

**UNDERSTANDING OF DEMOCRATIC ASSERTION OF
'PASMANDA' MUSLIMS: A CASE STUDY OF BIHAR**

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MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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CERTIFICATE

It is certified that the dissertation entitled *Understanding of Democratic Assertion of 'Pasmada' Muslim: A case Study of Bihar*, submitted by Manjur Ali is in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of this University. This dissertation has not been submitted for the award of any other degree in this University or any other University and is his own work.

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*“To the millions of unlucky Children, who are deprived
of formal education due to unwarranted reasons...”*

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

In a landmark move, the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly passed a Bill providing 5 per cent reservation for Muslims in educational institutions and Government service on October 5, 2005. Earlier, through the Government Order No. 33 on July 12, 2004, Andhra Pradesh government declared all Andhra Muslims as backward classes. The Andhra Pradesh High Court stays the government decision amid lots of hue & cry. The intention was to ensure that Muslims being integrated as equal citizens. The point to be noted here is that, the State like its previous decisions, treating Muslims as a homogeneous community and attempted to bridge the inter-community gap. Both the Central as well as State's Governments used to ignore the heterogeneity within the Indian Muslims.

Political parties and social elites are no less influenced by this theory, in spite of the fact that, scholars at various point of time have often argued about the heterogeneity of Indian Muslims. W. C. Smith, in his book "Islam in Modern History", cites extensively that, there are various modes of Islamic practices in South Asia. It is divided on the basis of religion, culture and region. Late colonial ethnographers¹ have recorded caste practices among the Muslims, but, the communal politics around the creation of Pakistan, and the idea of a homogeneous community overshadowed the issue of casteism. Since then, the communal politics has had its grip over the Muslim masses controlled by the feudal upper castes. They have thwarted all attempts at democratization of the community. The major political parties entertained these upper castes/classes for

¹ See, W. Crooke's *The Quanne Islam*, 1921; and W. Hunter's *The People of India*, 1915. And also see H. Risley, E. A. Gait (1901); E.H.A. Blunt (1931); J. Talke (1914).

political mileage. Thus, the fatality of ignorance and non-recognition that has shown by various democratic bodies, which was meant to guarantee the process of democratization can be gauged.

The progress of whole community was at stake until 1990. It was only after the inclusion of various Muslim caste groups in Central OBCs list, debate over the caste discrimination among the Indian Muslims embarked upon. Larger in numbers, *Pasmanda* and dalit Muslims have begun to unite both politically and socially against Ashraf of the community and their brand of politics. The assertion has been strong in Hindi-belt, especially Bihar. Due to this reason, Bihar has been selected for the case study.

According to 2001 Census, the Muslims in Bihar numbered 137.2 lakhs, constituting 16.5% of the State's total population and 9.9% of the country's total Muslim population². This population is highly stratified on caste line, which has been maintained since centuries.³ Endogamy, hierarchy based on clean and unclean occupation and specialization of occupation by particular caste can be easily identified. In post-independent India, the community affairs (social, political and religious) were hegemonised by upper castes. In Bihar too, these upper castes/classes leadership consciously focused on the politics of identity, centered on a few cultural-emotive issues – a process that by its very nature has stymied attempts towards democratization within the community.⁴ Such attempts only serve to perpetuate the domination of a miniscule elite. Consequently, all the religious and government institutions meant for Muslims

² Yoginder Sikand, *Muslims in Bihar: Findings of a survey*. Source: Indo-Asian News Service, October 25, 2004.

³ According to ADRI report, there are 43 caste group in Bihar.

⁴ Anwar Alam, Democratization of Indian Muslims: Some Reflections, *EPW*, Nov.15, 2003. Actually, this study has taken reference from the author's general observation about Indian Muslims.

in Bihar have been monopolized by the Ashraf. But, the implementation of Mandal Commission recommendation has instilled a sense of consciousness for their right into *Pasmanda* and dalit Muslims.

It is assumed that, this assertion will break the domination of upper castes, help lower castes to participate in decision making process of the community. In other words, it will de-feudalize the Muslim community, and will further deepen the democracy in India. Thus, this study is designed in such a way that, it will revolve around this hypothetical question. Further, there is also an attempt to trace the factors which operate at various levels to keep political actors away from taking up caste issue among the Muslims of India. This study also, examines the questions of why a revolutionary religion such as Islam could not break the social hierarchical order, which was alien to its basic teaching of '*Masawat*' (equality)? What role do the political and religious leaders play to maintain/ abolish these social evils? This research is divided into four chapters.

Chaptarisation

The first chapter, '*Pasmanda Muslims: Theoretical Evolution and Critical Inquiry*' deals with the social inequality among the Muslim community as widely accepted phenomenon. This study has tried to critically analyze the well-accepted categorization of Muslim society into three broader units i.e. *Ashraf*, *Ajlaf* & *Arzal*. Many Muslim scholars find that, the tenets of caste that exist in the community are a result of Hindu social influences.⁵ But the above argument has

⁵ M.S. Madani, in his book, "Impact of Hindu culture on Muslims", draws conclusion that influenced from Hindus, "Muslims are also divided into broad categories of Ashrafs and non-Ashrafs. It is obvious that this system of social hierarchy among the Muslims has been borrowed from the social hierarchy of the Hindu

oversimplified the problem of caste among Muslims and hold the 'low born' Hindu converted to Islam responsible for maligning pure Islam. In the first chapter, however, my argument differs from that of M. S. Madani and others.

The second chapter is titled '*Socio-Economic status of Pasmanda Muslims*' is my second chapter. The point that has dealt in this section is that, in spite of their (Pasmanda and Dalit Muslim) inclusion in OBCs list, they are not able to avail the benefits meant for them. The social and economic status is so low that, higher education and government jobs sound like a distant dream. The insensitive and discriminatory attitudes of the State prevent the well-meaning development programs from reaching them. But, most importantly, this chapter points towards the well-knit caste and class relationship. If a person is a poor Muslim, there is high chance that he belongs to lower/middle caste. But, the positive thing about their inclusion is that, now they are becoming conscious of their right and are behaving like one group.

Pasmanda Muslim organizations are playing a greater role in the shaping their ideas and goals, which is the theme of my third chapter, entitled, '*Politics of Pasmanda: A Case Study of Bihar*'. Because, the organizations and pressure groups are very active and are making real change happen at the grassroots, I have selected Bihar as my case study. After the failure of the Congress Party, regional parties dominated by OBCs, took over the State. The downtrodden had high hope from this government. Janta Dal (later on RJD) government infused the sense of social justice, but failed to match it with material base. In the case of Muslims, RJD pursued the same policies as its predecessors, giving more

society and it has been the contact between the Hindus and Muslims that has been responsible for this type of social differentiation and distribution of the social status". (Page 90)

importance to forward castes. The Pasmanda Muslims, with their raised consciousness, are now in a position to challenge and change the government that was paying no heed to their grievances. Certainly, the assertion of Pasmanda Muslims on the political horizon will be helpful in further democratization of Indian society in general and the Muslim community in particular, as their framework of politics is distinctively secular. Pasmanda movement has inaugurated a departure from the reactive politics.

The last chapter i.e. '*Way out of Backwardness – Affirmative Action?*' deals with the ways to solve the said problems. It also deals with the debates between Pasmanda Muslims and those who are supporting their cause and forward Muslims and the organizations those are against the caste based reservation. In this section, it has been argued that, unless the issue of minorities is tackled in the right perspective, the idea of sectarianism and communalism will have their space to create further troubles. An honest effort is required in this direction by the State and even within the community.

Research Methodology

This study relies on all the relevant, primary and secondary sources. The primary sources include government reports, Political parties' documents, memorandums, reports etc. Secondary sources include, books, articles from journals, newspapers, magazines and so on. Recent Supreme/High court judgments related to the issues of dalit Muslims have closely observed. Since last decade liberalization has been unfolding at fast rate, the reports of various NGOs dealing with its impact on poor (Muslims) have consulted. Interviews with *Pasmanda* leaders brought out various aspects of their movements in my notice.

Discussions with them facilitated to examine some of the current issues in retrospect. The data collected from various institutions of India, such as National Commission for Backward Classes, and Election Commission of India, have helped me to pursue the tenability of the hypothesis stated above. However, the lack of field survey is major limitation with this study.

CHAPTER I

PASMANDA MUSLIMS: THEORETICAL EVOLUTION AND CRITICAL INQUIRY

The process of understanding Indian society has always posed a challenge to social scientists all over the world. People of various races, religion and colour can be found here and they have co-existed since centuries. The very presence of different social groups in a widely spread geographical area, each having its own unique culture, makes their interaction more complex. Historians since ages have been trying to decode and understand Indian society, but have ended up either with adding just one more perspective to get the overall views of this society, or concur with the existing one. One feature that is commonly identified by the several of anthropologists and sociologists is the practice of caste system. Social scientists were so obsessed with this feature that at one point of time they used it as a variable having potential to define the entirety of the Indian social and political environment. It has dominated the political and social framework for a long time and continues till today, though in a different manner.

However, the problem with the voluminous study on caste in India is that it is restricted to the study and analysis of caste and functions among the Hindus. Its existence and principles of function among the Non-Hindus have been ignored most of the time or paid less attention to by social scientists. The first of its kind, Ghaus Ansari (1959) initiated the topic of categorization of Muslims (a Non-Hindu social group) on caste basis, in post-independent India. His research was based on censuses and reports of British administrative officials. Then with a gap of almost one and half decade later, Prof. Imtiaz Ahmad (1973) for the first time, brought together empirical studies on caste among Muslims in different parts of the country, viz. Khojas of Mumbai, Meos of Rajasthan and Haryana, Moplas of South-West Coast, Tamilian Muslims and the Muslims Of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, etc. Later on, Ali Anwar's (2001) "Masawat ki Jung", has reinvented

the zeal and interest of researchers in the issue of caste practice among Indian Muslims. Ansari, Ahmad and Anwar can be said to represent the important stages in the evolution of the study of Muslims' Social stratification. Although, all the authors agree that there are some kinds of caste tenets present in Muslims, but they differ in the nature and extent to which it has been rooted in the community. Scholars in their long driven endeavor to explain Muslims' social stratification have been able to develop the categories of '*Ashraf*', '*Ajlaf*' and later on added a third one '*Arzal*'. But, since their inception, these words created confusion regarding their origin and meaning and also about which section of the Muslim community falls in to which category.

This chapter will critically analyze the terms '*Ashraf*', '*Ajlaf*', and '*Arzal*' which act as a unit of distinction and will trace the evolutionary facts of social stratification among the Indian Muslim and the factors responsible for the establishment of cultural tenets of Hinduism in Indian Muslims, negating the egalitarian principle of Islam. Secondly, this chapter attempts to clarify the nature of caste practices in Indian Muslims and how deep its influence is on non-Hindus. Thirdly, this chapter looks into the word '*Pasmanda*', which is now providing a new turn to the whole categorization process, thus becoming a synonym of the politics of Muslim community in India.

Caste among Indian Muslims: Origin & Evolution

Mere consideration of caste among the Muslims raises a lot of hue and cry from various section of the Muslim community itself. The religious, social and political elite of the community completely rejected the theory of caste practices within the community till few years ago. However, once they acknowledged its

existence, they passed the blame on to the Hindu social milieu. On the other hand, the study of caste like practices in Non-Hindu social groups has stirred a debate among the social scientists and anthropologists on the whether the term caste can be applied to the system of social stratification of a community which professes a faith other than Hindus. Leach (1960) raised this question of whether caste is best considered as a cultural or as a structural phenomenon. There are two broad points of view on this question. Weber (1947) leading the first camp, takes the position that caste is a fundamental institution of Hinduism and its use should be restricted to Hindus or at best to social groups of other faiths that live with of near Hinduism. Towing Weber's line of argument, Dumont (1970) states that, caste is a typical feature of pan-Indian (Hindu) civilization. He rejected the idea that morphological similarities of ranked strata are enough to make other systems into caste system.¹ Srinivas (1968) admits that the model of caste society is appropriate for analyzing the structure of Hindu Society. He furthered that, it is also helpful for understanding the process of social mobility among various groups in the Hindu community. While, on the other hand, Bailey (1963), Berreman (1960), Harper (1968), C. Lindholm (1986) and other sociologists and social anthropologists define caste in structural terms so as to be applicable to the relationship between two or more groups in other religions and societies as well. In the structural-functional approach, according to Barreman, a proponent of this approach, 'a caste system resembles a plural society whose discrete section is all ranked vertically'. Caste can therefore in Barreman's view be useful compared to other rank societies such as the American ranking of blacks and whites.²

¹ This view is highlighted by author P.K. Lenda in his book "Caste, Cult and Hierarchy: Essay on the Culture of India".

² From T.N.Madan's book "Muslims communities of South Asia: Culture, Society and Power", page 452.

One cannot deny that, caste system is predominantly a peculiar feature of Hindu social and cultural milieu which has cast its shadow on the social structure of Non-Hindus (Muslims, Sikhs, Christian, Jainism, Buddhists etc.) almost on the same line³. If we carefully observe the archives of pre-independent British India and censuses that were recorded by British officials we can clearly spell out the names of occupational castes and sub-castes and the reflection of caste characteristics during the normal interaction between different caste groups of the Muslim community. 1901⁴, 1911, 1921, 1931 Censuses⁵ have record of various castes grouping in different parts of the country. Jolaha (Weaver), Dhuniya (Cotton Carder), Pathan, Sayyad, Sheikh⁶, Arain, Chuhra, Jat, Jhinwar, Kashmiri, Kumhar, Lohar (Ironsmith), Mochi, Nai, Rajput, Teli (Oil Presser), Mirasi, Meo, Darzi, etc. The 1931 Census of Bengal has recorded the caste names of Muslim community based on race and function. Behara, Jolaha, Kulu (Oil Presser), to the latter category and Sayyad, Sheikh, Moghul, Pathan to former one⁷. Moreover, Muslim society also had hierarchies on account of their claim to foreign descent and types of occupations they were involved in. So, Muslims from Arab, Persia, Afghan and Turkey were believed to be higher in social ranking than indigenous people who converted to Islam. The Muslims from outside were rulers and were mainly involved in administrative work, whereas converted Muslims stuck to

³ Feature of caste in Muslim community differs from region to region. It hasn't shown uniformity on a broader level.

⁴ The Census of India 1901 listed 133 castes, wholly or partially Mohamadan; vol. I, part I, page 543-544.

⁵ The entire names given below belonging to the Muslim community have been mentioned on page 199-230. The name of caste groups in the Muslim community sometimes matched with Hindu caste groups, for e.g. Nai, Mochi, Rajput, Teli etc.

⁶ *Sheikh* in Arabic means a man of note or chief. Orthodox Muslim literature has no term equivalent to Hindi *Guru*. But in mystic terminology the term *Sheikh* was used for this purpose. Accurately speaking a *Sheikh*; was a mystic man whom his spiritual teacher had given a written and properly witnessed document, called *Khilafat-nama* (*deed of succession*) authorizing him to enroll disciples to his *Silsilah*.

⁷ Source: 1931 Census of Bengal, page 421-425.

their traditional occupation. There were some kinds of reservation for non-interference into each others work. A survey among Muslims of Nadia District mentioned that, "The *Ashraf* will not adopt cultivation for their living"⁸. In the census for the same year H. H. Risley wrote, "Like the higher Hindu caste, the *Ashraf* consider it degrading to accept menial service or to handle the plough"⁹. In the system related to marriages, endogamy was followed by Muslims of all strata. Risley noted that, "just as in the traditional Hindu system men of higher groups could marry women of the lower while converse process was vigorously condemned, so within the higher ranks of Muhammadans a Sayyad will marry a sheikh's daughter but will not give his daughter in return, and inter-marriage between the upper circle of *soi-disant* foreigners and the main body of Indian Muhammadans is generally reprobated, except in parts of the country where the aristocratic element is small and must arrange its marriages as best it can"¹⁰. Perhaps, this is why, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar had reached the conclusion that, "Mohammedans observe not only caste but also untouchability"¹¹.

Having knowledge about the caste like tradition among Muslims of India, if we turn our attention, towards the question of origin of this stratification, we find that a group of scholars adhere to the theory that, caste in its present form was moulded by the colonial master. Since the mid-1980s several scholars have written on caste and the ways in which it was shaped and reshaped by the metropolitan modernity; and its intricate relationship with colonial statecraft, the decennial census being perhaps, most powerful technology in its storehouse. A.

⁸ Source: 'Reports on the Religion and Social Divisions amongst the Mohammedans of Bengal', London: India office Library Risley Collection, European MSSE 295, 9:88.

⁹ Source: E.A.Gait, 'Muhammadan Caste and Tribes in Census of India', 1901.

¹⁰ Risley, H., 'The People of India', 1915, page 121.

¹¹ B.R.Ambedkar, *Pakistan or Partition of India* (Bombay, 1946, 2nd edn.), p.220.

Appadurai highlights the deep inter-relationship between the rise of caste consciousness and the enumerative technologies of the colonial states. "The enumerations of the social body, conceived as aggregations of individuals whose bodies were inherently both collective and exotic", contends Appadurai¹². Nicholas Dirks, continued this rhetoric with more power, as "Under colonialism, caste was thus made out to be far more – far more pervasive, far more totalizing, and far more uniform than it had ever been before, at the same time that it was defined as a fundamentally religious order... What we now see as caste is, in fact, the precipitate of the history that selected caste as the single and systematic category to name, and thereby contains the Indian social order"¹³. Dirks's conclusive phrase, 'Ethnographic State', is not based on the original idea. He got inspired by G.S.Ghure¹⁴, who has made a similar argument. In fact, during the colonial rule (as early as 20th cent. A.D.), both the communal forces viz. Hindu Mahasabha and Muslim League, sensed a conspiracy to divide the respective community by a caste based census. Both the organizations appealed the members of their communities to make their religion count, rather than their caste. Ali Anwar in his book "Masawat Ki Jung" gave a historical account of such effort made by Muslim League's leader. On the eve of the 1941 Census, the provincial Secretary of the Bihar Muslim League, Syed Badruddin Ahmad – an *Ashraf* – issued an appeal to the Muslims to mention their religion but not their caste. He saw the inclusion of the caste category in the census as something divisive and hence against the 'community'. Taj Muhammad, a district leader of the low-caste Muslim movement called Jamiatul Momenin, forcefully countered the Muslim League's appeal. In open opposition to the Muslim League's

¹² Arjun Appadurai, 'Number in colonial imagination', p.330.

¹³ Nicholas. Dirks, 'Castes on Mind', page 13.

¹⁴ Ghure in his book 'Caste and Race in India' blamed colonial master for raising caste consciousness among the Indians.

position, he appealed to the colonial, 'ethnographic state' that *Momins* must necessarily be counted and registered as a separate caste¹⁵. In a letter published in *The Searchlight* on September 10, 1941, Taj Muhammad pleads his case:

Frightened with the numerical strength of the Momins, the veterans of the Muslim League, who have always looked down upon Momin as a class have left no stone unturned to enlist them not as Momins but merely as Muslims...In this context, the exploited and the deprived Momins make a humble request to the government that to maintain their representative character, which others want to annihilate, it directs the census department to register the Momins as a separate caste¹⁶.

However, *social stratification in Indian Muslim should not be considered as a colonial output*. Because if we look at the words designed to categorize the Indian Muslim society i.e. '*Ashraf*', '*Ajlaf*' or '*Atlaf*' and '*Arzal*' or '*Ardhal*', all have purely Arabic roots and remained in use in pre/Islamic Arabia. *Ashraf* came out of the word '*Sharif*'¹⁷, which means 'Noble' or 'respected person'. There is no substantive research material dealing with the early use of this word. But one can safely say that, the word '*Ashraf*' was used by people who trace their genealogy from the prophet's son-in-law Ali, through his martyred son Hussein. Their modern representative is the Sayyad who, in the fourteenth century, adopted as the outward sign of their claim to distinction- the green turban which was so noticeable in some Muslim lands¹⁸. Similarly, '*Ajlaf*', came out of the root word '*jilf*' means uncivil or unjust or brutal. Whereas, '*Arzal*', is derived from the word '*Razl*', or '*Radl*', means impure, mean or lowest of all. The word '*Arzal*' came into use in the context of India. Once Islam entered India, the meaning and the context of use of these words changed, which will be discuss later on. However,

¹⁵ Ali Anwar, *Masawat Ki Jung*, page 24-30.

¹⁶ *Ibid*.

¹⁷ '*Ashraf*' is used in superlative degree. Its plural is '*Surf*'. In India, Iran and central Asia, however, the word '*Sharif*' extended to wider categories of respectability.

¹⁸ Reuben Levy, '*The Social Structure of Islam*', 1969, p.65-66.

these words were certainly not in use to categorize the Arabian society on caste basis. Making the study of early Arabia, W. C. Smith, produced evidence, which clearly indicates that, "Arab society at the time was undoubtedly organized on the basis of tribal groups which shared the 'notion of honour and status' but were not necessarily vertically stratified". These words began to associate with the 'caste' like features meant to encompass higher status in India and evolved gradually.

The early phase marked the division of Muslims into two broader categories i.e. *Ashraf* and *Ajlaf*. The Muslims like Arabians, Iranians, Central Asian, and Turkish who claim their origin from foreign descent belong to former category and the dark-skinned local converts belong to later one. Here one can notice that, in India, the orb of the word 'Ashraf' has included the entire Muslim races who came from outside, unlike its restricted use for Sayyad in Islamic Arabia.

