

**COW-PROTECTION MOVEMENT AND THE COMMUNAL RIOTS IN
INDIA: A CASE STUDY OF AZAMGARH AND SHAHABAD RIOTS**

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CERTIFICATE

Certified that the Dissertation entitled "Cow-Protection Movement and the Communal Riots in India: A Case study of Azamgarh and Shahabad Riots", submitted by Rahman Muzammil Khalil is in partial fulfilment of requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of this university. This dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this university, or any other university, and is his original work.

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To
My Parents

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Rahman Muzammil Khalil

INTRODUCTION

India witnessed numerous communal riots during nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Though, these communal outbreaks were occasional, it posed a serious challenge to the functioning of civil society. So the reasons and mechanism of these riots needs to be analysed.

This research proposes to understand the Azamgarh riots of 1893 and Shahabad riots of 1917, in which Cow-Protection Movement played an important role. By trying to analyse these two riots, an attempt is made to understand the nature and circumstances of communal riots in India. Though these two riots are not representative of the entire country, it points to certain important aspects of communal riots. As communalism and communal riots are related with each other, it is better to take a look at some of the existing literature on communalism and communal riots.

The two-nation theory asserts that there had never been a confluence of Hindu and Muslim Civilizations and that the Muslim separatist movement which led to the establishment of Pakistan was, therefore, a natural and expected development.¹

Opposed to this thesis of communal conflict as a pre-colonial phenomenon is the argument that it was the British Policy of 'divide and rule' which fostered Muslim separatism as a Counterpoise to the development of a united nationalist movement.² Communalism is here considered as a purely modern phenomenon, the product of the capitalist era which emerged from specific policies sparked off by British government.³

Communalism has been described as 'the false consciousness' of the historical process of the last 150 years.⁴ it was distorted reflection of the aspirations, fears and sentiments of sections of the Indian people.⁵

From another viewpoint communalism is explained as a product of an attempt by the backward Muslim Community to 'get a fair share' within the structure of the British Raj.⁶ By creating 'new arenas of local power' the British Constitutional reforms of the 20th century are believed to have caused the development and realignment of communalist forces.⁷

Suranjan Das has analysed the riots in Bengal in the first half of 20th century. He says that in some cases these riots were the combination of economic and communal aspects, while in

other cases these riots were the combination of political and communal aspects.⁸

Sugata Bose says that economic factors were responsible for 1946 'communal holocaust' in Eastern Bengal. He explains it in the context of the breaking down of traditional economic 'symbiosis' between the Muslim small holding peasants and their Hindu traders and talukdar (landlord) creditors.⁹

Gyanendra Pandey, analyses the tension between Hindus and Muslims in terms of the economic, social and political dislocation of the colonial period and the struggle to safeguard traditions, honour, identity and power.¹⁰

I have divided the dissertation into two chapters. The first chapter is on Azamgarh riots which took place in June 1893, in the Azamgarh district of North-west Provinces. The second chapter deals with Shahabad riots, which took place in September 1917. Shahabad district was in the province of Bihar and Orissa.

Azamgarh and Shahabad riots are analysed in this dissertation because these two riots have many similarities. Azamgarh district was in the eastern part of North-west Provinces and Shahabad district was in the western part of the Bengal Presidency and later on (after the

creation of the province of Bihar and Orissa in 1911) it came under the western part of the Province of Bihar and Orissa. Eastern part of North-West Provinces and western part of the Bengal Presidency were connected with each other, and in this area *Bhojpuri* was spoken. So both the above mentioned districts came under the Bhojpuri speaking belt.

Another similarity between the above mentioned communal riots in these two districts was that both were related with cow-killing, and in both these two cases, efforts by Indian political parties to politicise the masses to put pressure on the British government to grant political and other Concessions, were indirectly responsible for the riots, as in both these two cases, religious symbol was used to mobilize the masses.

Shahabad riots were a bit different from Azamgarh riots because these riots occurred after a gap of 25 years from Azamgarh riots, and in these riots cow-Protection Societies were not firmly institutionalized and organized as in the case of Azamgarh riots. Never the less, the issue of Cow-killing was used in the Shahabad riots.

In the first chapter, the background of tension between Hindus and Muslims is studied i.e. role of colonial construction of the Indian past, revivalist movements, process of identity formation of different

religious communities, press and role of modern education and politics.¹¹ Beside this, an attempt is made to study the forces which operated behind the rise of tension between Hindus and Muslims. These forces, were zamindars, priests, political agitators and lower subordinate Hindu officials.¹² These forces were involved in the Cow-Protection Movement.

My study of the role of zamindars in the Cow-Protection Movement and in the outbreak of communal disturbances, supports the view of Sandria Frietag.¹³ I shall discuss the views of different historians regarding Cow-Protection Movement, Communal tension and communal disturbances, in the main body of the dissertation.

Regarding the role of lower subordinate Hindu officials in the Cow-Protection Movement, my research is similar to the work of Sandria Frietag.

My research will also show that how the activities of Cow-Protection Movement, proceedings of British officials and innovations introduced by Muslims in sacrifice of cattles, in some cases, were responsible for the riots.

The immediate cause of the riots in Azamgarh and Shahabad was the attempt by the Hindus to prevent the sacrifice of cows on the occasion of Baqr-Id, and the Muslim resistance to it.

In the second chapter, which is on Shahabad riots, I have tried to show how the mixing of communal consciousness with anti-imperialist struggle was indirectly responsible for the riots.

In this dissertation, I shall analyse the background of tension between Hindus and Muslims, the method of mass mobilization, organization, functioning and activities of Cow-Protection societies, and the colonial state's handling of the situation.

Notes:

¹ There are representative of this school both in Pakistan and India. For Pakistani historians, see I.H. Qureshi, 'The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent 610-1947 (The Hague, 1962); K.B. Sayeed, 'Pakistan: The Formative phase 1857-1948 (London, 1968); Foundations of Pakistan: All-India Muslim league Documents 1906-1947, ed. S.S. Pirzada, (Karachi, 1970). For Indian Historians see R.C. Mazumdar, 'History of the Freedom Movement in India, 3 Volumes (Calcutta, 1962-63) and M.R. Baig, 'The Muslim Dilemma in India (Delhi 1947).

² R. Gopal, 'Indian Muslims: A Political History 1858-1947 (Bombay, 1959); A. Mehta and A. Patwardhan, 'The Communal Triangle in India (Allahabad, 1942); R. Prasad, 'India Divided' (Bombay, 1946).

³ Bipan Chandra, 'Communalism in Modern India (Delhi, 1984).

⁴ Ibid, p. 23.

⁵ Ibid, p. 30

⁶ W.W. Hunter, 'The Indian Musalmans' (Delhi, 1969 edition); W.S. Smith, 'Modern Islam in India, A Social Analysis (London, 1946).

⁷ F. Robinson, 'Separatism among Indian Muslims'. David Page, 'Prelude to partition'. M. Hasan, 'Communalism in the provinces: A Case study of Bengal and Punjab 1922-26' in *Communal and Pan-Islamic trends in colonial India*, ed. M. Hasan (Delhi, 1981).

⁸ Suranjan Das, 'Communal Riots in Bengal 1905-1947', Published by Oxford University Press, 1991.

⁹ Sugata Bose, 'Agrarian Bengal: Economy, Social Structure and Politics 1919-1947'.(Cambridge, 1986).

¹⁰ Gyanendra Pandey, 'The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India; OUP, 1990.

¹¹ Home Deptt. Public File, File Nos. 169-189, November 1893, National Archives of India, New Delhi.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Sandria Freitag, 'Collective Action and Community: Public Arenas and the emergence of communalism in North India, p. 167, p. 171.

CHAPTER - I
COW-PROTECTION MOVEMENT AND THE AZAMGARH
RIOTS OF 1893.

Azamgarh riots of June 1893 were the most severe communal riots among the major communal outbreaks which took place in the North-west provinces during the late nineteenth century India. It took place in the last week of June 1893. In this chapter, I shall discuss the circumstances which led to these disturbances, and the events which were related with these disturbances.

Azamgarh district was the southernmost part of Gorakhpur division, which came under North-west provinces.¹ Azamgarh district was bounded on the east by the Ballia district, on the south by the districts of Jaunpur and Ghazipur, on the west by those of Jaunpur and Sultanpur, and on the north by the districts of Fyzabad and Gorakhpur.

The total area of the district was 1,413,731 acres. The extreme length of the district from west to east was 69 miles, and the extreme breadth from north to south was 54 miles.

There was no large town in the district and the urban population only amounted to 5.9 per cent of the whole. In 1901, Azamgarh contained 4,700 towns and villages. The largest town was Azamgarh, which contained 18,835 persons, and after this came Mau and Mubarakpur which had 17,696 and 15,433 persons respectively. These were followed by Muhammadabad, Kapaganj and Dubari all of which had over 500 inhabitants, the other towns being Sarai Mir, Dohri, Chiriakot, Phulpur, Atraulia and Maharajganj.

As per the census of 1891, the District had a population of 1,728,625 persons. At the census of 1901, the density of population was 804.6 persons to the square mile, a figure which was almost equal to that of Ballia, and exceeded that of all other districts, if the city population in the latter be excluded. The population comprised 757,314 males and 772,471 females. In 1901, the population was made up of 1,313,371 Hindus, 214,631 Muslims, 1,455 Sikhs, 185 Christians, 130 Aryas, 11 Jains, one Jew and one Parsi. Hindus comprised 85.85 per cent whereas Muslims comprised 14.03 per cent of the whole population. In 1891, the Hindu population was 1,50,0000 and the Muslim population was 225,000.²

The cattle census of 1899 ascertained that there were 296,695 bulls and bullocks and 9,601 male buffalos, giving a total of 306,296 plough animals, with the average of 2.12 animals per plough.³ This figure was the lowest of any district in the provinces at the time, except BaraBanki, and was considerably below the provincial average.

Cow-Protection Movement had been started in 1870s, at the inspiration of Dayanand.⁴ The Movement was started in Punjab.⁵ Dayanand Saraswati formed the first Ga'orakshini Sabha in 1882. Tilak was a supporter of the Cow-Protection movement. Cow-Protection Movement spread in two phases. In the first phase, it was concentrated to the urban centres of United Provinces and Central Provinces. The cow-protection movement entered its second phase by 1891-92, when the centre of support shifted quite noticeably to the rural parts of eastern districts of United Provinces. These districts were Ghazipur, Ballia, Azamgarh and Gorakhpur. Initially, the cow-protection societies were active in the western parts of Bengal Presidency, then gradually it spread to the eastern parts of North-West provinces, as both these areas were connected with each other.⁶

The Network of Gaurakshini Sabhas established in the 1880s and 1890s were almost disbanded, and the movement was effectively suppressed by the British government, after the Azamgarh riots of 1893.⁷ But the movement surfaced again as a major force in the Bhojpuri region⁸ in the years after 1910.

Initially, the cow protection societies were in the form of voluntary associations, in the Azamgarh district. At the beginning of 1893, these societies passed out the form of voluntary associations and assumed the organization of a league. On 15th May 1893, the league was organized at a meeting in Azamgarh town.

The organization of the Gaurakshini league covered the parganas of Sagri and Mohammadabad, a great part of Pargana Nizamabad, and part of Pargana Deogaon where it borders on Nizamabad and Muhammadabad. This practically included the eastern half of the district.

In Pargana Nizamabad the Kotwali police circle was the main centre of Cow-Protection Movement.

Several historians have written about the Gaurakshini Sabhas and the riots linked with the question of Cow-Protection, and sought to account for this massive outbreak of sectarian

strife in the Bhojpuri region. Francis Robinson views the agitation around this issue as a product of elite (and *ipso facto* urban) initiative, which petered out because of insufficient mass support.⁹

Peter Robb suggests that the Cow-Protection agitation and riots represented the last-ditch efforts of declining zamindari class, threatened by its own over-population, a sharp rise in prices and the growing assertiveness of a tenantry that was now better protected than ever before.¹⁰ 'Displacement of leaders (Zamindars and officials) associated with fluctuating prices: this is the picture which emerges in the background of the Shahabad riots of 1917. By unfurling the banner of the cow, and deliberate assaults upon the villages and homes of Muslim neighbours, the Hindu zamindars of the district apparently hoped to bring back to the fold their increasingly recalcitrant tenants and other dependants.

There are three different versions on the Azamgarh riots of 1893. Firstly, I shall mention these three different versions separately, and then on the basis of these three versions, I shall put forward my analysis of the circumstances which led to the outbreak of communal disturbances.

About the background of communal riots, the official viewpoint indicates towards the socio-cultural inclinations of communities, and the political and economic changes which took place during British rule.

The official viewpoint says that an important cause which contributed to embitter the relations between the two religious communities was the greater forwardness of the Hindus in the race of life and their more active participation in the spirit and practice of modern political organization in the 19th century.¹¹ Education had made most progress among the Hindus, while the Muslims had to a large extent and during the greater part of 19th century, stood aloof from instruction conveyed in English. Public employment and success in the legal and other professions had thus become to a great degree the exclusive possession of Hindus. For the same reasons the conduct of the newspaper press was done mainly by the Hindus; and political agitation, as it was carried on in India, had, therefore, a generally Hindu complexion. The effect of the exclusion from public and private employment embittered the minds of Muslims against the Hindus, and the awareness of their past state of supermacy contributed to make this feeling more intense. Hindus were also having ill-feelings against Muslims, due to their awareness of

their former 'enforced submissiveness' (in pre-British period).¹² Political controversy was carried on by younger and more reckless speakers and writers of both parties.¹³ Due to their estrangement, in some cases, Muslims committed excesses in the form of increasingly ostentatious exercise of their right to slaughter kine.

Bipan Chandra in his book 'Communalism in Modern India',¹⁴ has discussed this issue of 'backwardness of Muslims'. He says that due to colonial rule, India as a whole was suffering from under-development. So the Muslim backwardness was one aspect of the larger backwardness of Indians, and colonialism was the main obstacle in the removal of backwardness and under development. He describes communalism as the 'false consciousness' of the real aspirations of Indians. Due to their own vested interests Hindu and Muslim elites and sections of middle classes had deliberately or undeliberately created the notion that the 'other' community was in a way, responsible for the backwardness of their community. He further analyses the backwardness of Muslims in the field of public employment, legal and some other professions, in terms of their remaining aloof from instruction conveyed in English.

Another cause of friction between the two communities, was 'Hindu Revival'.¹⁵ It meant greater activity shown in promoting respect for the doctrines and observances of Hinduism. 'Hindu revival' was a reaction to the spread of western ideas which advocated indifference to religious affairs. The 'Hindu revival' – the essence of which was the drawing tighter of the bonds of Hindu discipline, and the inculcation of respect for Brahmans and of veneration for the Cow was a symptom of this reaction against the influx of western ideas and habits, though it may also to some extent be possibly regarded as a protest against the free slaughter of kine by Muslims.

On this issue, Bipan Chandra views that growth of revivalist movement among different religious communities contributed to the growth of communalism.¹⁶ Revitalization of Arya Samaj, spread of Sanatan Dharma Sabhas and the Cow-Protection Movement provided channels of Hindu revivalism and orthodoxy.

The second half of 19th century also saw the process of identity formation and drive for unification of various religious communities. The Cow-Protection Movement was the product of the drive for identity formation and unification of the Hindu

community. The cow Protection Movement used the sacred symbol of Cow to realize these goals. 'The Pioneer' newspaper¹⁷, expresses this view in these words, 'The wire pullers who play upon the feelings of the community care as little no doubt for the cow as they do for the sheep; but they are keenly alive to the value of the animal as a means of uniting Hindu opinion'.

On the issue of identity formation and unification of different religious communities, Bipan Chandra says that these developments were the product of the politics of middle classes, and it did not address the genuine requirement of the rest of the masses. The main social base of communalism was constituted by the middle classes.¹⁸ Sections of the middle classes and the intelligentsia were perpetually surrounded by a communal outlook in politics, in the press, in literature, and particularly in the educational system.¹⁹ The middle classes faced a constant threat to their economic position and social status and also the danger of the erosion and even loss of their identity.²⁰ They looked at their crises with a narrow and communal outlook. The sense of loss of identity and status among them led to the increase in tension. Sacrifice of cow, music before mosque and other religious symbols represented the preservation or destruction of the 'petty ego'. The rise of modern press and

pamphleteering led to the wider spread and reach of communal propaganda.

Gyanendra Pandey has looked at it in a different manner. He says that political and economic determinism in analyzing this issue is not adequate, and the 'consciousness' of the masses is to be understood. He views that the defense of institutions and practices were symbolic for the community, their ascendancy and self-respect.²¹ He further says that social and economic changes brought about by colonialism, Indian effort to defend the indigenous religion and culture against western missionary attacks, 'the "unifying" drive of the colonial state—which was marked at the level of administrative structure and attempted political control ("Muslims" must not be antagonized, "Hindu" sensibilities must not be touched), the activities widely publicized the idea of Hindu Community'. Due to these factors, the construction of the idea of Hindu Community took place at the end of 19th century. The same was the case with Muslims.

