise the Indian Government for not having pulled down Aurangazeb's Mosque. I am thinking particularly of two that overlook the Ghats at Banaras and of one that crowns Krishna's hill at Mathura. Aurangazeb's purpose in building those three Mosques was the same intentionally offensive political purpose that moved the Russians to build the Cathedral in

Warsaw. Those three Mosques were intended to signify that an Islamic Government was reigning supreme, even over Hinduism's holiest of holy places.

Speaking about the monuments built by the British he said:

if my countrymen still had a say in determining the policy of the Indian Ministry of Public Works, they might press for the demolition of these Philistine reminders of the British phase of history of India. But not so the Indian authorities. They are, so far as I know, being as tender to these British monstrosities as they are to the Taj Mahal. This particular example of Indian tolerance has moved me to admiration tempered by twinges of excruciation.

It needed a Toynbee to remind Nehru of India's humiliation to hasten the removal of the monster size statues of British monarchs. Yet the same Nehru failed to experience the humiliations inflicted by Babar and Aurangzeb.

They talk of Hindu tolerance, but conveniently forget examples like the lightning indignation exploding into violence by thousands of Muslims shouting "Islam in danger" when some miscreant mischievously introduced a pig among the *Namazis* assembled for the Eid Namaz at Moradabad some years back or breaking down four temples in large scale arson in Kanpur City on the basis of a rumor in March 2001 that *Quran* was burnt in Delhi. One piece of pork or one burnt page of *Quran* thrown inside a Mosque by any unknown miscreant is enough reason to trigger a major outbreak of communal violence. Preaching tolerance to one community and maintaining a deafening silence against acute intolerance on the part of other defies logic.

Being treated as special class citizens since independence it has not failed to shock the country when Muslim leaders go about proclaiming to the outside world that they are treated as second-class citizens. Yes! by this gimmick, their leaders do manage to rake in millions of petro-dollars, but it deeply hurts the National image as well as the relations between Hindus and Muslims.

34. If the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi Temple were rebuilt, what would be the position of Hindus in countries where Muslims are in large majority?

Unchanged. Absolutely unchanged. Hindus all over the world are respected for their contributions to the culture and economy of the countries in which they are residing. No country will ever harm its own social and economic fabric for what is done in distant Ayodhya. The agenda now is merely to reconstruct a grand temple. It is to be remembered that no such reaction had occurred in any country, not even in Muslim majority countries, even when the structure was actually demolished despite the lie perpetrated by Shri Narasimha Rao. Because of this lie, however, temples were destroyed in Bangladesh and Kashmir, but no persecution of Hindus had taken place even there.

Any fear of Hindus getting persecuted outside, if Rama Mandir is built is quite contrary to logic.

35. Would the reconstruction of the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi temple make the Christians in India insecure?

No question. No such reaction among Christians had been witnessed even when the structure had got actually demolished. The demand of restoration of temples has been categorically limited to just the three temples of Kashi, Ayodhya and Mathura. Neither Muslims, still less Christians need to be apprehensive about the thousands of sites on which Mosques or Churches stand where Hindu temples stood once. There is absolutely no Hindu agenda to recover any other temple site but these three.

36. It is said that Islam does not sanction breaking of temples. Please comment.

God knows which Islam is being referred to. The Islam known the world-over, more specially, the Islam that entered India in the last millennium was of a monstrously opposite variety. Four temples were destroyed in Kanpur City during a vicious riot that had taken place as late as March 2001.

Whoever says that Islam does not sanction destruction of temples should read the Quran or the words of the Muslim Kings and Muslim historians who have boastfully written about thousands and thousands of temples that each King destroyed. In Mecca, Mohammed himself ordered the wholesale destruction of idols except one — the well-known Black Stone of Kaaba. Every Islamic invader and looter, it seems has followed this example and destroyed Hindu Temples drawing his divine authority from the Quran. For example, when Kassim, the horrible invader who invaded Sind around CE 711 got sick of killing over 30,000 Hindu men, women, and children. When he sent message of his 'glorious' accomplishment, his Kind in Mecca, reminded him the Sura 47:4 and asked him to butcher the rest. This is the 'compassionate Islam' that India saw over the next 1000 years. To make this point again, out of innumerable examples, two of the Suras are quoted below:

Surah 2 Ayat 193:

Fight against them until idolatry is no more and Allah's religion reigns supreme.

Surah 8 Ayat 39:

Make war on them until idolatry is no more and Allah's religion reigns supreme.

The doctrine of Din-Panahi propounded by Muslim Jurist Shaikh-ul-Islam during the reign of Iltutmish ordains as follows:

. . . And the Kings will not be able to perform the duty of protecting their faith unless for the sake of Allah and the Prophets creed, they overthrow and uproot 'Kufr' and 'Kafiri' (infidelity). But, if the total uprooting of idolatry is not possible owing to the firm roots of 'Kufr' and the large number of Kafirs, the Kings should at least strive to insult, disgrace, dishonor and defame the Hindus who are the worst enemies of Allah and the Prophet. . .

There are over 100 verses in the Quran that enjoin every Muslim to destroy idolators, idolatry and give no quarter in this destruction save to those who embrace Islam.