The dichotomy of *Ashraf-Ajlaf* has been well recorded in history at least at governmental and administrative levels, during Delhi Sultanate period. As K. M. Ashraf and S. C. Mishra testified the distinction of Indian Muslims during the medieval period. Ashraf stated that, "In the administrative system the positions of status and authority were assigned to members of the families of foreign origin who had either originally accompanied the invading armies or had descended from the original immigrants"¹⁹.

But the question is whether these units of distinction are really meaningful in understanding the pattern of social distinctions that existed in medieval Indian

¹⁹ See K.M.Ashraf, *Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan*, 1959, page 61-63.

Muslims or today's social stratification on the line of *Ashraf*, *Ajlaf* and *Arzal*. They are probably not. These units of distinction presented the complex social stratification among the Muslims in an over-simplified manner. According to Ahmad, "...the greater emphasis placed on the distinction of Muslim society between *Ashraf* and *Ajlaf* has tended to produce a wrong and distorted picture of the nature and complexity of Indian Muslim social stratification"²⁰. While the distinction between Muslims of foreign origin and local descent became real in the government and administration, at the social plane each of these broad categories were in turn divided into a number of small units which were important in intimate social intercourse²¹. However, research material on the social interaction between these smaller categories are rarely available, making it impossible from the available evidence to arrive at concrete conclusions about the relationship between the smaller units and broader categories, but Ahmad²² has tried to provide the necessary link that defines the social intercourse between the smaller units and broader categories. While referring to the writings of Ashraf and Misra²³, Ahmad tried to locate instances of several sub-divisions among the early Turks and *Ashrafs*. Ahmad noted that, with their conversion to Islam the average Muslim did not change their old environment which was deeply influenced by caste distinctions and a general social exclusiveness. He also mentioned that, the various classes of which the Muslim community was composed began to live aloof from one another; even in separate quarters in the same city. Smaller units of both the broader categories were stratified hierarchically according to the country of origin and the degree of nearness to the

²⁰ Imtiaz Ahmad, '*The Ashraf-Ajlaf Dichotomy in Muslim Social Structure in India*', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 1966, page 273.

²¹ See Ashraf, op. cit., page 58.

²² See Ahmad, op. cit., page 271.

²³ S.C. Misra, *Muslim Communities in Gujarat*, Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1964, page 138.

Prophet. Thus, Sayyads who trace their descent directly from the prophet's daughter Fatima are regarded as the highest in status and honour; followed by the Sheikhs, Mughals and Pathans. The *Ajlaf* category on the other hand, is supposed to include converts from artisan and serving castes, and from untouchables. They too are distinguished among themselves and the ranks are recognized according to the criteria of original caste status, traditional occupation, caste customs and practices. In spite of changing their caste propagating religion to egalitarian Islam, they maintained their cultural practices with the same ease. In fact theoretical Islam and its principle were morphed by scholars and religious heads and used consciously as the mechanism to maintain the caste practices.

Principles of Caste

The legacy of vertical division of Muslim society has been continuing till today. In independent India, upper caste Muslims have appropriated major chunk of governmental jobs, monopolized the major religious institutions and also control politics. A research on KabirNagar in western U.P. by S. P. Jain, illustrates the power relationship between different social units based on caste and class distinction.

Table: 1²⁴

Caste and Occupational Class of Executive Members of Islamia Inter College

<i>Office Bearer</i>	<i>Caste</i>	<i>Hierarchy</i>	<i>Occupation</i>
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²⁴ S.N.Jain, 'The social Structure of Hindu-Muslim Community', 1973, page 63.

President	Sayyad	Upper	Legal Practitioner
Secretary	"	"	Agriculturist
Manager	"	"	"
Member	Sheikh	"	"
Member	"	"	"
Member	"	"	"
Member	Chaudhary	"	"
Member	"	"	"
Member	"	"	Businessman

*

there is no change in the Board till the survey was going on. Though, this college was instituted in 1918.

Jain also mentioned that, majority of leaders (Social and Political) belong to higher castes, namely Chaudhary, Sayyad, or Sheikh, with few exceptions, who belong to the upper middle caste (Ansari) [On page 114 & 123]. This is why; we cannot analyze the issues of caste and class separately. In the case of Muslims of India, both are completely interlinked and reinforce one another. Later on, Ali Anwar in his book '*Masawat ki Jung*' (Fight for Equality) has provided the data which speaks of marginalization of middle and lower caste Muslims. In the support of his argument, Anwar has included many institutions of Bihar as well as at the national level. Those institutions discussed by Anwar are Imrarat-e-Sharia, Phuwari Sharif, Idar-e-Sharia, All India Milli Council, All India Muslim Personal Board, Urdu Academy, Sunni Waqf Board, Minorities Commission, Madarsa Board and Urdu Advisory Council.

Occupational specialization is another important feature of the caste system on which comparison could be made to explore the nature of caste practices in Muslim society. A serious link has been established by sociologists between caste and hereditary occupation which serves as the basis for an economic interdependence of castes. Zarina Bhatti noted down a full-fledged jajmani system with the locally dominant caste serving as the nucleus of the exchange of goods and services in Kasauli (place in U.P.). She mentioned that,

“Interactions between the ‘oonchi zat’ (high caste) and ‘neechi zat’ (low caste) are regulated by established patron-client relationships of the jajmani system. The patrons, who belong to oonchi zat, are referred to as the jajmanis, and the clients, comprising the various occupational caste of the neechi zat, as Kamin. The Kamins, who are attached to the dominant Ashraf lineage in a hereditary relationship, provide specialized services to its members for customary payments in cash or kind. The Kamins are provided house sites by their jajmans and can also get land on lease from the jajmans for cultivation”²⁵.

Prof. Imtiaz Ahmad’s ‘Caste and Social Stratification among Muslims in India’ was a pioneering work in this regard. Almost all the contributors of this volume have strongly linked caste and hereditary occupations. However, Prof. Ahmad had recorded a degree of differences between these links at various levels of the social hierarchy. Such links seem to be stronger at the bottom of the social hierarchy than at higher levels. Upper caste Muslims are generally involved in a wide range of jobs (such as Medical and legal practitioners, Businessman, engineers, Landowners etc.) so they do not claim any types of hereditary occupation. Whereas lower social units have stuck to their traditional occupation, due to lack of opportunities for social mobility.

²⁵ M.N.Srinivas, ‘Caste—its twentieth century avatar’, Viking, 1996, page 249.

This brings us to the third feature of caste, that of the hierarchy of groups and its presences within the Muslims. Again there is a lack of consensus on this issue within the scholars who debate the presence of caste feature among Muslims. While making a study of South Indian Muslims, one contributor (D'Souza) in Ahmad's '*Caste and Social Stratification among the Muslims in India*', observes that different Muslim social divisions in Mysore and Kerala which are hierarchically ranked, does not associate considerations of rituals of purity and pollution on the basis of caste ranking. Others, provides examples to argue that, Muslim society is hierarchical. G. H. Khan in his study of Kashmiri Muslims gave the picture of vertically divided society. Sayyad, Sajada-Neshin, Pirzadaz, Dervish, the agriculturists belong to upper caste, whereas, Mochi i.e. the sweeper, lies on the lowest step of the occupational ladder. In between, there are numbers of castes like, kul-Faqir, Bhand, Mirasis (professional singers), Malyar (Vegetable farmer), Kumar (pot maker), Lohar (Iron smith) etc. The hierarchy depends on the social stigma attached with any particular job. But, these social stigmas themselves depend on the standard, both physical and economic, of the worker, and to the technique applied. For instance, if one sat on a side walks to repair the shoes of passerbies he would be looked down upon. But if he owned a decent looking shop and got the repair done away from the public gaze he may be taken as a decent man though the trade might still be considered as undignified. In one of the other study done by S.P.Jain of western U.P. (Kabirnagar), mentioned the presence of caste in hierarchical form, in a more explicit way. In a survey through questionnaire, he divided Muslim society in to four status categories viz. Upper, Upper-Middle, Lower-Middle and Lower²⁶.

- i. Upper –
 - a) Chaudhry
 - b) Sayyad

²⁶ Op.cit. S.P.Jain, Page 30.

- c) Sheikh
- ii. Upper-Middle
 - a) Ansari
 - b) Kazi
 - c) Ghosi
 - d) Halwai
- iii. Lower-Middle
 - a) Barhi
 - b) Darzi
 - c) Luhar
 - d) Dhuna
- iv. Lower
 - a) Khatik
 - b) Nai
 - c) Teli
 - d) Kalal
 - e) Mahgir
 - f) Kasai

A recent study made by S. A. A. Saheb on Andhra Pradesh's Muslim has presented the hierarchical diagram of social units.

Social Hierarchy of Muslims Castes in A.P.

- I – Sayyad
- II – Sheikh
- III – Pathan
- IV – Labbai
- V – Kureshi, Attar-Saibulu, Atar, Gair-e-Mehadi
- VI – Chekketakare, Borewale, Garadi
- VII – DudeKulā, Hazam, Fhakir-budbudki

* Source: S.A.A.Saheb, '*Dudekula Muslims of Andhra Pradesh: An Ethnographic Profile*' EPW, November 15, 2003.

These hierarchical positions or grading of each social unit in Muslim society is determined by the relatively pure or impure nature of the occupation associated with each. But, in her study of Kasuali's Muslims, Zarina Bhatti added one more factor of grading. She believed that, 'there was another criterion, viz. physical proximity of a non-Ashraf caste to Ashraf while performing services for them²⁷. *Mirasis* (singer) were thus higher than *Nais* (barbers) and both higher than Dhobi (laundrymen). *Mirasis* were higher than *Nais* because *Mirasis* women sat among Ashraf ladies to sing and singing had no polluting connotation. She further reiterates that, "things are not only impure or pure; some things are more impure than others; those groups handled the occupation related to impure things, are regarded as unclean. Any physical contact with individuals of these castes is avoided not only by *Ashrafs* but also by non-ashrafs." Among the Muslims, if a person accidentally contacts an individual of unclean caste, the former must purify himself by a simple bath, particularly prior to performing a religious function like saying '*namaz*' (prayer), reading the Koran or entering a mosque.

From the above discussion it is clear that many features of the Hindu caste system exist among the Muslims, though not exactly in the similar manner and magnitude. It varies from region to region and operates more in tune with local cultures at different social junctures. The factor which makes real difference between Hindu and Muslim caste practices is the lack of religious sanction for such practices in Islam. Egalitarianism is the quintessence of Islam. There is "no genealogy in Islam"²⁸, is one well *hadith*,²⁹ while others forbid emulation and boasting over ancestry. Islam, through Koran, speaks to humanity that, "O ye

²⁷ Zarina Bhatti, '*social stratification among Muslims in India*', in '*Caste -its twentieth Century Avatar*', by M.N. Srinivas, 1996, page 249-50.

²⁸ See R.Levy's '*The social structure of Islam*', page 56.

²⁹ *Hadith*, is the sayings of prophet Mohammad.



folk, verily we have created you of male and female... Verily the most honourable of you in the sight of god is the most pious of you" (Koran 49:13). It means all are equal and possess no reason for boasting of one's lineage.

In India, not only was the egalitarian principle of Islam subverted, but it was justified by many Muslim clergymen. Noted historian Irfan Habib viewed that, "Islam has struck at the roots of casteism in India. The works of theologians and scholars of the medieval period did not show commitment to any such equality". He further added that, "while medieval Islamic literature referred to Hindus as 'infidels', and denounced polytheism and image worship, there was no criticism of the caste system, the theory of population and oppression of untouchables that were rampant in medieval Hindu society"³⁰. This brings stagnation not only in political life, but, also in the social life of the Muslim community. The social reform debate concentrated on general issues of the community such as modern culture and its incompatibility with the Islamic teaching; India is *Dar-ul-Islam* (i.e. territory of Islam) or *Dar-ul-Harb* (i.e. territory of War); should Muslim adopt western education or not? Those issues dominated part of the discussion on Muslims, which fitted the interest of the religious and political elites. The issues of Muslim masses were almost ignored by historians.

Factor/s of Castes System in Indian Muslims

The traditional, medieval and late 19th century Muslim scholars covertly and overtly, provided a number of arguments to justify the practice of the caste system. One such principle which has continuously and successfully been used

³⁰ Sukhbir Choudhary, 'Encyclopedia of Indian Nationalism Series 11: Muslim struggle for National Renaissance (1930 onward)', 1996, page 144.

by the earlier *Ashraf* scholars, which helped greatly to establish the caste tenets in Indian Muslims, is *kafa'a* (plural of *Kuf*) means "an equal" or "one alike". This principle is applied mainly to define who equals whom, for the purpose marriage. In pre-Islamic Arabia, it was regarded with some rigidity and disapprobation shown towards ill-assorted matches. In the words of W. Robertson Smith: "It was a point of honour not to give away a woman in any unequal match. If you cannot find an equal match, says Cais Ibn Zohair to Namir the best marriage for them is the grave"³¹. But, the advent of Islam leveled distinctions based on colour, creed and racial factors. Later Sunni (Four Imam viz. Hanafi, Shafi, Maliki, and Hanabal) and Shia jurists, however, considered these doctrines in various shades, each offering diverse interpretations and justifications for his point of view.

The Hanafi School strictly adhered to the doctrine of *kafa'a*, regarding unequal marriages so objectionable as to open to dissolution under certain circumstances. The Hanafi School is most particular regarding equality, and is severe in conditions with respect to an appropriate match. The Shafis' stand is close to that of the Hanafis although the Hanafis are stricter in regard to reputation. But, Malikis, Hanabalis and the Ithna Ashari Shiahs are less exacting than the Hanafis in this respect. Imam Malik considered piety (*din*) as the only relevant criterion to use in the *Kafa'a* theory. Imam Malik, in support of his argument, referred to Quranic Verses 49:13: '*The noblest among you in the sight of God is the most godfearing of you*'³². Differing with Imam Malik's idea, Abu Hanifa had elaborately mentioned what constitutes *kafa'a*. Under Hanafi Law six requisites

³¹ W.R.Smith, 'Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia', A and C Black, London, 1903.

³² *Inna akrama-kum 'inda Allah atqa-kum*. I quoted the English Translation, *The Koran* (Oxford, 1983) by A.J.Arberry.

are necessary to establish Kafa'a: family descent, faith in Islam, noble profession, freedom, good character and means of livelihood. And as most of the Muslim population of the World follows the Hanafis rule of Law, these requisites are well recognized beyond doubt, in determining the Kafa'a.

These debates on Kafa'a have a direct bearing on the Indian Muslim 'Ulema, and their understanding of Kafa'a, as most of the Muslims are followers of the Hanafi Law. In India, the Muslim masses (excluding *Ashrafs*) were initially converted from Hindu (mainly from lower castes) did not change their old environment, which was deeply influenced by caste distinction and a general social exclusiveness, the idea of Kafa'a based on Hanafis Law propagates endogamy between existing social units. Thus, taking a spouse from outside one's Kafa'a was strongly frowned upon, if not explicitly forbidden by the fuqaha³³. It was the result of regarding caste (Biradari), known as hereditary occupational groups, as an essential factor in deciding Kafa'a by Indian 'Ulema. We have enormous literature dealing with the practice of endogamy among Indian Muslims. Risley (1901), Maulana A.A. Thanwi (1973), Imtiaz Ahmad (1973), Z. Bhatti (1996), Y.Sikand (2000), etc. are few examples. Thanwi, using the Kafa'a system mentioned that, though Syed, Sheikh, Mughals and Pathans, are all counted as belonging to the *Ashraf* category, they are not equal. Each of them is a separate class, so Mughals and Pathans married to Syed and Sheikh girls is declared as unequal³⁴. He also talks about Non-*Ashrafs*. According to him, weavers are not of equal class with tailors and so also barbers, washer-men etc. are not equal to tailors.³⁵ Two points can be drawn from the Thanwi's argument. Firstly, that

³³ It means scholars of Islamic Law.

³⁴ Maulana A .A. Thanwi, *Bahishti Zewar*, trans. by R. Ali Al-Hasmi, 1973, page 409.

³⁵ Ibid. pp-410.

Muslim society of that time was clear cut based on hierarchy. Secondly, these social units (occupation based caste groups) were theoretically as well as practically bound by the endogamy.

In the post-independence period, due to lack of concrete, substantial data and a fresh look into the matter of endogamy, an environment of confusion persists. However, the nature of endogamy varies from region to region, and ultimately dependent on the local social and cultural milieu of that area. For instances, Abdul Waheed argues that, the so-called ashrafs of U.P. have begun to marry their daughters off to the sons of the Banjara caste (otherwise lower in caste hierarchy) because of their strong economic position. Banjara, by contrast, do not give their daughters in marriage to the *Ashraf* castes³⁶. The situation of Malyar, i.e. vegetable farmer (a Kashmiri Muslim caste) is, exactly opposite to the above mentioned instance. Malyars job is to clean the privies of the citizens and collect the night soil and carry it in large wicket baskets on their backs to their fields. In terms of monetary status the Malyar would be richer than those fellows whose privies they clean and carry away, but are looked down by people (poor) due to their occupation in which they are involve. The Malyar's son may, after college education rise to the position of a magistrate but the clerk in his office, school teacher and the small constable would not give his daughter in marriage to him because the magistrate's father used to go from house to house for collection of the night soil and this stigma would be attached to his family for several generations³⁷.

³⁶ As quoted in "*A different Jihad: Dalits Muslims' challenge to Ashraf Hegemony*", by Irfan Ahmad, EPW, Nov.2003 p.4889.

³⁷ G.H. Khan, 'The Kashmiri Mussulman', Falah-E-Aam Press, 1973, p. 41-42.

If we infer from the above discussion, we can find that, endogamy is one of the most agreed upon element of caste stratification among Muslim, though it is not the replica of Hindu social tradition. There are a number of scattered instances of inter-caste marriages among Muslims, but it's not enough to prove the nature of endogamy today hence this requires more close observation. Although, groups of individuals defend endogamy by pushing forward the argument of economic and class position. But, caste and class both intertwine together in the case of Indian Muslims. After the proselytisation of local people to Islam, they did not experience many changes in their social and economic position. The *Ashrafs* continued to be mainly involved in the respectable (social and economic) jobs, whereas lowly converted Muslim population carried forward their hereditary occupations, which were either less respectable or menial jobs in comparison to *Ashraf*. So there always remains class differences between these social units. Perhaps, that's why, Maulana A. A. Thanwi considered caste as class and had forbidden any marriages contract between two unequal social units, whether they belong to Ashraf, Ajlaf and Arzal categories.

New Social Category: Pasmanda

In post-independent India, discourses such as communalism, Urdu and personal law, overshadowed the sociological problems that have persisted in Muslim society since centuries. Caste never became an issue for Muslim leadership or the secular political parties. The theorizing of the community (Muslim) as a homogeneous one, works as blanket to cover up the facts. But, Mandal Commission's inclusion of 82 Muslim social groups into the OBC list has sown

the seed of unrest.³⁸ Though the list is problematic enough as it bring OBCs and dalit Muslim castes together, but it succeed in initiating the long pending voice against caste practices within the Muslim community. Secondly, it re-moulds the measuring unit of castes among the Muslims. The new unit which evolved after the Mandal Commission is known as *Pasmanda*. This section will scrutinize the meaning of '*Pasmanda*' and trace the change it internalizes over a period time.

'*Pasmanda*', is a Persian word which means 'Backward'. Initially, during the Indian national movement, this unit of social distinction had its existence in the form of '*Momin*' means 'the faithful men of honour' or '*Ansar*'. It (*Momin*) had included all the Muslim castes exempting Ashrafs, like the word '*Pasmanda*' today which has larger scope than government's list of Muslims OBCs, [as government has just included 82 social units (caste), out of 170 identified backward castes³⁹]. In history, the word '*Momin*' had close link with the caste Julaha. On the turn of the 20th century, this weaver caste shaded their pre-conversion Hindu prefix in favour of *Momin* to gain an equal standing with the upper classes and to establish a "Purer Islamic Status"⁴⁰. The term '*Momin*' was probably in use even before the 19th century at least in the Purnea District Bihar. However, the trend became more noticeable in the 1911 Census returns, when Julahas began to use '*Ansar*' or '*Momin*' as their title. Later on, in the wake of Muslim League's demand for the partition, the above mentioned lower castes, under the leadership of backward Muslims raised their voices against the demand, under the united banner of '*Momin Conference*', a political party

³⁸ Although, various castes among the Muslim were the beneficiary of reservation policy in different Indian States.

³⁹ See Seik Rahim Mondal, EPW, 15 Nov. 2003, page 4893.

⁴⁰ Gyanendra Pandey, 'The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India', Delhi, OUP, 1990, page 88-9.

intended to foil the ploy of the Muslim League. A.Q. Ansari, a prominent leader of Momin Conference, maintained that the Muslim League slogan of "Islam in Danger" is merely a sinister game plan to distract the Momins from the organizing themselves⁴¹. He alerted, Momins to the parenting act of the "Capitalist and Power-seeker" Muslim League⁴². Momin Conference thus waged a battle against the '*Ashraf*' dominated Muslim League to 'ameliorate' not just of the Momins but of the Rayeen (Vegetable sellers and Grower), Mansoor (cotton carder), Idrisi (Tailor) and Quraish (butcher)⁴³. According to the Ansari's computation his strategy would mean the upliftment not only of 45 million *Momins* but of 35 million other backward Muslims as well⁴⁴. Thus the word 'Momin' historically evolved to cover a wider social boundary.

