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Communal Riots in India

A Chronology (1947-2003)

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Communal riots have become a distinct feature of communalism in India. Whenever conflicting groups from two different religions, which are self –conscious communities, clash, it results in a communal riot. An event is identified as a communal riot if (a) there is violence, and (b) two or more communally identified groups confront each other or members of the other group at some point during the violence.¹ The reason for such a clash could be superficial and trivial, though underlying them are deeper considerations of political representation, control of and access to resources and power. There have been many incidents of riots recorded during the course of British rule and even before that. For example: In Ahmedabad there were riots in 1714, 1715, 1716 and 1750. But according to Bipan Chandra, in his book “*Communalism in Modern India*”, communal tension and riots began to occur only in the last quarter of the 19th century, but they did not occur in India on any significant scale till 1946-47². Before that, the maximum communal rioting took place during 1923-26. A clear relationship between communal riots and politics was established for the first time in 1946, when the Muslim League gave its direct action call on August 16, 1946.³

This chronology reveals that communal riots are not caused spontaneously and also that they are rarely caused by religious animosity. They arise due to conflicting political interests, which are often linked to economic interests. There is a significant change in the pattern of communal riots since the 1990s, which could be noticed in the later part of this chronology. This brings forth the shifts that have occurred in the nature of communal riots in India. Moreover, the aim is to underline that religion in most of the cases is not the reason why communal riots occur. The reason for the occurrence of communal violence has been different in the two different phases. During the time of partition, it was the clash of political interests of the elite of two different communities which resulted in communal riots.⁴ But, from the 1960s till the late 1980s, the local political and economic factors played a very important role in instigating riots. The emergence of Hindutva politics in the last two decades has been a cause of communal riots in this phase where the local factors have also helped in instigating riots.

Communal riots that took place from the 1960s to the 1980s follow a particular pattern. They have mostly occurred in urban towns which are either industrial belts or trading centers with the economy largely based on a particular occupation. Most of these places had a considerable percentage of Muslim population whose political or economic interests clashed with those of the

¹ Ashtosh Varshney, *Ethnic Violence and Civic Life*, (New Haven : Yale University Press, 2002), p.309

² Bipan Chandra, *Communalism in Modern India*, (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing Home, 1984), Pp 4

³ Ibid, 6

⁴ Asghar Ali Engineer, “Gujarat Riots in the Light of the History of Communal Violence,” *Economic and Political Weekly*, December 14, 2002, pp. 5047-5054

Hindus. Moreover, the major riots occurred when the Congress was in power in these states or during the short and uncertain phase of the Janata Party coalition rule at the Centre. Riots in this phase might have occurred in the villages or rural areas like the Biharsharif riots, but they have often remained unreported. Therefore it is important to distinguish this phase from the 1990s during which the BJP and its sister organizations have been active in instigating communal riots.

Communal violence since 1990s needs to be seen in the light of the changing political equations in the country. The decline of the Congress and the emergence of the BJP as a strong political force resulted in shifting patterns of communal riots. Communal violence in the last two decades is a result of the manipulation of the religious sentiments of people by the Hindu right-wing organizations for political gains. The politicization of the Mandir-Masjid issue and the subsequent demolition of the Mosque gave the BJP the opportunity to consolidate its vote bank. But in the process the controversy created a communal divide, and frequency of riots also increased during this time. Since partition, never before has one particular incident resulted in the emergence of violence in almost all the states. From the 1960s till 1980 local factors played a very important role in the emergence of riots, but since the late 1980s this trend seems to be changing. Communal violence has always occurred when the BJP has wanted to expand its base. In the recent years the South Indian states, particularly Kerala and Tamilnadu, have also witnessed communal violence and are slowly growing into communally sensitive areas. This is primarily because of the recent entrance of BJP in the political arena of these states.