In Mecca, the Prophet (Mohammed), as per Ibn Ishaq's records, "found a dove made of wood. He broke it in his hands and threw it away". Next, he (Mohammed) turned to the idols, which were housed, in and around the temple. There were 360 in number. The

apostle was standing by them with a stick in his hand, saying, the truth (Mohammed) has come and falsehood has passed away. “Verily, falsehood is bound to pass away” [Sura 17: 81]. Then he pointed at them with his stick and they collapsed on their backs one after the other. When the apostle prayed the noon prayer on the day of the conquest, he ordered that all the idols, which were around the Kaaba, should be collected and burned with fire and broken up

Following however are quotations from records kept by Muslim writers:

- A Muslim historian in the times of Mohd. Ghaznavi records: “... In Benaras which is the centre of the country of Hind (India) they destroyed one thousand temples and raised Mosques on their foundations.”
- It will be better to quote the actual words of Al-Baruni (a scholar brought to India by Mahmud Ghori) who described the plunder of Mathura Temple of Krishna thus: “Mahmud utterly ruined the prosperity of the country, and by his wonderful exploits, the Hindus were reduced to atoms of dust scattered in all directions.”
- And now quoting V.A. Smith (page 207, 1985) on the destruction of holy city of Mathura by the order of Sultan Mahmud “In the middle of the city there was a temple larger and finer than the rest, which can neither be described nor painted. The Sultan (Mahmud) was of the opinion that 200 years would have been required to build it. The **idols included five of red gold, each five yards high** with eyes formed of priceless jewels. The Sultan gave orders that all the temples should be burnt with naphtha and fire, and levelled with ground. Thus perished works of art, which must have been among the noblest monuments of ancient India.”
- “Firuz Tughlak attacked Orissa in 1360 CE and destroyed the temple of Jagannath” as recorded by Sirat-i-Furz Shah.
- In Safiha-i Chahal Nasaih Bahadur Shahi, written during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century by the daughter of Bahadur Shah Alamgir, it is stated as follows: “The places of worship of the Hindus situated at Mathura, Banaras and Awadh, etc., in which the Hindus have great faith — the place of the birthplace of Kanhaiya, the place of Rasoi Sita, the place of Hanuman, who, according to the Hindus, was seated by Rama Chandra over there after the conquest of Lanka — were all demolished for the strength of Islam, and at all these places mosques have been constructed.”
- Mirza Jan, in *Hadiqa-i-Shahada* (1856), says, “The past Sultans encouraged the propagation and glorification of Islam and crushed the forces of the unbelievers, the Hindus. Similarly, Faizabad and Awadh were also purged of this mean practice of *kufir*. (Awadh) was a great center of worship and the capital of (the kingdom of) Rama’s father. . . . The temple of Janmasthan was the original birthplace of Rama, adjacent to which is *Sita ki Rasoi*. . . Hence at that site, a lofty mosque has been built by Babar Badshah under the guidance of Musa Ashikan.”
- The Urdu novelist Mirza Rajab Ali Beg Surur (1787-1867), in *Fasana-i Ibrat*, says, “During the reign of Babar Badshah, a magnificent mosque was constructed

in Awadh at a place which is associated with Sita ki Rasoi. This was the Babri mosque.”

- The *Tarikh-i Awadh* by Sheikh Mohammed Azmat Ali Kakorwai Nami (1869) states, “Awadh was the capital of the father of Laxman and Ram. There, under the guidance of Musa Ashikan, a magnificent Babri mosque was constructed at the site of the temple within the premises of Janmasthan.” In another book by the same title, but written by Alama Muhammad Najamulghani Khan Ramapuri (1909), it is stated, “Babur built a magnificent mosque at the spot where the temple of Janmasthan of Ramachandra was situated at Ayodhya.”
- In 1977, an English translation of *Hindustan Islami Ahad Mein* by Maulana Hakim Sayid Abdul Hai (d. 1923), was published by his son, Maulana Abdul Hasan Nadwi alias Ali Mian. The book contains a chapter “The Mosques of Hindusthan”, giving at least six instances of construction of the mosques on the very sites of the Hindu temples demolished by the Muslim rulers during the twelfth-seventeenth centuries. As regards, the Babri structure, he writes, “This mosque was constructed by Babar at Ayodhya which the Hindus call the birthplace of Rama Chanderji.”
- In 1391, Nasiruddin Mohammad the Tughlak Sultan sent Muzaffar Khan who became King Muzaffarshah after Sultan’s demise in 1393. He led an expedition to destroy the famous temple of Somanath, which had been rebuilt by the Hindus after the pillage by Mahmud Ghazni and raised a Mosque on top of the foundation of the destroyed temple.
- In 1472, Mahmud Beghara attacked Dwaraka and destroyed the Krishna temple.
- Between 1436-69, Mahmud Khalji destroyed Hindu temples and revelled in building Mosques at the same place.
- Ilyas Shah (CE 1339-79) demolished and destroyed Hindu temples all over south India.
- Babar in 1528 destroyed temples, including the Ayodhya Rama Temple.

The list is endless. These accounts are not of today, but culled out from the autobiographical descriptions of the Muslim Kings themselves or from the accounts of their contemporary history writers.

The broken temples throughout the length and breadth of the country are standing as glaring evidence of the actions of the followers of Islam. The sheer consistency in the pattern of destruction of temples and erection of Mosques on their foundations, down the centuries gives a vivid picture of Islam in action. Islam is the only thread that connects them all.

Shri Vidyadhar Naipaul has disclosed that:

The Muslim view of their conquest of India is a truer one. They speak of the triumph of the faith, the destruction of idols and temples, the loot, the carting away of the local people as slaves.

On the other hand, if it were true that Islam really does not sanction the destruction of temples, then vandalization of temples under the name of Islam, indulged in by Muslim invaders, has been a grossly anti-Islamic act. **Logically then, this provides a very powerful reason to return the three Hindu temples without reservations and undo what was anti-Islamic** and at once wipe out the stigma inflicted on Islam by the marauding invaders.

37. Can one make a comparison between Shri Rama Janmabhoomi and Somnath?

In both cases, the sacred-most Hindu temples of Ayodhya and Somanath were destroyed and Mosques built on their foundations.

The message was clear — ‘Hindus were now the slaves of Islam’. After all, Mosques could as well have been built elsewhere. A plea is given that by so doing, they saved precious money in constructing fresh foundations. But then the same spokespersons could not explain why the broken pieces of the main deity of the temples were used in the stairs of the mosques to ensure that every *Namazi* stamps his foot on the stone of which the deity had been made.