Taking the inspiration from this history, backward caste leaders and scholars since 1980s till mid 1990s, used the word '*Pasmanda*' in that particular broader sense, which made it a vague term, unable to define the vertically divided Muslim society, where few social units deserved to be in Scheduled Caste category like their Hindu counterparts. This sociological terminology has clubbed the clean and unclean occupational castes together, towing the line drawn by government in the Mandal Commission. If we follow the Mandal Commission Report, one finds that, particular Hindu caste belong to Scheduled Castes category, but their Muslim counterparts do not (they are in OBC's list). For instance, Dhobi, Nat, Halalkhor, Mahtar (all Hindus) of Bihar belongs to Scheduled Caste list, whereas the same castes in Muslims have been placed in the OBC list. In Andhra Pradesh, a Hindu Mahtar is in SC's list but a Muslim Mahtar

⁴¹ *The searchlight*, Oct.12, 1938; Dec.18, 1938 (Arrah); Dec.22, 1938 (Chatra).

⁴² *Ibid.*, March 2, 1940, Ansari at the Muzaffarpur District Momin Conference.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, May 26, 1939.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* Feb.10, 1940, at the Gaya Momin Conference.

in OBC's. A Hindu Mochi in Assam and Bihar, a Hindu Mukri (Gujarat), Hindu Madari of Orissa, M.P., Maharashtra and Rajasthan belong to SC list but the same caste in Muslims falls into the orb of the OBC's list in the respective states.⁴⁵

Why is it so?

Apart from the argument given above on the evolution of broader social category, the answer also lies in the historical juncture when efforts had been going on to define the backwardness. After the Constituent Assembly Debates, lack of untouchability became one of the qualifying criteria for deciding the backward class. And there is a general perception that, in Islam there is no concept of untouchability, thus those social units who were converted from the Hindu caste system have been out of caste clutches and do not observe untouchability. So those social bases of Muslims which are educationally and socially backward have been recommended for reservation under OBC's category. But, the point is that, not only untouchability, but social hierarchy of any kind has never been the philosophy of Islam. But practically, it is very much a part of cultural behaviour of Indian Muslims.

After defining the term 'Backwardness', the government through the Presidential Order of 1950 amended article 341 of the constitution. This enables the President of India, to notify a particular caste as Scheduled Caste. According to the amended law, only those dalits who were Hindus could be considered members of the Scheduled Caste and hence eligible for benefits under reservation.⁴⁶ It implies that, Muslims & Christian could be a scheduled Tribe or other Backward

⁴⁵ To know the caste and occupational similarity between Hindu SCs and Muslim OBCs, see annexure.

⁴⁶ In 1956, reservation was extended to include all scheduled castes professing Sikhism. In 1990, Dalits who had embraced Buddhism (Neo-Buddhist) were also included among the scheduled caste.

Class, but certainly not to scheduled castes, whatever their social position may be. This is in a sense, violation of article 15 [1], which state that, "the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them". This was indeed a set back to the dalit Muslims, and was based on the wrong notions about the absence of discrimination among the Muslims and Christians. Reacting to this constrain, Ajaz Ali (President of AIBMM), said that, "demand for scheduled caste status for dalit Muslims is fully in consonance with the spirit of the Indian constitution". Thus, it became important to demarcate between the 'Pasmanda' & 'Dalit' Muslim with immediate effect.

In spite of the problematic categorization into OBC's list, it is for the first time in post-independent era that Muslim groups have come under the purview of reservation at the Central level. It made 'Pasmanda' and dalit Muslim socially and politically conscious, who are now challenging the hegemony of the *Ashrafs*. They have become aware of the need for political power and socio-economic development of their respective groups.

Secondly, this movement, though late, is now redefining Muslim politics in particular and politics of India in general. In the recent election for the Bihar Legislative Assembly, the open support of these forces to JD (U) led to its massive victory. In a resolution adopted unanimously at its executive committee meeting on September 17, the *Pasmanda Mahaz* declared its support to the JD (U), affirming faith in the leadership of Nitish Kumar and demanding that "backward and Dalit" Muslims be given the same benefit of reservation as backward and Dalit Hindus. "We tested Lalu Prasad for 15 years; he did nothing for backward Muslims. He always promoted upper-caste, forward Muslims. We gave him a

warning in the last Assembly elections by weakening him, and this time we will totally sideline him,"⁴⁷ Pasmada Mahaz President Ali Anwar said.

This may start a new era of politics for Muslims which is distinctively secular and envisions a socially just and democratic society. The need for such a departure hardly needs to be stressed in the face of reactive Muslim politics.

⁴⁷ Purnima S. Tripathi, Bihar on the Edge, *Frontline*, Volume 22, oct.08-21, 2005.

CHAPTER II

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF PASMANDA MUSLIMS

In view of the varied conditions of development among the different communities of India, from the primitive ones to the most advanced ones, the framers of the Indian constitution deemed it necessary to make adequate provisions for the protection and upliftment of the backward communities. The aim was to provide equal opportunities for the advancement of the backward communities and bring them at par with the others. The constitution envisaged the establishment of a classless and casteless society, free from all kind of exploitation at an early date. The Preamble to the Constitution makes this abundantly clear, and the relevant provisions are included in Articles 15 (4), 16 (4), 38, 39 (c), 41, 43, 45, 46, 330, 340 and 344. The first chapter has argued that there are caste practices among the Muslim community of India. As a result, the State was obliged to include Muslim middle & lower castes into the list of those that who received preferential treatment. After independence, the first & second Backward Classes Commission came up with the OBC list, using the different criteria that included various Muslim castes.¹ Although there have been many scholarly studies on the impact of reservation for the SCs, STs and OBCs (Hindu), but any separate & critical assessment of its impact on Muslim OBCs (included backward Muslims & dalit Muslim) has been inadequate. This is mainly because the various Muslim caste groups that have been combined together with the Hindus became the victim of collective calculation. Given such inadequacies, in this chapter, the focus is on the socio-economic status of OBCs and Dalit Muslims, particularly after the implementation of Mandal Report. Also, this chapter is an effort to analyze the broader hypothetical question of

¹ Kaka Kalelkar and Mandal Commission came up with 2399 and 3743 castes respectively, which have also included non-Hindu communities, such as Muslim and Christian as OBCs.

whether affirmative action has been proved to be ineffective in general for any targeted group, especially those who are in the minority², lying at the bottom of social strata and facing double discrimination – first, on being a Muslim and second, belonging to the lower caste/class.

State, OBCs and dalit Muslim: 1947-1990

The Kalelkar Commission consisted of one Muslim from Backward caste as its member i.e. Abdul Qaiyum Ansari, the then M.L.A. from Bihar. The Commission used 11 criteria to determine the backwardness and listed more than two thousand castes as backward. The Commission very clearly pointed out caste practices among the non-Hindu communities. In its main report, while commenting about Muslims, the Commission claimed that, “Officially Muslims do not recognize any caste. It must be said to the credit of Islam that it did not compromise its position in the matter of untouchables.....” It further mentioned that, “... However Islamic society in India succumbed to the influence of caste and lost its pristine purity. There are certain professions, however, that are regarded as inferior by Muslim society and today there are a number of communities amongst them that are suffering from social inferiority and consequent educational backwardness. We have recognized this deterioration that has overcome Muslim society today and *added the names of such communities found among them in the list of Other Backward Classes.*”³ The Commission prepared State-wise list of Other Backward Classes that had included Muslim Castes too.

² In India, the case of OBCs and dalit Muslims is a little more complex, as they are also the part of religious minority.

³ Government of India, Backward classes Commission, chapter IV, page 27, 1955.

The lists of Muslims who were included in it are as follow⁴:

AJMER: Banjara*, Chhipa (Dyers and Printer), Julaha, Kasai, Labana (Pack Carriers), Nai, Sikligar, Teli.

ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS: All permanent inhabitants in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, including the settlers under the colonization scheme, excluding the Scheduled Tribes.

ANDHRA PRADESH: Dudekela (Cotton cleaning), Kasab, Nakkale (weaving and begging), Rangaraju (Tailors), Telikula (Oil Mongers).

ASSAM: Jolaha*/Momin, Kasai*/Kassab/Quraishi, Manipuri Muslim, Teli.

BHOPAL: Banjara, Pinjara, Bharbhujia, Bhat, Bhishti* (Water carrier), Chhipa/Rangrez, Dafali*, Dhobi, Dhunia/Naddaf, Darzi, Fakir (Mendicant), Julaha/Momin, Kasab, Nai, Nat* (Acrobats and Tumblers), Teli.

BIHAR: Abdal*, Bhathiara* (Inn-keepers), Chik, Mirshikar, Darzi/Idrisi, Dhobi*, Dhunia*/Mansoori/Naddaf, Gaddi, Hajjam or Ibrahim, Halalkhor* (sweeper)/Lalbegi, Kasab, Kunjara/Rayeen (Vegetable Seller), Madari*, Miriasin (Musician and Singers on auspicious Occasions), Momin, Nat*, Nalband, Pamaria (Musician and entertainers), Rangrez, Sheikhras, Teli.

BOMBAY: Arain (Fruit and vegetable sellers), Bhisti*, Chhipa (in Gujarat), Darzi/Shimpi, Dhobi/Parit, Hajjam/Nai, Julaha/Momin, Kalal (Distillers), Kasia, Lubana, Nat*, Pinjara*, Quraish (Butchers), Rangari (Dyers), Shikkaligar*.

COORG: Bilimagga, Mapilla, Napita.

⁴ * Indicates Communities considered most backward by Commission.

DELHI: Abbasi*/Bhishti/Sakka (Muslim watermen), Arain*/Rayeen/Kunjara, Bazigar*/Nat/Qalandar, Bhand, Bharbhujia, Bhatia, Chhipi, Chirimar*, Dafali, Darzi, Dhobi, Fakir, Hajjam/Nai, Julaha/Momin, Kalal, Kasai, Labana, Manihar (Lac-bangle makers and sellers), Meo/Mewati, Mirasi, Nalband, Naqqal, Rangrez, Saiz, Teli.

HIMACHAL PRADESH: Atishbaz*, Chhibi/Darzi, Julaha, Kalal*, Kassab*, Labana*, Nai. Pinje (Cotton scutcher), Teli*.

HYDERABAD STATE: Arekatika*, Rangrez, Chakala (Washermen), Choodi Farosh (Bangle Sellers), Naqqashi (carpenters), Dhobi, Faqeer, Hajjam, Julaha, Laddaf (Carders), Medari (Bamboo Workers), Mehtar*, Multani (Watchmen), Najjar (Carpenters), Neeli (Dying & Weaving), Pinjara, Qassab, Shimpi, Teli.

KUTCH: Darzi/Sai, Depala Dhobi, Fakir, Ghancha, Hajjam, Kasai, Makarani, Madari, Miyana, Nat*-Bajania-Bazigar, Shimpi, Vanzara.

MADHYA BHARAT: Banjara/Labana, Dhunia/Pinjara, Hela, Bhatiyara, Bharbhujia, Bhishti*, Chhipa, Darzi, Dhunkar (cadars), Faquir, Hajjam, Julaha/Momin, Kalal, Kunjra, Manihar, Mewati*, Mirasi*, Nai, Nat*, Qassab, Rangrez, Sikligar, Tawaif, Teli.

MADHYA PRADESH: Banjara*, Bhadbhunja, Chhipa, Bhisti*, Darzi/Meru, Dhobi, Fakir-Bandarwala, Hajjam, Kassab, Momin/Julaha, Nat*, Pindara*, Rangrez, Sais/Sayees, Teli.

MADRAS STATE: Dudekela, Kavuthiyan (Barbers), Labbai (Petty Traders), Mapilla,

MANIPUR: Nai or Napit, Teli.

MYSORE STATE: Darzi, Jetty*, Kasai, Labbai, Multani, Pinjari

ORISSA: Barika/Nai, Chik, Dhobi, Darzi, Dhuina, Fakir, Hajjam, Jolaha/Momin, Kasab/Kasai, Nai, Pamaria, Teli.

PATIALA & EAST PUNJAB STATES UNION: Bhand, Bharbhunja, Chirimar, Darzi, Dhobi, Hajjam, Kasab, Julaha, Lalbegi, Madari, Mirasi*, Manihar, Teli.

PUNJAB: Bhand, bharbhunja, Biloch, Chirimar, Chhipa, Dhobi, Faqir, Ghosi, Hajjam, Hali, Julaha*, Kassab*, Labana*, Madari*, mirasi*, Nalband*, Sikligar*, mewati, Teli, Soi (Tailor).

RAJASTHAN: Barbar/Nai/Hajjam, Banjara, Bhathiara*, Bhishti/Sakka*, Chippa, Darzi, Dhobi*, Fakir, Ghosi, Halalkhor*, Hela*, Julaha, Kassab, Kunjra, Labana, Merasai/Miras*, Nilgar.Rangrez, Pinjara, Sakka*, Multani.

SUARASHTRA: Arab (Traditionally Soldiers, now Watchmen), Baloch, Bawa (Beggars of religious Order), Barbar, Bhand, Darzi, Dhobi, Gadhai (carriers on the back of Donkeys), Ghanchi, Hajjam, Kasai, Madari*, Makrani, Nat-Banjara-Bajigar*, Pinjara.

TRAVANCORE-COCHIN: Vathi (Barbers), Kaikollan (Weavers), Labbai, Mappila, Thandal Vannan.

TRIPURA: Baraik (Weavers), Lashkar, Manipuri, Nat*, Napit.

UTTAR PRADESH: Ansar/Julaha/Momin, Atashbaz, Banjara*/ Kuta, Bhand, Bharbhuj, Bhatiyara, Bhishti, Chhippa, Chikwa/Qassab, Churihar/Manihar, Dafali*, Darzi, Dhobi, Dhunia/Naddaf, Faqir, Gaddi/Ghosi, Hajjam, Halalkhor*, Kalwar, Kunjra/Rayeen, Labana, Marasi, Nalband, Nat*, Rangrez, Pamaria, Teli.

VINDHYA PRADESH: Banjara/Lamana*, Bharbhuj, Bhishti*, Chhippa, Chikwa/Qassab, Chipi/Darzi, Dhobi, Ghosi, Hela*, Julaha/Momin, Fakir/Sain, Kalar, Kunjra, Manihar, Nai, Rajgir, Rangrez, Sikligar*, Teli.

WEST BENGAL: Bhand, Bhatnagar/Razzaqi, Chik/Chikwa, Kasai, Dafali, Darzi, Dhunia, Fakir, Gaddi, Hajjam, Halalkhor*, Momin, Nalband, Rangrez, Teli.

But, the Commission's report was criticized for its 'vague standards' and 'hindrance in the way of progress toward an egalitarian society'.⁵ The then Union government along with the apex court tried to put forth the economic criteria as the basis of preferential treatment. The Court verdict in *Balaji vs State of Mysore* was widely acclaimed and interpreted as a rejection of caste as the basis of reservation.⁶ It was only when the Janta Party came to power in 1977 that the issue of reservation for the OBCs gained importance.

Later, with the process of political strengthening of the backward class, the issue of the status of their social and educational backwardness became the core debate in the public domain. In December 1978, the Janta government supported by the OBCs established a new five-member commission under the chairmanship of B. P. Mandal. The terms of its reference, reminiscent of those in the 1953-55 Backward Classes Commission, with the addition of a specific inquiry about reservation of government posts were:

- 1) "to determine the criteria for defining socially and educationally backward classes;

⁵ Ministry of Home Affairs 1956: 3-4.

⁶ *Balaji vs State of Mysore*, A.I.R. 1963 S.C. 649.

- 2) To recommend steps to be taken for the advancement of the socially and educationally backward classes of citizen so identified;
- 3) To examine the desirability or otherwise of making provisions for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of such backward classes of citizens which are not inadequately represented in the services of both the Central and State Government/Union Territory Administrations; and
- 4) Present a report setting out the facts as found by them and making such recommendations as they think proper.”⁷

The Mandal Commission recorded 3743 castes as backward in which 82 were castes Muslim, although 170 castes among the Muslims are considered to be marginalized socially.⁸ The Mandal Commission came up with a wide range of suggestions to improve the socio-economic status of Other Backward Classes. It recommended 27 per cent reservation for the OBCs in all the Government services as well as technical and professional institutions, both in the Centre and the States. The Commission also emphasized to provide special educational facilities designed at upgrading the cultural environment of the students in a phased manner in selected areas containing high concentration of OBCs. At the grass-root level, the Commission asked to initiate special programmes for the village artisans to upgrade their skills. Subsidized loans from financial institutions should be granted to them for setting up small scale industries. To promote the participation of OBCs in the industrial and business life of the country, a separate net-work of financial and technical institutions should be

⁷ Marc Galanter, *Competing Inequalities: The Law and the Backward Classes in India*, Delhi, OUP, 1991.

⁸ Mondal, Seik Rahim. Social Structure, OBCs and Muslims, *Economic and Political Weekly*, November 15, 2003.

created by all state Governments.⁹ But the most important recommendation made by the Commission was regarding the 'radical land reforms' by all the States. The Commission believed that, under the existing scheme of production-relation, Backward Classes comprising mainly small land holders, tenants, agricultural labour, village artisans, etc., are heavily dependent on the rich peasantry for their sustenance. Unless these production-relations are radically altered through structural changes and progressive land reforms implemented rigorously all over the country, OBCs will never become truly independent.¹⁰ In 1990, the National Front government led by V.P.Singh announced the implementation of 27 per cent reserved seats in government jobs as recommended by the Mandal Commission. The benefit extended to all socially and educationally backward Classes, who got recorded as backward, both in Mandal Report and the states list. The Muslim castes too have been the beneficiary.

OBCs and dalit Muslims: 1990 Onwards

Once the National Front led Central Government announced Quotas for OBCs (including OBC and Dalit Muslims), governments at the state level begin to include Muslim OBCs in the list of positive discrimination. For example, in Kerala 12% of the jobs are reserved for the Muslims. In August 1994, the Andhra Pradesh government included the Qureshi (butcher) Muslims in the OBC list. In September 1994, the Manipur government announced the inclusion of Meitei Pangal (Muslims) in the state OBC list. In early 1995, the Government of Karnataka announced a 75% enhancement in the OBC quota of which 6% was

⁹ *Reservation for Backward Classes*, Mandal Commission Report, 1980, New Delhi, Akalank Publications, 1991

¹⁰ Ibid.

assured for the Muslims. In July 1995, the UP Government decided to issue caste certificates to Muslim sub castes so as to enable them to benefit from the 8.44% reservations under the OBC category. At the national level, political parties too have begun to compete with each other to show off their concern for the Muslims.¹¹ Yet, according to the various findings, the Muslim castes included in Central OBCs list, along with other Muslim population have suffered and not preformed well in the last decade. However, the middle and lower castes Muslims, which constitute 8 % (out of 13.4 % of total Muslim population) have been worst affected by the neo-liberal onslaught. Despite the fact that the National Sample Survey Organization came up with its findings about the Muslims in general, by using few indicators in 1987-88 and many more in 1993-94 and 1999-2000, the socio-economic conditions of the lower castes/classes Muslims can be ascertained from this data. The results are as follow:

Literacy rates for Muslims improved, albeit slowly, between 1993-94 and 1999-2000. The rate of illiteracy among Muslims in 1993-94 was 54 per cent and it came down by the end of the decade to 48 per cent- a difference of 6 percent. But in urban India, the Muslim illiteracy rate that was as much as 14 percent higher in 1993-94 had narrowed a bit to 11 percentage points by the end of the decade. Even Muslim representation in higher education is abysmally low, especially in urban areas.

¹¹ P. Ghosh, Positive Discrimination in India: A political Analysis, *Ethnic Studies Report*, vol. 15, No.2, July 1997, p.19.

Table: 2 -Literacy Rate

India	Hindus	Muslims	Christians	Sikhs	Buddhists	Jains	Others
64.8	65.1	59.1	80.3	69.4	72.7	94.1	47.0

Source: Census of India 2001

Table: 3a Distribution of Persons (per 1000) of age 15 yrs. & above by general education level

1999-00				
<i>Rural Male</i>				
	India	Hindus	Muslims	Christians
Not literates	369	368	409	241
Literates & upto Primary	260	225	303	307
Middle	178	180	153	224
Secondary	108	108	82	145
Secondary & above	192	196	134	227
Higher Secondary	51	53	30	49
Graduate & above	33	35	21	34

Source: NSSO 55th Round, Report No. 468, 2001

Table: 3b Distribution of Persons (per 1000) of age 15 yrs. & above by general education level

1999-00				
<i>Rural Female</i>				
	India	Hindus	Muslims	Christians
Not literates	648	658	664	370
Literates & upto Primary	175	169	199	259
Middle	98	96	89	165
Secondary	50	48	32	123
Secondary & above	78	77	47	205
Higher Secondary	19	19	10	49
Graduate & above	9	9	4	33

Source: NSSO 55th Round, Report No. 468, 2001

Table: 3c Distribution of Persons (per 1000) of age 15 yrs. & above by general education level

1999-00				
<i>Urban Male</i>				
	India	Hindus	Muslims	Christians
Not literates	146	129	259	60
Literates & upto Primary	198	187	274	140
Middle	192	190	197	218
Secondary	191	197	137	263
Secondary & above	463	492	269	582
Higher Secondary	115	121	73	138
Graduate & above	158	174	60	180

Source: NSSO 55th Round, Report No. 468, 2001

Table: 3d Distribution of Persons (per 1000) of age 15 yrs. & above by general education level

1999-00				
<i>Urban Female</i>				
	India	Hindus	Muslims	Christians
Not literates	318	306	445	122
Literates & upto Primary	194	188	245	159
Middle	158	160	140	200
Secondary	141	145	90	222
Secondary & above	328	344	169	518
Higher Secondary	86	90	45	146
Graduate & above	101	109	34	150

Source: NSSO 55th Round, Report No. 468, 2001

In rural India, Muslims seem to be further marginalized in terms of access to land during the course of the 1990s. In 1987-88, 40 per cent of the rural Muslim households cultivated little or no land, compared to 34 per cent among the Hindus. By 1999-2000 the proportion of households in both religious groups in this situation had risen, but the increase was much faster among the minority community: 51 per cent among Muslims and 40 per cent among the Hindus.