Sandria Freitag points out that colonial actions played important role in the construction of identities. She says that previously regional and caste identities were the main identities. In the late nineteenth century, however, an important new

process of forging group identities which transcended these local attributions came to characterize South Asian social history. This was in part promoted by the efforts of an alien British administration to identify the constituent units in Indian society.²² The administrators applied the collective labels "Hindu" and "Muslim" to groups who were far from homogenous communities. She further says that Cow-Protection movement proved important for the Hindu definition of a community. The movement was used to combine different sections of Hindu community.

To some extent, the press played an important role in causing ill-feelings between the two communities.²³ Some of the newspapers preached that the government officers were everywhere showing undue favour to Muslims because they had rejected the congress, while the officers were prejudiced against the Hindus because Hindus were supporting the congress.²⁴ The constant harping upon this theme created ill-feelings between the two communities.

Bipan Chandra has also highlighted the role of newspapers in causing disharmony between the two religious communities. He says that a large number of newspapers such as the 'Tribune',

'Amrit Bazar Patrika' and the 'Leader', and a vast mass of Hindi, Bengali and Marathi newspapers, known as nationalist newspapers and serving as the main printed vehicles for nationalist propaganda, simultaneously championed Hindu Communal Causes.²⁵ The same case was with the sections of middle classes who participated in the National Movement as well as served the communal politics.

Suranjan Das, too blames the newspapers for causing tension between these two communities. He says that during the fourth decade of twentieth century, 'Muslim Press' and leadership incited the Muslim masses to riot, and propagated the issue of Pakistan.²⁶

Due to modern education and many other factors, ideas of politics of agitation and mass mobilization came to surface and many political organizations were set up in various parts of the country.²⁷ Political leaders had various political demands, from the British government i.e. demand for local self-government, the enlargement of councils and the demands related with civil services examinations, and for the fulfillment of these demands, beside other methods, mass mobilization and agitation were considered to be important. Various issues and methods were

used to mobilize the masses and to create the mass base. Demand for the protection of cow was one of the issues for realizing the above mentioned goal, and Cow-Protection Societies were the instruments through which these goals were fulfilled.²⁸ In Azamgarh, Cow-Protection Movement was also favoured by many of those persons who had in years gone by put themselves forward as congress leaders.²⁹ They were principally *mukhtars*,³⁰ i.e. Gauri Shankar Singh, Hira Lal etc. Subscriptions³¹ raised among these men were said to be deposited with Hira Lal.

Though these societies managed to create the mass base and mobilize the masses, the issue or the religious symbol which they used, caused hostility between Hindus and Muslims of Azamgarh district.

John McLane views that Cow-Protection Movement was produced by Hindu leaders of the Congress.³²

Bipan Chandra says that though quite a few Hindu Congressmen, especially at the middle levels of leadership, were communal, the congress leadership stood firm and, on the whole, refused to side with either communal party or rather with any communal group.³³

Relationship between Hindus and Muslims of Azamgarh was pretty good untill the third quarter of 19th Century.³⁴ Due to the above mentioned factors, bitterness among them surfaced, in the last quarter of nineteenth century.

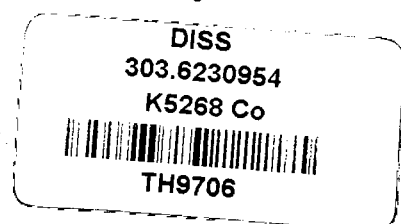
Cow-Protection Movement was largely responsible for the worsening of relationship between Hindus and Muslims, and consequently, for the riots of 1893 in Azamgarh district.³⁵ It was also responsible for riots in Ballia, Bareilly (North-west Provinces), Saran, Shahabad and other parts of the western part of Bengal presidency.

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Regarding this point, Peter Robb comes to the conclusion that Cow-Protection societies were causing strong sentiments among Hindus against the slaughter of Cow.³⁶

Regarding the Cow-Protection Societies, Anand A Yang says that the agitators and preachers of Cow-Protection Societies instigated the mobs. By their speeches and actions they created hostility between the two communities.³⁷

Among the Cow Protectionists, there were three classes in Azamgarh, and they had their own interests for their participation in the movement.³⁸ These were agitators, priests and the zamindars. The agitators consisted chiefly of educated



English speaking persons. The agitators were for the most part, men with a veneer of western ideas. They had poor economic condition, and they lived on the proceeds of the subscription they levied from the masses. Dupernex, the officiating Magistrate of Azamgarh, described their activities in these words: "It is their trade to create disturbances as the money flows freely into their pockets when their Dupes got involved in criminal proceedings".

One example of such type of agitators, was Jagdeo Bahadur, of Nagra, District Ballia. He was a high class Kshattri and was the soul of the movement in these parts. He was usually spoken of as the president of the Ballia League. He organized Sabhas and conferences to prevent the sacrifice of Cow on the occasion of *Baqr-Id*, in the Azamgarh district.

He had a fair estate once, but he fell into the hands of the Mahajans (money lenders), and of late years he was said to have lived by his wits.

Regarding Jagdeo Bahadur, Dupernex, the officiating Magistrate of Azamgarh, writes that he was told that the antecedents of Jagdeo Bahadur was not good, though he was not in a position to verify that his father was transported for riot, and that he himself was dismissed for misconduct from

government services. He was said to have been at one time a judicial Muharrir in the Sagri tahsil in Azamgarh district.

He stayed in Azamgarh district, during the two months preceding the riots of 1893. He used to go to Allahabad to transact legal business in the High Court for those people who had at his instigation involved themselves by rioting and cattle-lifting in criminal proceedings. The officials believed that it was he who mainly provided for the concealment of cattle stolen from butchers. on 23rd June, two days before the outbreak of riots, he was seen at Jianpur in Azamgarh district, in conference with the local leaders. He led the mob to Mau, a place in Azamgarh district where the main rioting took place, and organized the steps to prevent the sacrifice, but he did not participate in actual rioting.

Khaki Baba, the fakir, was another agitator. For the last few weeks (before riots) reports had come from different parts of the district in which khaki Baba had been named as the principal orator.

Cow-Protection Movement outside the Sagri and Muhammadabad tahsils seemed to have been associated with him and with one or two other Fakirs.

The Priests and Brahmans vigorously supported the movement and were foremost in proclaiming the religious necessity of protecting the sacred cow. The spread of the movement was undoubtedly to their advantage as it gave them an opportunity of re-establishing their spiritual ascendancy on its former basis.

The majority of Zamindars believed in the religious necessity of supporting the agitation.³⁹ They levied subscriptions from their tenants and deposited them with some fakir or zamindar.

So apart from serving the wider interests i.e. for mobilizing the masses for getting political favours from the British government and for identity formation and unification of the Hindu Community, Cow-Protection Movement also served the interests of priests and other agitators.

Sandria Frietag points out the role of Zamindars in mobilizing the masses to prevent the sacrifice of cow, and says that zamindars led the masses to the places of riot.⁴⁰

Gyanendra Pandey says about the participation of zamindars in the riots,⁴¹ and he points to the role of the barristers, pleaders, mukhtars and persons belonging to the

influential gentry of the district, in holding meetings related with Cow-Protection.

A striking feature of the movement was the favour it found among the lower Subordinate Hindu officials. These persons included school masters, sub postmasters and kanungos. Most of the leading Hindus of Mau town and its neighbourhood sympathized and aided in the movement.

Peter Robb says that government enquiries revealed the involvement of government servants—tahsildars, kanungos, Patwaris and especially school masters.⁴² He says that in Saran district, which was in the western part of Bengal presidency, Cow-Protection meetings in 1894 were held in the Judge's compound.⁴³ A Magistrate at Patna, Raghu Nandan Prasad, was the chairman of one of the gaurakshini sabhas. Local officials, the government was convinced, had not reported or tried to prevent the illegal aspects of the movement; preachers and disciples had been allowed to tour extensively without supervision, and inflammatory pamphlets had not been checked or even sent to the district magistrate for information. The organization of the civil government had been 'used' to disseminate and enforce the movement's ideas.⁴⁴

Sandria Frietag has also highlighted the role of subordinate officials in organizing the meetings related with Cow-Protection.⁴⁵

In the initial phase of the Cow-Protection Movement, the aims and objects of the Cow-Protection Societies were laudable.⁴⁶ The movement was directed towards the preservation and improvement of the breed of cattle, which it was alleged were decreasing in numbers and deteriorating in quality. The preachers sent forth by the societies inculcated the duty of treating the cattle with kindness, and of providing an asylum for sick and infirm animals. To this was soon added the corollary that no Hindu should sell cattle to persons who were likely to slaughter them, that if a Hindu found himself compelled to sell cattle in a fair, he should inform the society who would purchase the animal and place it in an asylum. For the expenses of the society and for the purchase of cattle, voluntary contributions were made by many devout and well meaning Hindus.

Nats, banjaras (Nomads) and cobblers used to buy cow and sell them to butchers. So, it was decided that cow shall not be sold to cobblers without the permission of the Sabhapati (an official of the Cow-Protection League). As the cobblers were considered to be indirectly responsible for the slaughter of Cow,

so it was decided that as a punishment, cobblers would not be employed to attend cows, and they would not be employed as cowherd.

Other rules which these societies framed were that contributions were made compulsory on all Hindus under penalty of exclusion from caste. Each household was directed to set apart at each meal one *chutki* (equal in weight or value to one paisa) of food stuff for each member of the family. The eating of food without setting apart the *chutki* was declared to be an offence equal to that of eating cow's flesh. The contribution of a *chutki*, or pinch equal to one paisa, either in weight or value of food stuff per member of a household at each meal daily seems a trifle when looked at as an single heap, but when the daily heaps of a whole village were brought together and these heaps were accumulated for a month, the total proceeds were immense. These heaps were collected and guarded. For this purpose, agents called *Sabhasads* were told off, one *sabhasad* to a small village and two to a larger, and so on. In large *qasbas*, there were several *sabhasads*. These agents sold the collected *chutkis* and paid the money to the *sabhapati*, who was placed over 40 or 50 villages.

Pounds were established to which cattle found trespassing were brought and in which fines were levied for the benefit of the league. In these pounds cattle were impounded and the fees were taken by zamindars and devoted to the purposes of the league. Gradually cow-protection societies began to resort to methods of intimidation .

The necessary corollary was a widespread system of intimidation. Men were stopped on the way and forced to resort to the zamindar's pound, and owners of straying cattle were blackmailed by irresponsible tribunals.

Gradually the activities of Cow-Protection societies were directed towards negative propaganda. The Cow-Protection league started a vigorous propaganda against the slaughter of Cows.⁴⁷

A large number of treatises and books were printed and circulated, which were related with the protection of cows. These books were written in most excitable language, and Muslims were called in these books *malikshas* (impure ones) and *rakshasas* (demons). Hindus were incited in plain terms to bestir themselves in the cause of Cow-Protection.⁴⁸

W. Hoey, Magistrate of Gorakhpur, obtained a copy of the cow picture, which was aimed at causing ill-feelings between Hindus and Muslims.⁴⁹ Other copies of this cow picture had been circulated by the Cow-Protection society. This picture represented a cow in whose body all the Hindu gods were depicted as residing. A calf was at her udder and a woman sat before the calf holding a bowl waiting for her turn. This woman was labeled: "The Hindu". Behind the cow above her tail was a representation as of Krishna labelled "*Dharmraj*", and in front of the cow above her head was a man with a drawn sword labelled "*kaliyug*". This picture was kept on a stool among the gathering of people and a preacher who produced this picture expatiated on its meaning. While telling the meaning of the picture, he said, "The Hindu must only take the cow's milk after the calf has been satisfied. In the 'Dharamraj' of the satyug no Hindu would kill a cow, but the kaliyug is bent upon killing the cow and exterminating kine. As every man drinks cow's milk just as he as an infant has drawn milk from his mother, the cow must be regarded as the universal mother, and so is called 'Gao Mata'. It is matricide to kill a cow. Nay more, as all the gods dwell in the cow, to kill a cow is to insult every Hindu".

In another picture which was in circulation, a Muslim was represented with a drawn sword sacrificing a cow. This picture was issued by the order of the Gau-rakshini sabha.

Gyanendra Pandey, in his work, has mentioned the activities of Cow-Protection Societies in this area.⁵⁰ These activities included circulation of numerous pamphlets, leaflets and pictures of the cow.

Resolutions were passed forbidding the sale of cattle to Muslims, forbidding the purchase of cloth from Muslims and, in some cases, proposals had been made to exclude Muslims from the use of village wells.⁵¹

Muslims were asked not to slaughter cattle under any condition.⁵² The demands had been backed up by threats of boycotting and loot. Where the Muslims were weavers, the threat of boycotting appeared to be usually employed, the idea being that no cloth should be bought by Hindus from weavers, and no grain sold to weavers by Hindu baniyas. The threat to loot was given when a land-owning Muslim community was being dealt with.

Gyanendra Pandey has highlighted this issue and says that Muslim weavers and zamindars were threatened to comply with the demands.⁵³

The policy of intimidation was also used against those Hindus, who sold cattle to Muslims.⁵⁴ For instance, few weeks before the outbreak of disturbances in Azamgarh, a case came under the notice of Dupernex, in which a respectable Hindu farmer had been boycotted for selling a bullock to a Muslim. His name was Lachhman paure and was a resident of Pargana Sagri. For selling his bullock to a Muslim, some of the villagers pulled down the tiles of his roof and smashed his earthen vessels. The irrigation of his sugarcane field was stopped. They threatened him that if he did not get the bullock back they would loot his house and kill him.

Cow-Protection demonstrations were organized at Jianpur, Azmatgarh, Gawdih and some other places.

The gathering of persons at certain places had been planned and arranged beforehand, and men in large numbers were collected to prevent the sacrifice of cow on the occasion of *Baqr-Id*, in the Azamgarh district.⁵⁵ These men were collected from Azamgarh, Gorakhpur and Ghazipur districts. In 1893, the

Baqr-Id was on 25th of June, and the riots erupted from this day and lasted for the next few days.

Even before the outbreak of communal riots in June 1893, many cases occurred which were the result of the Cow-Protection Movement.⁵⁶

The first part of the district affected by the movement was that lying between the Pakka road from Gorakhpur to Ghaziapur and the Ballia border.⁵⁷

In December 1892, 51 cattle were rescued from the butchers. In the early part of January 1893, the Hindu villagers round Kapaganj waylaid a herd of cattle that were being driven into Banaras and rescued them from the butchers in charge. The cattle which were being driven towards Ballia, were recovered by the police, but immense number of villagers assembled and again forcibly rescued the cattle and carried them over the Ballia border.

Riots between Hindus and Muslims occurred at a *Mela* (fair) at Salempur in Gorakhpur district on 19th April. Several Hindus and Muslims were severely injured in this. The riots occurred when Hindus tried to take the herds of cattle from the Muslim butchers at a mela (fair), by force.⁵⁸

On 22nd April 1893, at Sonadeh, on the high road, a butcher was stopped and the buffalo he was driving was taken from him. At Sikandarpur, on 22nd May, several hundred of Hindus assembled and deprived a Muslim of a buffalo which he was about to kill for a wedding feast.

On 25th June, which was the day of *Baqr-Id*, excited bodies of Hindus led by men of education and social position,⁵⁹ wandered round the district demanding, under threats of injury to person and property, the prompt surrender by the Muslims of the cattle destined for sacrifice and requiring from them an agreement that they would abstain from the sacrifice of kine in the future. After their demands were met, they attacked the Muslim houses in the elation of victory and to plunder. The centre of the disturbance was the town of Mau. Riots took place in five places in Azamgarh district. In some places in the interior, the British government ceased to exist at different times on the 25th of June.⁶⁰ There were 35 cases of unlawful assemblies and rioting, nearly all were the work of large bodies of excited Hindus. In some places, Muslims surrendered to the mobs without fighting, while at some other places, they surrendered after the fight. Many persons from both the communities were killed and injured in the fight.

81 persons (Hindus) were convicted for their involvement in these riots. Out of this, 9 were sentenced to transportation for life and others were sentenced to imprisonment, varying from 1 to 10 years imprisonment.

Gausiam Narain Misr, Jagdeo Bahadur, Sudist Narain Singh and Khaki Baba were mainly responsible for exciting the feelings of the masses and for assembling them at various places to prevent sacrifice.

The police guards who were on the spot, stated that a number of zamindars were there on elephants and marshelling the people. It was reported that Jagdeo led the men to Mau. Though Jagdeo kept clear of participation in the actual rioting, he organized it.

Gausiam Narain Misr played very important role in holding meetings. Next to Jagdeo, he took rank as the leading agitator in the eastern part of the district. He lived at Nimdand on the Ballia border.