Apart from Godhra, the other incidences of communal violence in the 90s have been minor, yet they cannot be dismissed. These eruptions of communal violence have not been spontaneous, but are organized, and often have the support of the local administrations. The state support to riots is a long established feature in India, yet the state has never been such an active participant in the violence before the Gujarat riots.

Communal violence has entered a new phase with the Christians and members of other minority religions being made the victims of planned attacks. Communal riots in this decade have been both urban and rural features, but the extent of damage is always greater in the thriving centers of trade and commerce. Tribal population in the rural areas is being forced to get involved in the attacks on Christians and Muslims by bringing them within the Hindutva framework. Apart from economic reasons, the call for Hindu unity which is primarily a means to achieve political advantage is the main source for communal violence in this decade.

Godhra was indeed the first major communal riot that got such a wide media coverage particularly from the satellite channels. Therefore the media now needs to be more responsible, considering the influence that it can have over the masses. It is time that the media stopped any kind of biased reporting as it can further encourage the communal elements to instigate the masses.

Political parties have always had a hand in instigating and exploiting communal violence so as to meet their electoral interests. Though communal riots are condemned in various quarters, there is still complete inaction both from the administration and the ruling governments in many states. Though religious festivals and processions are generally the starting points of communal riots, still sufficient security is not provided during these times. There is also not much response

against incidents of communal violence from the civil society. Till the time the political parties which instigate communal riots are voted to power, the incentives to combat communalism will not be able to develop fully.

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
			Dead	Injured			
1947	Calcutta and Naokhali, Bengal	Hindus, Muslims	5000	25000			The riots in Bihar also led to large-scale devastation of human lives and properties.
March-August, 1947	Lahore and Amritsar, Punjab	Hindus, Muslims	5000	3000			Punjab was the worst effected during the Partition riots. It was the key to the issue of partition and thus to the constitutional fate of India. In Lahore and Amritsar armed mobs murdered the people and burnt their homes
1953	Kota						situation brought under control quickly
1956	Kota						situation brought under control quickly
1961	Jabalpur	elopement of a Hindu girl with a Muslim boy, son of a local bidi magnate was the immediate cause; rivalry between Hindus and Muslims in the bidi industry			Justice Shiv Dayal Srivastava Committee	intelligence department was inefficient, the law and order authorities responsible for laxity in investigation and prosecution, resulting in large acquittals	A new phase began with the Jabalpur riots when local factors started playing an important role in instigating violence.
1964	Rourkela, Calcutta, Jamshedpur	business rivalry between the Hindus and the Muslims, particularly in the liquor trade in Rourkela	2000, mostly Muslims				reaction to the atrocities committed against Hindus in East Pakistan. communal elements were given a free hand by the administration

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August 1967	Hatia, Ranchi	started due to brick batting of a students' procession urging that Urdu be made the second official language of Bihar	19 Hindus, 164 Muslims		Raghubir Dayal Commission	feelings were agitated on hearing rumors about what happened in Ranchi. The commission was critical about the inadequate measures adopted by the district authority in Hatia; DM and SP new and inexperienced; political parties and labour unions criticized	
1968	Aurangabad	accidental injury to a cow by a Muslim boy while he was trying to chase it away from his shop. Loot and arson by RSS-Jan Sangh and Congress workers. Retaliation by Muslims		one incident of stabbing a Hindu			It was around 1964-65 that communal disturbances began to occur in Aurangabad. The Jamait-e-Islami did not have any active branches till about 1964. The Jan Sangh in the fourth general elections found the first opportunity to approach the masses on a purely communal platform since opposing Congress candidate in Aurangabad was a Muslim.
March 1968	Karimganj, Assam	a cow belonging to a Muslim trespassed into a Hindu house. When a Hindu boy tried to chase the cow away, a few Muslims beat him up	41 Hindua, 41 Muslims				Majority of the Hindu population of Karimganj was engaged in trade and business, the bulk of them were also involved in smuggling. The Hindus of the region resented the fact that Muslim smugglers had an edge over them, due to their relations with the Muslim population in Pakistan.