**Table: 4 per 1000 distribution of households by size class of
land cultivated by major religious groups for rural areas**

Size class of land cultivated	Hindus	Muslims	Christians	Sikhs	India
<i>0.00 hectare</i>	395	512	394	490	409
<i>0.01-0.40 hectare</i>	222	248	265	79	223
<i>0.41-1.00 hectare</i>	172	140	202	114	168
<i>1.01-2.00 hectares</i>	117	60	105	123	112
<i>2.01-4.00 hectares</i>	63	28	26	101	59
<i>4.01 hectares and above</i>	31	12	9	93	30
<i>All</i>	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

Source: NSSO 55th Round, Report No. 468, 2001

The relative position of the members of the Muslim Community in employment status followed an unusual trend. In 1987-88, in the towns and cities, Muslims in the work force experienced lower unemployment rates than the Hindus (4 per cent versus 5.5 per cent), a situation that continued in 1993-94, but by 1999-2000, there was a reversal. Muslims on the average had by the end of the decade a slightly higher level of unemployment (5 per cent versus 4.7 per cent in urban area).

Table: 5 Unemployment Rate for the main religious groups (per 1000 persons)

1999-2000 (NSS 55 th Round)				
	India	Hindus	Muslims	Christians
Rural	15	14	21	39
Urban	48	47	50	73

This change was largely, but not entirely, on account of deterioration in the position of working Muslim women. In the villages however, Muslims who in 1987-88 suffered from a higher unemployment rate, continued to do so in 1999-2000. The disadvantages that the community faced in terms of employment, literacy and access to land was reflected in the relative levels of monthly per capita expenditure on items of consumption. Compared to 1993-94, the proportion of both Hindus and Muslims who fell in the bottom 20 per cent of the population was greater in 1999-2000 in both rural and urban India. But a substantially larger proportion of Muslims fell in this class by the end of the decade, as indicated by the tables below.

Table: 6 Per 1000 distribution of *Rural* persons by household monthly per capita expenditure

Class (Rs.)	Hindus	Muslims	Christians	Sikhs
000-225	80	86	49	10
225-255	64	67	50	6
255-300	118	136	88	19
300-340	118	119	75	36
340-380	112	119	88	39
380-420	99	100	74	57
420-470	99	97	95	103
470-525	80	79	89	115
525-615	89	80	113	145
615-775	76	63	123	201
775-950	34	28	70	125
950 & above	32	27	86	145
All classes	1000	1000	1000	1000

Source: NSSO 55th Round, Report No. 468, 2001

Table: 7 Per 1000 distribution of *Urban* persons by household monthly per capita expenditure

Class (Rs.)	Hindus	Muslims	Christians	Sikhs
000-300	66	138	37	36
300-350	56	95	38	33
350-425	97	170	58	51
425-500	111	141	68	69
500-575	105	103	90	110
575-665	107	98	81	121
665-775	101	79	109	94
775-915	93	66	112	110
915-1120	94	52	120	111
1120-1500	89	33	128	122
1500-1925	45	15	71	63
1925 & above	37	10	88	81
All classes	1000	1000	1000	1000

Source: NSSO 55th Round, Report No. 468, 2001

Table: 8 Per 1000 *Rural* persons reporting monthly per capita expenditure less than Rs. 300 and more than Rs. 615 by major religious communities

Class (Rs.)	India	Hindus	Muslims	Christians	Sikhs
Less than 300	260	262	289	187	35
615 or more	147	142	118	279	471

Source: NSSO 55th Round, Report No. 468, 2001

Table: 9 Per 1000 *Urban* persons reporting monthly per capita expenditure less than Rs. 425 and more than Rs. 1,120 by major religious communities

Class (Rs.)	India	Hindus	Muslims	Christians	Sikhs
Less than 425	246	219	403	133	120
1120 or more	182	171	58	287	266

Source: NSSO 55th Round, Report No. 468, 2001

The deterioration in the status was especially marked in urban India. The NSSO has made estimates for a number of other indicators, for example, work participation rates and the kind of employment. It has also provided State specific results as well as gender disaggregated results. Noticeably all results lead to a similar conclusion, giving the details of deterioration. The lower and middle castes Muslims, on average, belong to the lower rungs of the socio-economic ladder than the Hindus and the differences either remained the same or widened during the 1990s.¹² This deterioration of the socio-economic position of the Muslim still persists and continues.

Causes of lower Socio-Economic Status of *Pasmanda* Muslims

At the very outset it has been said that the socio-economic status of Muslim community is not identical. During the last decade, the impact of globalization has worst effected the lower castes/classes of the Muslims, such as the peasants, landless labourers and artisans. If we take the example of the Muslims in Bihar, the cottage industry collapsed due to the policies of liberalization. The direct effect of the policies transformed the weavers and artisans into landless labourers. In fact at present in Bihar, 51 per cent of total Muslim population is agricultural labourers. They are mainly found in the Muslim dominated areas, such as West Champaran (41.3 %), East Champaran (57.7 %), Sitamarhi (60.5 %), Araria (68 %), Kishanganj (58.7 %), Madhepura (69.2%), Katihar (61.2%), Purnia (66.3%) and Shivhar (68.8%).¹³ The poor socio-economic condition consequently led to the vast rate of migration among the Muslims in Bihar. The Table 10 shows the comparative study of migration of the entire population, in which Bihar tops

¹² C. Rammanohar Reddy, *The gap widened during the 1990s*. Source: <http://www.hinduonnet.com/2002/09/13/stories/2002091302781300.html>.

¹³ *Pasmanda Awaz*, Sep.-Oct. 2005, P.19.

the list. Within Bihar, the Muslim Community has the highest rate of migration compared to any other community. According to a survey conducted by the Patna-based Asian Development Research Institute (ADRI), funded by the Bihar State Minorities Commission, there are 63 migrants for every 100 Muslim households in rural Bihar and 24 migrants for every 100 families in urban areas.¹⁴ Unfortunately the *State has also shown apathy towards the problems of the Muslims*, which stands proved from the failure in effective implementation of various programmes targeting the general poor masses. The ADRI report says that under the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) government's much publicized Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), only 5.8 percent Muslim households were benefited. The reach of other poverty-alleviation programmes like Old Age Pension, Antodya Yojna and Annapurna Yojna was abysmally low among Muslim families. Under Indira Awaas Yojna (IAY) only 4.1 percent rural and 0.4 percent Muslim households had benefited. The remaining poverty-alleviation programmes were non-existent for the Muslims, both in the rural and urban areas. Even Minority Finance Commission (MFC) scheme, designed to help Muslims and other minorities proved to be a non-existent poverty alleviation programme for Muslims in Bihar, the report adds.

Table 10: Migration Pattern in Bihar Compared to other Indian States

STATE	POPULATION GROWTH RATE 1991-2001	MIGRATION RATE (Per 100) 1991-2001
Bihar	28.62	-2.7
Delhi	47.02	18.7

¹⁴ M. Mazharul Haque, Half of Bihar Muslims below poverty line, *Milli Gadget*, 1-15 December, 2004. The data based on 1991 Census of India.

Jharkhand	23.36	-0.5
Maharashtra	22.73	3.0
Punjab	20.10	1.7
Uttar Pradesh	25.85	-2.0

Negative values indicate net emigration, positive values immigration. Source: Census of India 2001, Table on migration: data highlight, Part I.

Again those States ruled by the right wing political parties (like the BJP) have been consistently hostile to the minorities and have been acting discriminately in the implementation of any development programmes. For example, in the State of Gujarat (that was hit by riots four years ago), the Muslim residents in many villages even now face social and economic ostracism. This has been officially acknowledged and is now being examined by a panel of the state government. The most recent case of discrimination against the Muslims, as reported in the media, was during the implementation of the NREGA scheme. The districts which were worst affected by the communal riots in 2002, namely Eral, Delol, Panchmahals, Banaskantha, Sabarkantha, and Vejalpur, the Muslims are nowhere on the EGS rolls.

Even in the states like Andhra Pradesh registering high rate of economic growth in the last decade, the position of Muslims is no better. The Andhra Muslims are also divided hierarchically on caste lines¹⁵, yet few castes have been enlisted as backward. Commissionerate of Minorities Welfare, headed by the Ex-Officio Commissioner, has made an in depth study on the socio-economic and Educational Conditions of the Muslim Community in Andhra Pradesh and

¹⁵ For castes details see the Annexure.

submitted his report to the government. The study focused mainly on the living conditions, occupational profile, income and literacy levels and participation in social activities. The study was conducted through the District Minorities Welfare Officers and the officials of A.P. State Minorities Finance Corporation. According to the 1991 census, the population of Minorities in Andhra Pradesh is 72 lakhs (i.e. 11% of total population) out of which the population of Muslims is around 64 lakhs consisting 8.5% of total population. The report of the Commissioner of Minorities on Socio-Economic condition of Muslim Minorities revealed that around 65% of Muslims are living below poverty line (i.e., annual income Rs.11,000/- or below) and 16% are living under double poverty limit (i.e. annual income is Rs.44,500/- or below). The literacy rate among Muslim Minorities is only 18% as against 44% rate among other communities in the State as per 1991 Census. The literacy rate among Muslim women is very poor, which is only 4%. The study also revealed that most of the Muslims are engaged in petty business activity (viz., Pan Shop, Chai dukan, selling of fruits & flowers, as labourers in Engineering work shops, watch servicing and repairs of Radio & T.V. etc.,) in addition to rural artisans.¹⁶ Even in the states ruled by Communist Parties as in West Bengal, the reports in the Writers' Buildings suggest that Muslim minorities are "grossly underrepresented" in government jobs. Figures for the past 10 years show that only one in 30 government jobs routed through the employment exchange goes to a Muslim, though the community forms 25.5 per cent of the state's population.¹⁷

In the Indian society where two or more categories such as class and caste overlap each other, the poor masses generally belong to lower caste group. Here

¹⁶ Government Order 33, 12th July 04, Government of Andhra Pradesh.

¹⁷ *The Telegraph*, June 13, 2006.

the Muslim community too follows up the same trend. In Gujarat, the Muslims who require 100 days jobs generally belong to the Dafer, Bafan, Dhobi, Ghanchi, Julaha, Makrani, Nat, Pinjara etc. castes.¹⁸ Similarly in Bihar, West Bengal or in any other state, landless labourers, peasants, artisans, sweepers etc. belong to lower and middle castes and the adoption of the neo-liberal policies by various states have worsened the situation.

In conclusion, one can therefore comment that the Muslim community in India is lagging far behind the other communities in terms of development and representation. The communal discrimination, state insensitiveness towards their basic needs (i.e. food, health, and security), impact of privatization, and lack of will to initiate social reform within the community, are the major factors contributing to their present situation. The various studies about the backwardness of any community in India overlooked the caste-wise inequality persisting within it. The backwardness of middle and lower caste groups constitutes larger share in the overall retarded growth of any community in India. The same things could be said about the Muslim community, whose middle and lower social units (castes/class) have been the worst affected. Yet any collective study analyzing the poor performance of the Muslim community in all the areas hides the evident fact of underlying inequality within this minority community. This is in fact nothing but a manifestation of the idea that the Muslims are a single homogeneous community, which is essentially a colonial construction, followed by the state and its policy makers of independent India. On the other hand, the OBCs and dalit Muslims who have been included in the OBC list of the Centre and the various states, have been treated at par with any

¹⁸ 31 Muslim castes included by Central Government from Gujarat. Source: www.NCBC.nic.in

other Hindu OBCs, and have thus lost their minority character. But it becomes very important to retain this because of the unique socio-political background. The communal discrimination of being a lower caste Muslims has resulted in a poor socio-educational history. Thus, providing reservation in government jobs and in higher educational institutions play no or negligible role in their upliftment in the present scenario.

Yet, a positive thing about the inclusion of Muslim castes into the fold of reservation has been that it brought together the OBCs and Dalit Muslim who are culturally, regionally as well as religiously different (follow various sects of Islam) but quite similar in their socio-economic status. Consequently, this equivalent socio-economic situation of the OBCs and dalit Muslims in the era of political competition has acted as a fertile ground for backward class to make them politically conscious about their rights and to unite them for the same, giving rise to leaders from those strata. In fact, they are uniting themselves under different political banners with a single motive: to fight for their due share and against the elites in the Muslim community. This effort has lead to the process of democratization and the practice of active participation in India. The next chapter will deal with the rise of various Backward Muslim Organizations under the current situation and how they have been contributing to the upliftment of the downtrodden Muslims.

CHAPTER III

POLITICS OF PASMANDA MUSLIMS: A CASE STUDY OF BIHAR

This chapter provides a detailed analysis regarding the role that has now been playing by the social forces (Muslim OBCs and Dalits, about whom this study has discussed in the previous chapter) in the arena of politics. There have been continuous efforts by various personalities in some regions of the country to unite the *Pasmanda* Muslims not only against the politics of *Ashraf* Muslim elites, but in favour of their due rights under the influence of general process of democratization and implementing Mandal Commission recommendation to come out of degrading socio-economic position. In Maharashtra, for instance, this movement has its origin before the implementation of Mandal Commission. In the guidance of Shabbir Ahmed Ansari, national President of All-India Muslim OBC Organization, activist like Vilas Sonaware tried hard to organize Dalit and the Muslim OBCs. On February 5, 1984, Shabbir A. Ansari held a massive rally of Muslim OBCs and dalits at Jalna in Maharashtra, where his organization received massive support from intellectuals, social activists and politicians. Similarly, in West Bengal, among various organizations working to raise the consciousness of OBC and Dalit Muslims, Uttar Bango Anagrasar Muslim Sangram Samity (UBAMSS) is the most active one. But, the activism of OBC Muslim organizations in Bihar has set-up a high standard in terms of influencing State level politics. Coming up of various caste categories as one unit engendered a sense of unity and produces consciousness about their strength in terms of electoral politics. As, many OBC leaders like Ali Anwar, Ajaz Ali have worked tirelessly, to consolidate these scattered and benign masses and transformed them into a class for itself. The result of February 2006 Bihar Assembly election – detail of which will be dealt later on in this chapter - speaks out the success of Mandal Commission in fostering the seeds of democratization within the Muslim community. It is due to this strong current of *Pasmanda* and

Dalit Muslims' movement in Bihar, this State has been selected as a case study. Further, this chapter will also try to trace the trajectory of ideological shift i.e. from communal and identity politics to a kind of secular politics among the Muslims of Bihar. In other words, this chapter is an attempt to locate the direction of Bihar politics in general and Muslim in particular in post-Mandal phase and to draw a wider implication for Indian political process.

Socio-Economic and Political Profile of Bihar's Muslims

At the theoretical level, to understand the political orientation and behaviour of any community or group, it is mandatory to have a clear picture about their socio-economic position, as it broadly shows their level of interaction as well as participation in the mainstream political process and their share of state resources. In case of the Muslims of Bihar, who constitute 16.5% of the State's total population and 9.9% of the country's total Muslim population, rank among the poorest communities in the State, many of them (approximately 80-90 per cent) being descendants of 'middle; and 'low' caste converts. As per record, 28 Muslim castes viz. Abdal, Bhathiara, Chik, Churihara, Dafalange, Dafale, Dhunia, Faqir, Gadihar, Dhobi, Nai or Salaami, Qassar, Darzi or Idrisi, Julaha or Momin, Kasai, Lalbegi or Bhangi or Mahtar, Madari, Miriasin, Mirshikar, Mukro, Nalband, Nat, Pamaria, Rangrez, Rayeen or Kunjra, Sayee and Thakurai, from Bihar got itself listed in Central list of OBC.¹ Recently, ADRI (Asian Development Research Institute, Patna) Report has recorded a total of 43 castes among Muslims in Bihar. These castes either possess no land or involved in low-paid

¹ Mandal Commission Report of the Backward Classes Commission 1980, Akalank Publications, 1991, pp.307-08. The First Backward Classes Commission (Kalelkar Commission) had recorded 21 Muslim Castes from the Bihar in annexure I & II. But, the lists prepared by state and central government are bit erroneous, as they have included both the Dalit and OBCs Muslim together with long list Hindu's OBC. Now Pasmanda Muslim organizations are demanding to put Dalit Muslim into the SCs list.

jobs. The survey indicates a very high degree of landlessness among the Muslims living in rural Bihar, as well as a high ratio of Muslims with very small landholdings. Only 35.9% of the Muslim households in rural Bihar possess any cultivable land, the corresponding figure for the general population being much higher, at 58%. The percentage of rural Bihar's Muslims actually holds some land is even lower, at 28.8%. In other words, for about one-fifth of the land-owning Muslim households the amount of land owned is so marginal that they have no option but to lease out their land to a cultivator with larger landholding. As a result, nearly three-fourth of the rural Muslim households is dependent largely on agricultural wage employment and, to a smaller extent, on whatever limited self-employment is available outside the agricultural sector. Muslims' marginalization in rural Bihar is more apparent when one considers the size of their landholdings, the study points out. According to the 1990-91, Agricultural Census of Bihar, the average landholding was 2.32 acres. The survey finds the average size of landholding of cultivating Muslim households to be much lower, at 1.91 acres. Further, barely 8.2% of the Muslims households in rural Bihar have landholdings over 2.0 acres. The percentage of Muslim households having at least five acres of land (generally considered to be the minimum size of an economic holding) is miniscule. The survey also finds that although land ownership is much lower for rural Muslim households than for the general population, relatively better irrigation facilities available to the former in some districts that partially compensates for this disadvantage. According to the same report, 28.4 per cent of rural Muslim workers are landless laborers, 19.9 per cent of Bihari Muslims are acutely poor. Straight forwardly, the crux of the report is that, Muslims of Bihar are characterized by a high degree of poverty and deprivation. Their per capita income is estimated at Rs. 4640 in rural areas and 6320 in urban areas. 49.5% of rural Muslims and 44.8% of urban

Muslims in Bihar are estimated to live below the poverty line. 41.5% rural Muslim households and 24.9% urban Muslim households are said to be indebted, the average outstanding loan for the two categories being Rs. 6790 and 4990 respectively, which, as a percentage of the annual income, works out to 21.5% and 11.45% respectively.² The obvious combination of lower castes with low income and ignored by the State has placed them on most vulnerable side. On the one hand, they are the victims of caste based discrimination by their own upper castes groups and on the other; the government's poverty alleviation programs practically do not exist for Muslims of Bihar. Out of five such program that are essentially employment and income-oriented, IRDP is the only one which has reached some rural Muslim households (5.3 per cent). Even the Minority Finance Corporation scheme, specially designed to help Muslims and minorities, practically does not exist in Bihar.³

The political history of Bihar indicates that in general the leadership has been controlled by the forward castes, whether they belong to the Hindu or Muslim community. Tables 11 given below points out that the domination of Hindu forward ended since 1990 Assembly election onwards, though, Muslims forward castes hegemony continues till today.

Table 11: Caste Background of Members of the Bihar Assembly

YEAR	UPPER CASTE MLAs	PER CENT	OBCs MLAs	PER CENT

² This data is based on Bihar's Muslim as a whole, rather than caste based. But, when we have already recognized that, approx. 80-90 % population belong to OBC and Dalit Muslim, then, this data can be used to figure out the social as well as economic position of this group.

³ *Times of India*, January 23, 2005.

1967	133	41.82	82	25.78
1969	122	38.36	94	29.55
1972	136	42.78	76	23.89
1977	124	38.27	92	28.39
1980	120	37.03	96	29.62
1985	118	36.41	90	27.77
1990	105	32.40	117	36.11
1995	56	17.28	161	49.69

Source: Chaudhary and Srikant, Bihar me Samaajik Parivartan, p.316.

After partition, many Muslim League leaders joined Congress. In Bihar, prominent leaders like, Jafar Imam, Mazhar Imam, Mohd. Shafi and Maqbool Ahmad joined Congress.⁴ This act was not taken in right spirit by nationalistic elite (bourgeois) Muslims of Bihar, and factionalism developed among Bihar Muslim leaders. The cleavage was very sharp and it was unusual to find these two groups fighting publicly, accusing each other by the using epithets like, 'traitor', 'pro-Pakistani', and 'anti-Indian'.⁵ Commenting on one such event which took place in August 1965, the editor of *The Searchlight* observed:

"Patna has a band of Muslims who are over anxious to show their patriotism. Calling themselves 'Congress Muslims' they organized a convention on August 7. Very belligerent and provocative statements and counter-statements marked the pre-convention days. 'Congress -Muslims' attacked other Muslims for being pro-Pakistani and 'other Muslim' quickly retaliated.... The 'Congress-Muslims' were led by a senior Minister of the Bihar cabinet and had full backing of

⁴ Joining the Communist Party was out of the question for them since the Communists in principle, had not only no faith in religion-oriented politics but were averse to communal interests. There were Muslim leaders from Bihar, like, Maulvi Usman Ghani and Maulvi Syed Ayub, who emphasized on the independent role of Muslim leaders in politics, rather joining any party for permanence.

⁵ This was not for the first time that they used such language against each other. During the Movement of Pakistan, nationalist Muslims were called as 'enemy of Islam' and 'Gaddar'.

the Congress Party.... As a result 'Congress-Muslims' and 'other Muslims' came to blows in front of the convention hall and police had to restore order. Passions were aroused to a dangerous pitch."⁶ The act was nothing but the clash of interest between the Muslim elite for the community leadership.