Sudisht Narain Singh was a resident of Mau and was very influential. It was reported by the official sources that he got the letters circulated. He was mainly responsible for the disturbances at Mau.

Khaki Baba played key role in organizing the Sabhas.

Beside these persons, many other persons of better education and position led the masses. About them, Charles Crosthwaite, the Lieutenant Governor of North-west provinces, commented in these words: "The persons I wish to detect and punish are those men of better education and position who have led the ignorant astray. Unfortunately, it is difficult to convict these men, although we may know who they are".⁶¹

Many zamindars also led the masses.

Not even a single zamindar of Azamgarh or neighbouring districts did cooperate with the administration. They did not give information or warning to the Magistrate or police of what was going to happen.⁶²

To prevent the disturbances, the arrangements made by the magistrate of Azamgarh for the distribution of his force and of the work of supervision were good and judicious.⁶³

Neither he nor his subordinates anticipated any trouble beyond local disturbances between the two factions residing in the same villages or towns. What the magistrate (Dupernex) expected was that there would have been several cases of attempted rescue of cattle set apart for the *Kurbani* (sacrificial)

purposes in out-of-the way villages. And to meet these intra-district cases he had already applied, to the higher authorities for some additional armed police, which were sent to him. Dupernex had not expected that his district would have been 'invaded from outside by thousands of Hindus' at different points on the Ballia and Ghazipur border.

The disturbances which took place during the Baqr-Id were of a very different character. of 35 cases of unlawful assemblies and rioting, nearly all were the work of large bodies of excited Hindus who had been collected from distant villages and from the Ballia and Ghazipur districts, to join in an attempt to prevent the Muslims from sacrificing the cows.

Police was present at the time of attack, in most of the villages which were attacked, but they were unable to prevent the attack, due to their small number. In some cases, police intervened and checked the disturbances. The native police officers and men appeared to have acted well, also considering their small numbers.⁶⁴

In view of the expected differences, Dupernex took certain measures to prevent the disturbances.⁶⁵ Dupernex, the officiating magistrate of Azamgarh District, on 13th of March ordered all

Thanadars to send in list of villages where there was friction between Hindus and Muslims likely to result in a riot on the I'd, and he received reports from all police stations between the third and seventh June. Ten out of twenty police stations sent lists of villages—Mohammadabad 42 names, Jianpur 23, Chiriakot 19, Nizamabad 14, and in the rest only a few villagers were mentioned.

On 8th June, Dupernex directed that notice should be sent by the police to the Muslims of the villages in which there was danger of disturbance, directing them to report at their respective police stations before 15th June whether they intended to sacrifice kine during the *I'D* and in what villages. Dupernex had explained that the object of this order was to ascertain the villages to which he should direct special attention with a view to preventing a breach of the peace. This order, which the Magistrate had directed to be sent to those police stations only where there was danger of disturbance, was as a matter of fact communicated to all police stations, and 426 Muslims throughout the whole district gave notice of their intention to sacrifice cattle. The lists submitted from police stations show that the intention was to sacrifice 79 buffalos and 347 cows.

The Muslim population of Azamgarh amounts to 2,25,000 as compared with 1,500,000 Hindus, but there were no means of ascertaining whether the number of 426 cattle was more or less than the number which was customarily sacrificed by the Azamgarh Muslims at the *I'd*. It was possible that in the existing state of feeling which prevailed i.e. tension between these two communities, some Muslims who had not been in the habit of sacrificing kine, might have recorded their names, at the police stations. On 8th June, Dupernex passed a second order directing that the leading Hindus and Muslims residing in the villages in which disturbances were anticipated should be summoned to appear before himself or the sub divisional magistrate, so that it might be settled in what villages sacrifice should take place.⁶⁶ The principal men of these villages appeared before the magistrates, and in all but a very few cases statements were recorded before the magistrates in the following terms by the Hindus: "We have no objection to the sacrifices taking place according to the established custom. If the Muslims do any thing new, we shall inform the police".

The statements of the Muslims were recorded as follows: "We shall sacrifice only in accordance with the established custom, and shall do nothing new in contravention of usage".

In no case was any compulsion used to oblige the Hindus to consent to a sacrifice which was not customary, nor was any official sanction accorded to any divergence from the usage of past years.

Though, Dupernex and Charles Crosthwaite (Lieutenant governor) mainly blames the Cow-Protection Societies, for disturbances, they didn't rule out the possibility of some Muslims who were not in habit of sacrificing kine, might have recorded their names in the list, at the police stations.

Now I shall mention the views of a group of newspapers which put the blame of the Azamgarh disturbances on the British officers.

These newspapers allege that due to the 'divide and rule' policy of government officials, their acts of breaking the old customs, tension surfaced between the Hindus and Muslims.

On the occasion of the Sepoy Mutiny the Hindus and Muslims rose in concert against the English government. This union of Hindus and Muslims alarmed the Government, and after the suppression of mutiny of 1857, the British officials adopted the policy of setting Hindus and Muslims against each

other.⁶⁷ The officials had since that time, made every possible effort to prevent a hearty union of the two religious communities.

Whenever there were quarrels between the Hindus and Muslims, the officials seemed to take the side of Muslims, and this partiality of the officers caused great annoyance to the Hindus and their relations with the Muslims became tense.⁶⁸

The danger had deepened since the day the Muslims had begun to feel, from the conduct of the Government, that they were in the great favour with the government than Hindus, and so, the Muslims began to act in an irresponsible manner and overstepped their limits while exercising their religious privileges and customs, and this caused great resentment among the Hindus. It is not the case that government was always partial in favour of Muslims, but after the mutiny of 1857, the government changed its policy.

Differences between Hindus and Muslims in connection with cow-slaughter had always existed and it was by following the path that leads to strict justice that the English Government had so long been able to maintain the peace. And it was since the officials had deviated from the path of strict justice that the breaches of peace had become frequent.

Mau town of Azamgarh district was a good example of change in British policy, and their intervention in the local custom. This change in British policy was greatly responsible for the Azamgarh Riots.⁶⁹

Cow killing in Mau was forbidden by Akbar, the Mughal Emperor. The prohibition was enforced in the time of the Nawab Wazir and under British Rule. The Hindus possessed a *Sanad* granted in the time of Shahjahan. There was a riot in 1806 on the Muslims endeavouring to kill cattle, and therefore the prohibition was renewed by Lord Minto, the then governor-General of India, and the Nizamat Adalat in 1808. The Muslims made an application to the magistrate in 1863 for permission to kill cattle, but the application was rejected. All these incidents occurred when no Gaurakshini Sabhas were in existence. So till this time British Government adhered to strict justice and were impartial in dealing with the disputes between Hindus and Muslims. Therefore, there was no great tension between the two communities and there were no major communal riots.

Tension began to emerge when in 1866, the local officers established a slaughter house at Mau, for the first time. This act of the Government caused great annoyance to the Hindus. In

1885, Mulock, the then District Magistrate of Azamgarh who was well known for his high-handed proceedings, permitted the Muslims to sacrifice cattle at their own houses.⁷⁰ The Hindus made an appeal to the local government in vain, and this gave rise to high religious feeling among them, which resulted in the riots of 1893. So, the seeds of discord were sown not by the Gaurakshini Sabhas, but by the local authorities who, in direct opposition to the orders of Government of India and the Nizamat Adalat, granted permission for the sacrifices of cattle. The Hindus were enraged because their old custom was broken by the authorities and Muslims, and they found the Government greatly partial in favour of the Muslims and indifferent to the genuine demands of the Hindus.⁷¹

Like the case of Mau, the local authorities in Bareilly district did not adhere to the old custom in the matters of religious dispute and granted permission to sacrifice cattle in 1892. This further inflamed the feelings of the Hindus, and in the coming few years riots broke out in some districts of North-west provinces.

Regarding cow sacrifice in Mau town, Sandria Frietag says that cow sacrifice was forbidden by Nawab Wazeer.⁷² Regarding

the issue of cow slaughter in Mau town, Gyanendra Pandey says that the government officers gave permission to the slaughter of cow in order to mollify the "Muslim" interest in the face of what they saw as rising "Hindu nationalism", or because a decision had been taken at the local level and the steel-frame had to be shown to be without cracks.⁷³ So, these officials paid no attention to the appeals of Hindus to cancel the permission.

Besides religious factors, the ever-deepening poverty of India was also an important factor for the communal riots. The starving people indulged in rioting and plunder to get material benefits from the plunder, beside their religious feelings, economic factor was also important.⁷⁴

The Hindustani newspaper, cites Naroji as saying that host of hungry men whom poverty had created; that mode of (different) treatment of Hindus and Muslims which some officers had adopted; and those opinions advocating partiality to one community and severity to the other, which were generally given expression to through the columns of Anglo-Indian newspapers, were in reality responsible for the recent riots.⁷⁵

The situation was already tense due to the establishment of slaughter house at Mau and the permission given to sacrifice

cows, and the irresponsible proceedings of Dupernex, before and during the Baqr-Id of 1893, made the situation extremely tense, which resulted in the outbreak of major communal riots in the district.

In May 1893, Dupernex received secret information that disturbances were sure to occur on the day of Baqr-Id.⁷⁶ He issued a general order calling upon officials in charge of police stations throughout the district to submit lists of places where kine were usually killed. No such lists were kept at the police stations, and therefore the police asked the Muslim cultivators, weavers etc. in villages to prepare and supply them. As a general idea prevailed that the Magistrate was opposed to the Hindus, and Hindus regarded him as their enemy, almost every Muslim declared that he usually sacrificed a cow. The police prepared the lists and forwarded them to the magistrate, who sent for the Hindu members of the District Board and the Hindu landholders, and told them where kine would be sacrificed in their respective villages and asked them to sign agreements to the effect that they would not interfere. Among them was one Rajan Pandit who said that he would prefer death to signing such an agreement. He was at once required to execute a bond to keep the peace. Seeing

how he was dealt with, the other Hindus quietly signed the agreements without raising any objections.⁷⁷

Being dissatisfied with Dupernex's orders, the Hindus appealed to Ferrar, the commissioner of Gorakhpur, who dismissed them with the remark that they might shut their eyes if they did not like to see kine slaughtered. A telegram was sent to the Lieutenant - Governor but no reply was given. All these developments caused great resentment among the Hindus.

Depernex did not ask his subordinates to enquire about the opinion of the Hindus in those villages where sacrifices were to be performed.

Tension had already prevailed when almost all the Muslims in the villages sent their names in the list containing the names of the persons who intended to sacrifice cattle. Though all those Muslims who had given their names in the list were not given permission to sacrifice cattle, but their act of giving names in the list caused tension, as some of them did not sacrifice the cattle in the past.

It is said that Dupernex compelled a Hindu tahsildar, a Hindu Deputy collector, a Hindu Police Inspector, and even

several Hindu raises (men from aristocracy) to witness cow-slaughter, to expediate the sacrifices.⁷⁸

The result of all these measures of the government was that serious riots broke out in Mau, Ghasi, Jianpur, Adri and some other places in Azamgarh district, and many men were killed on both sides. The Hindus were successful in their attempt to protect cows in most cases, and they forced the Muslims of Mau to pass an agreement never to kill a cow.⁷⁹

Mau, which is situated at a distance of 25 miles from Azamgarh town, was the principal scene of disturbances.⁸⁰ According to popular rumour there were one hundred thousand Hindus present at the time of riot at Mau, but the official estimate put it to 50,000 Hindus. The Muslims numbered five thousands. There were large numbers of cow-herds among the Hindu mob, and large number of weavers in the Muslim mob. The Muslims were determined to kill kine and the Hindus to rescue them at any cost. Both sections of the community were prepared for a fight, as was evident from the large numbers of men engaged on both sides. The Hindus carried sticks, while the Muslims were armed with guns and swords. The Hindus asked the Muslims to refrain from the slaughter of kine as usual and to

maintain their friendship with them. The Muslims were willing to accede to their wishes, while a Maulvi (Muslim clergyman) endeavored to incite them to fight by declaring that any man who would perish on that occasion would be readily received into paradise. The police were ordered to fire with blank cartridges with a view to frighten the people, but one constable used ball cartridges and four Hindus were shot. This enraged the Hindus, who thought that the shot had been fired by some Muslim. The District Superintendent of police tried to pacify them in vain, and a free fight ensued. According to the official account, about a dozen men were killed, but people thought that the loss had been understated to minimize matters and that more than 200 men were killed on both sides.

At Goudih (Gauri Diti), which is 5 miles from Azamgarh town, about 1000 Hindus assembled and called upon the Muslims, who numbered 400 or 500, to sign an agreement not to sacrifice kine. The agreement was signed; but Brunyate, a young civilian, soon appeared on the scene, and being told by the Muslims that they had reluctantly signed the agreement he asked them to kill kine without fear. Kine were killed by Muslims and that an affray occurred, some men on both sides being wounded.

Sunaura, another village situated close to Azamgarh town, was the scene of a riot which resulted in 11 Hindus and some Muslims, being hurt.

There was a disturbance at Karimuddinpur. Some men died and some were injured in this.

At Kopaganj, some 'bad characters' plundered the houses of some Hindus and Muslims, assaulting and robbing some women who were hospitalized in Azamgarh town in a precarious state.

Government officials' policy of favouring Muslims and harassing Hindus, which was largely responsible for riots, did not stop, and they continued to pursue this policy after the riots were over, and this attitude of government officials helped to continue the tension between the Hindus and Muslims after the riots. The government officials continued this policy, in pursuance of their policy of widening the gulf between Hindus and Muslims. The disunity between Hindus and Muslims suited their policy of 'divide and rule'. The authorities were also harassing the Hindu educated class, because they were training the Indians in political agitation which were aimed at getting political reforms and concessions from the British government.

After the riots in Azamgarh, only Hindus to the number of 400 were arrested.⁸¹ Warrants had been issued against the entire Hindu population of 35 villages of Azamgarh district.⁸² In Azamgarh, Ballia, Bareilly and other places where riots had occurred in 1893, Muslims had been made complainants and witnesses, and Hindus defendants, and there was a close compact between Muslims and the officers of the Government.⁸³

The Hindu pleaders were frightened and did not come forward to defend the accused.⁸⁴ The editor of the Hindustani newspaper, who had occasion to inspect the records of a dozen cases, was struck with the circumstance that, although the prisoners were defended by Mukhtars, the examination-in-chief of a witness extended over ten pages, but his cross-examination did not occupy more than ten lines.

The convictions were being made on very weak evidence. Many *Mahajans* (money lenders) had been arrested on false reports by their debtors, and other men were bringing their enemies into trouble. Many people were availing themselves of the opportunity to levy blackmail from respectable persons. Some Muslim weavers of Mau and corrupt police constables prepared a long list containing the names of landholders, *mahajans* and

cultivators, accused them of rioting and threatened to get them arrested. Many of them got their names removed from the list by the payment of blackmail. The accused were being severally dealt with by the Magistrates. Many were jailed. Property of many Hindus were attached. Some *chhatris* (men belonging to Rajput caste) were whipped. Thakur Jagdeo singh and Thakur Sham Singh were respectable and educated men and whose only fault were that they had connection with the Cow-Protection society, were accused of having issued letters to Hindus in the neighbouring district, instigating them to interfere with the slaughter of kine and of having been the ring-leaders of the rioters. They were kept in jail for long time before being tried by the session judge. The immediate transfer of Hindu *tahsildars* and police officials from Azamgarh district were indicative of the fact that the authorities were bent upon prosecuting the Hindus. Dupernex, who was chiefly responsible for the riots in Azamgarh, was trying the accused.

Due to all these things, there was great resentment among the Hindus of Azamgarh district.

The newspapers deny the official allegation that no influential person informed the authorities about the anticipated

riots. Telegrams were sent to the commissioner, the Lieutenant-Governor, and the Governor - General, informing them of the apprehension of serious riots in Azamgarh on account of Cow slaughter on the *Baqr-Id* day.

All the riots that occurred were the work of the masses of both the Hindu and Muslim communities, and no educated Hindu or Muslim took part in any of them.

These newspapers refute the official claim that Cow-Protection societies were responsible for riots. They said that cow-protection societies, far from encouraging such disputes, had been the means of improving the relations between Hindus and Muslims, in as much as many Muslims had been induced to appreciate the advantages of the preservation of the bovine species.⁸⁵ These societies carried on their operations in a constitutional manner and had nothing to do with turbulent men. These societies asked people not to sell cows to those who were likely to slaughter them. But, the cow-protection societies did not force anyone in the preservation of the cattle. If any members of such societies committed disturbances, the societies could not be held responsible for their misdeed, as the societies did not ask these men to commit disturbances.

The editor of 'Anis-I-Hind' newspaper had seen the rules of many Gaurakshini Sabhas, but in none of them had he found a crusade declared against Muslims.⁸⁶ They, of course, enjoined upon Hindus the protection and preservation of the cow.