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1969	Ahmadabad	Communal riots between Hindus and Muslims occurred near the Jagannath Temple in September. The riots spread to 25 more localities, in which around 512 persons lost their lives. It is alleged that handbills calling for a religious war were distributed to the rioters by the Jan Sangh and the RSS.	512		Justice P.Jaganmohan Reddy	the havoc was caused by rumors, patrikas writings on blackboards and provocative newspaper reports; recommended that the special branch of the Gujarat police needed to be reorganized.	The Congress was not far behind in spreading communal feelings. Most Congressmen participated directly or indirectly in the riots and called the Muslims anti-national. The Hindu Dharma Rakshak Samiti was formed at this time. Its members were largely middle class Hindus. Ahmedabad's textile industry, which provided large-scale employment opportunities for Hindus and Muslims, was facing a crisis, and there was strong rivalry between the Hindu and Muslim workers in this industry. The relief work that followed the riots was not efficient and the general attitude towards the riot victims was unsympathetic.
1970	Bhiwandi, Maharashtra		17 Hindus, 59 Muslims		D. P. Madan Commission of Inquiry	the MTM and Rashtriya Utsav Mandal shared joint responsibility for the riots	1,286 Muslims and 323 Hindus were arrested after the riot
May 1970	Jalgaon, Maharashtra	Hindus traced the disturbances to the molestation of a married Hindu woman by some Muslim youth..	1 Hindu, 42 Muslims		D. P. Madan Commission of Inquiry	report held that there was no such incident. The Commission said that police officials with the help of some Hindus invented the story at a much later stage.	The day the riots occurred, 8 th May, all the senior officers were out of town. Another immediate reason for the riot was a quarrel that took place at a pan shop at Rath Chowk between a Muslim and some Hindus.

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May 1970	Mahad, Maharashtra	riots broke out after the announcement of the Bhiwandi riots over All India Radio.		9 Hindus, 6 Muslims	D. P. Madan Commission of Inquiry	criticized the political parties for exploiting communal feelings.	
November 1972	Nonari and Sajni, Uttar Pradesh	in Nonari, the riots began on 15 November after Muslims murdered a Harijan leader; a crowd of 10,000 attacked Muslim houses and shops and started looting and arson. In Sajni on 12 December, a crowd of 5000 started looting and arson after a few Muslim boys tried to molest a Hindu Brahmin girl of another village. A Hindu boy, who was beaten up by the Muslims, saved the girl; rumor was spread that the Hindu girl was raped	1				in Nonari, 107 houses of Muslims were looted and 76 were set on fire
October 1977	Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh	riots started when students from the Anglo-Bengali College and young men from the adjoining locality of Muslim weavers clashed over the question of whether the spreading of yarn by weaver boys on a part of a playground was restricting the space available for students to play	5 Muslims were stabbed after being dragged out of a cinema hall and	several injured			The police instigated the riots by going to the Muslim locality and beating up the weavers. This led to a worsening of the situation and further clashes taking place. In another incident the police did not make proper arrangements when a Hindu procession was crossing a Muslim locality. The police, instead of firing at the miscreants in the stabbing incident, started firing on the Muslims.

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
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March 1978	Sambhal, Uttar Pradesh		23 Hindus, 2 Muslims				a big trading centre for smugglers and bootleggers. There was trade rivalry between the Hindus and the Muslims who wanted to dispossess the Hindus of their property.
October 1978	Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh	immediate reason for this particular riot was the murder of a Hindu. A procession was led demanding the punishment of the murderer but violence erupted when the procession was crossing the Muslim populated area. During the riots the ruling party office bearers used strong-arm methods to secure the release of some anti-socials arrested by the police as a preventive measure.	30				Commerce in Aligarh revolves around the lock industry, which is owned by rich Muslims. But there is also the exploitation of the Muslim workers by these owners. Every time a riot occurs the lock owners come out as protectors of the Muslim workers and thereafter continue their exploitation of the workers. The Hindu traders, who are followers of the Jan Sangh, had control over the raw materials for the lock industry. The Hindu traders also benefited from the riots as they got possession of a little more territory by occupying the land of the victims, which they generally leave due to fear.
September 1978	Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh	a particular group started throwing stones on a Ganesh procession consisting of 2000 people.		19			264 were arrested; Chenna Reddy, the then Chief Minister of the state, started addressing Ganesh processions, after this incident for political gains.