In 1960s - the period, when Nehru and Muslim nationalist bourgeoisie left the political scene and communal riots were order of the day around the country and the religion became the mode of political mobilization - the second generation of Muslim leadership in Bihar took over. Jamiat-Ulema-Hind, after long time, came back to active politics, along with Jamaat-e-Islami Hind.⁷ In 1967, Bihar had seen a new set of leaders such as Ghulam Sarwar, Betab Siddiqui, A. Moghani, Shah Mushtaque Ahmad, Moin Ansari, and Taqui Rahim emerged as the new leaders around the Urdu cause. After close observation, it is found that Urdu has never been the language of Muslim masses and the vast majority of Muslims in the country do not speak Urdu. It remained confined to the minority upper strata of the community. Hence the question is that who benefits from projecting the issue of Urdu as a Muslim issue? Who gains from making Urdu a symbol of cultural identity of Muslims at national level? Answer is very obvious. The *Ashraf* leaders never dare to go against these (religious and cultural) issues which have been projected as an issue of the whole community. Under political compulsion, they never tried to swim against the wind.⁸ Making a fact finding study about the socio-economic profile of Muslim leadership of Bihar in 1983, Ali Ashraf pointed

⁶ T. J. S. George, *Revolt in Bihar: A Study of the August 1965 Uprising*, Perspective Publication, New Delhi, 1965, p.8.

⁷ These organization along with Indian Union Muslim League (IUML); Tamir-i-Millat; Ittehad-ul-Musalmeen; Muslim Majlis; Muslim Block (Members of Parliament); Ahl-i-Hadith; Representative of Shia community; Representative of Barelwi school; & Some prominent Muslim dignitaries were parts MUSLIM MAJLIS MUSHAWARAT.

⁸ As, it has already been mentioned that, most of the Muslim leaders got elected from Muslim dominated areas, which is controlled by traditional and backward looking idea. They have to woo the local leaders who control vote for them.

out that more than two-thirds of the elite belong to the conventionally designated upper caste among Muslims.

Table 12: Socio- Economic Profile of Different Castes

Caste	Number	percentage
Syed	114	38.4
Sheikh	69	23.2
Mallick	09	3.0
Pathan	11	3.7
Momin (Julaha)	22	7.4
Rayeen (Kunjada)	03	1.0
Others	15	5.1
Not Mentioned	54	18.2
Total	297	100.0

*Source: Ali Ashraf, *The Muslim Elite*, 1983, p.71.

Here, Sayyad and Sheikh alone account for 61.6 per cent of the elite members and together with Mallick and Pathan they account for 68.3 per cent of the total elite. In terms of rural-urban point of view, 91.2 per cent of elite resides in urban areas leaving 8.8 per cent with rural background.⁹ This domination continues even today, in spite of the failure of Congress in maintaining one party system. The regional parties, who took over from Congress, maintained the similar strategic alliance with forward caste/*Ashraf* Muslims to ensure their victory. In 1995 Bihar Assembly, 17 out of 23 were upper castes Muslims i.e. 73.91 % and only 6

⁹ Ali Ashraf, op.cit, p.68. As there is no recent study have done on Muslim Elite of Bihar, so I am relying on the old data provided by the Ali Ashraf.

belonged to middle and lower caste. Similarly, in 2000 Bihar Assembly, only 22.58 % backward Muslims got elected for State legislature. Showing a bit of improvement in 2005 election, 31.25 per cent backward Muslims got elected in October re-election.¹⁰

The upper castes domination has been the historical legacy, be it the pre or post-independent phases of India. During the colonial struggle, the Muslim leaders of Muslim League and Congress belonged to socially high strata and represented the interest of upper castes/class people. For instances, Muslim leaders of Bihar, such as Syed Noorul Huda (Zamindar and an upper caste), Syed Sharfuddin (a urban based elite whose sister was married to Nawab Imdad Imam), Sir Ali Imam (son of a Nawab and Syed by caste), Hasan Imam (brother of Ali Imam), Mazharul Haque, Sir Sultan Ahmad (belong to high caste Syed family), Sir Syed Fazl Ali (upper caste), Shah Mohammad Zubair (a Zamindar), Syed Mahmud (upper caste), Nawab Ismail of Patna and others, draw their lineage from upper castes and class.¹¹ There were leaders who came from the middle class families of lawyers, businessmen, government official, but generally belong to Ashraf castes, with little exception like A. Q. Ansari, leader of Momin Conference.¹² During freedom movement they were representing Muslims as whole. But, their meager mass base until the last phase of movement put a big question mark on their claim. The well recorded history refute their claim which was meant for propaganda against each other (Muslim league against the Congress and vice

¹⁰ This data is drawn upon the Election Commission of India's list of winning candidates and the casteswise data of candidates mentioned in *Pasmanda Awaz*, March 2005.

¹¹ At the all India level, Muslim League had leaders like, Nawabzada Liaquat Ali (a big landowner from the united Provinces), Nawab Ismail Khan (another big landowner from U.P.), Nawab of Mamdot, Sir Muhammad Saadullah (President of Assam provincial Muslim League), and Sir Abdoola Haroon (President of Sind Provincial Muslim League).

¹² Ali Ashraf, *The Muslim Elite*, New Delhi, Atlantic Publishers, 1982.

versa)¹³ and to British crown. As per record, in 1927, total membership of the Muslim League was 1,330.¹⁴ Its annual expenditure did not exceed Rs. 3,000.¹⁵ In 1931, the annual subscription was reduced from Rs 6 to 1 and the admission fee of Rs 5 was abolished to attract new members. The Quorum was reduced from 75 to 50. In terms of socio-economic profile, its membership was limited to the landlords, lawyers and business communities. According to an estimate, Muslim League at all India level had single largest group from landlords. Out of total membership of 503 members, there were as many as 163 landlords, next group of 145 members belong to lawyer.¹⁶

The case was similar with the Congress as well. Now the question is that, why, Muslims fought shy of the congress. The answers are wide ranging from economic, social to cultural continuum. According to C.A.Bayly, the pre-colonial ideologies and institutions had contributed in the structural formation of the colonial and post-colonial society. It had made two culturally different groups i.e. Muslim service gentry and unified Hindu merchant class, residing in *Qasbah* and *Ganj* respectively, and operating in sharply differentiated economic contexts. Their distinct separateness compels them to avoid the Hindu Congress. The second line of argument provided by S.A.A.Rizvi and Barbara Metcalf, who observed that it was the Muslim revivalism that stopped them from joining Congress. Revivalist created a form of Islam in which the state was irrelevant and in this formulation any form of contact with Hindu religious practices were avoided. It is true that Muslim reformists supported Congress, but it was more because they feared to live in British India or state run by Islamic modernists,

¹³ Muslim League claim to represent the Muslim, whereas to show its all India character Congress make efforts to bring Muslims under its influence.

¹⁴ R. Palme Dutt, *India Today and Tomorrow*, London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1955, p.234.

¹⁵ Annual Report of the All India Muslim League for the years 1932 and 1933, Delhi: n.d., p.10.

¹⁶ Khalid B. Sayeed, *Pakistan: The Formative Phase 1857-1948*, London, OUP, 1968, p.207.

whose policies could verge on the purely secular, than because they had any wide-ranging identity of purpose with the Congress. Third argument was discussed by Farzana Sheikh, in which she pointed out that, how the political values of north Indian Muslim elites, derived in large part from their Islamic background, were profoundly opposed to those of Western liberalism.¹⁷ Muslims, generally focus on the communal group as the basic unit of representation rather than the individual, who only had rights within the framework of the Muslim community. Such political values, whatever weight we give to other factors such as the interest of imperial policies, were bound to make it difficult for Muslims to join the Congress. Thus, Congress representation of national aspiration has been contested.

The main concern for upper castes Muslim politicians was the protection of religious and cultural interests of Muslims, which include preservation of Urdu, continuation of Muslim personal law in governing community life, reservation based on community. Through their wide network, they tried successfully to make it a vital issue, as if its existence meant the continuation of Islam in India. Any attempt to reform has been projected as an 'affront on Islam'. The glaring example was Mohd Ahmad Khan vs Shah Bano Begam case in which Supreme Court held that if a divorced woman is able to maintain herself, the husband's liability ceases with the expiry of the period of *iddat* (three menstrual courses after the date of divorce, that is, roughly three months), but if she is unable to maintain herself after the period, she is entitled to have recourse to Section 125 CrPC. This decision led to a controversy and in order to dilute the judgment in the Shah Bano case, the Muslim Women's Bill, later became the Muslim Women

¹⁷ Robinsons:218.

(Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986, was passed. The role played by Ulema and so-called Muslim leaders of secular credential, was devastating not only for Muslim women, but to the community as a whole.

Thus, on the part of Muslim leadership dominated by upper castes, it's a serious drawback, that they have failed to infuse the secular and democratic idea in the community, both at the national and state level. They failed to realize the changed circumstances caused by the partition, and consequently continued to pursue a communal agenda such a demand for separate electorate or reservations for their community. They did not mould its politics to the altered situation and grasp the opportunities afforded by a democratic constitution and a free and fair electoral process.¹⁸ Obsessed with self-interest and such community matters as are essentially 'communal' there is a tendency to ignore the issues which are secular and of common interest, whether in the field of economic development or social reforms. The lack of effort has much to do with the kind of socio-economic background they belong to.

Social and Political rise of Pasmanda and dalit Muslims

Unlike Hindu OBCs, who continue their struggle against the forward castes domination¹⁹, Pasmanda Muslims' struggle against the *Ashrafs* of the community is a 1990s phenomenon. Although, these lower and middle castes got enlisted by State government in Most Backward Caste/OBC lists, firstly, in 1951 and then in

¹⁸ A .G. Noorani, The Constitution of India and Muslim Politics, *Studies on Islam*: Vol. I, No. 1, (2004), pp. 1-8

¹⁹ Hindu OBCs had their fight against the forward caste prior to the independence through different caste forum. Yadavas, Kurmi and Koeri of North India formed Triveni Sangh in 1920s to challenge forward caste political domination. The Sangh also contested municipal election during 1920s.

1978 for preferential treatment,²⁰ but it is only after the implementation of Mandal Commission that the backward caste Muslims began to organize themselves in real sense. The All-India Muslim OBC (Other Backward Classes) Sangathan taking a pioneering step organized its first national convention in Delhi on August 29, 1996. This Convention was for the first time able to rope in Muslims, having similar socio-economic status together based on caste. The Julaha of Uttar Pradesh, Bakho of Bihar, Ghanchi of Gujarat, Dhunia of West Bengal, Barber of Andhra Pradesh, have shown similar interests. "The meeting was successfully ended with the demands that include, predictably, extension of Mandal Commission Recommendations to all Muslim OBCs, more scholarship etc; and less predictably, land reforms, funding for small entrepreneurs and restoration of concessions to Scheduled Caste (i.e. non-OBC) Muslims which were withdrawn in 1950".²¹ In State like Bihar where caste has been involved in each and every sphere of life, the self-realization of their vast strength among OBC and dalit Muslims quickly began to organize them.

In Bihar, to raise the consciousness of backward Muslims and unite them to fight for their rights, many organizations came into existence. All-India Backward Muslim Morcha (AIBMM) was set up by Ajaz Ali, in 1994, in Patna Bihar. The importance of Backward Muslim Morcha lies in the context of lower/middle Muslim castes' extreme poverty and continuous assault of privatization which is turning these destitute masses into daily wage labourers, manual workers, artisans and petty peasants. It was AIBMM coined the term dalit Muslims for the

²⁰ In year 1951, through an order, government gave some facilities and seats in educational institutions to some 79 most backward castes (Annexure I) and 30 backward (Annexure II), which included lower and middle Muslim caste. With the coming of Karpoori Thakur - a backward- as a State CM, through a G.O. in November 1978, he implemented the Mungeri Lal Commission recommendations. For the purpose of recruitment to jobs, 8% and 12 % seats were reserved for the OBCs and MBC respectively.

²¹ Praful Bidwai, Age of Empowerment: Muslim OBCs Discover Mandal, *Times of India*, 12th Sep. 1996.

descendent of indigenous converted population belonging to lower caste. The foremost priority for the AIBMM is to get recognition from the Indian State for the over 100 million dalit Muslims as Scheduled Castes so that they can avail of the same benefits that the Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist Scheduled Castes enjoy, including reserved government jobs, reserved seats in state legislatures and in the Indian Parliament, special courts to try cases of atrocities against them as well as social and economic development programme meant specially for them.²² Recognizing the fact that demands for special legal status for Muslims have been viewed in the past as 'separatist' and 'anti-national' and even 'pro-Pakistan', the AIBMM is careful to project its demands which aims at integrating the 'dalit Muslims into the 'national mainstream' by enabling them to progress economically and socially, along with other deprived sections of the Indian population. Due to its serious effort, AIBMM in less than a decade of its origin, it emerged as an umbrella group of over forty organizations claiming to represent backward and dalit Muslim castes.

The second important organization which transforms the cause and concern of 'Pasmanda' and dalit Muslims into a movement is '*Pasmanda Muslim Mahaz*' (*Marginalized Muslim Front*). Organized by Ali Anwar²³, *Pasmanda Muslim Mahaz* like AIBMM is an umbrella organization of a number of Dalit and Backward Caste Muslim organizations from different states of India, particularly Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Delhi. The *Mahaz* since its existence i.e. in 1998 has been pressing the demand that the State should include dalit Muslims and dalit Christians in the Scheduled Castes list, as there was no

²² Sikand, Y. *Islam, Caste and Dalit-Muslim Relations in India*, New Delhi, Global Media Publication, 2004, p. 52.

²³ A well known Hindi journalist, he is the author of *Masawat Ki Jang* ('The Struggle for Equality') and *Dalit Musalman* ('Dalit Muslims') and writes regularly on issues related to Backward Caste/Dalit Muslims, who form the majority of the Muslim population in India.

religious restriction in the law passed in 1935 for the same purpose. Dalits of all religion were entitled to avail of this facility. In 1950, members of all minority communities were debarred from this facility by a Presidential Order through which a religious ban was imposed. *Pasmada Muslim Mahaz* (henceforth, PMM) argues that the extremely discriminatory Presidential Order of 1950 is essentially an anti-secular. This Order, going completely against all notions of secularism, democracy and social justice, declared that such benefits would be limited only to those dalits who claim to be 'Hindus'. However, two amendments were made in this Order and thereby two minorities, Sikhs (1956) and neo-Buddhists (1990) were re-included in this category. But Muslims and Christians have still been out. So why, Ali Anwar questions, should dalit Muslims and dalit Christians, too, not be included in the list of Scheduled Castes? To realize the aim, PMM participated in several peoples' struggles through staging demonstrations, presenting memorandums and bringing out publications. These organizations (AIBMM & PMM) received positive response from the Muslim masses and were able to generate pressure on Bihar government to provide SC status to dalit Muslims. Responding to the raised demand, in July 2000 the Legislative Assembly of Bihar passed a resolution, which has been sent to the President of India for his approval. The movement continued to awaken the ignorant masses, through seminars, meetings and rallies in each district and talukas of Bihar. Attempt in this direction has been made by Deshkal Society by organizing a seminar in association with Heinrich Boll Foundation, titled '*Marginalization of Dalit Muslims with Special Reference to Democracy, Identity and Livelihood*'. The intention of this seminar was to weave the stray thoughts into an ideological framework. Organized on 14 July, 2002 in Patna, the entire seminar strove to reflect the fact that the dalit Muslims were a separate class within the Muslim society, and attempted to foreground various aspects of Muslim society vis-à-vis

the dalit class as no less significant. On 20th March 2004, PMM organized 'Pasmada Jagao Mulk Bachao' rally, in Patna, which was also, attended by Medha Patker and Pakistani writer Fauzia Said.

The wider reach of these initially regional organizations across the country encouraged them to organize programmes at all India level.²⁴ For instance, the Insaaf Sammelan (Justice Conference) organized by AIBMM in Delhi, in 2002. The main demand was the removal of the religious ban from article 341. The conference was attended by Muslim leaders of all hues, including Maulana Asad Madani of Jamiatul Ulema-e-Hind, Maulana Asrarul Haq Qasmi of Milli Council, Shia leader Kalbe Jawwad, and others. Besides them, several Hindu leaders also came up in support of the demand. Former Union minister Chaturanan Mishra and dalit leaders Udit Raj and J.N. Nishad made fervent appeals to the Union government to amend the article in favour of Muslims and Christians. Supporting the demand of underprivileged Muslims, chairman of All India Confederation of SC/ST Organization, Udit Raj said, "We have to fight together to remove this religious ban from Article 341, which will bring all dalits under one category in the Constitution also".²⁵ On similar line PMM organized 'Dalit Muslim Mahapanchayat, in December 2004. Along with this demand, Mahapanchayat also asked for the rehabilitation of victims of communal riots, pro-farmers and workers policies and employment to the youth. Certainly, PMM has got edge over the other backward Muslim organization.²⁶

²⁴ It was also possible because, these organizations during their period of activity were able to gain support from various section like academic, concern citizens, Dalit activists & organizations and NGOs.

²⁵ Milli Gadget, 2002.

²⁶ The PMM, leader Ali Anwar had been associated with CPI for almost 20 years. The long time association helped him in establishing balance between caste and class. Source: *Communalism Combat*, Vol. 12, No. 112, November 2005.

The organizational effort for the first time in the post-independent India, stirred the psychological bondage of dalit and OBC Muslims. They began to speak against the reactionary politics of *Ashraf* Muslim leaders, and started demanding their long delayed rights from the state.

“Ram Kumar Hindu dhobi hai. Use sarkar ne saari sahulat de rakhi hai. Use naukri se lekar padhai tak har jagah sahualt मिली है. लेकिन मैं एक मुसलमान धोबी हूँ इसीलिए मैं इन सभी सुविधाओं से محروम हूँ”. (Ram Kumar is Hindu dhobi. From education to job, the government has given him all facilities. But I am a Muslim dhobi. So I have been debarred from all these facilities.)—Ghulam Rasool from Bihar.”²⁷

It reflects the aspirations of millions of underprivileged Indian Muslims, who have been prevented from getting the help of government that other dalits get under the Article 341 of the Constitution. As the Assembly election approached, the Muslim vote became the major concern for all the political parties to form the government. On the other hand, the backward and dalit Muslims as a conscious (both politically and socially) mass, were ready to take on the forward castes politics. This election was the test for ‘Pasmānda’ Muslim movement in Bihar. “Vote hamara fatwa tumhara, nahi chalega” and “jo Pasmānda ki baat karega, wahi Bihar pe raaj karega”, and other political slogan reflected the mood of poor masses. Just before the election, PMM along with Bihar Momin Welfare Society, call a meeting on 23rd July 2005, in Shri Krishna Memorial Hall on the issue of “reservation for Dalit Muslim”. Both Lalu Prasad Yadav and Nitish Kumar attended that meeting. Mr. Nitish very clearly supported the cause of the meeting, whereas Shri Lalu P. Yadav missed the opportunity to promise anything for them. Disappointed by the attitude of secular leader Mr. Lalu P.

²⁷ Milli Gadget, 2002.

Yadav, seven *Pasmanda* Muslim parties were given call to defeat RJD alliance. On 8th October, 2005, in a joint statement made by the representative of Bihar *Momin* Welfare Society (Danapur), All India *Momin* Welfare Organization (Hajipur), *Momin Ekta Munch* (Momin Unity Forum, Aara), Bihar Pradesh *Momin* Youth Majlis (Patna), A. Q. Ansari Memorial Committee (Patna), and All India *Pasmanda Muslim Mahaz* (Bihar unit), mentioned that, during the 15 years rule Lalu have done nothing for the poor Muslims, thus announced to defeat RJD in coming election. According to these pressure groups, after the defeat of the Congress, Lalu Prasad Yadav took over power in 1990, to carry forward his politics on the notion of social justice and secularism for dalits, OBCs and Muslims respectively. However, nothing substantial delivered by his government for backward Muslims. Mr. Lalu P. Yadav in the name of M-Y (Muslim-Yadav) alliance, have promoted FM-Y (Forward Muslim-Yadav) alliance, where major benefits were cornered by *Ashraf* Muslims in the name of the community. During 15 long years of RJD (*Rashtriya Janta Dal*) rule which was based on social justice lacked enough enthusiasm for economic development. This is as truer for Muslims as it is for other section of people who voted him. Unemployment, poverty and apathy of State towards their problems, were never raised by the Bihar *Ashraf* political elites and they will never do so, as it was this section of minority which got maximum benefits out of fifteen years rule of Lalu/Rabari Devi. RJD made 14 Muslims M.L.C., out of which 12 belonged to upper caste Muslims. Again, there were seven appointment made for the post of Vice Chancellor, all from upper castes. Similarly, appointment on government posts like, teachers, police department and on minority institutions were allotted

to these *sharif* people.²⁸ And in turn, Lalu received blessing from religious leaders belonging to the upper castes for electoral victory.

It is true that, Lalu P. Yadav had been successful in curtailing the fang of communalism in Bihar. But important question is that, why communalism remained the only issue for Lalu, when it should have one of the many. It is a duty of the government to protect the life and property of minority, and should not allow arrogance in its attitude for doing what is prescribed in the Constitution. Secondly, the rise of Hindutva/Communal forces in 1990s kept Muslims closer irrespective of heterogeneity of various types, and they tried out secular alternative other than Congress in Bihar. The sense of insecurity worked for Lalu, as it has done earlier for Congress. By default, it was a golden moment for the feudal and reactionary leaders of the community to use this opportunity to stop any kind of democratization process in the pretext of 'Islam/Muslim in danger'. Communal riots or fear of violence always brings back the notion of homogeneity claimed by *Ashraf* politicians. As of now, the *Pasmenda* movement has gathered so much of strength in Bihar that it challenges mighty Lalu P. Yadav. Without paying any attention towards the grievances of backward Muslims, Lalu continued to woe them on the issue of communalism. For this Lalu paid the price and lost the election, which seemed as impossible few days back.²⁹

²⁸ Ali Anwar, *Pasmenda Aawaz*, March 2005, p.4.