Is it a sin now, if after winning freedom, the Hindus seek liberation from the slavery of Islam and redeem their self-respect, honor and self-esteem?

38. Have vandalized sites in other parts of the world been sought to be recovered?

Yes! When Spaniards retook Spain in the sixteenth century after 400 years of Moors slavery, they not only demolished all the Mosques, specially those that had been built on the foundations of their Churches, but had also de-converted all the Muslims of Spain back to Christianity.

The Russian built Oriental Orthodox Cathedral in the Square of Warsaw was pulled down in 1915 (**even while Poles themselves were Christians**) when the Poles won their country back after 100 years of Russian rule in their country.

Redeeming national honor is not merely the birthright, but the bounden duty of every citizen.

39. How will the reconstruction of the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi temple affect the election fortunes of the BJP?

Somanath temple was built without a political ripple and so should have been the Rama temple at Ayodhya. However, it unfortunately got embroiled in vote-bank politics. For the Dharmacharyas, who are the promoters of the Rama Janmabhoomi temple, the favorable or unfavorable political fall-out on BJP or on any other Political Party has no relevance. For them, it is the fulfillment of a religious obligation. A perception has been created that the VHP sets the agenda for the Dharma Samsad. The truth is that the Dharma Samsad sets its own agenda.

In a free India facilitating the reconstruction of the Rama Temple should rightfully be on the agenda of every political party because Rama has been the most powerful pillar of Indian culture down the ages. That is the only way that this issue can be de-politicized.

40. Why could you not build a temple adjacent to the Babri structure, similar to the case of Krishna Janmabhoomi in Mathura and Kashi Vishvanath in Varanasi?

You are presuming that the status of Kashi and Mathura have become acceptable by the passage of time or by the passing of a man-made law clamping status-quo for all religious places. Far from it. The compromises in Kashi and Mathura were forced upon the enslaved Hindus. To suggest their continuance in Free India, will verily be perpetuating the humiliation of a whole race. The Rama temple will have to come up at its place in due course and so will the temples of Kashi and Mathura if abiding communal amity is to be achieved.

However, as on today, as there is no existing Muslim structure at Ayodhya, the question of equating it with Kashi and Mathura does not arise.

41. Instead of Shri Rama Janmabhoomi Movement, are there no other important issues to be tackled by the society?

The VHP, RSS and its allied organizations are verily the engine of Hindu renaissance and national reconstruction. The temple movement is barely one hundredth of VHPs preoccupations. In 1976 Kumbh at Allahabad, the VHP had organized a Virat Hindu Sammelan attended by all Dharmacharyas, Mahamandaleshvars, Mathadhishes and, most importantly, all the Shankaracharyas (i.e., heads of all possible religious bodies of Hindus in the country). It was at this mammoth congregation that an enthusiastic and UNANIMOUS decision was taken which officially abolished the evil of untouchability from the Hindu society. Again, in 1993, an unprecedented seven-day congregation of hundreds of top Vedacharyas constituting the cream of Vedic Scholars of the country had been convened by VHP at Allahabad. A path breaking unanimous decision was taken throwing open the teaching of Veda to every Hindu irrespective of his caste or creed. As per traditions, before this decision, Veda knowledge could only be imparted to Brahmans. As a result, people of all castes are being entrusted with the responsibility of performing the functions of *Grama Pujaris* (Village Priests) all over the country. In Tamil Nadu alone, there are 4,00,000 *Grama Pujaris* today and the bulk of them hail from Backward Class. Only a couple of months back, a congregation of 70,000 *Grama Pujaris* was convened in Chennai. Kanchi Shakaracharya himself besides the Chief Minister Karunanidhi blessed these *Pujaris*.

Over 24,000 different projects in the form of Samskar Kendras, Sanskrit Paathshalas, Cow Protection Centres, Ekal Vidyalayas, etc., are going on throughout the length and breadth of the country, specially so among the Tribals and the extremely deprived sections of society. The RSS and, its affiliates, are running another over 70,000 projects in the form of Sewa Bharati, Kalyan Ashrams, Sarasvati Shishu Mandirs, the Vidya Bharti, etc., etc. All these are besides the thousands of daily Shakhas that RSS has been organizing traditionally since its inception. The common objective of all these endeavors is to generate strong healthy bodies and minds imbued with right values, patriotic fervor, and virtuous conduct and become self-reliant individuals not only to stand on their own two feet but also to share the burdens of the less fortunate in society. There is a poignant consciousness that though the above efforts look stupendous, yet these are but a drop in the ocean considering how much more remains to be done.

It is mischievous propaganda by the opponents of the temple movement to call VHP as a Mandir Party having a one-point agenda, as though the construction of Shri Rama temple was the be all and end all for the VHP. Doubtlessly, it is a vital issue, but it is far from being the only issue it handles.

It is significant that even after the Temple Movement took the centre-stage in the life of this country, the pace of development and programs of amelioration of the conditions of the poor in this country has not only gone on unhindered, but has continuously shown an upward trend. It is wickedness to create an impression that the temple movement is hindering country's development.

42. Why not build something other than a temple at the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi, say a Library? Will this not lead towards a better communal harmony?

The counter question is WHY SHOULD A RAMA MANDIR NOT BE BUILT WHERE RAMA WAS BORN? When places of birth of persons like Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajendra Prasad, Jai Prakash Narain, Sardar Patel and many other far lesser mortals have been converted into National monuments, it is preposterous to even suggest the building of a library or any other building instead of a Rama temple at the birthplace of Rama.