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April 1979	Jamshedpur, Bihar	a joint Ramnavmi procession passed through an area which had a significant population of both Muslims and adivasis. The local MLA played an active role in provoking the riots.	120 killed, more than half were Muslims		Jitendra Narain Commission of Inquiry	concluded that the RSS, with its extensive organization in Jamshedpur and close links with the BJP and the BMS, had a hand in creating a climate propitious for the outbreak of these disturbances. It further said that not a single Hindu was killed by the Bihar Military Police in 22 hours of firing resorted to by the police for quelling the riots.	
August 1980	Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh	Id-prayers were disrupted and scores of people, including many young children, died in a stampede at the Idgah. The riot occurred on this particular occasion when a police constable on duty refused to chase a pig when asked by Muslims in the Idgah. A number of Harijan slums and Muslim refugee camps were attacked.	1500 to 2000				The population of Moradabad is evenly distributed between Hindus and Muslims. The town's brassware industry is the main source of its income. Most of the artisans in the industry are Muslims, but the traders and exporters of the finished products are Hindus. There has been a long standing rivalry between the Muslims in this area and the Valmikis, traditionally sweepers. Constant clashes occur between them over land, and the straying of pigs into the Muslim locality. riots in Moradabad was followed by Biharsharif, Merrut, Baroda, Bhiwandi, Pune and Sholapur. The PAC played a communal role, and in one particular incident 15 Muslims were killed by the PAC.

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April 1981	Biharsharif, Bihar	a quarrel in a toddy shop owned by a Harijan. The trouble erupted in the Gagandiwan village having a majority Muslim population. There was also traditional rivalry between the Hindus and Muslims over a piece of land which both claimed as their own.	around 80		Balasubramanian Commission set up by the Bihar Government	failure of the intelligence machinery and the District Administration misleading the higher authorities by not providing a correct assessment.	The police did not take effective action to control the clash, which ended in rioting. The spread of false rumors affected the other villages in Biharsharif. The hold of the RSS and the Jammat-e-Islami in these areas further increased the violence
September 1982	Meerut, University Press	dispute over a Shiv temple and a Mazaar in two adjoining buildings in the highly sensitive Shahghasa area	12	30			In the elections that took place before the riots, a Muslim MLA was elected, displacing the BJP candidate. Soon after, the riots broke out over a trivial issue. Outside forces, which included the Shahi Imam of Delhi's Jama Masjid and some BJP leaders joined the fray. The worst sufferers of the riots were the Ansaris, Muslim weavers.

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
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December 1982	Baroda, Gujarat	communal clashes occurred when the Dussera and Muharram coincided. The liquor traders from both communities looted and clashed with each other. The news of the transfer of the Hindu Police Commissioner due to pressure from the Muslim community spread like wild fire, and led to a worsening of the situation. The Hindu leaders used the opportunity to criticize the Islamic Muslims for opening an Islamic study centre in Baroda. 19 riots occurred in the city in a short span of 10 months.	17	50			After the 1969 communal riots, Baroda had witnessed a deliberate boycott of Muslim shops and establishments, which led to deterioration in the economic condition of the Muslims. There was also a rise of Islamic Fundamentalism and communal activities of the RSS and BJP. The illicit liquor trade was flourishing at that time in Baroda with a large number of shops selling local brands. Both Hindus and Muslims owned these shops. The constant competition among these shop owners often aggravated the situation.
May 1983	Malur, Karnataka	riots were sparked off by group rivalry between the Congress (I) MLA of Malur and the ex-Congress (I) MLA					Three months before the riots a Harijan woman was raped by three Muslim youths and it was the communal, rather than the criminal aspect of the problem, that received much importance. Soon, another incident of molestation of a Hindu girl by a Muslim boy took place. The RSS took full advantage of the situation, and instigated some militant Hindus to take revenge. Soon after, trouble erupted leading to large-scale damage to Muslim property. Communal disturbances in Malur were unknown before the advent of the RSS.