²⁹ "The position of the RJD at the helm of power in Bihar is secure. Moreover, the opposition is highly divided and the setting up of a strong anti-RJD front presently appears to be unlikely." 2005 Bihar elections: Laloo against Who?, Economic and Political Weekly, December 18, 2004.

Table 13: Statistics related to Muslim contestants of Oct.-November 2005 elections³⁰

Party	Muslim Winners (Oct05)	Total Winners (Oct05)	%age of Muslim Winners (Oct05)	Muslim Winners (Feb05)	Other Winners (Feb05)	%age of Muslim Winners (Feb05)
RJD	4	54	7.4%	11	75	14.66%
JD(U)	4	88	4.5%	4	55	7.27%
INC	4	9	44.4%	3	10	30.0%
BJP	0	55	0.0%	0	37	0.0%
NCP	1	1	100.0%	2	3	66.7%
LJP	1	10	10.0%	0	29	0.0%
BSP	0	4	0.0%	1	2	50.0%
CPI	0	3	0.0%	0	3	33.3%
SP	0	2	0.0%	1	4	25.0%
CPM	0	1	0.0%	0	1	0.0%
CPI-ML	1	5	20.0%	1	7	14.3%
Ind.	1	11	9.1%	1	17	5.9%
Total	16	243	6.58%	24	243	9.87%

Table 13 clearly shows that, in October re-election for Bihar Assembly, 63.63% Muslim who contested election from RJD seats were lost. There was a rush for parties to award tickets to Muslims. LJP scored the highest with 43 candidates matched by RJD only when combined with its allies (RJD: 27 out of 175 total contested seats; INC: 12 out of 51 + NCP: 4 out of 8). Highest success rate for Muslim contestants was achieved by JD (U) i. e. 44.4% and the lowest by LJP i. e. 2.3%. However, the situation is strange – the party with highest success rate allots the minimum percentage seats to Muslims (combined with its allies, JD-U allotted just 4.1% seats to Muslims), and the party with lowest success rate allots

³⁰ Source: www.ECI.gov.in

the highest percentage of seats to Muslims. This time too, the number of forward Muslim MLAs, has outnumbered the backward castes, but it is for the first time *Pasmanda* Muslims were able to challenge the forward castes agenda based politics.

The *Pasmanda* Muslim organizations tilted in favour of Nitish Kumar led Janta Dal (United); following the commitment shown by Mr. Kumar in favour of their demands. Due to this decision, charge of joining hands with Hindutva forces has been lamented against *Pasmanda* Muslim leaders and in broader terms they are categorized as 'anti-Islam' for raising the issue of caste practices amongst Muslims. The organizations like All Indian Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB), Milli Council, Majlis-e-Mashawrat, Jamaat-i-Islami, Jamiat-Ulema-Hind (JUH), Imarat-e-Sharia, Adara-e-Sharia are spearheading the charges of anti-Islamism. In response, the *Pasmanda* leaders and concerned intellectuals think that, raising the issue of caste, which is a sociological fact rather than sanctioned by religion, is not against Islam. In fact, rooting out the problem of social hierarchy which is never sanctioned by religion is a step towards strengthening Islam.

We have seen that, how the lower caste Muslims are asserting themselves in the social as well as political spheres. They are now trying to come out of the old methods of communal and identity politics, which was used by Muslim politicians till now to foment the venom of communalism, making them more vulnerable against the right wing attacks. Now, these social forces are mainly concentrating on the issues like employment, land reform, education, health, which in itself is very much secular in nature. In other word, it takes the stand that a secular social structure and class/caste hierarchy comes before religious identities. It is these structures that provide the foundation for political

organization and interest articulation.³¹ For example, while writing to Justice Rajinder Sachar, Ali Anwar tried to attract the attention of Sachar Committee towards the worsening situation of *Pasmanda*. He suggested some measures to handle the problem, such as, 'the alternative to Multinationals and New Economic Policy is to give people a new means of livelihood. It is very sad to note that among those who get license to export vegetables and fruits there is not even one from the community of those who have made cultivation as their profession. Similar things are going on with the other Backward Caste Muslim communities too. The situation of the Muslims, who are weavers, cultivators, tailors, washer-men, butchers, barbers, and artisans, is worsening day-by-day. The government must take proper steps to check this. The onslaught of globalization is being acutely felt by the Indian industries. The loom owners need and demand continuous supply of electricity where as large amount of electricity is being consumed by the elites for their comforts and lavish living. There has to be assured supply of electricity to the sector on priority. The electricity has to be subsidized.

This is indicating the beginning of a new era of Muslim politics at all India level. In democracy number does matter, as these social groups have large number which political parties in the coming days will not dare to avoid.'³² Finally, there is a conscious effort to forge relations between dalit and OBC Muslims and OBC Hindus and Dalits, to create bonds of solidarity across religious divides. This has the potential of helping large number of Muslims break out of the 'ghetto' in which their 'traditional' leaders and many parties have placed them.

³¹ Bidwai 1996:12.

³² [www.Asian Human Right Commission.org](http://www.AsianHumanRightCommission.org)", Religious Groups for Human Rights. The full version of the letter is given in Annexure.

CHAPTER IV

WAY OUT OF BACKWARDNESS – AFFIRMATIVE ACTION?

Preferential treatment has been universally accepted by the modern state and society as an instrument to raise the standard of living of the deprived sections of the society. Many scholars and political thinkers envisage that, preferential treatment is an inherent diacritic of a liberal democratic state.¹ The state tries to distribute the available resources among the people by giving priorities to destitute individuals or groups through preferential treatment. The reasons for preferential treatment and criterion for selecting groups or individuals differ between the individual states and mostly depend on the nature of discrimination leading to the backwardness of the same. Therefore, it is found that different types of preferential treatments being practiced around the world viz. affirmative action, positive discrimination and strict quotas in school/college admissions and jobs² in order to correct the imbalance in terms of access to capital assets, employment, education, political participation and other spheres. The examples are not only seen in the West (i.e. USA, UK, Northern Ireland and Yugoslavia) but also in the Latin American countries like Brazil, Bolivia, Peru; African countries like Nigeria, Sudan, South Africa and also in the Asian countries like Malaysia, Pakistan, China, Japan and India.

India has a long history of positive discrimination in favour of socially neglected and educationally deprived sections of the society. Beginning from the late nineteenth century i.e. 1874 to the present, it has been used by the state for the purpose of social levelling. Some of the earliest instances of such policies were to be found in the caste based reservation schemes instituted by Indian princely

¹ But Ambedkar felt that a major drawback of liberal democracy was its insensitivity to reach out proactively towards those subject to disadvantages of one kind or the other.

² Z. Hasan, Reservation for Muslim, *Seminar*, May, 2005.

states. Mysore accepted the desirability of reservation for Backward Classes in 1874, with the stated aim of countering the preponderance of Brahmins in the public services. Another princely state, Kolhapur, enacted schemes in 1902 decreeing that half of all administrative posts is reserved for the 'non-Brahmin' groups.³ But even then, like in any democratic state, India faces the challenge of harmonizing two essentially contradictory political concepts—first, equality before the law irrespective of religion, caste, creed, race, and gender; and second, social justice at the cost of the same commitment for equality before the law. In the Constituent Assembly Debates many members of the Assembly opposed the continuation of reservation policy, specifically in government employment. The most common arguments forwarded were those of comprising merit at the cost of reservation. Merit based objections to quotas assumed two main forms, those of fairness and general welfare type of arguments. Quotas were regarded as unfair because they allegedly detracted from the individual right to equal opportunity in matters of state employment. The most prominent merit based arguments against quotas in this period, however, invoked considerations of general welfare rather than fairness. It was argued that departures from merit selection in the form of group quotas would harm public interest in an efficient administration and good government. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar argued that, '...the first requisite is that all appointments shall be made in the interests of public administration on merit and merit alone. But, having regard to the conditions of our country, there must be some provision in favour of those persons who are not even economically and socially advanced and may not be able to come up to the mark....With regard to appointments which require enormous skill and capacity, certainly, these rules cannot be relaxed, because

³ See Rochana Bajpai, op cit. 2005.

public interests demand otherwise.⁴ Such a contrast is not wholly legitimate, as argued by Prof V. Rodrigues. Preferential treatment, aimed at overcoming such disadvantages, is over and above the concept of equality of treatment and is meant to offset historical inequality.⁵ Nevertheless, the policy of reservation has left deep impact on the psyche of the society. At present many more social groups want to get included in the list of preferentially treated. In this chapter, the focus of analysis is the Muslim community of India which now demands reservation given the distressed socio-economic status of the community. Further this chapter analyses the rationale behind such a demand and the arguments and counter-arguments interlocked into it. Thirdly, an attempt is made to look into the activities of shaping the demand of reservation by backward Muslim pressure groups and social organizations.

History of Reservation for the Muslims

It has been observed that under the influence of the Hindu social milieu, the Muslim society in India too has developed caste based hierarchical social structure. However the degree and intensity has always remained debatable. The record of caste Muslims in Census 1901, 1911, 1921 and 1931 clears all these doubts and questions the homogeneity of Muslim community. Mahatma Gandhi, while writing to one of his friends in the year 1941, mentioned the presence of evil practices in the society, even within communities other than the Hindus. "Undoubtedly, Muslim and Christian have caste evil, thanks to the Hindu society. By eliminating caste practices, Hindu community can help other social groups to have check over it. Rest work could be done by the infected

⁴ See, for instance, *CAD*, IX, p. 626

⁵ Valerian Rodrigues, unpublished paper, *Preferential Treatment: Contentions*.

community itself.”⁶ Taking reference of the Bengal census 1901, Dr. Ambedkar, too have commented on the social and psychological stagnancy of Muslim society. “Islam speaks of brotherhood. Everybody infers that Islam must be free from slavery and caste.....But if slavery has gone, caste among Musalmans has remained.”⁷ These lower caste Muslims were mainly converted from Hindu lower strata belonging to various occupational groups. Conversion didn’t affect their social and economic status. Thus, they remained poor and neglected in the society. Secondly, due to the discriminatory policies of the British government, especially after the 1857 mutiny and the rise of the influential English speaking Hindu middle class, the Muslims began to lose out their control from the government jobs. This is clearly borne out in the report of the Indian Education Commission of 1882. It noted that, “after the introduction of English into the course of studies, the Council of Education had to confess that, ‘the endeavour to impart a high order of English education to the Muhammadans community had completely failed.....The Muhammadans were not even competing on equal terms with the Hindus for employment under Government....”⁸ Cumulatively, both lower as well as upper strata of the Muslims, were at the receiving end of the society.

Thus, the conditions of the lower castes as well as upper castes people who were in government or administrative jobs in Mughal rule over India brought them into the category of backward classes, recognized by the committee appointed by the princely state of Mysore in 1918. The committee instituted quotas for the

⁶ See collected works of Mahatma Gandhi, vol. 70, p.139.

⁷ Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, *Pakistan or The partition of India*, Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, 1990, p. 228. He had noted down three categories of Muslims i.e. Ashraf, Ajlaf & Arzal.

⁸ A. Peshkin, Education, the Muslim Elite, and the Creation of Pakistan, *Comparative Education Review*, Vol.6, No.2, Oct. 1962, p.156. Hunter had categories three distinct streams of Wealth which was controlled by Muslim rulers for their political stability, which were Military Command, the collection of revenue, and Judicial or Political Employ. With the British capture of power, these were slipped out Ashraf’s hand.

Backward Classes, a category that was defined to include all caste and communities other than Brahmins, including the Muslims, who were not adequately represented in the public services.⁹ Later on, reservations in government appointments for Muslims were first recognized by the colonial state in 1925. However, by this time the Muslim politicians began to forge the communal identity of the Indian Muslims, who were projected as spiritually and temporally different from the Hindus not considering the heterogeneity of society at all. But the temporal Hindu-Muslim unity forced Jinnah to reconsider the demand of a separate electorate. Jinnah put certain conditions before Congress to give up the demand. The demands were as follow:

1. The formation of a separate province of Sindh.
2. Introduction of reforms in the North West Frontier Province and in Baluchistan on the same footing as in other provinces.
3. Unless and until the above proposals were implemented, the Muslims would never surrender the right of their representation through separate electorates. Muslims would be willing to abandon separate electorates in favor of joint electorates with the reservation of seats fixed in proportion to the population of different communities, if the above two proposals were implemented to the full satisfaction of Muslims and also if the following proposals were accepted.
4. Hindu minorities in Sindh, Baluchistan and the North West Frontier Province are accorded the same concessions in the form of reservation of

⁹ R. Bajpai, op.cit. 2005.

seats over and above the proportion of their population as Muslims would get in Hindu majority provinces.

5. Muslim representation in the Central Legislature would not be less than one-third.

6. In addition to provisions like religious freedom, there was to be a further guarantee in the constitution that on communal matters no bill or resolution would be considered or passed if three-fourth of the members of the community concerned were opposed to it.

This proposal, known as the Delhi-Muslim proposal of 1927, was to be accepted or rejected in toto. So, in effect, the Muslims agreed to give up the separate electorates in the form of reservation of seats. The demand was rejected in favour of a joint electorate as per the Nehru Report of 1928, which began having its own impact on the Hindu-Muslim politics since the 1940s. Despite the communal and identity politics of the 1920s and 1930s, the Government of India Act of 1935 extended the policy of reservation to Muslim castes along with Hindu dalits.¹⁰ Later on, it was constrained only for the Hindu dalits. As per the 1950 Presidential Order, under Article 341 of the Constitution had declared that "no person who professes a religion different from Hinduism shall be deemed to be a member of a Scheduled Caste." In 1956 the Sikh religion was included with Hinduism as part of this order. Thus the Sikh castes (Mazhabi and Ramdasias Sikhs) were included in the SC list. As far as the Buddhist SCs were concerned, they were granted limited benefits, that too only in UP and Maharashtra till 1990. It was then that this anomaly was rectified and they were brought on par with

¹⁰ Pasmanda Awaz, *op.cit.* p.2

the Hindu SCs. But it is an appalling fact that India has kept the Muslim and Christian castes belonging to the dalit category out of the purview of the Scheduled Castes reservation. As a self-proclaimed secular state, India should have shown equal respect to all religions, not just in theory, but in practice as well. But there have been certain ambiguities in the Indian policy of affirmative action meant for the upliftment of SCs and STs.¹¹

However, it did not initiate in the same way as it ended. Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel presented to the Constituent Assembly the report of its advisory committee's subcommittee on the minorities dated 8th August, 1947. It provided for the reservation of seats for minorities within a joint electorate on the basis of their population. Separate electorates were abolished. The Assembly debated the report on 27th and 28th August, 1947 and adopted its recommendations. Along with reservation in central and provincial legislature, a sort of reservation was considered in the recruitment of services. Paragraph 9 read as "In all-India and provincial services, the claims of all the minorities shall be kept in view in making appointments to these services consistently with the consideration of efficiency of administration."¹² Having agreed to this, the drafting committee moved a special Article 299 in which the rights of all minorities were granted. Not only that, later a report was submitted to this House by the Advisory Committee on the subject of political safeguards to minorities on 11th May, 1949. In this report, the earlier decisions were reiterated and confirmed and not denied, except the reservation in legislature. But the amendment moved by K.M. Munshi restricted Article 299 to the Scheduled Castes only. Continuing the

¹¹ T. K. Oommen, Religious Minorities: Inconsistency in Affirmative Action, *Times of India*, 4 April 1994.

¹² B. Shiva Rao, The Framing of the Indian Constitution: Select Document, Vol II, pp. 426-29.

process of abolishing special rights to the minority, reservation for dalit Muslims was also done away with the Presidential Order of 1950. To abolish reservation, the logic put forwarded by the then (and even the present) Indian government that Islam as a religion, does not comprise of a caste system or any type of inequality between the human beings. There has been a conscious denial of the caste practices among the Muslims, which was recorded by colonial ethnographers. Thus, while on one hand, in the name of national unity and integration, independent India denied special measures that was enjoyed by the general Muslim population; on the other it restricted the measure of reservation only to Hindu dalits.

Renewal of the Debate over Reservation

In independent India, often the demand for the extension of reservation to Muslims has been made by individual pressure groups and political parties. The demand was for the whole community, as the Muslim elite have always intended to declare the Muslims as backward.

However, both the Commissions formulated by the Centre rejected any such demand. And based on Mandal Report, Central Government has included few Muslim castes in the OBCs and extended the benefit of reservation (27 per cent reservation to OBCs in 1990). This was the turning point in the history of intra-community relation. The Muslim community got sharply divided into two camps –first being the supporter of reservation on the basis of caste or socio-educational backwardness and the other supporting reservation based on community as whole. The *Pasmanda* organization supported the announcement of 27 per cent reservation in government jobs. On the other hand, *Ashrafs* of the

community who have control over the politics began to organize themselves to put enough pressure on the Union government. In a Convention on Reservation in New Delhi on October 9, 1994, upper castes leaders from various political parties like Syed Shahabuddin (Janata Dal M.P.; now in Congress), Syed Hamid (former Vice Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University), Ebrahim Sulaiman Sait (Muslim League, M.P.), and Maulana Mohammad Shafi Moonis, (vice president of the All-India Muslim Majlis-i-Mushawarat), supported the view that:

1. The whole community to be declared a backward class countrywide; and
2. The benefits of reservations should accrue first by the priority to Muslims notified as OBCs and that candidates belonging to other Muslim Sub-Communities (*Ashraf*) are admitted to those benefits only if the Muslim quotas remain unfilled.¹³

The tacit backing of Congress to the Convention had its strategic political importance. Acting as an opposition to the general idea of Mandal, Congress was much worried about its eroding backward class and large chunk of Muslim base to Janta Dal. So, Congress put forward a counter proposal through the Muslim Convention, to declare the Muslim community as backward in its entirety. The demand had much wider implications than it appeared. Once a state declares a community as backward, the claim for some kind of affirmative action, even for the economically deprived section will get strengthened, which is not the aim and objective of reservation in India.

¹³ Zoya Hasan, Reservation for Muslims, *Seminar*, May, 2005. Other demands that were made by the Convention can be found recorded in Theodore P. Wright's, Jr 'A New Demand for Muslim Reservation in India', *Asian Survey*, vol.xxxvii, No. 9, September 1997. I don't think that, there is anything new in this demand, though method has changed; it is nothing but the continuation of colonial psychology of Muslim leaders which determined there community based political action.

The opposition to the caste based reservation for the Muslims and efforts to declare them as backward still continue. The upper castes/classes have always dismissed resistance to them as a ploy to sow the seeds of disunity. In 1996, AIMOBCO organized a conference to build public opinion in favour of extending the existing provision of reservation for other backward classes to their Muslim counterparts. Barely a week after the Conference, *Dawat*, biweekly Urdu organ of the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind [JIH], front-paged an alarming story – “Do not Create Further Disunity in Problem-Ridden Millat”.¹⁴ *Dawat* sees it with absolute suspicion and as a design of some sort to divide the Muslims. For those assuming the Muslim community as a whole are deprived today believe that they are liable for separate reservation of 10 percent. The Association for Promoting Education and Employment of Muslims (APEEM) demand for affirmative action for all Indian Muslims. Syed Sahabuddin, a politician and veteran Muslim leader, demanding affirmative action for all Muslims, proposed a single quota on the basis of total Muslim society. The Islamic Council of India (ICI) and All-India Muslim Milli Council (AIMMC) demanding from the government to declare all the Muslims economically backward to bring them under the protective umbrella of reservation¹⁵. In two more conferences in Delhi and Hyderabad in 1996, the Association reiterated its major demand:

The recognition of the Muslim community, as a backward, in the constitutional meaning of the term, both in the country, as a whole, in a various States/UTs (Union Territories) and for the consequent extension of reservation to the community, in proportion to its professional educational and level of backwardness, both in higher and professional education as well as in public employment, at the central and state levels and in all job categories, subject to

¹⁴ *Dawat* 1996.

¹⁵ Usman HalalKhor, ‘*Makhmal me Taat ki Paiband!*’, Pasmada Awaaz, Dec.2004, page 11. Writer is General Secretary of All Indian Pasmada Muslims Mahaz.

decennial review (*Resolution on Promotion of Employment, Reservation in Public Employment and Management of Wakf Properties 1996: 1*)¹⁶

However, the idea of 'total reservation' for Muslims has been completely rejected by the *Pasmanda* leaders and intellectuals of the society on three important grounds. Firstly, if reservation applies to all, the majority share will be appropriated by elite of the community, which limits their chances and opportunities. A. A. Engineer has well articulated the fear of *Pasmanda* Muslims in his article "Reservation to Muslims: Yes or No"¹⁷. He writes that, "Reservation on the basis of economical backwardness will restrict the benefit to the *Ashraf* strata only and will not bring any effective change in the life of poor-dalit Muslims...." Secondly, in the entire history of affirmative action, mere economic backwardness has no role to play as a criterion for reservation, which has been demanded by the Muslim upper castes and class. Kaka Kalelkar recommended reservation for OBC's on the ground of social and educational backwardness. The criteria to identify the socially and educationally backward classes are:

- i) Low social position in the traditional caste hierarchy of Hindu society.
- ii) Lack of general educational advancement among the major section of a caste or community.
- iii) Inadequate or no representation in government service.
- iv) Inadequate representation in the field of trade, commerce, and industry.¹⁸

¹⁶ See L.D.Jenkins, 'Caste Class and Islam: Boundaries of Backwardness In India', *The Eastern Anthropologist*, Vol.53, no.12, 2000, 330.