A million sins have been committed in the name of communal harmony. Hundreds of thousands of lives have been lost in the quest for communal harmony. The Hindus sacrificed a huge chunk of their motherland for the sake of communal harmony during partition. Despite the dismemberment of the country, communal harmony is still eluding us. It is time for the Indian Muslims, who were generously allowed to stay on in India after Partition, to ponder seriously and come forward and deliver with all love and reverence for the Hindu deities, the three sacred-most temple sites of the Hindus. As stated, in the answer to Question 23, never before in the history of this country came such an opportunity as this. If the Muslims grab it, this can really create abiding communal understanding in this country. Let it not be forgotten that communal harmony has been rudely disturbed from time to time even before the Rama Mandir issue picked up any momentum. It is verily a wicked innuendo that Rama Mandir is the sole cause of communal strife. **Besides, Communal harmony is not the sole responsibility of Hindus. The Muslim leaders have yet to show up their contribution in the account books of communal harmony during the past 50 years.**

One should read "*Select Inscriptions*" vol. 2 by D.C. Sarkar to learn the long tradition of building mosques by Hindu Kings. It dates back to 100 years prior to Muslim invasion. This is the only country of the Upanishads which wrote an '*Allopanishad*' in the sixteenth century in which Prophet Mohammed has been compared to the Hindu gods of Mitra, Varuna and Allah has been equated to the Supreme Being '*Brahman*'. Hindus have been making their contribution to communal harmony for centuries. Is it not time now to remind the Muslim leadership to make some positive gestures?

43. Was the Babri structure used as a Muslim place of worship in recent years?

No. No Muslim performed *Namaz* there since 1934. After December 1949, Rama Lala has been occupying the sanctum-sanctorum and only Hindu *Pooja* is being performed since that date till today. After the vicious riot between Hindus and Muslims, the structure had been attached and locked by the Government under section 145 of Criminal

Procedure Code in 1934. Since then, no *namazi* ever visited the structure to offer *namaz* while the worship and *keertan* of Rama had continued ceaselessly at Rama Chabootra. After Rama Lala's appearance in 1949, there has been continuous *Pooja* of Rama Lala in the sanctum-sanctorum structure itself. Attempts were made by Muslims to seek an injunction against this *Pooja*, but the Courts rejected the petition. When they appealed, the High Court upheld the judgement given by the subordinate Court.

Thus, the Babri structure was not only not used for *Namaz* since 1949, but also actually the place has been a functioning temple since twenty-third December 1949.

44. Why do we need to have a grand temple at the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi in place of the existing functional temple?

The Shri Rama Janmabhoomi movement is not one of bricks and mortar, but is one that will restore the honor of the nation and its culture. People take great pride in, and receive inspiration from temples that signify their glorious past. This can be done only when we have a proper and full-fledged temple at the site, the grandness of which is commensurate with the grandeur of Shri Rama.

Svami Vivekananda said:

Your forefathers underwent everything boldly, even death itself, but preserved their religion. Temple after temple was broken down by the foreign conqueror, but no sooner had the wave passed than the spire of the temple rose up again. Some of these old temples of Southern India, and those like Somanath of Gujarat, will teach you volumes of wisdom, will give you keener insight into the history of the race than any amounts of books. Mark how these temples bear the marks of a hundred attacks and a hundred regenerations, continually destroyed and continually springing up out of the ruins, rejuvenated and strong as ever! That is the national mind, which is the national life-current. Follow it and it leads to glory. Give it up and you die; death will be the only result, annihilation the only effect, the moment you step beyond the life-current.

45. Since some of the Dharmagurus are not willing to be associated with the Rama Janmabhoomi Nyas, how can it be said that the movement is of the Hindu Samaj?

The fact that, on the call given by the VHP, between four and five hundred thousand Hindu volunteers (Kar Sevaks) descended upon Ayodhya from every nook and corner of the country, with total commitment to lay down, if necessary, their very lives for the cause of the temple first in October 1989, again in July 1992 and yet again in December 1992, is proof enough of the Pan-Indian character of the movement.

This is not all. A draft petition to the President of India, drafted by the Dharmagurus stated:

We are of the definite view that only the temple should be reconstructed at Shri Rama Janmabhoomi at Ayodhya. A Mosque can be built beyond the "Panchkosi Parikrama" area.

A total of ninety-seven million seven hundred seventy three thousand and seven hundred fifty three Indian citizens appended their signatures to the above petition. People from the

tribal areas and inaccessible interior regions signed up. A total of 281,272 villages participated in this campaign among the signatories, as many as 397,388 were Muslims while 119,763 were Christians. A 20-member team headed by Veetruga Swami Vaamdevji delivered the truckload of signatures under the above petition to the President of India on 10th May, 1993. There is no parallel example of such wholesale upsurge anywhere in all history of the world.

Does it require any more proof to establish that the entire Hindu Samaj is behind this movement?

46. Are the Rama Janmabhoomi Nyas and the VHP trying to exclude some Dharmagurus from participating in the movement? In effect, are they trying to hijack the movement?

Most emphatically No! It is a canard to suggest that VHP is trying to exclude some Dharmagurus. In the light of the unanimity in the Dharma Samsad and in the face of over **97.7 million SIGNATURES** on the petition demanding the construction of Rama Temple at the very spot and its delivery to the President of India, the non-participation of some Dharmagurus is entirely possible but it is mischievous to suggest that VHP is out to deliberately exclude any Dharmaguru. Even so, on this matter, the VHP has little role to play. The Dharma Samsad is the Supreme body. However, to suggest that VHP is trying to hijack the movement is as absurd as to suggest that a child is trying to kidnap his own mother. The countrywide signature campaign, the Sant Yatra, Shri Rama Jyoti Yatra, Shri Rama Shila Pujan, Shri Rama Paduka Pujan, the actual Shilanyas by a Harijan and the congregation of hundreds of thousands of Kar Sevaks, as many as three times in the course of the Movement, etc., were all carried out by the Nyas using the organizational structure of VHP and all the other sister organizations. No doubt, the VHP has only been the visible face of these efforts. Actually, the VHP is the limbs, the Dharma Samsad is the heart and the Nyas is the MIND of the Rama Janmabhoomi Movement.