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
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June 1983	Malegaon, Maharashtra	The bursting of crackers before the Jama Masjid to celebrate the victory of the Indian Cricket team in the World Cup led to communal riots					trade rivalry between the Hindus and the Muslims is marked. The Muslim loom-owners sold only to Muslims, which affected the profits of Hindu traders. Cow slaughter is a sensitive issue, and Malegaon is the only district where 36 butchers had been convicted and imprisoned for three months for violating the Cow Slaughter Act. The situation worsened after the then Chief Minister, A.R.Antulay, floated the idea of constructing a martyr's memorial to honour those who had lost their lives in the freedom struggle. The Malegaon authorities came up with names, all of which were Muslims. The Hindus objected to this on the grounds that these people had been involved in destroying temples. This issue had been responsible for escalating the tension in 1982. There was an agitation by the Muslims at that time also for dropping a chapter from the standard VIII history textbook where it was stated that the Prophet Mohammad fled to Mecca
October 1983	Hazaribagh, Bihar	procession led by Hindus turned violent after Muslims stopped it near the Jama Masjid					caused by negligence by the local authorities; while local political leaders persuaded the members of both the communities to start the Moharram procession and the Chaitra Ramnavmi procession to spread communal harmony, the actual intention of these leaders was to gain political advantage out of the situation. The Police inspite of being well aware of the situation did not take effective measures

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September 1983	Hyderabad	desecration of a mosque, followed by the call for a bandh by MIM (Muslim Itthadul Muslimeen) party.	45	150			The BJP, RSS, VHP and the MIM appeal to communal sentiments and raise communal tensions on the eve of elections and religious festivals. From 1979 to 1984 there have been constant communal clashes in the city. newspapers added further fuel to the communal violence by disclosing the identities of the victims. The Congress (I) and the TDP have formed electoral alliances with the MIM
May 1984	Bhiwandi, Maharashtra	A Shivaji Jayanti procession led to large scale communal violence; the ban on the Shivaji Jayanti procession after the 1970 riots was resented by the Shiv Sena.	146	611			The Muslim population in Bhiwandi has increased considerably since 1970 and many of them set up their own powerloom industries, which was financed by Marwaris. Therefore, during the riots, the Marwari godowns were not destroyed in Muslim areas. The increase in the number of smugglers and underworld activities also led to communal tension. The number of Pakistani nationals staying illegally in the city was around one lakh according to the unofficial figures.
October 1984	Delhi	anti-Sikh riots broke out in Delhi and most parts of North India after the assassination of the then prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards	2733, mostly Sikhs		Justice Jaggannath Misra Commission of Inquiry formed in 1985. In 1999, the Justice Nanavati Commission began its investigations.	Jaggannath Misra Commission recommended that the Delhi administration investigate the conduct of the delinquent police The results of the Nanavati Inquiry Commission revealed that the police force played a vital role in instigating violence.	The pattern of these riots showed that they were organized and planned against a particular community and the many senior Congress leaders were alleged to have participated in the anti-Sikh riots. The main accused in these riots were H.K.L.Bhagat, Sajjan Kumar and Jagdish Tytler. All these senior Congress leaders were exonerated till the CBI on July 11, 2003 filed an appeal against a lower court which acquitted Sajjan Kumar.