¹⁷ Op.Cit., *Pasmanda Awaaz*, page 13.

¹⁸ Mandal Commission Report, Vol. I, Ch. 1, page 6.

Thirdly, the fear of communal backlash was anticipated by *Pasmanda* leaders from the right wing forces of this country. Apart from the backward leaders, the scholars like Prof. Imtiaz Ahmad, Prof. Zoya Hasan¹⁹ and others feel that the reservation based on religion is a problematic one. Nevertheless, upper castes in support of their argument use the socio-economic conditions of the Muslims calculated by NSSO or State Minority Commission and religion (as Islam does not recognize caste practices). These data bases are a generalization of the Muslim community and no separate study on the socio-economic status of *Pasmanda* and dalit Muslims have been done yet. Looking at the various claims made by the *Pasmanda* leaders, backward and dalits constitute 80-90% of the total Muslim population. It is this section of the society that is contributing to the overall backwardness of the community. However, poverty and deprivation due to caste based discrimination are not complementary to each other. Thus they cannot be used interchangeably. As is rightly pointed out by Prof. Dipankar Gupta that:

“Reservations should not be construed as an anti-poverty programme, as a stand in for poverty eradication interventions. Programmes that attack poverty should continue independent of reservations because there are poor people in all castes and religious groups. Therefore, it is unjustifiable to either hold back anti-poverty programmes for the sake of reservations, or to hold back reservations for the sake of anti-poverty programmes. The two are indeed quite distinct and should be kept that way.”²⁰

On the question of raising caste issue as anti/un-Islamic, Ali Ashgar Engineer, critiqued those, mainly 'upper' caste Muslims spokesmen, who claimed that

¹⁹ Religious quotas are not an effective means of achieving the desired objective, says Prof. Zoya Hasan. Source: Seminar, May 2005.

²⁰ D. Gupta, Limits of Reservation, *Seminar*, May, 2005.

addressing the problems of the 'low' caste Muslim communities is an 'anti-Islamic' conspiracy to divide the Muslims, seeing it as 'un-Islamic' on the grounds that Islam has no room for caste. He argued that this denial of internal caste differences among Muslims as means to perpetuate the hegemony of 'upper' castes Muslim leaders and the 'Ulema' who present an image of Muslims as a seamless monolith. He also opposed the proposal put forward mainly by the 'upper' castes Muslim leaders that all the Muslims of India should be declared as 'Backward Class', and hence are eligible for reservations in government jobs. Instead, Engineer said, reservations should be available only to those Muslim communities recognized as dalits, tribals and backward castes.²¹ On the other hand, *Pasmanda* leaders went offensive against upper castes leaders, who took pride in being of foreign extraction – Arab, Iranian or whatever – and have considered other Muslims, who are all of indigenous Indian origin, as belonging to the 'low' caste. According to *Pasmanda* leaders, it is the *Ashrafs* who poisoned the community for their own interests, and once the voice from inside has been raised against the systems of inequality and justice they felt threatened. Consequently, they labeled *Pasmanda* and dalit Muslims movement as anti-Islamic.

This reaction is no different from that of many upper caste Hindus who brand the dalit movement as divisive, accusing it of reinforcing caste simply because the dalit movement seeks to do away with upper caste hegemony.²²

²¹ Y. Sikand, Muslim Dalit and OBCs Conference: A Report, *Milli Gazette Online*, 30 November, 2005.

²² Y. Sikand, Voice of Oppressed: Empowering Dalit Muslims, *Communalism Combat*, November 2005, Year 12, No.112.

Ali Anwar, responding on the charge of dividing Muslims, points out that:

“far from doing so we are trying to unite the dozens of dalit/backward caste Muslim communities who have been kept divided for centuries! We are trying to bring them – Ansaris, Halalkhors, Kunjeras, Kalals, Dhuniyas, Mochis and who knows how many such castes – together on a common platform to voice their demands and concerns. Now, you tell me, are we dividing these Muslims or uniting them? We are not setting dalit/backward caste Muslims against *Ashraf* Muslims. Our movement is not directed against them. Rather, we seek to strengthen and empower our own people, to enable them to speak for themselves and to secure their rights and justice from the state. We welcome well meaning people of *Ashraf* background as well as non-Muslims who are concerned about the plight of our people to join us in our struggle”.

He further argues that:

"You so-called *Ashraf* have kept us divided for centuries by fanning sectarian (*maslaki*) differences. Why don't you put an end to this instead of telling us what to do? You have created and magnified these sectarian divisions for your own interests, to run your own little religious and political shops, for which you have not stopped even at promoting bloodshed and hatred. First you put an end to this sectarian hatred and division that you have created and then talk to us."²³

Today numerous *maulvis* of different *maslaks* – Deobandi, Bareilvi, Jamaat-i Islami, Shia, Ahl-i Hadith and who knows how many more – issue statements against each other, some going to the extent of branding all Muslims but themselves as ‘apostates’ and even as ‘enemies of Islam’! Is that not ‘dividing the Muslims’?

²³ Y. Sikand, op. cit.

The idea of total reservation was also opposed by the anti-minorities organizations and right wing political parties, especially BJP (the political front of '*Hindutvaadis*'). The opposition was both from ideological and electoral perspectives. All the right wing organizations feared that the extension of reservation to the minority will expedite the rates of conversion, which is antithetical to the idea of Hindu nation. But it is not the case that the BJP is in favour of *Pasmanda* Muslim's reservation, although sometimes they have done lip-service on this issue. Here lies the true colour of the BJP. Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi found the policy of reservation as 'un-Islamic'.²⁴

Suggestions

In spite of the existing debate of equality and social justice within the community, it must be accepted at the broader level that the whole community is backward. There are two different but parallel history of Indian Muslim community from caste/class perspectives. One is of *Ashraf* Muslims (Sayyad, Sheikh, Moghul and Pathan), whose politico-economic power has seen continuous downfall, since 1857. It reached an inferno after the partition of India. Initially, they followed the line of secularism (which has been a practice by the parties more for their opportunistic gain rather than out of true commitment), and later on began to harness communal politics just to maintain their leadership over the community. The major political parties supported it because the democratization of the community and their mobilization on secular lines means, demand for more jobs, more representation in public sphere. At the social level, the population belonging to this section loosens their share to the Hindus, and

²⁴ The Statesman, 21st March, 1999.

faces discrimination just because they belong to the Muslim community. This has been blamed for the partition of 'Mother India' by the Hindu communal forces. Upper classes/castes Muslims along with backward and lower caste Muslims faces discrimination at every facets of life.

The available data clearly express the general backward trends of development among the Muslims, and their positions in the society in comparison with the other communities. The OBC and dalit Muslims constitute the largest chunk of it, who have faced double discrimination, first on being a Muslim and then as a lower caste Muslim within and outside their community. As a member of new religion i.e. Islam, their economic and social position doesn't change much. During the communal riot, it is this section who suffers the most. To bring social mobility in this section of the society, just the poverty eradication program will not be enough, as they are economically deprived, but it is more of a result rather than a factor. Caste based discrimination together with the apathy of the state machinery act in this direction. Second chapter of this study has argued that, Muslim OBCs have not benefited through reservation, the way they should have. Therefore separate quotas for OBC Muslims within the 27 per cent OBCs reservation should be allocated by the government if it is really committed and believes in inclusive development of the nation. Further, dalit Muslims should be included into the SCs list, even if it requires Constitutional Amendment. Nonetheless, even that is not enough. Those Muslims who remain out of any affirmative action, government should target them through various programs, as it acts in the case of SCs/STs. And last but not the least, the long pending demand for implementing land reforms should be met. It is because the issue involved here is not only about the distribution of resources but the healthy functioning of democracy. Unless the issue of minorities is tackled in the right perspective, the

idea of sectarianism and communalism will have their space to create further troubles. An honest effort is required in this direction by the state and even within the community.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates the presence of caste practices among Muslims throughout the country. Historical records show the presence of various castes, which stand hierarchically based on occupational and racial distinction. The most important point is that, followers of egalitarian Islam very silently co-opted this social evil and never raised a finger against it. There is not a single movement in history, which is directed against the caste system, except in Bihar for a short period during the last moments of partition led by Abdul Qaiyyum Ansari. Perhaps the control of upper caste Muslims over the existing Muslim organizations (e.g. AIMPLB, Jamiatul Ulema-e-Hind, Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, Adara-e-Sharia, Imarat-e-Sharia etc.) and minority institutions supported by Central and States level governments is the major factor for the delay in the social movement. The so-called *Ashrafs* of the community have never recognized the presence of casteism in Muslim society. In fact, non-recognition helped them to retain their domination, over the entire community in the name of Islam. They have been well assisted by religious leaders.

The Islamic missionary organizations like Jammat-e-Islami, Jamiat-Ulema-Hind, Tablighi Jamat, and others propagate that Islam is fully equipped to deal with the centuries' old problem like caste. According to Shamim A. Siddiqi, "The moment an individual enters into the fold of his or her creator and sustainer by reciting and confirming that:

'There is no deity except Allah and Muhammad is his messenger' [La Ilaha Illallah Muhammadur Rasulullah], he or she demolishes the centuries-old bondage of caste system and immediately comes at par with the highest place in the society. There is no caste system in Islam. All men and women are born equal. In Islam, excellence

depends on the attainment of piety or Allah-consciousness... *This is the only way to abolish the political and social hegemony of Brahmanism in India.*¹

Is that sociologically true about Indian Muslim? No, this is a myth created by the religious and political leaders of this country. This understanding that there is no caste practice among Muslims has been the cause of 'Social Stagnation'.² In fact, this non-recognition has been not to save Islam from division, but to protect the vested interests in the community - a deliberate effort to stop the democratization of the community.

Muslim elites are under the Orientalist influence; treat themselves as a homogeneous group. Community leaders and upper section of the society begin to project the problems of the community. 'Islam is in danger' has been the core issue for the Muslims in pre and post-independent India. Communal riots added value to this notion. Whenever they (Muslim elites) ask the government for favours for the community, they take the community as a whole, as if intra-community socio-economic situation has been similar. This symbolizes the deep-rooted colonial construction of knowledge about a community, which has been borrowed by all the political actors to put forward their own interest at the cost of the majority of the Muslim masses belonging to the lower castes with low incomes.

However, since 1990s, India has seen the assertion of the *Pasmanda* Muslims in the social and political arena. The inclusion of these groups into the OBCs list though has not benefited them in an extensive manner, but it helped in boosting

¹ Shamim A. Siddiqi, Role of Islam in uplifting Dalits, in *Dalit Agony And Islam*, A Radiance Presentation, New Delhi, Board of Islamic Publications, 2003.

² Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Writings and Speeches Vol. 8, Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, 1990.

the moral of destitute masses. It gave them the power to realize their strengths and their importance in democracy. Today, they question the very idea of homogeneity and facts revolve round it. They sense wrong and reject the efforts of upper caste Muslims to declare the whole community as backward. Further, they insist that the government should include all OBC Muslims in the Central list, and dalit Muslims into the Scheduled Caste category. A rally organized by All India *Pasmanda Muslim Mahaz* on 21st March, 2004 demanded that dalit Muslims be given the same benefit of reservation and other privileges as Scheduled Castes. On 15th July 2006, in a joint press statement, Muslim and Christian leaders demanded reservation for dalits from both the communities under the Scheduled Caste quota and asked the Centre to confer the SC status on them by removing a restrictive clause in the Constitution. All India United Muslim Morcha (AIUMM) spokesman Kamal Ashraf told reporters at a joint press conference with the Dalit Christian Liberation Movement:

"A Presidential Order of 1950 discriminates among Dalits on grounds of religion, leaving out Muslims and Christians while recognizing Dalit Sikhs and Buddhists as SCs despite the fact that they too are minorities."³

Thus, the caste, which had oppressed them historically, is now providing opportunity in a democratic political set up to fight for their causes. Further, *Pasmanda* and dalit Muslim movements in order to achieve their goals are also making a conscious effort to associate themselves with the cause of Hindu dalit and OBC. This is creating bond of solidarity among the poor and lower castes across religious boundaries.

³ The Hindu, 15th July 2006.

However, given its significance, it has some drawbacks too, as while talking about socio-religious reform; they do not raise the specific issue of the Muslim women. The problem of marriage and divorce, property rights of women, and education has not been gaining much space within the *Pasmanda* social groups. It must be noted that, without considering the emancipation of Muslim women from the backward- looking ideology which is more influenced by socio-cultural milieu of Indian society rather than Islam, any movement will remain unsuccessful in true sense. Women should not be treated merely as the carrier of culture and tradition, but they should be included in the process of community development. Secondly, the whole movement for the dalit Muslims is controlled by so called OBC Muslims, mainly the *Ansari* caste, and the present leadership has not been able to carve out a single leader from among the dalit Muslims in one and half decades. It's important that these people should take the lead and voice their grievances. What is lying in the future is unpredictable, but these assertions have the potential to redefine the grammar of Indian politics.

In conclusion, one can say that, Muslims (*Pasmanda*) have been facing discrimination, apathy and insensitivity of the State, but there is no concerted effort to understand and to determine the socio-economic status of the OBC and dalit Muslims. Even the Committees and Commissions of the governments (Gopal Singh Committee etc.) meant for general understanding of socio-economic conditions of Muslims were never taken seriously, rather they were all used to pacify the anger and dissatisfaction of the Muslims. In spite of this hard reality, the newly formed 'High Level Committee' under (Retd. Judge) Rajinder Sachar to re-examine the socio-economic condition of Indian Muslims and suggest methods to overcome the obstacle in the path of community development, inoculates high hope among them. Its terms of reference mean to

enquire about the socio-economic status of *Pasmanda* Muslims. References are following⁴ --

6. (a) What is the proportion of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) from the Muslim Community in the total OBC population in various States?
- (b) Are the Muslim OBCs listed in the comprehensive list of OBCs prepared by the National and State Backward Classes Commissions and adopted by the Central and State Governments for reservations for various purposes?
- (c) What is the share of Muslim OBCs in the total public sector employment for OBCs in the various states in various years?

The Committee's initial findings through detailed surveys data collection in few states (Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala) are actually not surprising, and prove what has been long argued by secular, progressive, and Muslim intellectuals. The state-wise findings are given below.

In Rajasthan, the much publicized 15-point programme for the minorities are non-existent and no financial and physical targets are fixed in implementing these programmes. The state government has few programmes for the minorities and the outlays of these programmes have been abysmally low. Even the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Shiksha Abhiyan do not appear to have entered the Muslim-dominated areas. Sanitation and sewerage facilities are next to nothing in poorer Muslim areas. There was only one primary school with "improper building" and a few teachers in an exclusive Muslim locality of over 1.2 lakh population on the outskirts of Jaipur.

⁴ Imran Ali & Y. Sikand, Survey Socio-Economic conditions of Muslims in India, Countercurrents.org, Feb. 9, 2006.

In Uttar Pradesh it was found that there is an adverse impact of economic liberalization on the traditional occupations of Muslims—brass and wood work, lock industry in Aligarh, power looms etc. An urgent intervention of the UP government is needed to prevent “the disturbing practice of child marriages, which is the cause for high mortality rate among the Muslims in the state.” UP is “serene and peaceful and there is communal harmony and amity,” despite it being a centre “of many controversies relating to the demolition of Babri Masjid and Ayodhya issue.”

In Karnataka, the panel showed concern over the complaints of Muslims not getting loans from the nationalized banks despite the recommendation from the Minority Development Corporation. The committee also expressed concern over the “number of recent occurrences that highlight inter-community tensions in the coastal areas of the state and the district of Chickmagalur.”

The findings on Kerala, threw up some statistical puzzles at committee meetings. Though Muslims constituted 24.7 per cent of the state’s population, their share in government jobs was just 9.88 per cent. The SC/STs who constituted 10.95 per cent of the population had a job share of 13.3 per cent. Contrast this with the Hindu community whose share in population is 23.5 per cent, but had 40 per cent of the government jobs.⁵

But, even this Committee like many other Committees/Commissions, has flaws in its methodology. There is no mention of the specific problems of Muslim women or of the dalit Muslims, who are clubbed together with Backward Caste

⁵ Indian Express, 19th April, 2006.

Muslims as Other Backward Classes. The terms of reference ignore the deleterious impact of the 'liberalized' economic policies of the Government on Muslim OBC artisan communities, who account for a large section of the Muslim community. Instead, the focus is on Muslim OBC representation in government services at a time when such jobs are rapidly contracting owing precisely to the Government's economic policies.

The caste and class relationship suggests that, most of the lower castes – if not all- belong to the lower classes. In the era of globalization, the failure of small or cottage industries like, handicraft, brass, lock, etc dragged workers of these industries (among whom Muslims constitute higher percentage, whose occupations were considered as lowly) into the scantily paid jobs. Today, most of the Muslims are the part of unorganized sector. Thus, like Scheduled Castes and Schedules Tribes, class and caste are overlapping category and are juxtaposed with each other. These sections of Muslim community (indigenously lower castes Hindus converted to Islam) have been facing caste based discrimination for centuries. The socio-economic condition of the Muslims has not changed even after conversion. In addition to this, the onslaught of liberalization has further deteriorated their conditions. Hence, if social and educational backwardness of the Hindu groups award them special treatment (reservation), today Muslim OBCs and dalits are in perfect condition to avail the benefits of reservation both in public and private sectors.

ANNEXURE

ANNEX I: State/UT wise list of Muslim castes got enlisted as OBCs by Mandal Commission are as follow:

ANDHRA PRADESH

S. Number	Names of the Muslim Castes
1.	Darzi
2.	Dudekula, Laddaf, Pinjari or Noor-Bash
3.	Katika, Kasai
4.	Madari
5.	Mahatar
6.	Atar
7.	Garodi

ASSAM

S. Number	Name of the Muslim Caste
1.	Banjara
2.	Chick Banik
3.	Jolha
4.	Madari
5.	Maimals (Muslim Fishermen)
6.	Manipuri Muslims
7.	Nai
8.	Teli

BIHAR

S. Number	Name of the Muslim Caste
1.	Abdal
2.	Bharbhuja
3.	Bhathiara
4.	Chik
5.	Churihara, Manihar
6.	Dafalange
7.	Dafale
8.	Dhunia
9.	Faqir
10.	Gadihar
11.	Nai or Hajjam

12.	Qassar
13.	Darzi or Idrisi
14.	Julaha
15.	Kassab (Kasai)
16.	Lalbegi, Bhangi
17.	Madari
18.	Miriasin
19.	Mirshikar
20.	Momin
21.	Mukro
22.	Nalband
23.	Nat
24.	Pamaria
25.	Rangrez
26.	Rayeen (kunjara)
27.	Sayee
28.	Teli
29.	Thakurai

GUJARAT

S. Number	Name of the Caste
1.	Bafan
2.	Dafer
3.	Dhobi
4.	Fakir
5.	Gadhai
6.	Galiara
7.	Ghanchi
8.	Hingora
9.	Jat
10.	Julaya, Garana, Taria & Tari
11.	Khatki or Kasai, Chamadia-Khatki, Halarikhatki
12.	Madari
13.	Darban Majothi
14.	Makrani
15.	Mansari

16.	Matwa-Kureshi
17.	Maina, Miyana
18.	Mirasi
19.	Nat
20.	Pinjara or Mansuri-Pinjara
21.	Sandhi
22.	Shikligar
23.	Sipai, Patni Jamat or Turk Jamat
24.	Teli
25.	Theba
26.	Hajjam, Khalipha
27.	Wagher

HARYANA

S. Number	Name of the Caste
1.	Banjara
2.	Bharbhuja
3.	Bhat
4.	Dhobi
5.	Gaddi
6.	Ghasi
7.	Julaha
8.	Madari
9.	Mawati
10.	Mirasi
11.	Nai
12.	Nalband
13.	Teli

HIMACHAL PRADESH

S. Number	Name of the Caste
1.	Bhat
2.	Darzi
3.	Faquir
4.	Gaddi
5.	Ghasi

6.	Labana
7.	Madari
8.	Marasi
9.	Nai
10.	Nalband

KARNATAKA

S. Number	Name of the Caste
1.	Ansari, Julai
2.	Baagawan Tamboli
3.	Bazigar
4.	Beri
5.	Chapparband, Chapparbanda
6.	Darzi
7.	Darvesa
8.	Dhobi
9.	Faqir
10.	Teli
11.	Ghasi or Haddi
12.	Kasai, Katik, Khatik, Kasab
13.	Medara, Medari
14.	Nadafs, Ladafs, Dhunya, Mansuri, Pinjar or Pinjari
15.	Nat, Natuva
16.	Nalband
17.	Pindaras or Pendaris
18.	Qureshi (Kassab)
19.	Shikkaligar of Shikkaligar
20.	Sweepers
21.	Takaras
22.	Zargaras
23.	Mali
24.	Kumbara

In Kerala, except Bohra, Cutchi Menmon, Navayat, Turukkan and Dakhani Muslim all others are considered as OBC.