Though these newspapers stressed that cow-protection societies were not responsible for the disturbances, some of the newspapers who held the government action and irresponsible acts of Muslims, responsible for the riots, admitted that in absence of a central Cow-protection league, who would have regulated the activities of Cow-Protection societies and would have enabled these societies to work in a disciplined manner, preachers of some Cow-Protection societies worked in a reckless manner which made them a target in the eyes of government who alleged these societies to have caused the disturbances.⁸⁷

These newspapers say that though the Cow-Protection societies were not responsible for the outbreak of disturbances in Azamgarh, government officials were trying to suppress the Cow-Protection societies. The government of North-west provinces passed a resolution which prohibited government employees from joining any societies or association which were capable of setting one class against another.⁸⁸ Though, no any particular society

was mentioned in this resolution, Government action was aimed at discouraging the Cow-Protection societies, and it indicated that the government considered these societies in negative light. Papers of the Cow-Protection societies was seized at Ballia, by the District Magistrate. Mr. Gibson, the Deputy Commissioner, suspended Thakur Hanuman Singh, the Tahsildar of Bahraich, and reported him to the Board of revenue for dismissal, because he gave a donation to a Gaurakshini Sabha.⁸⁹ Lala Kundan Lal, the Tahsildar of Nanpara, was also said to have been called upon for an explanation for a similar act.

The Lieutenant-Governor of the North-western provinces gave orders to the commissioner of Banaras Division, to the effect that not more than five persons should be permitted to assemble in any Gaurakshini Sabha, and that in case more than this number was collected in any sabha, it should be caused to be dispersed by the police.⁹⁰

So, due to the unfavourable attitude by the government officers, towards the Gorakshini Sabhas, the Cow-protection Movement in North western provinces had received a very serious blow.⁹¹ Such Sabhas were being abolished, members and *updeshaks* (preachers) were tendering resignations and people

were discontinuing their aid. Several *Goshalas* (pounds) in the Ballia and Azamgarh districts had ceased to exist.

Now I shall mention the views of those newspapers who held the Cow Protection Societies responsible for the riots of 1893.

Some of these newspapers stressed that the spread of western education among Hindus and growth of Hindu political organizations were responsible for the deterioration in the relationship between Hindus and Muslims. During the 19th century, Hindus had become educationally powerful. Due to the spread of western education, many political organizations were set up which were trained in the politics of agitation.⁹² Introduction by the parliament into the Indian administration the principle of government by the majority, ignoring the facts that India was inhabited by two nations which differed in race and religion, sowed the seeds of disunity between Hindus and Muslims.⁹³ Due to this principle Hindus were entering the legislative councils and Muslims were lagging behind. So due to education, greater participation in government services and the principle of the government by the majority, Hindus were becoming more and more powerful politically and in other

respects. So the extension of the elective principle to the Indian legislative councils and the simultaneous Civil Service Examination Resolution had emboldened the Hindus and produced dissatisfaction among the Muslims.

Among the factors which caused disunity between Hindus and Muslims, the British perception about Muslim rule was also the important factor. The love of Englishmen to point out the defects and oppressions of the Muslim rulers in India with a view to contrast their rule with their own and thereby vividly exhibit the superiority of the latter, was an important factor.⁹⁴ These things were slowly working on the minds of the Hindus until they came to perceive themselves not only on an equal level with the Muslims—their late rulers—as being common subjects of the same government but far in advance of them in several respects. Thus realizing their present advantages, it were natural for them to contemplate satisfying their old grudges against the Muslims, who, had been told, oppressed them greatly in the past; and the first thing in which they thought of exercising their newly-acquired powers on the Muslims were the matter of Cow-sacrifice, by which the religious feeling of the Hindus were offended.

On the other hand, the Muslims who were lagging behind in the field of education, government services and political privileges were dissatisfied with their present situation. They refused to live cowed by the Hindus, or even accede to their unlawful demands and bear patiently their interference with their religious ceremonies.⁹⁵

Lectures of the Christian, Hindu and Muslim preachers in public streets stirred up a religious feeling among different sections of the community, which was further increased by the congress and anti-congress movements, the proceedings of the Arya Samaj, the operation of Gaurakshini Sabhas, which were an offshoot of the Arya Samaj.⁹⁶

So due to all these factors there were great tension between Hindus and Muslims.

These newspapers held Cow-Protection societies responsible for the riots. Due to the propaganda and meetings of Cow-Protection Societies, there was immense tension between the two religious communities. Its members incited the mobs to riot.

These newspapers blamed influential persons among Hindus for organizing and inciting the riots. There were meetings

to interfere in the sacrifice of cow, which were held by men of higher classes of Hindu community.⁹⁷ On return to their villages the men established committees to give effect to the resolution.

Jagdeo Singh, Ghansham Misra and other big land-holders led and incited the mobs to riot.⁹⁸

Large number of influential persons were tried in connection with the riots.⁹⁹

These newspapers didn't hold Dupernex responsible for the riots. They said that Dupernex acted efficiently and without partiality.¹⁰⁰ He took precautions with a view to prevent riots on the day of Baqr-Id. He fixed the places and the hours at and during which the sacrifices were to be made, in order that Hindus might not pay visits to the places during those hours.¹⁰¹ He appointed Hindu officials to keep watch at those places, probably because he was afraid that the Muslim officials, if placed on duty, might connive at any attempts made by Muslims to offend the Hindus, and because the Muslim officials themselves had also to perform sacrifices during the fixed hours.¹⁰²

These newspapers refute the claim that Mau town didn't have the history of Cow sacrifice.¹⁰³ In response to the claim of

the Hindustani newspaper which said that kine had not been killed at Mau since the time of Akbar, Gorakhpur newspaper said that Akbar might have forbidden Cow slaughter, but his firman (order) was no proof of the circumstance that kine had not been killed since then. It said that as a matter of fact sacrifices of kine was not a break from the old tradition.

Now I shall summarize and compare these three views on the outbreak of communal riots in June 1893, in Azamgarh district.

In this chapter, I have mentioned the official viewpoint and the versions of two groups of newspapers which differ from each other. After the official viewpoint, I have mentioned the version of the group of newspapers which blame the British government for the riots, and which are printed in Hindi, Urdu and some other Indian languages. After this, I have mentioned the version of the group of newspapers which blame the cow-protection societies for the riots, and are printed in Urdu language. For the sake of convenience and to distinguish them, I shall mention the former group of newspapers as the first group of newspapers and the latter group of newspapers as the second group of newspapers.

Though, the newspapers of a group of newspapers differ from each other, to some extent and on some points, they largely agree with each other.

Though, the three sources, mentioned in this chapter, differ significantly from each other, especially the official viewpoint and the second group of newspapers, differ greatly from the first group of newspapers, there are some facts on which they agree.

The official viewpoint says that tension between Hindus and Muslims was due to the greater forwardness of Hindus in the field of education, press, public and private employments, and their greater participation in the modern form of politics which had Hindu complexion. The memory of their 'enforced submissiveness' in the past and the awareness that in the present time also their religious interests are suffering due to Muslims, caused dissatisfaction among them.

The Muslims were also dissatisfied with their present backwardness and the interference made by Hindus in their religious customs.

On this point the views of the second group of newspapers are same, except that they put the factor of 'enforced submissiveness' of Hindus in pre-British period, in different way.

They say that the colonial reconstruction of the Indian past, keeping in mind the colonial interests, was responsible for agitating the minds of Hindus on this issue.

The first group of newspapers do not highlight this factor, and they put the blame for disunity between Hindus and Muslims on the British policy of 'divide and rule' which advocated favour to Muslims and discouragement to Hindus.

The British viewpoint says that the 'Hindu revival' which stressed on religious institutions and practices, and respect for Brahmans and cows was the factor of tension between the two religious communities. It further says that drive for identity formation and unification of the Hindu community was also an important factor.

The views of the second group of newspapers is similar to the official viewpoint which says that speeches of the leaders of different religious communities, Arya Samaj Movement and Cow-Protection Movement was an important factor behind the rise of tension between the two religious communities.

The first group of newspapers says that poverty which was the product of colonial rule was the reason behind the conflict.

The official viewpoint argues that some of the vernacular newspapers and the method of modern politics and mass mobilization was responsible for the growth of hostility between Hindus and Muslims.

While both the official viewpoint and newspapers of the second group lay the blame for the increase in tension and the subsequent riots on the propaganda and activities of Cow-Protection Societies, the first group of newspapers exonerate the Cow-Protection societies from this blame and blames the proceedings of British officers and irresponsible acts of Muslims for the increase in tension and outbreak of disturbances. Though, these newspapers exonerate the Cow-Protection Societies from the blame of increasing tension, some of the newspapers of this group, admit that though the aims and objectives of these Cow-Protection Societies were noble, some speakers of these societies acted in a reckless manner.

The official viewpoint and the newspapers of second group stress that influential persons from the Hindu community, did the work of opinion formation against the cow slaughter and incited and mobilized the mobs to riot.

The newspapers of the first group deny the involvement of influential persons and says that the masses worked on their own. These newspapers blame the British officials for giving undue publicity to the sacrifice of cows and thereby created tension, and allowed the Muslims to sacrifice cow at places where cows were not usually sacrificed.

The newspapers of the second group deny that official proceedings were responsible for the riots, and says that announcement regarding the sacrifice of kine was done as a precautionary measure to avoid conflict between the two religious communities. They further deny that innovations were introduced in the matter of kine sacrifice, though some of these newspapers admit that in the existing situation of hostility between Hindus and Muslims, and due to undue interference of Hindus in the religious custom of Muslims, some Muslims who were not in habit of sacrificing kine in the previous years, sacrificed the cows.

The official viewpoint regarding this issue is that no official sanction was given to any innovation in the mater of kine sacrifice. They further say that some Muslims who did not sacrifice kine in the past years, might have given their names in

the official list containing the names of the persons who desired to sacrifice cows, and some Muslims, in the state of resentment might have introduced innovations in the matter of kine sacrifice.

Though, all these three viewpoints indicate towards the socio-economic, political and cultural changes in the 19th century as the source of differences and disunity between Hindus and Muslims, they give different interpretations to these factors and arrive at different conclusions. Official viewpoint and the views of the newspapers of the second group, are similar in many respects and these two are very different and almost opposite from the views of the newspapers of the first group. While these two views held the Cow-Protection Societies responsible for the tension between the two religious communities, the newspapers of the first group blames the British officials and Muslims for the tension between them.

Now I shall put forward my analysis of the situation which created tension between the Hindus and Muslims of Azamgarh district, and led to the disturbances.

Sources play very important role in the reconstruction of history, but some times availability of those sources which differ

from each other, and put versions which are almost opposite of each other, and contest each other, the work of analysing the historical situation becomes difficult. Though such type of sources create complexities in analyzing the circumstances, these are extremely helpful as it saves us from oversimplification and from a limited framework or version, and gives us a greater understanding of the circumstances.

The difficulty one encounters with such type of sources is that it prevents from arriving at conclusions in certain aspects. Without thorough research based on variety of sources and facts, it is not possible to comment on some of the facts and views which are negated by different and opposing Sources. In my further research, I shall try to examine these views and facts, with the help of extensive sources, and shall try to give a more clear picture of the circumstances which led to the disturbances in the Azamgarh district. Never the less, in this chapter, I shall draw some conclusions on the basis of facts and views on which nearly all the above mentioned viewpoints agree, and on the basis of my own interpretation.

Cow-Protection Movement was the product of the process by which efforts were being made to unify the Hindu

Community.¹⁰⁴ My view is similar to the view of Sandria Freitag, who says the same thing. To some extent my view is similar with Gyanendra Pandey's work which says that Cow-Protection Movement was the result of the struggle for safeguarding tradition, honour, and it was a process by which an effort was made to unify the Hindu Community.¹⁰⁵

Peter Robb puts the Cow-Protection Movement as the efforts of zamindars to bring back the tenants and peasants under their control by using the symbol of cow.¹⁰⁶

I view the issue of identity formation and unification of different communities, as a result of the trends of 'religious revivalism' which took place due to socio-economic changes which occurred during the British period.¹⁰⁷ So the defense of religious practices and traditions also gave rise to the process of identity formation and unification of communities.

My finding is some what similar with the view of Gyanendra Pandey, who says that the process of identity formation took place due to the effect of the socio-economic changes brought about by colonialism, and in this situation, the tendency of different communities to safeguard their institutions and practices.¹⁰⁸

Sandria Frietag says that it was the product of the efforts of an alien British administration to identify the constituent units in Indian society.¹⁰⁹

Bipan Chandra says that the process of identity formation and unification of different religious communities, was the product of the middle classes' efforts to secure their economic and social interests.¹¹⁰

One important reason for tension between the Hindus and Muslims was the feelings which the activities of Cow-Protection Societies had aroused and the British efforts to maintain status quo by facilitating sacrifices in many places.

Regarding this, Pandey suggests that official interference, for example in trying to establish 'custom' in order to regulate cow sacrifice, sparked off Hindu reprisals.¹¹¹ Regarding this Peter Robb says, "I think this probably true, as proximate cause, but also more generally in that British seeking after definitions and certainty, encouraged assertiveness and polarization among Indians."¹¹²

Few days before Baqr-Id, the district administration sent a notice to every village of the district. This notice, contained the list of villages where cow slaughter takes place every year, and

indulged in surmises as to the places where such slaughter was likely to produce disturbances this year.¹¹³ There was no need to publish in every village a notice which contained nothing but surmises as to the villages in which breaches of the peace were likely to take place. So the undue publicity given to the slaughter of cow also Caused tension between the two religious communities.

British failure to understand the local feelings also caused tension. Even the word Cow-killing was offensive to the Hindus. Dupernex had it proclaimed by beat of tom-tom throughout the Azamgarh city that the Muslims were at perfect liberty to perform sacrifices between 9 and 12 A.M., on 25th June 1893, and even ordered Hindu Magistrates and police officials to go over the town with a view to expediate the sacrifices. This proclamation served to fan the flame.¹¹⁴

All the three viewpoints agree that there was greater forwardness of Hindus, in the field of education conveyed in English language, public and professional services and modern politics. The Muslims were dissatisfied with their backwardness in these fields and they might had considered the demands of Hindus to refrain from the sacrifice of cows, as their show of

strength and interference into the religious ceremonies of Muslims.

The colonial re-construction of Indian past was also the source of displeasure between Hindus and Muslims, because some of the Muslim rulers were shown as the oppressors of Hindus.

19th Century India, witnessed various religious movements which stressed on religious institutions, religious symbols and religious ceremonies. Different religious communities asserted their religious privileges more vigorously, and these developments, in some ways gave rise to tension between the religious communities. For instance, Muslims stressed on their right to sacrifice cows and Hindus stressed on the sacredness and usefulness of cows, and maintained that keeping in view the religious sentiments of Hindus and benefits in the preservation of cows, they should not be slaughtered. Tension grew among Hindus and Muslims because Hindus insisted on the protection of cow as a religious symbol, and Muslims insisted on the sacrifice of cows as a religious ceremony and custom of the place. The issue of the sacrifice of cow was also a show of

strength between these two religious communities, as they did not want to be subdued by each other.¹¹⁵

In some places, rival claims on the issue of sacrifice of cows was responsible for the tension. Mau town of Azamgarh district is a good example of this. Hindus resented the act of sacrifice of cows by Muslims in Mau, where they claimed, was no custom of cow sacrifice or where cows were not sacrificed in the past. The Hindus asked the Muslims not to sacrifice cows. The Muslims interpreted the demands of Hindus, as interference in their religious ceremonies. They were under the impression that Cow sacrifice in Mau was not an innovation and it was the old custom. So their stand and claims on cow sacrifice increased the tension. Mau was the place where most terrible riots took place in Azamgarh district.

To stress the issue of protection of cow, modern ways of agitation was brought into practice, and this increased disaffection between Hindus and Muslims. Through speeches, pamphlets, booklets, pictures of cow and newspapers, Hindus were aroused against the slaughter of cow. Masses were mobilized on this issue and demonstrations were held. Some pictures of cow were obtained by the district administration.

These pictures were shown in a manner which caused disaffection between the two religious communities.

Cow-Protection Societies played important role in the Movement for the protection of Cow. They organized meetings and demonstrations, in support of the protection of Cow. They asked the Hindus not to sell the cows to those persons who were likely to slaughter them. The newspapers of the first group claim that Cow-Protection Societies did not launch negative campaign against Muslims and did not ask the Hindus to fight with them, and their aims and objects were noble which were only confined to the protection of cow in peaceful manner.

It might be true that the Cow-Protection Societies did not incite the Hindus to quarrel with Muslims on the issue of cow slaughter. But due to their vigorous campaign in favour of cow-protection, a strong sentiment was created among some of the Hindus on this issue, and they did not like the slaughter of cows in their district, and the large scale slaughter of cows on the occasion of *Baqr-Id*. The frequent cases of cattle lifting few months before *Baqr-Id*, indicates towards this tendency. When the Hindus heard that despite their act of persuading Muslims not to sacrifice cows, large scale sacrifice of cows was going to

take place and many cows had already been sacrificed and even at some of those places where cows were not sacrificed in the past, they got angry and mobilized at various places to stop the sacrifice of cows. The Muslim response to this was their resistance to the attempts of Hindus to prevent the sacrifice of cows, and this led to the disturbances.