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			Dead	Injured			
April 1985	Ahmedabad	anti-reservation agitation	300			city court in April 1986 pronounced the death sentence on five Muslims charged with the killing of 8 persons during the riots.	There is large-scale poverty among the Harijans and the Muslims who primarily live in the slums of Ahmedabad. Therefore the Muslims and Harijans did not respond to a bandh called to protest the reservation policy by the upper caste leaders. This eventually led to the burning down of their houses and destruction of their property.
July 1986	Ahmedabad	violence broke out during the historic Rath Yatra procession through the walled city areas. Disturbances started after the annual Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath was subjected to a heavy stone throwing barrage in the sensitive Dariapur and Kalapur localities	59	80			

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April, May 1987	Meerut		6, 75	40	Minority Commission headed by Shri N.C.Saxena	blamed the police for its biased attitude in its report and stated that the Hindu communal groups aggravated the situation.	The PAC had killed a number of young men and thrown their bodies into a canal during these riots. The media however played a positive role in uncovering the communal role played by the PAC in killing innocent people. In April 1995 that the Mulayam Singh Government announced that the 19 guilty policemen would be prosecuted. The lower-middle class, the middle strata of the population had participated in large numbers in these riots, while large section of the Harijans attacked localities inhabited by the Muslims. In some areas the rioting was between the Harijans and Muslims. The mere presence of the PAC in Muslim majority mohallas created a feeling of insecurity among the Muslims, while Hindus wanted the deployment of PAC in their localities.
October 1989	Indore	riots started after a Ramshila procession was stopped. After the Ramshila procession, a Muslim local leader with political ambitions took out a rally on the occasion of Milad-un Nabi, the Prophet's day. The procession was passing through the streets of Indore when two explosions took place leading to confusion and then the riots broke out.	7 Hindus, 20 Muslims				There was a wave of communal violence that took place in Kota, Badaun, Bhagalpur, Ratlam, Mhow, Khargone, Khambat, Palanpur and several other places. result of communal politics played by the BJP, VHP and the RSS, and it is interesting that the violence occurred in Congress run states. The violence in Indore and other areas were the result of political rather than religious overtones. It was soon after this wave of violence started that elections were announced. Local factors also played a significant role in the emergence of violence. Muslims form 10% of the total population of Indore and are largely backward, both economically and socially, but the important fact is that the Hindus and the Muslims have different political loyalties which encouraged the BJP and the Congress leaders to exploit the situation to their benefit. Several Muslim families suffered from police excesses.

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
			Dead	Injured			
September 1989	Kota, Rajasthan	riots broke out on the occasion of Anant Chaturdashi when Hindus took out a procession. The procession was marked by the participation of a number of Akhadas which were a part of the VHP, RSS and the Shiv Sena. Despite warnings the administration did not make proper arrangements at the time of the procession.					The Muslims in Kota are poor, except for the Bohra Muslims who are a business community. But a large number of Muslims from this area went to the Middle-East and became prosperous. Therefore the dependency relation between the Muslims and the Hindus was disrupted. Moreover, with the coming of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions, controlled by the CPI (M), there have been more strikes and militant trade union actions. Thus, the relations between the Hindus and the Muslims ceased to be cordial from the late 70s itself. The Muslims suffered the most in the riots and among them the Dawoodi Bohras were the worst victimized.
March 1989	Bhadrak, Orissa	riots occurred during the Ram Navami procession	4 Hindus, 13 Muslims.				Bhadrak had a population of 70,000 Muslims at the time of the riots and two Muslim Congress leaders were popular in that area. The economy of Bhadrak was under the control of Marwaris and Oriya Hindus. But economically there was no competition between the Hindus and the Muslims. The Marwaris employ some Muslims and there is a long standing dispute between the employers and the workers on the revision of pay scales. During these riots the Muslims looted the Marwari shops and burnt them. The Muslims who had earlier voted for the Congress in the 80s switched their loyalties to the Janata Dal. The BJP was also trying at this time to get a strong hold in Orissa. Therefore it decided to take out Ram Navami processions in many places in the state. They took out a procession at Bhadrak too and surprisingly the police allowed it to pass through a Muslim locality.