Yes! Narasimha Rao himself did want to hijack the Movement. For this, he utilized the services of his close confidant Chandraswami who went to Ayodhya on the pretext of organizing the Som Yagya. A Ramalaya Trust had been floated, parallel to the Dharma Samsad. Against a total of 16500 Dharmacharyas attending the Dharma Samsad organized in five different regions of the country, Chandraswami's vast resources could muster up only 18. The Som Yagya had to be abandoned midway for lack of local support and nothing has been heard since about the Ramalaya Trust. If only Narasimha Rao had informed the VHP in confidence that he was keen to go down in history as the person responsible for the reconstruction of the Rama Temple, the VHP would have most willingly slipped into the background. For the VHP, the renovation of the temple was, and still is, far more important than earning credit for this in the history books.

47. What has happened to the funds collected through the Shila Pujan program?

A sum of about Rs.8.25 crore (Rs. 82.5 million) was collected during the Rama Shila Pujan program in the year of 1989. The entire amount was deposited in Government financial institutions in India, in the name of Shri Rama Janmabhoomi Nyas alone. The Nyas is a registered Trust and was set-up by Poojya Jagadguru Ramanandacharya Swami Shiva Ramacharyaji Maharaj. The contribution amount along with the accrued interest

and continuing contributions have provided the funds for carrying out the construction work at Ayodhya (since 1990) and Rajasthan (since 1996).

The account of every penny received and spent is maintained. The accounts are audited by an authorized Chartered Accounting Company and are assessed by Income Tax authorities each year punctually.

48. Is it true that a Harijan laid the foundation stone for the temple?

Yes. The Dharmacharyas picked on Shri Kameshwar Chaupal of Bihar to do the honor of laying the foundation stone on 10th November 1989. This was a deliberate act to show that the essential unity of Hinduism is blessed not only by the words of the Dharmacharyas but also by their action. It is also a clear sign of the immense unifying power of Shri Rama Janmabhoomi Movement.

49. What is the current status of construction?

As per design, pink colored sandstone, from Bansi Pahaarpur, district Bharatpur, Rajasthan will be used in the entire structure. The design is on the lines of ancient architecture where steel, bricks, sand, cement, etc., have no place. The stone pieces interlock between themselves firmly. The Carving on 106 ground floor pillars walls of Main Hall — ‘Ranga Mandap’ and the sanctum-sanctorum — ‘Garbha Griha’ has already been completed. Of the 175 beams required, 50 are ready. The fine carvings on the rest of the beams and the ceiling of the Ranga Mandap and Garbha Griha are in progress.

50. Has the date been announced for the construction of the temple? If so, what is the plan for mass mobilization?

At the Ninth Maha Dharma Samsad convened during the Prayag Mahakumbh on 20th January, 2001 a resolution was adopted notifying “all concerned” that all obstacles in the commencement of construction of the Shri Rama Temple at Ayodhya should be effectively removed by 12th March 2002 — the day of *Mahashivaratri*. That thereafter the Mandir construction can commence on any date after 12th March 2002 depending on the auspiciousness of date and time. Once the construction starts it shall be carried on uninterrupted until it is completed.

As this shall constitute the final lap of the centuries long journey of the Rama Janmabhoomi Mandir Yatra, there is tremendous excitement. In order to channelize this burst of energy in creative channels, the following program in phases has been chalked out by the Dharma Samsad:

(1) JALABHISHEKA

As Rama and Shiva are inseparable, daily obeisance to every single ‘Shivalinga’ — whether located inside a temple or out in the open — shall be paid by millions of Hindus throughout the country, where they will go collectively to do traditional ‘JALABHISHEKA’ (pouring of a continuous stream of water on the body of the Shivalinga). This program shall be undertaken during the whole of ‘Purushottam Maas’, i.e., from 18th September to 16th October, 2001. Every single one of the four hundred

thousand villages of India shall participate. In the unlikely event of there being no Shivalinga in any village, the Jalabhisheka shall be done to the village Peepal tree.

This program will require every participant to take a prescribed '*Sankalp*' — (vow) to perform this for a whole month without a break.

(2) PROGRAM OF DOING 'RAMA NAAM' MAHAJAP

The 'Cardinal Mahamantra': is

"Shri Rama Jaya Raam Jaya Jaya Raam"

As per the Scriptures, ten million *japas* of this *Mahamantra* invests any place with enormous power. Samarth Guru Rama Das had performed 130 million *japas* to invest Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj with the power to beat back the aggressive Mughal armies.

Millions of Hindus, after taking the prescribed *sankalp* (vow), will do the prescribed number of *japas* each day, commencing from the Devoththan Ekadashi, i.e., 26th November, 2001. The total target of 130 million *japas* will be completed in the Siddhakshetra (the place where these *japas* will be done collectively) for two months at fixed timings for half an hour.

- (a) 'Program for Family Units' After taking the vow, (*sankalp*) every family will be required to do one hundred and fiftyone thousand *japs* in 60-day period.
- (b) A 24-hour *sankirtan* will be organized once a month.
- (c) Collective *japas* shall be organized — in all schools and colleges, outside the college hours.
- (d) *Satsangs* and *kathas* are routine activities. During this period, these functions shall also be emphasising extra *japas* of Rama Naam.

51. You say that there was neither intention nor any plan to destroy the Babri structure on December 6, 1992 at Ayodhya. How can you expect anyone to believe this in the light of what actually happened ?

True! Prima-facie this sounds perfectly unbelievable. But if only one were to look below the mountain of false propaganda, one can know for himself as to the door or doors at which the responsibility of the destruction is to be placed. It may startle one to know that that door is neither of the VHP-*Sangh Parivar* nor of the Hindu religious leaders.

There is no doubt also that in the thinking of VHP, the structure had to go for sure at some point of time, but December 6 was most certainly not the time for it. The VHP and the *Marg Darshak Mandal* could plainly see that:

- (1) Despite December 6, the *Mandir* of the vision of around a hundred million committed Hindus was nowhere near the horizon.
- (2) It was certain that even if the over 40 years old High Court case got sincerely expedited, it would still take two to three years to finalize.
- (3) The *Mandir* itself would take three to five years for completion.