It is admitted by all the three viewpoints that some influential persons were members of these societies.

The proceedings of the district administration and acts of some Muslims increased the tension in the region. The act of establishing a slaughter house in the Mau town of Azamgarh district, in 1866, increased the tension. There may be rival claims on the slaughter of cows in Mau, and the official justification for establishing a slaughter house in Mau, but the mere act of establishing it caused tension in the region and the Hindus protested against this. Similarly, the act of giving permission to the sacrifice of cow in 1885 in Mau, created tension. Though no comment is being made on this aspect that the official acts were justified or not justified, biased or not biased, the consequence of their acts is being highlighted. So

instead of pointing fingers at the official proceedings, the situation which created tension is being highlighted.

Another cause of increase in tension was the act of British administration to record custom. The act of district administration of sending lists to the areas of every police stations in the district and asking those Muslims who desired to sacrifice cattle, to give their names in the lists caused tension. Initially, the administration intended to send these lists only in those villages where disturbances were anticipated. The lists were sent to make an idea about the security arrangements which was required to keep peace and order, in these places. Due to the sending of lists in the areas of every police stations, some Muslims who were not in habit of sacrificing the cattles in past, gave their names in the lists, though all these Muslims were not given official sanctions to sacrifice cattles. But even the act of giving those names in the lists caused tension because Hindus interpreted this act as a nexus between British officials and Muslims to introduce innovations in the matter of cow sacrifices i.e. introducing it to new places. Moreover, the act of some Muslims of performing sacrifices of cows in some places where there was no custom of cow sacrifice, added fuel to the fire. In the state of the existing feelings between the two religious

communities and as resentment against the interference of Hindus in their religious ceremony, some of the Muslims committed excesses and introduced the above mentioned innovations in some places.

In my final analysis I wish to say that under the British rule, in 19th century India, many political, economic, social and cultural changes took place. 'Religious revival movements', 'drive for identity formation' and 'unification of different communities' and modern methods of politics were the result of these changes.

The colonial reconstruction of Indian past generated disaffection among Hindus for Muslims, as it showed that Hindus were oppressed under the Muslim rulers, and their religious and other interests suffered greatly under the Muslim rulers.

Due to many factors, 'religious revival movements' started in 19th century India, which stressed on safeguarding religious symbols, customs, ceremonies and rights. Due to colonial reconstruction of the Indian past, Hindus were under the impression that their religious interest suffered greatly in the past, and they thought that in the present time also their religious interests were suffering due to the activities of Muslims.

Among other interests, cow slaughter was an important factor by which they complained that their religious sentiments were being offended. So they asked the Muslims to refrain from the sacrifice of cow. The Muslims who were dissatisfied with their present condition, interpreted the demand of Hindus as undue interference in their religious ceremony, and show of strength, as they had become powerful in certain respects. So the insistence on safeguarding the religious symbols, ceremonies and rights also became part of show strength between the two religious communities, and the religious symbols and rights also became a matter of communities' pride.¹¹⁶ In this situation the religious symbol of Hindus i.e. sacredness and protection of cow, came into conflict with the religious ceremony and custom of Muslims i.e. the sacrifice of cow on the occasion of *Baqr-Id*. So, the issue of Cow-Protection or the sacrifice of cow was related with the religious tradition and custom of the place and pride and show of strength of these two religious communities.

Modern political methods were used mainly by the cow-protection societies, to mobilize the masses and to form public opinion on the issue of protection of cow.

The British administrators tried to make balance between the religious interests of Hindus and Muslims, and tried to safeguard their religious rights and feelings, and to maintain status quo. So the government rules allowed the Muslims to perform the sacrifices, as it served their religious interests, and at the same time they forbade the Muslims from ostentatious display of cow sacrifice and from introducing innovations in the matter of cow sacrifice. The government's permission to allow the Muslims to perform sacrifices, caused resentment among Hindus. So the British efforts to maintain status quo caused tension. The sending of lists in different parts of the district further increased the tension. This tension culminated into disturbances when some Muslims introduced innovations in the sacrifice of cows at some places. A lack of understanding on the part of British officers about the sentiments of Hindus also became a factor of increase in tension i.e. the announcements made on the orders of British officers regarding the schedule of sacrifice in Azamgarh town. The word Cow-killing was offensive to many Hindus, and they interpreted it as an undue publicity to the sacrifice of cow.¹¹⁷

Due to all these factors severe communal riots broke out in Azamgarh district.

One important aspect of the Cow-Protection Movement was that caste system was used to secure the compliance of the masses to contribute to the movement. Collection of chutki in the villages, was made compulsory, to every Hindu house-hold. People were threatened that in case of failure, the concerned persons would be considered out of caste,¹¹⁸ and being out of caste meant many disadvantages to live in the villages.

Social hierarchy was maintained in the conflicts related with the cow-killing. The police guards who were on the spot, stated that a number of zamindars were there on elephants and marshalling the people.¹¹⁹ This incident shows that even at this time when many sections of the Hindu community were united on the issue of protection of cow and they were making effort to prevent the sacrifice of cow, social hierarchy was maintained i.e. zamindars were on elephants and the masses were on foot.

The Zamindars did not get themselves involved in the direct fighting, but mobilized the mobs to the places of disturbances. So these zamindars were not awarded severe punishments. On the contrary , the masses got themselves involved into direct fighting, and many of them were awarded severe punishments.

NOTES

- ¹ D.L. Drake-Brockman, ed. & compiled, 'Gazetteer of Azamgarh' in *District Gazetteers of united provinces of Agra and oudh*, Vol. XXXIII.
- ² Home Deptt. Public File, Nos. 169-189, Part-A, November, 1893, National Archives of India (NAI hereafter).
- ³ D.L. Drake Brockman, Op. Cit.
- ⁴ Amal Tripathy, *The Extremist Challenge: India between 1890 and 1910*, Calcutta, 1967.
- ⁵ Sandria Freitag, *Collective Action and Community: Public Arenas and the emergence of Communalism in North India*, p. 167.
- ⁶ Home Deptt. Public File, Nos. 169-189, Part A, November 1893, NAI.
- ⁷ Gyanendra Pandey, 'Rallying Round the Cow: Sectarian strife in the Bhojpuri region, C. 1880-1917', in R. Guha, ed., *Subaltern Studies*, Vol. 2, Delhi, 1983.
- ⁸ The Bhojpuri region comprised of the western parts of Bengal Presidency and eastern parts of North-west Provinces. In this region Bhojpuri was spoken.
- ⁹ Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims: the Politics of the United Provinces' Muslims, 1860-1923*, Cambridge, 1974.
- ¹⁰ Peter Robb, 'Officials and Non-Officials as leaders in popular Agitations: Shahabad 1917 and other Conspiracies' in B.N. Pandey, ed., *Leadership in South Asia*, Delhi, 1977.
- ¹¹ Letter from Lansdowne, Governor-General of India, to the Earl of Kimberley, Secretary of State for India, Calcutta, 27 December 1893, Home Deptt. Public File, Nos. 210-213, Part A, 1893, NAI.
- ¹² *Ibid.*
- ¹³ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁴ Bipan Chandra, *Communalism in Modern India*, Delhi, 1984.

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- ¹⁵ Letter from Lansdowne, *op. cit.*
- ¹⁶ Bipan Chandra, *op. cit.*
- ¹⁷ *The Pioneer*, 20th August 1893.
- ¹⁸ Bipan Chandra, *op. cit.*, p. 305.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 10.
- ²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 132.
- ²¹ Gyanendra Pandey, 'Rallying Round the Cow', P. 124.
- ²² Sandria B. Freitag, 'Sacred Symbol as Mobilizing Ideology: The North-Indian search for a "Hindu" community' in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 22, 1980, p. 597.
- ²³ Letter from Dupernex, officiating Magistrate of Azamgarh, to commissioner, Gorakhpur Division, 7 July 1893, Home Deptt. Public File, Nos. 169-189, Part A, November 1893, NAI.
- ²⁴ Home Dept. Public File, Nos. 169-189, Part A, November 1893, NAI.
- ²⁵ Bipan Chandra, *op. cit.*, p. 150.
- ²⁶ Suranjan Das, *Communal Riots in Bengal*, OUP, 1991.
- ²⁷ Home Deptt. Public File, Nos. 169-189, Part A, November 1893.
- ²⁸ *Ibid*.
- ²⁹ Letter from Dupernex, *op. cit.*
- ³⁰ Persons who are subordinate to lawyers and are involved in the activities of law courts for their livelihood.
- ³¹ Money collected with these subscriptions were spent on the activities of Cow-Protection Societies.
- ³² John McLane, *Indian Nationalism and the Early Congress*, Princeton, 1977.
- ³³ Bipan Chandra, *Op. Cit*, P. 344.
- ³⁴ Home Deptt. Public File, Nos. 169-189, Part A, November 1893, NAI.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Peter Robb, 'The Challenge of Gau Mata: British Policy and Religious Change in India, 1880-1916', *Modern Asian Studies*, 20, 2, 1986.

³⁷ Anand A. Yang, 'Sacred Symbol and Sacred space in Rural India: Community Mobilization in the "Anti-Cow killing" Riot of 1893' in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 22, 1980.

³⁸ Letter from Depernex, Op. Cit, July 1893.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Sandria Freitag, op. cit., p. 167.

⁴¹ Gyanendra Pandey, Op. Cit., p. 89.

⁴² Peter Robb, Op., Cit, p. 309.

⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 310.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Sandria Freitag, op. cit., pp. 152-53.

⁴⁶ Letter from Dupernex, op. cit.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Regarding propagation of 'Communal ideas' and 'communal hatred', Bipan Chandra says that as a part of the policy of 'divide and rule' the Government of India refused to take action against propagation of these ideas. Bipan Chandra, op. cit., p. 280.

⁴⁹ Letter from W. Hoey, Magistrate of Gorakhpur, to Commissioner, Gorakhpur Division, 11 May, 1893, Home Deptt. Public File, November 1893, Nos. 169-189, Part A, November 1893, NAI.

⁵⁰ Gyanendra Pandey, Op. cit., p. 109.

⁵¹ Extracts from Charles Crosthwaite's, Lieutenant Governor of North-west Provinces, address to the Darbar at Ballia district, *The Pioneer*, 15th August 1893, p. 6.

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- ⁵² Letter from Dupernex, op. cit.
- ⁵³ Gyanendra Pandey, op. cit., p. 82.
- ⁵⁴ Letter from Dupernex, op. cit.
- ⁵⁵ Extracts from Charles Crosthwaite's address, op. cit.
- ⁵⁶ Letter from the chief Secretary to Government of North-west Provinces and Oudh, to secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, 28 August 1893, Home Deptt. Public File, Nos. 169-189, op. cit.
- ⁵⁷ letter from Dupernex, op. cit.
- ⁵⁸ Letter from Home Department, Simla, to Secretary of State for India, 4 July, 1893, Home Deptt. Public File, Nos. 169-189, op. cit.
- ⁵⁹ Though many of these men of education did not participate in actual rioting, they led the masses to various places of rioting.
- ⁶⁰ Letter from the Chief Secretary to the Government of North-west Provinces, Home Deptt. Public File, Nos. 169-189, op. cit.
- ⁶¹ Extracts from Charles Crosthwaite's address, op. cit.
- ⁶² Ibid.
- ⁶³ Home Deptt. Public File, Nos. 169-189.
- ⁶⁴ Regarding State intervention into the Communal violence, Bipan Chandra says that during colonial rule Police did not crush the Communal riots energetically and effectively, and showed inactivity.
Bipan Chandra, op. cit., p. 284.
- ⁶⁵ Home Deptt. Public File, Nos. 169-189.
- ⁶⁶ Ibid.
- ⁶⁷ 'Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika', 17th August 1893, Mentioned in the Appendix of Home Deptt. Public File, Nos. 103-106, Part B, October 1894, NAI.
- ⁶⁸ Ibid.

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69. 'Nasim-I-Agra', 7 August 1894, Urdu Weekly, Published From Agra, by Babu Jamuna Das Biswas, Circulation 500 copies, Mentioned in *Report on Native Newspapers, 1894*, National Archives of India (NAI hereafter).
- 70 Ibid.
- 71 Ibid.
- 72 Sandria Freitag, op. cit. p. 168.
- 73 Gyanendra Pandey, op. cit., p. 122.
- 74 'Hindustani', 13 September 1893, Urdu Weekly, Published from Lucknow, by Ganga Prasad Varma, Circulation 300 Copies, Mentioned in *Report on Native Newspapers, 1893, NAI*.
- 75 'Hindustani', 20 September 1893, op. cit.
- 76 Report of the editor of 'Hindustani' newspaper, on the causes of Azamgarh riots. He conducted this inquiry alongwith Pandit Bishan Narayan Dar, Barrister-at-law at Lucknow. 'Hindustani', 20 September 1893, op. cit.
- 77 Ibid.
- 78 'Banganivasi', 11 August 1893, Mentioned in the Appendix of Home Deptt. Public File, Nos. 103-106, Part B, October 1894, NAI.
- 79 'Karnatak Patra', 31 July 1893, Mentioned in the Appendix of Home Deptt. Public File, Nos. 103-106, Part B, October 1894, NAI.
- 80 'Hindustani', 2 August 1893, op. cit.
- 81 'Sulabh Dainik', 5 August 1893, Mentioned in the Appendix of Home Deptt. Public File, Nos. 103-106, Part B, October 1894, NAI
- 82 'Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika, 21 August 1893, op. cit.
- 83 'Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika, 13 September 1893, op. cit
- 84 'Hindustani', 2 August 1893, op. cit
- 85 'Godharm Prakash', August 1893, Hindi Monthly, Published from Farukhabad, by Mohan Lal, Circulation – 440 copies, Mentioned in *Report on Native Newspapers, 1893, NAI*

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- ⁸⁶ 'Anis-I-Hind', 2 and 9 September 1893, Urdu Weekly, Published in Meerut by Kishun Sarup, Circulation – 625 copies, Mentioned in *Report on Native Newspapers, 1893*, NAI.
- ⁸⁷ 'Gosewak', 7 September 1893, Mentioned in *Report on Native newspapers, 1893*, NAI.
- ⁸⁸ 'Hindustani', 13 September 1893, op. cit.
- ⁸⁹ 'Hindustani', 13 September 1893, op. cit.
- ⁹⁰ 'Rahbar', 24 September 1893, urdu weekly, Published from Moradabad, by Pratap Krishna, Circulation – 375 Copies, Mentioned in *Report on Native Newspapers, 1893*, NAI.
- ⁹¹ 'Godharm Prakash', April 1894, Hindi Monthly, Published from Farukhabad, by Mohan Lal, Circulation – 400 Copies, NAI.
- ⁹² 'Najm-ul-Akhbar', 28 August 1893, Published from Etawah, by Ruh-ullah khan, Circulation – 223 copies, Mentioned in *Report on Native Newspapers, 1893*, NAI.
- ⁹³ 'Aligarh Institute Gazette, 5 September 1893, Bi-Weekly, Published from Aligarh, by Mumtaz-ud-din, circulation – 441 Copies, Mentioned in *Report on Native Newspapers, 1893*, NAI.
- ⁹⁴ 'Oudh Punch', 31 August 1893, Urdu Weekly, Published from Lucknow, by Sajjad Hussain, Circulation – 350 Copies, Mentioned in *Report on Native Newspapers, 1893*, NAI.
- ⁹⁵ 'Aligarh Institute Gazette', 5 September 1893, op. cit.
- ⁹⁶ 'Nur-ul-Anwar', 14 October 1893, Urdu Weekly, Published from Cawnpore, by Abdul Hamid, Circulation – 163 Copies, Mentioned in *Report on Native Newspapers, 1893*, NAI.
- ⁹⁷ 'Riyaz-ul-Akhbar', 24 August 1893, Urdu Weekly, Published from Gorakhpur, by Nizam Ahmad, Circulation – 350 Copies, Mentioned in *Report on Native Newspapers, 1893*, NAI.
- ⁹⁸ 'Riyaz-ul-Akhbar', 16 July 1893, op. cit.

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- 99 'Tohfa-I-Qadiri', 6 August 1893, Published from Ballia, op. cit
- 100 'Gorakhpur', 25 August 1893.
- 101 Ibid.
- 102 Ibid.
- 103 Ibid.
- 104 Letter from Lansdowne, op. cit.
- 105 Gyanendra Pandey, op. cit.
- 106 Peter Robb, op. cit.
- 107 Letter from Lansdowne, op. cit.
- 108 Gyanendra Pandey, op. cit., p. 124.
- 109 Sandria Freitag, op. cit., p. 597
- 110 Bipan Chandra, op. cit., p. 132.
- 111 Gyanendra Pandey, op. cit.
- 112 Peter Robb, op. cit., p. 292.
- 113 'Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika', 7 September 1893, op. cit.
- 114 'Banganivasi', 11 August 1893, op. cit.
- 115 'Aligarh Institute Gazette', 5 September 1893, op. cit.
- 116 Ibid.
- 117 'Hindustani', 2 August 1893, op. cit.
- 118 Letter from Dupernex, op. cit.
- 119 Ibid.