MANIPUR: Lalbegi, Teli and Mehtar

MADHYA PRADESH

S. Number	Name of the Caste
1.	Banjara
2.	Labana
3.	Bhand
4.	Bharbhuja
5.	Bhishti, Bhisty
6.	Darzi
7.	Dafali, Dholi
8.	Dhobi
9.	Dhunia, Nadaaf
10.	Fakir, Faquir, Sain
11.	Hajjam
12.	Hela,
13.	Julaha, Momin
14.	Kalal
15.	Kasab, Quraishi
16.	Kunjra
17.	Lohar
18.	Manihar
19.	Mewati
20.	Nai
21.	Mirasi
22.	Nilgar
23.	Pindara
24.	Pinjare
25.	Rangrez
26.	Sais, Sayees
27.	Sikligar
28.	Tadavi
29.	Teli

MAHARASHTRA

S. Number	Name of the Caste
1.	Banjara
2.	Bhadbhunja
3.	Bhisti or Pakhali

4.	Chippa
5.	Darzi
6.	Dhobi
7.	Fakir Bandarwala
8.	Julaha
9.	Kalal
10.	Kasai, Khatik
11.	Ladaff
12.	Momin
13.	Nai
14.	Pinjara
15.	Rangrez
16.	Teli

ORISSA

S. Number	Name of the Caste
1.	Chik
2.	Darzi
3.	Nat
4.	Pamaria
5.	Teli

PUNJAB

S. Number	Name of the Caste
1.	Arain
2.	Bharbhuja
3.	Darzi
4.	Dhobi
5.	Faqir
6.	Gaddi
7.	Julaha
8.	Madari
9.	Mewati
10.	Mirasi
11.	Nai
12.	Nalband
13.	Teli

RAJASTHAN

S. Number	Name of the Caste
1.	Banjara
2.	Chhipa
3.	Dhobi
4.	Godi
5.	Hela
6.	Julaha
7.	Kalel
8.	Lohar
9.	Merasi, Mirasi
10.	Mukri
11.	Nai
12.	Pinjara
13.	Teli

TAMILNADU

S. Number	Name of the Caste
1.	Dekkani Muslims
2.	Dhobi, Vannan
3.	Kallar

TRIPURA

S. Number	Name of the Caste
1. Bhatiya	Halalkhor
2.	Lalbegi
3.	Nat
4.	Teli

UTTAR PRADESH

S. Number	Name of the Caste
1.	Ansari
2.	Bajigar
3.	Banjara

4.	Bhathiyara
5.	Chik
6.	Chikwa (Kassab)
7.	Darzi
8.	Dhobi
9.	Dhunia
10.	Gaddi
11.	Halalkhor
12.	Kalar
13.	Kasai
14.	Kunjra, Rayeen
15.	Mirasai, Merasi
16.	Momin (Ansar)
17.	Muslim Banjara
18.	Muslim-Kayastha
19.	Nai
20.	Nat
21.	Rangrez
22.	Teli
23.	Ghosi
24.	Halwai
25.	Lohar or Luhar

WEST BENGAL

S. Number	Name of the Caste
1.	Ansari
2.	Bhathiara, Razzaqi
3.	Chik, Kasai
4.	Dafali
5.	Darzi
6.	Dhunia, Mansoori
7.	Fakir, Sain
8.	Halalkhor
9.	Ibrahimi
10.	Teli
11.	Kunjara, Rayeen
12.	Mirshikar

13.	Momin
14.	Nai, Hajjam
15.	Nalband
16.	Rangrez
17.	Banjara
18.	Bhat
19.	Gaddi, Ghosi
20.	Hela

CHANDIGARH

S. Number	Name of the Caste
1.	Dhobi
2.	Faqir
3.	Gaddi
4.	Hajjam, Nai
5.	Julaha
6.	Kassab
7.	Labana
8.	Madari
9.	Mirasi
10.	Naddaf, Pinja
11.	Nalband
12.	Teli

DELHI

S. Number	Name of the Caste
1.	Abbasi, Bhisti, Sakka
2.	Bazigar, Nat, Kalandar
3.	Bhatiara
4.	Dafali
5.	Darzi
6.	Dhobi
7.	Dhunja, Pinjara, Kadher Dhunnewala
8.	Fakir
9.	Julaha, Momin
10.	Kalal, Kalwar

11.	Kasai, Qussab, Quraishi
12.	Merasi, Mirasi
13.	Nai, Hajjam
14.	Nalband
15.	Naqqal
16.	Rangrez
17.	Saiz
18.	Teli

Sources: Mandal Commission Report, 1980; *Pasmanda Awaz*, December 2004; Sashi Ram Sharma, *Protective Discrimination: OBCs in India*, New Delhi, Raj Publication.

Annexure IIMuslim Caste/Sub-caste enlisted in Central OBCs listANNEX II:

Sl. No.	Name of the Caste/sub-caste/synonym/community	State/UT
1.	Abbasi, Bhishti, Sakka	Delhi, MP.
2.	Abdal	Bihar
3.	Bafan	Gujarat
4.	Banjara, Mukeri, Makrani (all Muslim)	Madhya Pradesh, Bihar
5.	Bhatiara	Bihar, Rajasthan, U.P., M.P.
6.	Chhaparband, Chapparbanada	Karnataka, Maharashtra
7.	Chik	Bihar, Orissa
8.	Chippa/Chhipa	Madhya Pradesh
9.	Churihar	Bihar, West Bengal
10.	Dafali	Bihar, U.P.
11.	Daafer	Gujarat
12.	Dekkani Muslim	Tamil Nadu
13.	Dhobi	Bihar, M.P., West Bengal
14.	Dhunia	Bihar, West Bengal
15.	Fakir/Faqir	Gujarat, West Bengal
16.	Gaddi	Madhya Pradesh, Bihar
17.	Gadhai	Gujarat
18.	Galiara	"
19.	Ghanchi	"
20.	Hajjam (Barber), Nai, Salmani	MP, Bihar
21.	Hela	M.P. & West Bengal
22.	Hingora	Gujarat
23.	Idaisi or Darzi	Bihar
24.	Jat	Gujarat
25.	Jolah/Julaha/Julaha-Momin, Julaha-Ansari, Julaya	W.B., Rajas., Mahar., M.P., Gujarat
26.	Kalaigar	M.P.
27.	Kasab (kasai), Qasai	Bihar, West Bengal
28.	Khatki or Kasai, Chamadja, Halari Khatki	Gujarat

29.	Kulhia	Bihar
30.	Kunjara, Raine	M.P., Bihar, West Bengal
31.	Luhar, Saifi, Nagauri Luhar, Multani Luhar	M.P.
32.	Madari	Assam, Bihar, Haryana, H.P., Punjab, U.P., Chandi.
33.	Mahtar, Lalbegi, Halalkhor, Bhangi	Bihar
34.	Maimal (Muslim Fisherman)	Assam
35.	Majothi, Kumbhar, Darbar or Daban, Majothi	Gujarat
36.	Makrana	D & NH
37.	Makrani	Gujarat
38.	Manihar	M.P.
39.	Manipuri Muslim	Assam
40.	Matwa or Matwe-Kureshi	Gujarat
41.	Methar	A.P.
42.	Mewati, Meo	M.P., U.P.
43.	Mir, Dhadhi, Langha,	Gujarat
44.	Mirasi	M.P., Gujarat,
45.	Mirdha	M.P.
46.	Mirisin	Bihar
47.	Mirshikar	Bihar
48.	Miyana, Miana	Gujarat
49.	Mochi	M.P., Punjab
50.	Momin, Julah	Bihar, U.P.
51.	Mukri	Bihar
52.	Naddaf (Dhunja), Mansoori, Behna, Kandere, Kadere, Pinjara	Uttar Pradesh, M.P., Karnataka, Bihar
53.	Nalband	Bihar, M.P.
54.	Nat	Bihar
55.	Niyargar, Niyargar-Multani, Niyaria	M.P.
56.	Other Muslims excluding (i) Bohra, (ii) Cutchi Memon (iii) Navayat (iv) Dakhani Muslim (v) Turukkan	Kerala
57.	Other Muslims excluding (i) Cutchi Memon (ii) Navayat (iii) Bohra or Bhora or Borah (iv) Sayyid (v) sheik (vi) Pathan (vii) Mughal (viii) Mahdivia/ Mahdavi (ix) Konkani or Jamayati Muslims	Karnataka
58.	Pamaria	Bihar

59.	Pemdi	M.P.
60.	Ganchi-Pinjara, Mansuri-Pinjara	Gujarat
61.	Ladaf	Karnataka
62.	Rangrez	M.P., Bihar, Delhi, Mahara.
63.	Sandhi	Gujarat
64.	Sayee	Bihar
65.	Tadavi	M.P.
66.	Teli (Hindu & Muslim), Nayata, Pindai (Pindara)	M.P & West Bengal, Bihar
67.	Teli-Malik, Rogangar	U.P.
68.	Theba	Gujarat
69.	Valand, Khalipha	"
70.	V/Banjara	Gujarat, Bihar
71.	Shershahbadia	West Bengal, Bihar
72.	Sikligar	Bihar, Gujarat etc.
73.	Shekhra	Bihar
74.	Kumbara	Karnataka

NOTE: Most of the Castes mentioned above are present in more than one State. Consciously, not all the name of the States is given here. And also, many new castes were added by National Commission for Backward Classes.

Annexure III

Chart Showing the Occupational similarity between "Muslim OBCs" and "Hindu Scheduled Castes"

Serial Number	Muslim Castes as OBCs	Hindu Castes Who Match the Occupation of Muslim OBCs & Restricted Reservation for them	
		Name of the Caste OBCs/SCs/STS	
1.	Banjara/Bakho	Banjara	SC/ST
2.	Badhai	Badhai	OBC
3.	Bhat/Bhand	Bhand	SC
4.	Bhatia (Shershah Aabadi)	The Socio-Economic and Educational status of this regional Biradari resemble with ST	
5.	Bhathiara	Kotegar/Kotwaal	SC
6.	Bhishti	Kahar	OBC & SC (in some States)
7.	Chik	Katik	SC
8.	Churihara	Bhata/Laheri	SC
9.	Dafali (Drum Beater)	There are many caste who beats drum & all are kept in SC List	
10.	Dhobi	Dhobi	SC
11.	Dhunia (Turk Pasi)	Pasi, Dhuna	SC
12.	Darzi	Shilpkar/Damai	SC
13.	Fakir	Maang/Jogi	SC
14.	Gujar	Gujar	OBC & SC in some States
15.	Gaddi	Gaddi	OBC & SC in some States
16.	Gulguliya	Nat	SC
17.	Hajjam or Nai	Nai	OBC
18.	Julaha	Julaha	SC in Six States
19.	Kalal	Kalwar	OBC
20.	Kalandar (Madari/Bazigar)	Madari/Bazigar	SC
21.	Kulhaiya	No Match of Occupation with	

		Hindu Caste
22.	Kumhar	Kumhar OBC/SC in some States
23.	Kunjara	Katik SC in Ten States
24.	Kasaab	Katik SC in Ten States
25.	Lalbegi/Bhangi/Dom/Mehtar/Halakhori	Known by same name SC
26.	Lohar	Lohar SC
27.	Mali	Mali OBC
28.	Malaah	Malaah OBC
29.	Mirasi	Hurkiya SC
30.	Mirshikar	Chirimaar, Baheliya SC
31.	Mewati	Mewati OBC
32.	Mochi (Muchi)	Mochi SC
33.	Mukri	Mukri SC in 3 States
34.	Nalband	No Match
35.	Namoshudra (Bengali Muslim, holder of Mandal and Biswas title)	Namoshudra SC
36.	Nat	Nat SC
37.	Pamaria	177 Castes do singing and Dancing SC
38.	Pauds (Bengali Muslim who hold the Mandal, Chaudhary title)	Pauds SC
39.	Rangrez	Many Hindu Castes perform the occupation of Dying. All are in SC Lists
40.	Sikligar	Sikligar SC/OBC
41.	Teli	Teli OBC & SC in few States
42.	Shekhra	No Match

Annexure IV**Bihar Assembly Election Feb. 2005: List of Winner (Muslim Candidate)**

<u>S.No.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Caste</u>
1.	Md. OBAIDULLAH	Kesariya	East Champaran	JD (U)	Sheikh
2.	Riyazul Haq	Gopalganj	Gopalganj	BSP	"
3.	Azazul Haque	Ziradei	Siwan	RJD	"
4.	Abdul Bari Siddiqui	Baheda	Darbhanga	RJD	"
5.	Anis Ahmad	Laukaha	Madhubani	RJD	"
6.	Naiyyar Azam	Pandaul	Madhubani	RJD	"
7.	Abdus Shubhan	Baisi	Purnia	"	"
8.	Abdul Jalil Mastan	Amour	"	Congress	Shershahbadi (MBC list)
9.	Md. Afaq Alam	Kasba	"	S.P.	"
10.	Md. Saqoor	Barari	"	NCP	"
11.	Abdul Jalil	Kadwa	Katihar	"	"
12.	Maboob Alam	Barsoi	"	CPI(ML)	Kuhaiya (OBC)
13.	Mubarak Hussain	Manihari	"	Congress	Shershahbadi
14.	Dr. Monazir Hasan	Mungyer	"	JD(U)	Syed
15.	Jawed I. Ansari	Banka	Mungyer	RJD	Ansari
16.	Akhtarul Imam	Kishanganj	Kishanganj	"	Surjapuri
17.	Tausif Alam	Bahadurganj	"	IDP.	"
18.	Dr. Mohammad Jawed	Thakurganj	"	Congress	Sheikh
19.	Manzar Alam	Jokihat	"	JD(U)	Kuhaiya

20.	Ilyaas Husain	Dehri	Rohtas	RJD	Mukeri (OBC)
21.	Akhlaaq Ahmad	Vikramganj	“	“	Pathan
22.	Md. Nehaluddin	Rafiganj	Aurangabad	RJD	Sheikh
23.	Shakil A. Khan	Guruaa	Gaya	RJD	Pathan
24.	Shahid Ali Khan	Pupri	Sitamadhi	JD(U)	Pathan

Source: Pasmada Aawaz, March 2005.

Annexure VList of Successful Muslim Candidate in Bihar Assembly Re-election in Oct-Nov. 2005

<u>S. NO.</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>AREA</u>	<u>DISTRICT</u>	<u>PARTY</u>	<u>CASTE</u>
1.	Munnaf Alam	Barsoi	Katihar	CPI(ML)(L)	Kulhaiya
2.	Khurshed Alias Firoz Alam	Sikta	West Champaran	Congress	Pathan
3.	Md. Tousif Alam	Bahadurganj	Kishanganj	"	Surjapuri
4.	Abdul Jalil Mastan	Amour	Purnia	"	Shershahbadi
5.	Mubarak Hussain	Manihari	Katihar	"	"
6.	Syed Ruknudin	Baisi	Purnia	IDP.	Syed
7.	Shahid Ali Khan	Pupri	Sitamarhi	JD(U)	Pathan
8.	Jamshed Ashraf	Balia		"	Syed
9.	Manzar Alam	Jokihat	Kishanganj	"	Kulhaiya
10.	Monazir Hasan	Monghyr	Katihar	"	Syed
11.	Izhar Ahmad	Ghanshyampur	Darbhanga	LJP	Syed
12.	Abdul Jalil	Kadwa	Katihar	NCP	Shershahbadi
13.	A.B. Siddiqi	Bahera	Darbhanga	RJD	Sheikh
14.	Akhtarul	Kishanganj	Kishanganj	RJD	Surjapuri

	Iman				
15.	Md. Nehaluddin	Rafiganj	Aurangabad	"	Sheikh
16.	S.A.Khan	Gurua	Gaya	"	Pathan

Source: Pasmada Aawaz, March 2005; and internet site of Election Commission of India.

Annexure VI**Letter to Justice Rajinder Sachar - Pasmada and Dalit Muslims****Ali Anwar****To,****Justice Rajinder Sachar**

Chairperson, Prime Minister's High Level Committee for Preparation of Report on the Social Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community in India

Through this humble submission we would like to bring before you the situation of the Pasmada (Backward Caste) and Dalit Muslims who suffer extreme marginalization and oppression not only within Muslim society but also in the wider society. Indeed, they are looked down upon and suffer a social stigma closely comparable to that of the Hindu Dalits, a much deeper socio-economic disability than the Hindu Dalits and the extremely Backward Caste communities. Several of them have similar caste names as Hindu Dalits and Backward Caste communities and are engaged in the lowliest occupations such as scavenging and washing of clothes. But they are deprived of the Scheduled Caste facilities as are available to the Dalits among other communities.

Through a government Act (1935) Muslims Dalits were offered the facilities of reservation together with other Dalits. Unfortunately, the same was withdrawn by a Government Ordinance of the Honorable President of India in 1950. This was indeed a set back to the Dalit Muslims and was based on the wrong notions about the absence of discrimination among the Muslims and Christians. This is not true and fair to the judgment.

The Bihar Legislature was the first in the country to have recommended to the federal Government for the reservations for the Dalit Muslims in the year 2000. However, there is a conspiracy to consider the issue of reservation considering the entire Muslim community as a homogeneous mass. This would be a retrograde step and would go against the agenda of empowering the Dalits. This will help only the economically and socially upper castes among the Muslims.

You are well aware of the precarious conditions of the different Backward Caste and Dalit Muslim communities engaged in various traditional vocations like weaving, vegetable vending, block printing, stitching and entertainment. Because of the onslaught of globalization and wrong government economic policies such traditional caste groups are facing extinction and decay. You are also aware of the several cases of suicide that have been reported in the case of these communities because of crushing and growing poverty. Many of the People are living through nefarious means of survival including scandalous sale of blood and even sale of their children. This does not go well with the spirit of justice and equity. The Parliament and State Assemblies do not feel uncomfortable with such situations, as there is seldom a debate around such issues where as precious time is wasted on trivial issues. This represents the insignificance of such issues for them, which are relegated to the margin. Yet another reason is the total absence of representatives belonging to such communities.

Our key concerns:

1. Dalit Muslims should be given the benefits of reservation and other privileges as Scheduled castes in the State Legislature
2. People in the whole of the country furnish fabricated caste certificates and get into government jobs reserved for the marginalized and oppressed castes. Census based on caste might put an end to the corrupt practice of fabricating caste certificates.
3. The alternative to Multi-Nationals and New Economic Policy is to give people a new means of livelihood. It is very sad to note that among those who get license to export vegetables and fruits there is not even one from the community of those who have made cultivation as their profession. Similar things are going on with the other Backward Caste Muslim communities too.
4. The situation of the Muslims, who are weavers, cultivators, tailors, washermen, butchers, barbers, and such many artisans and professionals, is day-by-day becoming worse. The government must take proper steps to check this.
5. The onslaught of globalization is being acutely felt by the Indian industries. The loom owners need and demand continuous supply of electricity where as large amount of electricity is being consumed by the elites for their comforts and lavish living. There has to be assured supply of electricity to the sector on

- priority. The electricity has to be subsidized.
6. Poor law and order and indifferent government policy are crushing entrepreneurs in cities like Bhadohi, deprived of the basic infrastructure support like roads, electricity, and air link, or other cities like Varanasi (famous for its Banarasi saris) and Mau (famous for its handlooms), witnessing flight of people to other urban centers as they are not able to run their enterprises properly because of lack of infrastructure. Differential purchasing policy in Bihar is being systematically flouted and the government departments are making purchases from the mills. This deprives the looms and the local industry of economic opportunities.
7. The small village-based vocational groups accessing credit requirements through co-operatives which have suffered from serious mismanagement, nepotism and corruption. Some dominant groups have usurped the rights and privileges of the cooperatives and the poor entrepreneurs have been relegated to the margins. This needs to be seriously looked in to.
8. The Bihar State Handloom and handicraft corporation have become a hotbed of corruption and political interference. As referring to points 6-7, this also needs to be looked into.
9. Many traditional groups like weavers, fruit and vegetable growers and traders in the poor Backward Caste Muslim Kunjaras cannot compete with capital rich traders and businessmen who are using their resources to run businesses using modern terms of trade.
10. The removal of barriers on the import of hosiery is proving a deterrent to the small time tailors, many of whom belong to the Backward Muslim Darzi and Ansari castes.
11. The Pasmanda Cates in Bihar are covered, by and large, under Annexure I of the Other Backward Caste list and they have not to compete with dominant ruling castes. In UP and at the central level they (the Pasmandas) are clubbed together with the dominant castes under backward category. For example the Pasmandas in UP have to compete with the other powerful OBC communities. There is a need to rationalize reservation policies on the lie of Bihar in U.P and at the Central level. Otherwise reservation exclusively for the Muslim OBCs should be provided for.
12. In many states the major industry after agriculture and looms, is bidi making. This industry has been placed among the hazardous industries for health reasons but all the projects for the welfare of those involved in it, whether it is of the state or central government, remain on paper only.
13. For promoting the education and health of the Pasmanda Muslims, new projects are necessary. The Dalit and Pasmanda Muslims are totally ignored in the construction of houses under Indira Awas Yojna and distribution of Red

Ration Cards. The quota for this must be decided and it must be followed strictly.

14. Steps should be taken to put an end to caste system among Muslims and encourage inter-caste marriages. Islam gives equal status to women. This must be put into practice.

15. We would not appreciate any external interference with the Muslim Personal Law. This does not mean that by accepting certain fundamentals, we are not against certain necessary changes according to the present day circumstances. Even in many Islamic nations, such changes have been introduced.

16. The Indian Constitution has given the right to minority communities to run their educational institutions. But they, in no way, can go against the policy of reservation. In most of such institutions, all over the country, it is the upper class that has an upper hand. For these people, engineering colleges, medical colleges and other such institutions are place to make money in the name of donation while appointing the teaching and non-teaching staff as well as taking admission of students. Strong steps should be taken against such institutions.

17. Just as among the Savarna Hindus, so, too, among the forward Muslims there are poor people. There is no provision in the Indian Constitution for reservation based on economic backwardness, but for such poor people there should be separate economic development policies.

18. People look at Urdu as the language of Muslims, which is a great disservice to Urdu. The Madrasas should be oriented more scientifically and job oriented. Urdu language should be given the status of second national language and Urdu translators should be appointed in each department from the Block level to state level and up to the central government.

Ali Anwar

President, All India Pasmanda Muslim Mahaz

Source: [www. Asian Human Rights Commission.com](http://www.AsianHumanRightsCommission.com)

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