- (4) It was important that with the mountain of malicious lies heaped on the Hindus, the perverted perceptions had to be changed by letting the people know about the inherent validity of the movement and the truth behind these false perceptions and finally that the actual construction of the temple should be commenced to assuage the deep hurt caused to Hindus by denying the temple indefinitely.

Accordingly, plan was made which proposed:

- (1) To completely delink the immediate issue of *Kar Seva* from the ultimate fate of the disputed structure to enable *Kar Seva* to be taken up.
- (2) *Kar Seva* could be started in the remaining 2.04 acres of land, which belonged to VHP itself in case the acquisition was quashed, and in 2.77 acres if it was upheld. The important thing was that the judgment should come before the 6th December, 1992.
- (3) Once the writ was finalized and the matter of the disputed structure delinked, one did not see any obstruction coming from any quarters against *Kar Seva*.
- (4) Having totally delinked and quarantined the RJB-BM structure, it was naturally expected that the Hindus will be allowed to carry out the construction activity in the undisputed land and in the two or three years that it would take for the remaining structure to come up the decision about the *Garbha Griha* also will get finalized either through amicable settlement or through the agency of the Court.

However, the following catalogue of events is placed for everyone to see and judge who it is that was actually responsible for the destruction of the structure on December 6.

- (1) The U.P. Government acquired 2.77 acres of land on 10th October, 1991 to enable *Kar Seva* on the spot. This did not include the disputed structure on the one hand, but included 2.04 acres of land owned by VHP.
- (2) The acquisition was challenged and the High Court issued injunction order, but permitting temporary construction work.
- (3) Not one or two, but three petitions were filed against the same acquisition in the Supreme Court also. The Supreme Court transferred all the three cases to the Lucknow bench of the High Court on 15.11.1991 with the following remarks:

We are of the view that when the High Court has already entertained the matter, made an interim order, and as stated at the Bar, is taking the case for final disposal: some time in December, it may not be necessary and justifiable to transfer the writ petition pending before the High Court to this Court.

The above Order shows that the Supreme Court is expecting the case to be finalized in six weeks time. The case however lingered on indefinitely. Instead of fulfilling the expectations of the Supreme Court and finalizing the case by December 1991, the High Court on 15th July, 1992, even revoked the permission it had granted for doing temporary construction and ordered Status Quo to be maintained. Exasperated at the unusually tardy progress in the acquisition case, call for *Kar Seva* was given on 9th July, 1992. In

between, two more contempt cases also had been filed in the Supreme Court during February and April 1992 for alleged violations of Status Quo. **Subsequent finding in this count by the Commission appointed by the Supreme Court reported no such violations.**

From 10th July, 1992 onwards, the Supreme Court was beleaguered with PIL petitions, plain Affidavits, miscellaneous applications and even News Papers were given to the Supreme Court across the table, all trying to make out that gross contempt was being committed by the State Government as well as the *Kar Sevaks*. The State Government, in turn, was being asked to give counter-Affidavits in respect of all the allegations at a frenetic pace. Applications were being received at the residence of Supreme Court Judges, proceedings were being conducted well beyond Office hours of Supreme Court and all these petitions were enjoying the rare privilege of day-to-day hearing. In contrast, counter-affidavits and replies from State Government were being demanded in the time-frame of hours or next day. The disadvantage experienced by the U.P. Counsel was so acute that he had to submit to the Supreme Court, the non-availability of adequate opportunity for the State Government to submit its replies. And the Supreme Court found itself compelled to admit this shortcoming through their Order, dated August 5, 1992:

“We think that the prayer is reasonable and the respondent should have such opportunity”

By 22nd July, 1992 over a couple of hundred thousand of *Kar Sevaks* had collected and there was tremendous tension throughout the country.

On 22nd July, 1992, certain suggestions were discussed in the Supreme Court:-

- (a) That the order of status quo will be decided by the Supreme Court forthwith.
- (b) All disputes regarding acquisition shall be withdrawn and decided most expeditiously.
- (c) That a Special Bench shall be constituted for the above two cases and hearings done on a day-to-day basis.
- (d) That all this was possible only if the *Kar Seva* were withdrawn.

The Supreme Court Order of 23rd July, 1992 confirms this:

The cases were adjourned from yesterday to today in the light of certain suggestions discussed then. We had made it clear to the learned Counsel for the respondents that any consideration of the suggestion should be on the strict condition that the construction of any kind on the acquired land should be suspended.

In the light of the understanding given by the Supreme Court, the *Kar Seva* was withdrawn on 26th July, 1992. To the shock and horror of the Sant Samaj, no order was given by the Supreme Court to withdraw the two cases for day-to-day hearing. No Special Bench was formed. Nothing that was contemplated was done. The Supreme Court merely gave the following order :

It is also appropriate that the High Court should decide the cases most expeditiously as, indeed, we were told the High Court is doing its best to expedite the disposal of the case. (Recall Supreme Court hoping for its finalization way back in December 1991). In this view of the matter, it is not necessary to withdraw to this Court the proceedings now being heard before the High Court. The High Court will deal with and dispose of the matter most expeditiously.

The Hindus felt embittered, let down and thoroughly humiliated.

The State Government and the BJP are blamed for letting down the Nation, but who really let down whom will be for history to judge.

This is not all.

The saga of deceit and treachery by the Prime Minister was yet to unfold.

On the other side, on the 23rd itself, the Prime Minister was also promising that if *Kar Seva* was stopped, he would refer the whole matter to the Supreme Court **and solve the entire problem for all times**. The *Kar Seva* was stopped on 26th July, 1992.

The three months passed. Narasimha Rao said he had asked for four. The *Marg Darshak Mandal* decided to grant him the fourth also. And the *Kar Sevaks* were called to Ayodhya on the date of expiry of the four months, i.e., 26.11.1992.