CHAPTER - II

SHAHABAD RIOTS OF 1917

India witnessed numerous communal riots during nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Before 1947, many communal riots took place in Peshawar, Karachi, Punjab, Delhi, United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa, Central Provinces, Western parts of India and in the eastern parts of India especially Calcutta and Noakhali. In 1809 serious Hindu-Muslim clashes occurred in Banaras, in which several hundred persons were killed.¹ Hindu Muslim clashes also occurred in Kiol (1820), Moradabad, Kashipur (1833), Shahjahanpur (1837), Bareilly, Kanpur, Allahabad (1837-1852).² In 1871 there were serious riots in Bareilly. Hindu Muslim Riots occurred in Lahore and Karnal (1885), Delhi (1886), Dera Ghazi Khan (1889), Palakod (1891). In 1893, there were grave outbreaks in the rural areas of Azamgarh and in the same year there were very serious Muharram riots in Bombay in which 80 persons were killed. Riots also broke out in Nasik (1894), Mymansing (1907), Peshawar (1910), Ayodhya(1912), Agra (1913). In 1917, Shahabad riot occurred, which according to the official observation was among the most serious riots

which had occurred at any time since the British Connection with the Country.³ Between 1918-1926 riots took place in Calcutta, Patna and Dhaka. In 1918 serious riot occurred in Katarpur village of Saharanpur district. In 1923, rioting took place in Amritsar, Lahore and Saharanpur. In 1924, the most horrifying riots took place in Allahabad, Calcutta, Delhi, Gulbarga, Kohat, Lucknow, Nagpur, Jabalpur and Shahjahanpur. In 1931, fierce rioting took place in Agra, Banaras, Mirzapur and Kanpur. In the same year, riot took place in Chittagong. In 1941, riot took place in Dhaka. Serious riot took place in Calcutta in the course of 'Direct Action Day', in 1946, and in Bihar, in the same year. By the spring of 1947, the North-west Frontier and the Punjab were enveloped in flames of communal strife.

In Communal riots, large number of people of different communities were killed and injured and suffered monetarily i.e. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis etc. (among those who were killed and injured, Hindus and Muslims constituted the majority). In the communal riots, Hindus suffered more where Muslims were in majority and were dominant i.e. in parts of North-western India and eastern India. The same case was with Muslims where Hindus were in majority and were dominant i.e.

in parts of Northern and western India and some other parts of India. In either religious community, some people played key roles in organizing these riots for their own political, social, economic and cultural interests.

In this chapter I shall try to show the interaction between the political and cultural elements which was responsible for the outburst of Shahabad disturbances of 1917. Shahabad district was in Patna Division and which was in the central western part of the province of Bihar and Orissa. The districts of Patna and Gaya lie to the east of Shahabad District.⁴

In terms of disappearance of law and order, the Shahabad disturbance of 1917 had no parallel since 1857.⁵ The Lieutenant Governor in Council believed that the occurrence of this great rising, involved the total disappearance of law and order for more than a week, over the greater part of this large district.⁶

In this chapter I shall discuss the causes of this riot, the method of mass mobilization, role of local police, armed police and landlords, and sequence of events.

Shahabad district was spread in 4,373 square miles.⁷ This district had six towns and 4,682 villages. Arrah was the main

town and Headquarter of Shahabad district. Shahabad district was divided into 4 divisions which are as follows:

(1) Sadar Subdivision (2) Buxar Subdivision (3) Sasaram Subdivision (4) Bhabua Subdivision.

The name of Thanas under each subdivision are as follows:

1. Sadar Subdivision - Arrah, Shahpur (Belauti), Piru.
2. Buxar Subdivision- Buxar, Dumraon.
3. Sasaram Subdivision - Sasaram, Bikramganj, Dehri, Kharghar.
4. Bhabua Subdivision - Bhabua, Mohania.

In 1911, the population of Shahabad district was 1,865,660 out of which 904,905 were male and 960,710 were female.⁸ It's urban population was 102,373 and rural population was 1,763,287. Number of persons per square mile was 427. Hindu population was 1,730,563 and Muslim population was 131,189. Animist population was 1,618. Christian population was 700. Other population was 1,590.⁹

In 1911, total number of literates among Hindus was 76,772 and among Muslims was 9,191.¹⁰ Total number of literates in English among Hindus was 4219 and among Muslims

was 1,124. Percentage of literate among Hindus was 44 and among Muslims was 7.¹¹

In 1911, sanctioned strength of police in this district was as follows:

1. Number of Superintendents - 1¹²
2. Number of Inspectors - 7
3. Number of Sub-Inspectors - 56
4. Number of Sergeants - 1
5. Number of Head Constables (Foot) - 73
6. Number of Constables (Foot) - 578.¹³

Shahabad district was famous for big risings. It played very important role in the 1857 rebellion. In 1893, it again came into limelight in connection with anti-kine killing disturbances.¹⁴

The inhabitants of Shahabad were well known for their turbulent character.¹⁵ The population consisted largely of Ahirs (milkmen) whose propensity for crimes of violence was proverbial'. The landlords were mainly of the Rajput and Bhumihaar Brahman castes. There were great estates in this district. Most of these great estates belonged to Maharaja of Dumraon and the Jagdispur Babus (big landlords). Beside this,

there were large number of small landlords, mostly of the Rajput and Bhumihar Brahman castes. Regarding the character and power of these landlords McPherson, chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa, writes, 'As a body these landlords are extremely conservative. The most important families have only slightly been affected by western ideas and education, while the great majority have remained entirely aloof from these influences. Their high position in the Hindu social system and the authority they derive from their position as landlords have given them enormous power over the lower classes, who are accustomed to obey their orders without hesitation. They have little respect for the law, and many of them retain gangs of Ahirs of Criminal propensities, whom they employ in their quarrels with their neighbours and in maintaining their power over those of their tenants whose obedience is not absolute'.¹⁶

The Shahabad Riot of 1917 took place due to the issue of Cow Sacrifice during Baqr-Id. The Cow-Protection movement of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century resulted in terrible riots in Bombay, Bihar and Eastern U.P. while the Bombay riots were restricted to industrial settlements, the riots in Bihar and Eastern U.P. covered big rural areas. These riots

affected Azamgarh, Ballia, Ghazipur districts in United provinces, and Saran, Shahabad, Gaya and Patna districts in the province of Bihar and Orissa.¹⁷

The first organized and armed attempt at Cow-Protection came to be seen in the Kuka revolt, but this remained a limited and localized movement. It was the Arya Samaj that brought the movement to the national level and made it a symbol of Hindu honour. With the expansion of the Arya Samaj, Goraksha Mandali was formed in Delhi. In November 1889, Bal Gangadhar Tilak became very active in Goraksha Mandali.¹⁸

The movement against Cow slaughter that spread all over Eastern U.P. after 1887-88 had its origin in a decision of the Allahabad Municipal Board to change its by-laws in order to ban cow slaughter and the refusal of the Allahabad High Court to uphold this decision to give legal sanction to a religious belief. As a result, cow-protection societies sprang up in many towns. With great speed and extraordinary organizational ability, the movement spread to remote rural areas in Eastern U.P. and Bihar. The leadership of the movement was usually in the hands of feudal elements. The landlords of the Bhojpuri-speaking areas of Eastern U.P. and Bihar were mostly Bhumihars, Kshatriyas

and Brahmins. These castes played a dominant role in the movement.¹⁹

On the issue of Cow Killing during *Baqr-Id* festival, riots had taken place during the last 25 years in the Patna division, and this particular riot of Shahabad also fell under this category. Every year at the time of *Baqr-Id* and for few weeks after, there were tension between Hindus and Muslims in northern India.²⁰ During the early 1890s, serious Cow killing riots occurred in the Patna division, the chief centres of disturbances being Gaya, Shahabad and Saran. Official reports say that it appeared that there had been a great deal of secret organization behind these outbreaks and Sadhus and Gaurakshini Sabhas were widespread.²¹ In contrast with their behaviour during the riot in Shahabad in 1917, the Muslims in some of the cases, during the above mentioned riots, gave a certain amount of provocation and adopted a more active attitude. Though riots took place at intervals between Hindus and Muslims, the anti-cow killing movement did not become prominent again in the Patna Division until about 1910. In 1911 a series of disturbances occurred in the south of the Monghyr district and Patna.

During the *Baqr-Id* of 1915, a serious riot occurred in Patna district. In 1916 also, riots occurred in Patna and Gaya on the issue of Cow sacrifice during *Baqr-Id* festival. On this issue trouble had been threatened each year in the eastern portions of Patna since 1911. The district of Patna and Gaya lie to the east of Shahabad district. The eastern districts of the united provinces which border on Shahabad, were centres of anti-cow killing agitation of 1893. So in Shahabd and in its surrounding districts, anti-cow killing sentiments were very strong. In August 1893, two serious riots occurred at Koath in the Sasaram Sub-division of Shahabad district. The issue was killing of cows by Muslim butchers. The first riot started with the attack on butchers by a Hindu mob. The second riot occurred as a result of retaliation by a Muslim mob on Hindus. Many people were severely injured in these two riots.²²

In 1917, anti-cow killing sentiments reached its peak point, which led to the Shahabad riot. Due to the intense efforts of armed police, this riot did not spread beyond shahabad, though rioters made great efforts to engulf other regions adjoining Shahabad district, into riots.²³

Riot started in Shahabad district on 28th September, 1917. It took more than a week for the administration to suppress the disturbances. 129 villages were looted during the riot.²⁴ 38 persons were killed and 147 were injured.²⁵ Many Muslim women were ill-treated and stripped.²⁶ 3,350 persons were arrested in connection with this riot.²⁷

The first disturbance in this district broke out in Ibrahimpur village in Piru Police Station, on the morning of 28th September. On this day many thousands of Hindus, who had come from different parts of the district, assembled at this village, to prevent cow sacrifice on the occasion of Baqr-Id. In 1917, the Baqr-Id festival was from 28th to 30th September. On the issue of Cow sacrifice, the local Hindus and Muslims of Ibrahimpur had succeeded in effecting a compromise, a day before the large crowds assembled at Ibrahimpur. By an agreement signed on 27th September, Muslims of Ibrahimpur became ready to give up the sacrifice of cows. The Hindus agreed to provide 30 goats, to be sacrificed instead of cows, every year from then on. On the morning of 28th September, some local Hindu leaders, informed the assembled crowds of this compromise, and asked them to return home. But the mob, according to the Superintendent of police, which had come from

far away places and assembled there, did not want to miss the fun of looting. So before any cow sacrifice had taken place, the crowds attacked Ibrahimpur, Bhagalpur and Milky villages, and after partially looting the Muslim houses, disappeared from the scene. At this stage, the administration said that attack by Hindu crowds had violated the Ibrahimpur agreement and hence the Muslims were entitled to perform cow sacrifice. So, under police presence, Cow Sacrifice was performed in these 3 villages, on 28th and 29th September.²⁸

The performance of cow sacrifice enraged the Hindus and in the morning of 30th September, a mob of Hindus which was estimated to number more than 25 thousand, attacked and completely looted Muslim houses in Ibrahimpur, Piro Police Station. During the process of looting, the mobs clashed with the police. After this clash the mobs disappeared. In this clash with police, several rioters were killed and wounded. The mobs carried away with them, the tale of failure (to prevent cow sacrifice) and casualties due to police firing. As a result, the district which was already fed with propaganda and anti-cow killing sentiments, was engulfed into large scale disturbances, and from 30th September, the actual rioting started.²⁹ Fifty or sixty thousand

people were scattered in all directions and looted Muslims in different villages of this district.³⁰

On 8th October 1917, a large mob consisting of several thousands, attacked Mauna village, which was in Nasriganj Police station in the Sasaram Subdivision. This village was mostly populated by Muslims. There were few Hindu residents in this village. Many Hindus of this village fought side by side with the Muslims to save the Muslim houses from the attackers.³¹ Finally, the defenders of the village were overwhelmed. The Muslims hid themselves in the houses of Hindus. Many Muslim houses were looted, and in the course of which some of the dakaits committed murder. Three persons were killed and many injured. The neighbouring villages participated and led the attack on Mauna. These villages include Baradih, Taraon, Babhandi, Shankerpur, Parasia, Turkaulia, Chilha, Dhanaon and Ramadih.³²

There was time for the mobs to go from one village to another, and they did so. As many as 10 or 15 Muslim villages were attacked daily.³³

A very large mob consisting of thousands of persons, attacked Turukbigha, on 4th October 1917. Turukbigha was a

part of Mauza khiriaon village which was in Nasriganj police station in Sasaram subdivision of Shahabad district. There were about 80 or 90 Muslim houses and 20 or 25 Hindu houses in Turukbigha. After a furious fight, Muslim houses were looted and set on fire by the rioters. Two Muslims were killed and many were injured. It is alleged that the leaders of this riot were zamindar (lakhatpati) and another well-to-do zamindar (landlord) of the neighbourhood Lobhi upadhyaya of Mangraon village.³⁴

On 5th October 1917, village Bisaine Kalan was attacked by a large mob. Bisaini Kalan lies seven miles from Nasriganj Police Station. Muslim houses were looted in this village. Similar occurrences took place in neighbouring villages.³⁵

On 5th October 1917, a mob of one thousand people attacked Bithwa-Rasulpur village. This village lies 8 miles north-west of Bikramganj police station in the Sasaram subdivision. 24 Muslim houses were looted and destruction of a mosque took place.³⁶

Katar village was looted on 2nd October 1917 by mobs of several thousands.

Katar is a village situated at a short distance east of the Sasaram Arrah road. In this village, Muslim houses were looted. There was no serious injury caused to anyone.³⁷

Upto the 7th October, 129 villages had been looted in Shahabad district.

Regarding the involvement of masses in the riots, Peter Robb says that the Reports claim that most of the rioters belonged to lower castes and classes.³⁸ Regarding the involvement of middling agricultural castes in the Cow-Protection Movement of this period, Peter Robb says that they were involved in this movement to attain higher status in the social hierarchy.³⁹

Gyanendra Pandey also indicates towards this trend. He says that an important aspect of the involvement of lower and intermediate castes of this region, in the Cow-Protection Movement was that they wanted to upgrade their social status, by making common interests with the upper castes of Hindu Community.⁴⁰

The riot originated in the Shahabad district, as a result of the careful planning of certain Home Rule Leaguers, though they had not intended such a large scale riot.⁴¹

In December 1916, Bipin Chandra Pal Came to Patna. He lamented that Bihar took no active part in agitation related with Home Rule. A meeting was held in the house of Babu Sachidananda Sinha at which Babu Sachidananda Sinha, Kalika Prasad Singh of Dalippur (Dalippur is a village in Shahabad district), Pandit Samalanand of Arrah, Bipin Chandra Pal and some others were present.⁴²

The question of how Biharis could be made to take an interest in political affairs was discussed. It was agreed that the only way to interest Biharis in political affairs was to introduce an element of religion.⁴³ It was decided to adopt measures to secure the confidence of cultivators and the illiterate classes in popular leaders. It was decided that selected leaders should be prepared to offer themselves as arbitrators as occasion arose. In order to introduce the religious element it was decided to push the Gaurakshani movement and to stop cow sacrifice during the *Baqr-Id* festival. Shahabad was favoured for this purpose. Shahabad was favoured because, as Mr. P.R. Das pointed out, 'the illiterate classes were more advanced, numbers being returned emigrants from Demarara, Mauritius, Canada and Uganda, who had seen something of the world, were more enlightened and were imbued with principles of freedom and

people's rights, and to whom therefore any popular movement would ,more readily appeal.⁴⁴

Some weeks before the *Baqr-Id* a secret meeting was held in Arrah town. It is said to have attended by barristers, pleaders, mukhtears and many others of the influential gentry of the town and district. Jamuna Sahu and pleader Shyam Sundar Lal were present in this meeting. They were Co-sharers in the Village of Ibrahimpur, where the disturbances started. Lal the Patwari, who took an active part in the disturbances and who was convicted and was sentenced to jail was also present in the meeting.⁴⁵

The meeting in Arrah town was followed by meetings in the mufassal, several meetings were held at Piru. Finally between the 19th and 24th September 1917, a meeting was organized at the house of Jay Bahadur (also, former President of Gaurakshini), Bindeshvari Prasad, Gundeshvari Prasad, Kunkun Sahay, Ramdeo Ram, Bansropan, Kalika Singh (landlord of Dalippur village), Sitaram (landlord of Dumraon Village), Thakur Prasad Singh (zamindar of Chaugain village) were present at the meeting. Some of these persons were members of the Arya Samaj and Gaurakshini at Arrah.⁴⁶ After the disturbances had been

checked, a meeting was held at Dalippur (a village in Shahabad), and was followed by a meeting at the house of Bechu Singh in Sheopur village and in the house of Gopi Singh. They were local leaders of the disturbances which took place in Piru village.⁴⁷

On the 14th October 1917, a meeting was held at Arrah town which is said to have been attended by most of those who attended the meeting on the 24th September referred to in the previous page. At this meeting a sum of Rs. 2,355 was subscribed for helping the accused in the *Baqr-Id* disturbances.⁴⁸

Leaders of Home Rule League never contemplated that their plan of creating a political base in the Shahabad district, by using religion, would result into wide spread disturbances, which would be beyond their control. They were aware of this fact that such disturbances between Hindus and Muslims would be fatal for their political cause. Rai Bahadur Purnandu Narayan Singh, a home Rule leaguer, made efforts to obtain permission at a late stage to come down with a party to assist the officials in making peace.⁴⁹ Rai Bahadur, Hasan Imam and other leaders of Home Rule League made efforts to effect a compromise.