At Lucknow, the High Court declared that the judgment would be delivered on December 4th, 1992. Commence-ment of *Kar Seva* was fixed for December 6. As already stated, the plan of *Sants* of Marg Darshak Mandal and VHP was simple:

- (1) The structure had been delinked from all operations and was to be quarantined with adequate force ensuring its protection.
- (2) If acquisition was upheld, *Kar Seva* shall commence on 2.77 acres.
- (3) If acquisition was quashed, then 2.04 acres of undisputed land would revert to VHP and become available for *Kar Seva*.
- (4) Thus, all the stupendous energy of hundreds of thousands of *Kar Sevaks* will be creatively channelized in a disciplined way.

Thus, there seemed no hitch in peaceful *Kar Seva* no matter what decision the High Court gave on the expected date of 4th December, 1992.

As the date of assembly of *Kar Sevaks*, i.e., 26.11.1992, approached, once again, Muslim leaders and a variety of other leaders deluged the Supreme Court with PILs suggesting presumptive contempt and even use of Article 356 of the Constitution, etc. They were all being given day-to-day hearings with extended Court sittings, including sitting on holidays.

Several CRP Battalions arrived in Ayodhya on the 26th November, 1992. The CRP Commander, in a surprise move, drove the PAC and the U.P. Police away from the innermost cordon around the structure and posted his own men exclusively in their place. The Chief Minister lodged a written protest to the Centre for encroaching upon the constitutional right of the State Government without receiving any response. This

arrangement continued till the 6th of December 1992. How and why this CRP started walking away on its own at the first sign of assault on the structure is a mystery that can only be unraveled by the Ayodhya Commission of Enquiry headed by Justice Liberhan.

The Supreme Court, at its end, wanted a categorical written assurance that the U.P. Government shall comply with Status Quo orders and no construction will be permitted. The submission of Chief Minister was that he had already given a comprehensive assurance in the National Integration Council meeting and the Supreme Court was quite welcome to adopt it as such for its own record also. However, the Supreme Court wanted a categorical written assurance.

To exact the written assurance, the Supreme Court ordered on 25.11.1992 :

If any constructive response is forthcoming from the State Government, we might, in order to strengthen the hands of the State Government in its handling of the religious groups, consider making appropriate request to the High Court in the matter of a most expeditious decision of the matter.

For the State Government, the VHP and the *Sant Samaj*, this was virtually like getting the moon. Getting a decision from the Lucknow Bench in the acquisition case “**most expeditiously**” obviously meant that the decision shall positively come before the 6th of December. The U.P. Government could not have asked for more to defuse the tension completely. Till then, the date of 11th December had not been announced for Judgment by the High Court.

The State Government made the deal. Shri Kalyan Singh readily gave the written assurance, along with that of Swami Chinmayanand on behalf of the *Sant Samaj* and Smt. Vijaya Raje Scindia, Vice President of VHP, on behalf of the VHP. Giving the personal undertaking was no price compared to the deal offered by the Supreme Court.

After exacting the written assurances, the Supreme Court then issued the following order to the absolute shock & horror of the State Government, the VHP and the *Sant Samaj* :-

Sri Venugopal also recalled to us the terms of the last paragraph of the order made on the 25th November, 1992 to the effect that if any constructive response was forthcoming from the State Government, we might consider requesting the High Court for an expeditious decision of the matter. Sri Venugopal (Counsel for U.P. State Government) says that the State Government by its performance is now entitled to Court's consideration of this prayer.

Indeed, in a matter of this nature, it is neither advisable nor practicable to tell the High Court within what time-frame it should render Judgment; but having regard to what we said on the previous occasion, we request the High Court to consider the expectations of justice and bestow on it such thought as it might consider proper.

Even the words “**most expeditious disposal**”, repeated twice earlier by the Supreme Court in November 1991 and July 1992 orders were conspicuous by their absence. God

alone knows what subtle message was read from this Order of the Supreme Court by all those who saw it.

The High Court set the new date of 11.12.1992 as the date for giving judgment. Frantic pleas were made on 30th of November, 4th of December and 5th of December to the High Court to deliver at least the operational part of the judgment by December 6th, 1992, so that the tremendous tension that had generated throughout the country could subside at once. However, this was not to be.

Of course, when circumstances suddenly demolished the structure on December 6, 1992, all hell broke loose and disgrace was heaped on the U.P. Government and the Hindu organizations and wholesale condemnation followed. It was labeled as a National Shame but not many people are aware as to who really caused this National Shame.

The stark cold facts speak eloquently and facts don't lie.

It will now be for history to judge as to the doors at which the responsibility for the destruction of the structure deserve to be placed.

Annexure I

Summary of the Legal Findings

A. Summary of the Legal Findings Before India's Independence

- Hindus never relinquished the legal claim to the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi area, including the temple site and all land around the temple site.
- In 1859 the British divided the area into two parts: one consisting of the Babri structure and the other comprising of the Rama Chabootra, and the Sita-ki-Rasoi and the entire courtyard to Hindus. Hindus continued continuous *pooja* (i.e., worship) and *bhajan* (i.e., prayers and singing) in that area.
- In 1885, Mahant Raghuvar Das filed a case in the Faizabad Court to renovate the temple near Chaootra area. That case was rejected. But on appeal the British Judge Col. F.E.A. Cowmiyar wrote in his judgement that what happened to the Hindus was extremely sad about the fact that a Masjid was built over one of their most sacred site some 356 years ago and now it is late to rectify that.
- During 1934 the domes were at least partially damaged by the *sants* of Ayodhya. After this incident the whole area was declared off-limit to the Muslims.