Deputy Inspector General of Police, Crime and Railways, analyses the intention of Home Rule leaders in these words,

'Whilst the leaders might reasonably have expected these measures to be successful in connection with a small disturbance not only for the benefit of the actual rioters but in advertising themselves, they must have known that success was more than doubtful in a widespread conflagration. Even with their exalted ideas of their power, I doubt whether they would have risked the rousing of the whole Muhammadan Community in India.⁵⁰

The leaders of the Home Rule league wished to create interest among the people of Shahabad district, in political agitation, and for this purpose they planned that a small occurrence would take place, and that would be prevention of *Kurbani* (cow sacrifice) at Piru Thana (Police Station), on the occasion of *Baqr-Id*. They planned that a vast mob would be collected so as to be imbued with an interest in public agitation. It was planned that this mob would prevent Cow sacrifice in Piru on the occasion of *Baqr-Id*.⁵¹ Despite the presence of such a large mob of 50 or 60 thousand people, *Kurbani* (cow sacrifice) took place in Piru, in the presence of Police. Performance of cow sacrifice and casualties in police firing, enraged the mob, and they decided to stop cow sacrifice 'once and for all' throughout

the district. So the general movement started to intimidate the Muslims to stop cow sacrifice in future.⁵²

Whether it was the intention of the leaders to collect such a vast mob is not clear, but it appears that the 'Patias' (letters asking people to assemble at Piru) they issued met with a more ready response than they anticipated.⁵³

Regarding the role of some Home Rule League leaders in mobilizing the masses on the issue of protection of cow, Peter Robb says that while the landlords of the Shahabad district were using the symbol of cow and trying to reassert their dominance over the raiyats (tenants) by stressing their Common interest with them, there were other people in India who were watching these changes and seeing how they could be harnessed to political advantage. He further says that Bipin Chandra Pal had attended a meeting in Patna which was aimed at politicizing the people of Shahabad by appealing to their religion.⁵⁴

On this issue Sandria Frietag says that the political activists tried to use the Cow-Protection Movement for their own purposes. The British administration's special Branch made much of the connections between the Ga'orakshini Sabha and the Indian National Congress.⁵⁵

On this issue Bipan Chandra says that some of the Congress leaders used religion to reach the people with the new ideology of nationalism. He says that it was easier to build up the anti-imperialist movement on existing religious consciousness than to generate a new consciousness i.e. modern secular consciousness, for this purpose. This type of consciousness appealed to the people, but this type of politics contributed to the growth of communalism.⁵⁶ He further says that Bipin Chandra Pal's 'political propaganda and agitations' contained appeal to Hinduism. He and some other congress leaders used Hindu symbols in their political speeches.⁵⁷

Recruitment of soldiers for the I World War, from this village was also partly responsible for the outbreak.⁵⁸ It was rumoured in different villages of this district that the government had no more troops, and that if they had troops, these had no ammunition, and if they had ammunition, would not or could not use it.⁵⁹ It was also rumoured that British rule was about to end.⁶⁰ So rioters felt encouraged in spreading disturbances.

Peter Robb mentions the same thing in his book.⁶¹ He says that the increase in army recruitment in this area, encouraged

the rumour that the British had lost all their troops, and the British rule was coming to its end.

Anand A Yang, while discussing the disturbances related with cow-protection, at Basantpur, in Saran district of the western part of Bengal Presidency, mentions about the rumours of similar nature i.e. about the end of British Rule.⁶²

The collection of mob at Piru Police Station, was done through Patias (letters asking people to assemble at Piru).⁶³ The first patias invited mobs to Piru. The mobs concentrated at Piru and its neighbourhood. The mobs came from different villages of Shahabad district. Later on, Armed Police received numerous Patias (or snowball letters) which were inciting the mobs to loot certain places on fixed dates.

The following is a translation of a chit or Patia:

“Enmity has taken place between Hindus and Mussalmans. Oh Hindu brothers, help us. The Musalmans kill cow for Kurhani on 27-28th September. Those who are Hindus should assemble for Cow Protection and should write and make over five Chittis (letters) to others, failing which he will be sinful of killing five cows. Place Birahimpur”. The last name is a mis-spelling of Ibrahimpur.⁶⁴

After the first disturbance took place in the Piru Police Station, many 'patias' were written to loot other villages in Shahabad district. The police had obtained or intercepted several "patias" namely small pieces of paper written in Hindi, calling on Hindus to collect at certain villages on certain dates, and in several cases these villages had been looted on these dates.⁶⁵

Patias were also circulated after outbreak of disturbances. In some of these patias, it was written that in great war, British soldiers were killed and Government was short of arms and ammunition. The British rule is about to end and Germany was helping India. So no one should be afraid of army, and even after the arrival of army looting could be continued.⁶⁶

Regarding Patias, Peter Robb says that these were circulated before and during the Shahabad riots of 1917.⁶⁷

The mobs were convinced that they had the support of the Maharajas of Rewa and Dumraon, the Dalippur Babus (they were big landlords in Shahabad district) and other persons of influence, and they were given to understand that they might even expect assistance in the way of troops. It is evident from their war cries, from 'Patias', from intercepted letters and from

statements of accused persons, apart from a mass of indirect evidence.⁶⁸

Though the greater zamindars were cognizant of what was occurring, they could not be shown to have participated in the organization.⁶⁹

The organizers of the riots were zamindars (landlords) of moderate ranks. Leaflets were sent out by these zamindars to the persons of influence, to collect mobs on appointed dates. These leaflets were sent through their servants and dependents. These zamindars of moderate ranks led the mobs in the important attacks.⁷⁰ Their complicity is established by the judgments of the tribunals. Large number of zamindars were convicted. Nearly all the men of this class over half of the district joined the movement at very short notices.⁷¹

For Peter Robb, Cow-Protection Movement was the efforts of the zamindars to reassert their authority over their tenants, by rallying them under their leadership over the issue of cow.⁷²

Suranjan Das has highlighted the similar situation in Bengal during 1930s and 1940s, where Muslim elites mobilized the Muslim masses on the basis of religion, for their political and communal interests.⁷³

Beside zamindars, the movement was encouraged by pleaders and mukhtears. Apart from other activities, they also attended the meetings which were held to plan the disturbances. But none of them appeared to have been in evidence during the disturbances.⁷⁴

Gopi Singh, a resident zamindar of Narayanpur village, took an active part in the disturbances. He was later convicted and jailed.⁷⁵

Bachha Singh, another well-to-do zamindar of Sheopur, in whose house, a meeting was held on the 24th September, was also convicted. Many less important landholders and their agents were jailed for taking an active part in the disturbances.⁷⁶

The police had no news of the outbreak before hand and it got no assistance from the village chaukidars, police or local police, and in some cases there was direct evidence that Chaukidars had joined the rioters.⁷⁷

It was established that Sub-Inspector Lachhmi Narayan Misra of Piru Police Station with the writer (head Constable Jugal Kishore Rai threw in their lot with the organizers of the movement. It was in evidence that the police were approached and the Sub-Inspector promised his help.⁷⁸

Meetings were held at the police station and some of the first 'Patias' were actually written and sent out from there. The village Police were freely used to distribute the 'Patias'. One Chaukidar was caught carrying a 'Patia', while several have been convicted for taking an actual part in the rioting. The village police were, to some extent under the impression that they were required by the authorities to collect men to prevent the *Kurbani* (Cow sacrifice) at Piru is evidenced by the fact that a Chaukidar went up to an Inspector and in all innocence asked him whether men from his village were to go to Piru.⁷⁹

It is said that the Sub-Inspector of Piru Police Station, Lachhmi Narain Misser was promised a large sum of money and shortly before the *Baqr-Id* he deposited Rs. 500 in the local post office Savings Bank in the name of his wife.⁸⁰

For a month prior to the *Baqr-Id*, Pandit Sumeshwar Datt Pathok of Dumri, Police Station Dumraon, held daily meetings in the varandah of the Sub-Inspector's quarters in the thana (Police Station). Ostensibly these meetings were for "katha" or religious recitation but evidence showed that the discourses of Pandit Sumeshwar Datt took the nature of appeals to the martial spirit of the Hindus.⁸¹

Head Constable Jugal Kishore of the Piru Thana took an active part in writing earlier 'Patias'. The 'Patias' were addressed to villages or individuals, and it was in evidence that the Sub-Inspector and other organizers made personal appeals to zamindars and persons of influence.⁸²

Gyanendra Pandey says about the support of the local policemen to the Cow-Protection cause, and says that some patias were written in the police stations.

No definite information was received by the criminal investigation Department as regards Shahabad. The fact is to be attributed to the Complete secrecy with which the riots were organized. The local Muslims were kept completely in the dark regarding the preparations and not a hint reached the higher police officials of the district, though many of the chaukidars and some of the subordinate police were privy to the plot.⁸³

As a body, the armed police were well disciplined and were not biased. Posts and Patrols were established throughout the area but on account of the difficulties of communication and the impossibility of following up mobile gangs of rioters who were well served by their spies, over wet cultivation, the looting of Muslim houses and villages continued.⁸⁴ The disturbances were

controlled when it became possible to connect mufassal military posts with patrols along the main roads.⁸⁵

In my final analysis I wish to say that the Shahabad communal disturbances of 1917, which had no parallel since 1857 rebellion (in terms of collapse of law and order), had political origin, which subsequently took the form of communal conflict due to the active intervention of zamindars (land lords) of moderate rank, and also due to the collection of a very large mob in the Piru Police station and the neighbouring areas, which were enraged at their failure to prevent Cow sacrifice on the occasion of Baqr-Id in Piru Police Station. The intention of the leaders of 'Home Rule' was to collect a mob to prevent cow sacrifice in Piru Police Station. By this, they intended to create interest among people, in political agitation. But due to Cow sacrifice in Piru and the collection of very large mob, which was subsequently frustrated, the plan of the leaders of 'Home Rule', to only prevent the Cow sacrifice at Piru Police station did not materialize, and large scale disturbances broke out. It is not clear from the primary sources that whether the local leaders asked the mobs to start large scale disturbances or the masses (mainly peasants) went out of their control and started large scale disturbances. But the masses were certainly led by zamindars of moderate rank

and petty zamindars and their dependants, in spreading the disturbances in the entire district.

Local Police played very important role in collecting the mob in Piru Police station, through 'Patias' and other means. After the outbreak of disturbances many members of subordinate police participated in the disturbances.

The role of high police officials and armed police is appreciable. Due to its great efforts the disturbances could not cross the Shahabad district. They could not check the disturbances in this district for more than a week, due to the reasons which I have mentioned in the later part of this chapter.

Shahabad disturbances had political origin, but its spread was due to the immense escalation of tension between the two religious communities, on the issue of cow sacrifice. For many years preceding 1917, tension was mounting in Shahabad and its adjoining districts over this issue.

In this chapter I have also tried to show the nature of mass mobilization in late 19th century and in 20th century, and how the efforts to spread nationalism, national movement and anti-imperialist struggle was combined with communal consciousness, and the disastrous consequences it engendered.

Home Rule leaguers, congress and Muslim League leaders used communal consciousness for mass mobilization. My conclusion is, to some extent, similar with Mushirul Hasan's analysis regarding congress mass mobilization campaigns. In his article Mushirul Hasan writes, "The Congress mass mobilization Campaigns also had severe limitations. Many congress campaigns built a following by exploiting narrow sectarian and religious issues. It is common knowledge that the congress was closely identified with Hindu institutions and its leaders were connected with Cow-Protection Societies, the Nagari agitation, the Shuddhi Sabhas, the Arya Samaj, and the Hindu Mahasabha. They used Hindu Symbols-the cult of Kali, Ram Rajya, Ganapati – and religious fairs and festivals for nationalist mobilization. In Maharashtra, Tilak and his followers employed the cult of Shivaji in their mobilization campaigns. Similarly the swadeshi movement in Bengal, notwithstanding its contribution to the anti-colonial struggle, had unmistakably revivalist overtones. In the united provinces, several congressmen, supported by traders, bankers and landlords, actively campaigned against Cow Slaughter, patronized the Hindu Sahitya Sammelan, the Nagari Pracharini Sabha'.⁸⁶

Though in many cases congress used religious symbols to mobilize the masses for anti-imperialist struggle, it cannot be generalized. In many other cases congress mass mobilization programmes did not use religious symbols and it had wider appeal.

This chapter also reflects the spread of communal consciousness among certain sections of local police and landlords, though this trend cannot be generalized.

NOTES

¹ L/P& J/7/132, *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission*, Vol. IV, 1930, pp. 96-97, Mentioned in Gyanendra Pandey's Book *The construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*, New Delhi, 1994, p. 25. The Figures given regarding these riots are official observation.

² Vibhuti, Narayan Rai, *Cambating Communal Conflicts. Perception of Police neutrality during Hindu-Muslim Riots in India*, Chapter II, Delhi, 1998.

³ Gyanendra Pandey, *Op. Cit*, p.25.

⁴ Maps related with Shahabad district is at the end of the dissertation.

⁵ Letter from H.Mc Pherson, Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, Delhi, Home Deptt. Police File, Nos. 154-166, Part A, NAI.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Compiled from Imperial Census Table I and provincial Table I of 1911, Shahabad District Gazetteer, Vol. B, Statistics 1900-1901 to 1910-1911, Printed at the Bihar and Orissa Government press, 1918.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Compiled from the Tabulation Register to Census Imperial Table VIII of 1911, Shahabad District Gazetteer, Vol. B, Statistics, 1900-1901 to 1910-1911.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Compiled from the Police Reports Statement D, Shahabad District Gazetteer, Vol. B, Statistics, 1900-1901 to 1910-1911.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Letter from the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Crime and Railways to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa, 5 September 1918, Home Deptt. Police File, Nos. 154-166, Part A, 1919, NAI.

¹⁵ Letter from H.Mc Pherson, chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa, Op. Cit.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Vibhuti Narain Rai, op. cit.

¹⁸ Vibhuti Narayan Rai, op. cit.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Letter from H. Mc Pherson, op. cit.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Bengal District Gazetteers, Shahabad, By L.S.S. O' Malley. It was published in 1906.

²³ Letter from H. Mc Pherson, op. cit.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Letter from Mc Pherson, Under secretary of the Government of Bihar and Orissa to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, 11 February 1918. Home Deptt. Police File, Nos. 88-93, Part B, May 1918, NAI.

²⁶ Judges of the special Tribunal of Arrah, mentioned it in their judgment, 22 December 1917 Edition of Patliputra, weekly Newspaper, Published from Bankipore, Patna, ed. Satya Narain Singh.

²⁷ Letter from McPherson, under secretary of the Government of Bihar and Orissa to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, Op. Cit.

²⁸ Bihar District Gazetteer, Shahabad, by PC Roy Chaudhry, Printed in 1966. The information regarding Shahabad Riot was taken in this Gazetteer from Shahabad District Gazetteer which was printed in 1924.

Trial in the Court of the Commissioners of the Special Tribunal of Arrah, 11 December 1917, Home Deptt. Police File, Nos. 154-166, July 1919, NAI.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Letter from the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Crime and Railways to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa, 10th April 1919, op. cit.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Taken from trail in the court of Commissioners of the Special Tribunal of Arrah, 5th February 1918, Home Deptt. Police File, Nos. 154-166, Pat A, July 1919, NAI.

³⁵ Taken from trial in the Court of the special Tribunal., Arrah, 25 January 1918, Home Deptt. Police File, Nos. 154-166, op. cit.

³⁶ Taken from trial in the Court of the Special Tribunal, Arrah, 25 January 1918, Home Deptt. Police File, Nos. 154-166, op. cit.