B. Summary of the Legal Findings after India's Independence

- The Revenue Records as recorded in the village of Ramkot (or Kot Ramachander) shows the Shri Rama Janmabhoomi site area as Janmasthan.
- On 23rd December 1949, the idols of Ram Lala Virajman (appeared) in the middle of the floor space under the central dome and soon after thousands of devotees assembled there to worship and the practice of continuous *pooja* and *bhajan* started, in front of the idols.
- On 29th December, 1949, the city Magistrate exercised control over the whole area. However, the *pujaris* (i.e. Priests) continued their prayers to Ram Lala.
- On 16th January, 1950 one Shri Gopal Simha Visharad filed a suit in the Faizabad civil court for the exclusive rights of performing *pooja* for Ram Lala and asked the judge to issue orders to stop anyone moving the idols. A temporary injunction was issued preventing the removal of the idols of Ram Lala. The civil judge on 3rd March, 1951, and later the Division Bench of the Allahabad High Court maintained that order and dismissed the appeal. It is interesting to note that 13 Muslim residents of Ayodhya had filed affidavits in the proceeding under section 145 of Cr. P.C. before the magistrate. They provided the affidavits to the effect that the disputed structure was constructed after demolishing the temple of Janmabhoomi at that site and that they have no objection if the place remains with the Hindus. The city magistrate closed the file consigned by his order 30, July, 1953, on the ground that there was no longer any apprehension of breach of peace.

- On 5th December, 1950, Paramahansa Ramachandradasji also filed a suit asking for the continuation of the *pooja* and keeping the idols in the Babri structure. During August 1990 out of sheer frustration with the justice system, the Plaintiff Paramahans Ramachandradas withdrew the case.
- A Muslim filed a suit against the status quo order (i.e., of not allowing the Muslims to enter any of the area and the continuation of *pooja* and *bhajan* in front of Ram Lala). On 26th April, 1955 the case was dismissed.
- Just as the limitation for the legal procedures, for the public, was about to end, after 11 years, 11 months and 26 days after the day when the idols of Ram Lala idols emerged in 1949, a fourth suit was filed by the Sunni Central Board of Waqf of U.P. to reclaim the Janmabhoomi area for the Muslims.
- On 16th December, 1964 the Faizabad civil judge consolidated all the suits. After hearing the parties on all the issues the judge in his 21st April, 1966 order said that “no valid notification so far relating to the specific disputed property of the present suits at hand”. This finding has become final. This means the court took out the bottom of the Waqf Board’s right to suit.
- In April, 1984, the VHP organized the first Dharma Samsad in New Delhi and Shri Rama Janmabhoomi Mukti Yagya was initiated. In Uttar Pradesh, the *sants* started a Rama-Janaki Ratha Yatra to create nation-wide awareness and to bring to the notice the earlier 77 encounter to free the Rama Janmasthan.
- On 21st January, 1986, Shri Umeshchandra Pandey filed a suit in the Munsif Magistrate of Faizabad and requested the court to order the opening of the locks on the gates of the Janmasthan property. On 1st February, 1986 the District Magistrate Shri K.M. Pandey ordered that the locks be opened and further ordered the government of U.P. not to come in the way of the *pooja* and *bhajan* or create any types of obstructions.
- On 1st February, 1986, a Muslim from Ayodhya filed a suit in the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court against the opening of the locks. The Sunni Waqf also filed a suit for the same purpose.
- During January 1989, the 3rd Dharma Samsad met at the Mahakhumba in Prayag, and decided to perform Shilanyas on 9th November, 1989.
- On 1st July, 1989, Retired Justice of the High Court, Shri Deoki Nandan Agarwala, joined the suit as a friend of the court on behalf of Ram Lala and the Janmabhoomi.
- On 18th October, 1989 the Sunni Waqf Board filed a suit for not allowing any people to the Janmabhoomi area and not to allow any Shilanyasa within 200 yards from the site. On 23rd October, 1989 the Full Bench rejected the Waqf Board’s request.

- Muslim parties continued their effort of stopping the Shilanyas by filing two more suits petitions in the Supreme Court. On 27th October, 1989 the Supreme Court dismissed both cases and the path for Shilanyas was cleared.
- On 10th October, 1991, the then U.P. government acquired the 2.77 acre of land, around the disputed *Dancha*, for the convenience of the devotees who attend the Ram Lalla *dharshan*, etc.
- At this point the Muslim representatives filed a writ petition in the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court. On 25th October, 1991, the court after hearing all the parties issued an interim order stating that U.P. government has every right to do so. The High Court also said that they would issue a permanent decision by 4th November, 1992.
- On 30th October, 1992 the fifth Dharma Samsad met in New Delhi and decided to start the Kara Seva on 6th December, 1992.
- On the morning of 8th December, 1992 the Central Government took over the complete Shri Rama Janmabhoomi Parisar area under its control. The *pooja* for Ram Lala did continue.
- On 7th January, 1993 the Government of India, with the consent of the Parliament, took over some 67 acres of land all around the disputed area. But the Muslims took a tough stand stating that once a place becomes a Masjid, it does not matter what the new circumstances will become.
- On 7th January, 1993, the President of India, per rule 143(1) of the Parliament, requested the Supreme Court for its opinion on the subject-matter and find out whether there existed a Hindu place of worship before the disputed *Dhancha* was constructed over it. The Supreme Court declined.
- After 21 months of deliberations, on 24th October, 1994, the Supreme Court gave its majority decision in favor of the action taken by the Government under rule 4(3) and turned the case back to the Lucknow Bench of the High Court of U.P. Also it rejected the arguments of the Muslims that once a Masjid it always remains a Masjid. It further ordered that the *pooja* to Ram Lala can continue under the central dome and no action should be taken to change the situation. While turning down the claims of the Muslims the Supreme Court cited case under the Lahore High Court and the Privy Council.
- As of now, the High Court continues to take depositions from the parties concerned (i.e., Sunny Waqf Board, and Nirmohi Akhada). Since 1966, on behalf of the Muslims, 16 out of some 103 depositions have been completed. On behalf of Hindus Paramhans Ramachandradasji has provided his deposition. On behalf of Hindus some 100 depositions have been completed.

Annexure 2

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