³⁷ Taken from trial in the Court of the Commissioners of the Special Tribunal of Arrah, 19 December 1917, File, Nos. 154-166, op. cit.

³⁸ Peter Robb, 'officials and non-officials as Leaders in popular Agitations: Shahabad 1917 and other Conspiracies', in B.N. Pandey ed., *Leadership in South Asia*, Delhi, 1977, p. 190.

³⁹ Peter Robb, 'The Challenge of Gau Mata: British Policy, and Religious Change in India, 1880-1916, *Modern Asian Studies*, 20, 2, 1986, p. 291.

⁴⁰ Gyanendra Pandey, 'Rallying Round the cow: Sectarian strife in the Bhojpuri region, C. 1880-1917', in R. Guha, ed., *Subaltern Studies*, Vol. 2, Delhi, 1983.

⁴¹ Letter From The Deputy Inspector General of Police, Crime and Railways to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa, 10 April 1919, Home Deptt. Police File, Nos. 154-166, Part A, 1919, NAI.

⁴² It was known by the investigation conducted by the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Crime and Railways, in Patna. Letter from the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Crime and Railways to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa, Home Deptt. Police File, Nos. 154-166, op. cit..

⁴³ It was known by the investigation Conducted by The Deputy Inspector General of Police, Crime and Railways, in Patna, *ibid*.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*.

⁴⁵ It was known by the investigation conducted by the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Crime and Railways, *Ibid*.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*.

48 Ibid

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid.

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid.

54 Peter Robb, 'Officials and non-officials as Leaders in Popular Agitations: Shahabad 1917 and other Conspiracies', in B.N. Pandey ed., *Leadership in South Asia*, Delhi, 1977, p. 197.

55 Sandria Freitag, *Collective Action and Community: Public Arenas and the Emergence of Communalism in North India*, p. 51.

56 Bipan Chandra, *Communalism in Modern India*, Delhi, 1984, p. 155.

57 Ibid, p. 143.

58 Letter from Inspector General of Police, Bihar and Orissa to Home Department, 15 October 1917, Home Deptt. Police File, Nos. 133-158, Part – A, December 1917, NAI.

59 Ibid.

60 10 November 1917 Edition, *Patliputra*, Weekly Newspaper, Published from Bankipore, Patna, ed., Satya Narain Singh.

61 Peter Robb, op. cit, p. 183.

62 Anand A Yang, 'Sacred Symbol and Sacred space in Rural India: Community Mobilization in the "Anti-Cow Killing" Riot of 1893', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 22, 1980, p. 583.

63 Letter from the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Crime and Railways to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa, 10 April 1919, Home Deptt. Police File, Nos. 154-166, Part A, July 1919, NAI.

64 Ibid.

⁶⁵ Letter from the Inspector-General of Police, Bihar and Orissa to the Home Department, 15 October 1917, Home Deptt., Police File, Nos. 133-158, Op. cit.

⁶⁶ 10 November, 1917 Edition, *Patliputra*, op. cit.

⁶⁷ Peter Robb, op. cit. p. 191.

⁶⁸ Letter from the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Crime and Railways to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa, 5 September 1918, Home Deptt. Police File, Nos. 154-166, op. cit.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ November 1917 Edition, *Zulqarnain*, Urdu Weekly Newspaper, Ed., Nizami Badauni, Published from Budaun.

Bihar District Gazetteer, Shahabad, ed., P.C. Chaudhry, Printed in 1966. In this Gazetteer details of Shahabad riot of 1917 is taken from Shahabad District Gazetteer which was printed in 1924.

Letter from H. McPherson, Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, Delhi, 11 March 1918, Home Deptt. Police File, Nos. 154-166, op. cit.

⁷¹ Letter from H. McPherson, Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa, op. cit.

⁷² Peter Robb, op. cit, p. 192.

⁷³ Suranjan Das, *Communal Riots in Bengal*, Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 6.

⁷⁴ Letter from the Deputy Inspector General, Crime and Railways to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa, 10 April, 1919, Home Deptt. Police File, Nos. 154-166, op. cit.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Letter from Inspector-General of Police, Bihar and Orissa to Home Department, 15 October 1917, Home Deptt. Police File, Nos. 133-158, Part-A, December 1917, NAI.

⁷⁸ Letter from the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Crime and Railways, 10 April 1919, op. cit.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Letter from McPherson, Under secretary of the Government of Bihar and Orissa to the Secretary to the government of India, Home Department, 11 February 1918, Home Deptt. Police File, Nos. 88-93, Part B, May 1918, NAI.

⁸⁴ Letter from McPherson, Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa, op. cit.

⁸⁵ Bihar District Gazetteer, Shahabad, op. cit.

⁸⁶ Mushirul Hasan, "Communal and revivalist trends in Congress", *Social Scientist*, Vol. 8, No. 7, February 1980, pp. 53-54.

CONCLUSION

Many changes took place during the nineteenth century colonial India. These changes in a way produced the circumstances which caused disunity and tension between different religious communities, and especially between Hindus and Muslims. 'Revivalist Movements' a drive for 'identity formation' and 'unification of religious communities' caused tension between these two religious communities. Stress on religious symbols and practices also represented the show of strength between these two religious communities. They also came into conflict with each other on the issue of defense of custom and religious practices, and the act of British government to record the custom was also in a way responsible for this situation. For example, the act of Dupernex to ask for the lists containing the names of those Muslims who intended to sacrifice Cows and buffalos, gave rise to tension between these two communities.

The act of political leaders to make a mass following and to politicize the masses for anti-imperialist struggle, by using the religious symbol caused tension between these communities, and it was indirectly responsible for Shahabad riots of 1917. Though, there were many cases of such types of mass mobilization i.e. mixing of communal consciousness with the anti-imperialist

struggle, this trend cannot be generalized, and there were large number of cases of mobilization which did not have religious appeal.

The Cow-Protection Movement was the product of these above mentioned socio-political and religious changes during the colonial rule. The Cow-Protection Societies were well-organized. Collection of Chutki and establishment of Pounds indicates towards this. These societies employed the modern methods of mass mobilization i.e. speeches, pamphlets, Patias (letters) and demonstrations. Traditional system and influence of the local notables were also used to strengthen this Movement i.e. use of caste system in case of collection of Chutki and mobilization of mobs.

The propaganda and activities of Cow-Protection Societies caused tension between these two communities.

Zamindars (landlords) of moderate ranks were involved with the Cow-Protection Movement and they played important role in mobilizing the masses to prevent the sacrifices of cow.

Various methods were used to secure the compliance of Muslims to the demands for Cow-Protection i.e. economic boycott and threat to loot.

Colonial state was impartial, but it's subordinate officials and employees and subordinate police were indirectly involved with

these disturbances and riots. colonial state was trying to cope with this situation and it tried to bring the matter under control, by issuing guidelines to them and by initiating departmental action against them.

British efforts to maintain status quo by facilitating sacrifices at some places caused tension between Hindus and Muslims.

British lack of knowledge about the Indian sentiments and tradition, caused tension. For instance, the announcement of the timings of sacrifices by tom tom also inflamed the feelings of Hindus.

The occurrences of these riots show that the hold of British administration was not firm on the country side. Due to the lack of adequate number of armed forces and police, and due to poor infrastructural set up i.e. very poor condition of roads, it took many days to suppress the disturbances.

On the contrary, the communication of information was strong among the rioters and there was greater mobility of the rioters. The rioters were well acquainted with the routes in the country side and they were well informed about the movement of troops through Patias (letters) and spies. So they indulged into the cases of looting and arson at many places, for many days, and

managed to avoid direct confrontation with the police and armed forces.

Even in this atmosphere of tension and polarization between these two communities, there were some cases which showed that bonds of inter communal solidarity and cooperation existed. In some cases the concept of village unity, and of sorting out the differences at local level still existed.

These incidents show that even at this time when politics had penetrated the villages and there were efforts to bring the people under the shade of a symbol or identity, and the solidarity and mobilization of people had exceeded the limits of a particular village or a group of villages as is evident from the gathering of mobs from various districts to stop the sacrifice of cows, there were some cases where Hindus and Muslims of a particular village reached at an agreement over the issue of Cow sacrifice and the Hindus subsequently asked the attacking mobs to return, and in some other cases Hindus fought side by side with Muslims against the invading mobs, as they interpreted the attack on Muslims as attack on their village, and it was also due to the solidarity between different religious communities at the local level.

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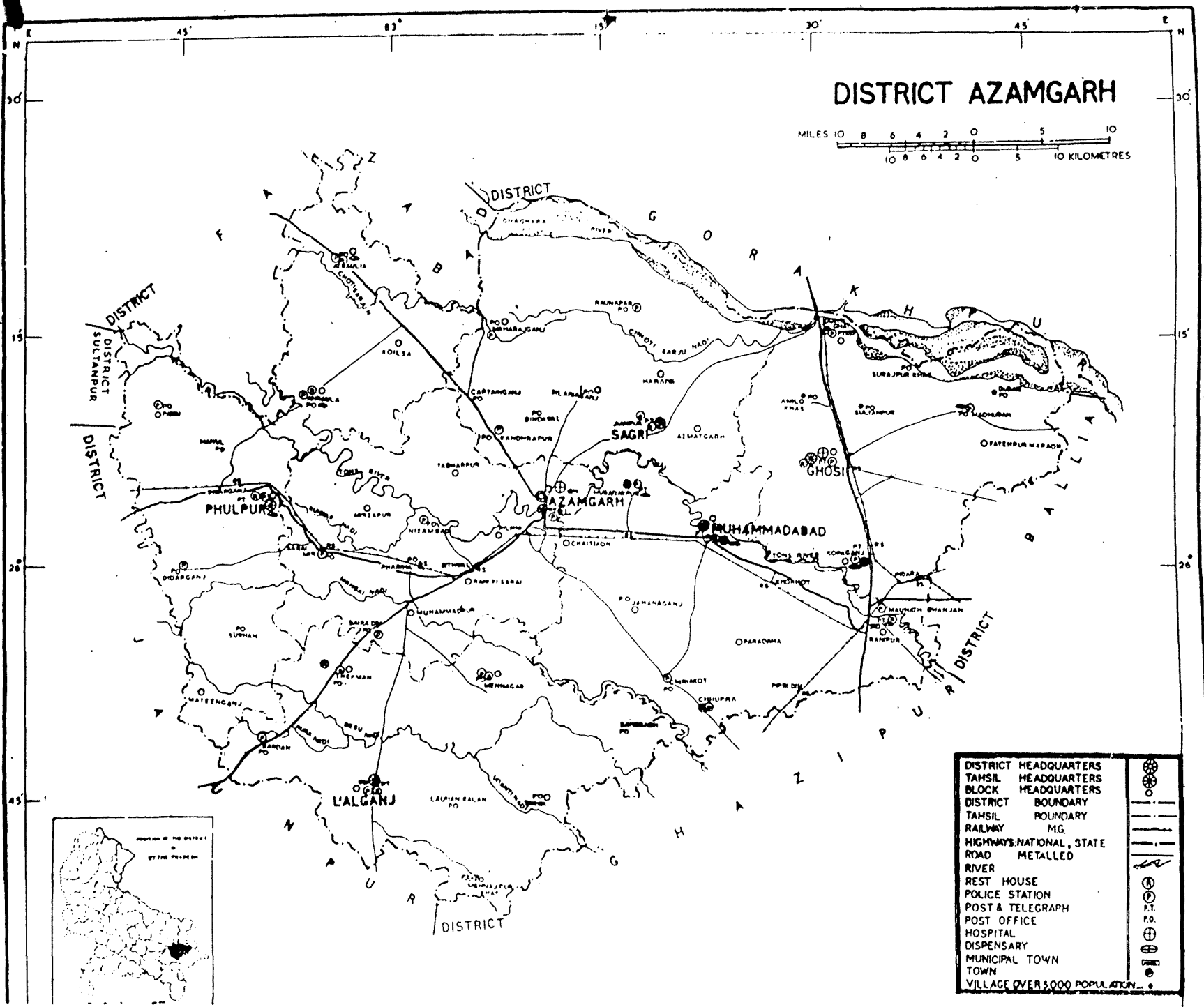
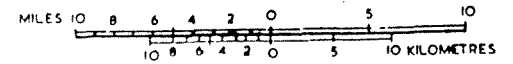
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DISTRICT AZAMGARH

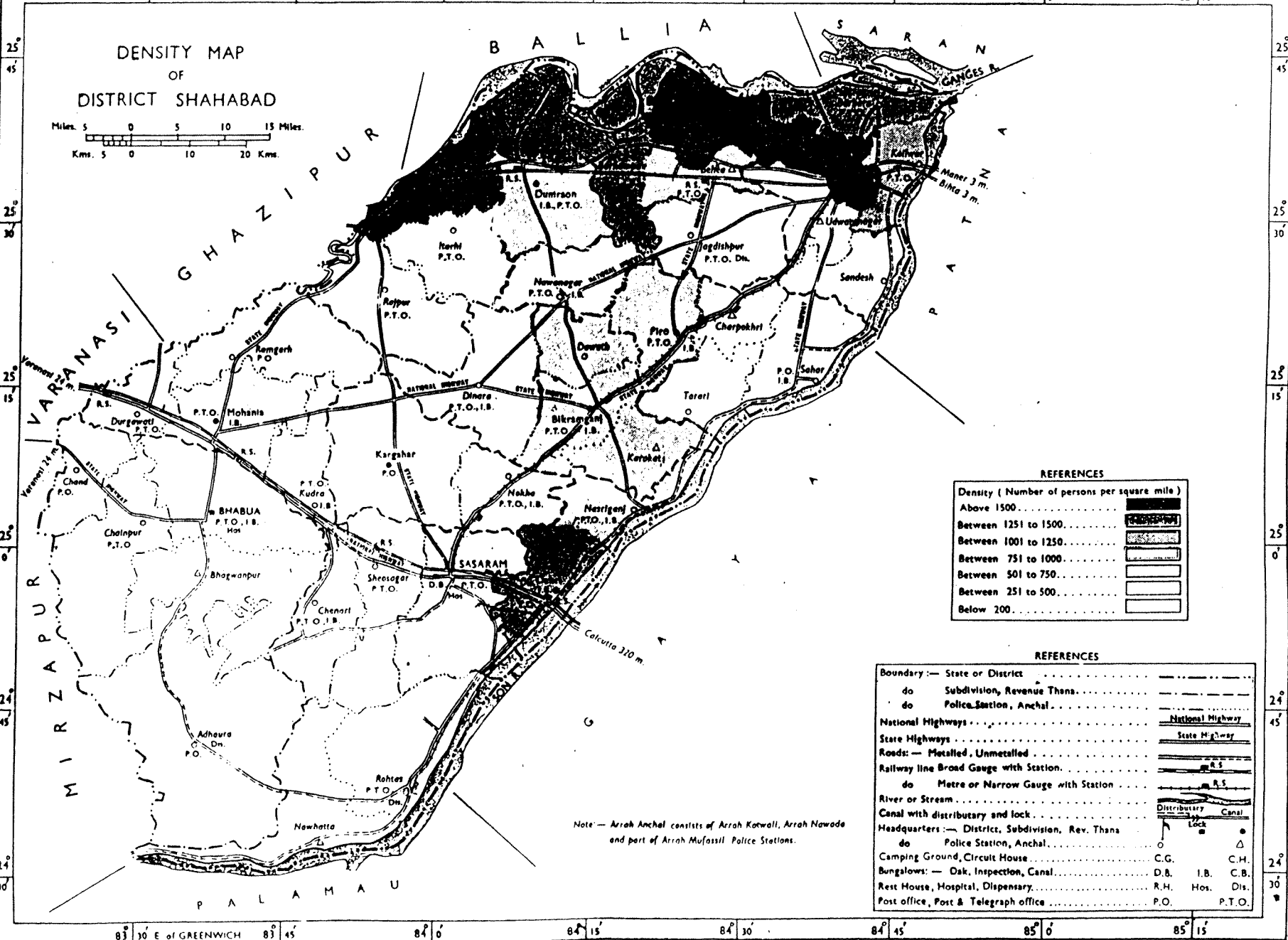


DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS	
TAMSI HEADQUARTERS	
BLOCK HEADQUARTERS	
DISTRICT BOUNDARY	
TAMSI BOUNDARY	
RAILWAY	
HIGHWAYS NATIONAL, STATE	
ROAD METALLED	
RIVER	
REST HOUSE	
POLICE STATION	
POST & TELEGRAPH	
POST OFFICE	
HOSPITAL	
DISPENSARY	
MUNICIPAL TOWN	
TOWN	
VILLAGE OVER 5,000 POPULATION	



Taken from Census 1961, District Census Handbook, Uttar Pradesh,
49-Azamgarh District.

83° 30' 83° 45' 84° 0' 84° 15' 84° 30' 84° 45' 85° 0' 85° 15'



Taken from census 1961, Bihar, District census Handbook, 3, Shahabad.

Map of Shahabad and its adjoining areas