The mobilization campaign for Kar Sevaks to construct the proposed Ram Janma Bhoomi Temple at Ayodhya on 30th October 1990 aggravated the communal atmosphere in the country. Communal riots occurred in the wake of L.K.Advani's Rath Yatra wherever it went.. These riots were led by RSS-BJP men to consolidate the 'Hindu' vote bank. They were widespread over almost all the states from Assam to West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat, Maharashtra and D elhi.

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
			Dead	Injured			
April to December 1990	Gujarat	nearly 1400 communal incidents	224	775			
January and April 1991	Gujarat	120 riots	38	170			
October 1990	Ahmedabad	violence began soon after the Rath Yatra was started from Somnath	41				Rioting, arson and looting was witnessed in Vyara and Bulsar towns of South Gujarat. The violence continued in Ahmedabad, Bapunagar, Baroda and Ankleshwar. 200 persons belonging to the minority community were detained under TADA, but among these there were no charges could be established against 178, nor any explosives or weapons recovered.
	Rajasthan						
October 1990	Jaipur	hate campaign organized by the BJP since the Rath Yatra started from Somnath	52	144			
October 1990	Jodhpur, Rajasthan	VHP, BJP and Bajrang Dal called for a Jodhpur bandh to protest the arrest of L.K.Advani	20	100+			>From the morning of the bandh, BJP leaders including MLAs terrorized a section of the people by using physical force and provocative slogans, which resulted in communal violence. The administration shielded the miscreants but adopted anti-Muslim postures. Curfew was imposed in 49 districts
	Uttar Pradesh						

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
			Dead	Injured			
October, 1990	Lucknow	after the BJP chief started the Rath Yatra	33				army had to be deployed. But despite its presence it became difficult to bring the situation under control and the riots became a regular feature for the next two months.
November 1990	Agra	situation in the city was tense due to the Rath Yatra by L.K.Advani. The incident that led to riots was the stabbing of a scooter rider. 20 to 22 similar incidents occurred during the same time at different places.	31 mostly Muslims	69			The VHP leaders in the town were engaged in instigating communal sentiments. The city remained disturbed for nearly two months, despite the curfew imposed. 669 arrested.
April-May 1990	Kanpur	The city was a victim of communal riots thrice within a year.	30				Communal violence resulted from a clash between mafia dons to establish a foothold in politics by communalizing incidents that resulted in violence. The city was tensed during this time due to the Rath Yatra organized by the BJP, RSS and VHP. Therefore communal riots could break out with slight provocation. But the riots that broke out in May were organized and planned. It started with the aggressive BJP stormtroopers taking out procession in Muslim dominated Lakkarmandi area and hurling abuses at the community. This was followed by retaliation from few Muslims and four persons got killed. The next day disturbances began again due to a BJP meeting which was right in front of a thickly populated Muslim area. This led to communal riots and the police had no control over the mob.

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October 1990	Delhi	began in Chandni Chowk area when L.K. Advani's Rath Yatra was passing through	100+				30 to 40 people who were participants of the rally attacked the Deputy Imam of the Fatehpuri Masjid. As soon as the news of the attack on the Imam spread to the other parts riots broke out in Lal Kuan and Jama Masjid Chowk
October 1990	Hailakandi, Assam	Hindus demanded a government plot for the construction of a Kali Temple which for a very long time was commonly owned by all the communities and used for all public functions. The District Magistrate, Hailakandi at that time was a Muslim and the BJP exploited this factor to its own benefit.	37				Communal tension began to rise as soon as VHP, RSS and BJP organized pujas to purify the bricks for Shilayas at Ayodhya. The continuous migration of people from Bangladesh also instigates violence between the two communities
October 1990	Beawar, Maharashtra	VHP and BJP gave a call for Baewar bandh to protest against the arrest of L.K.Advani					In an effort to close Jai Mandir Cinema hall, a skirmish erupted between students and its employees. The RSS and BJP gave this small incident a communal angle. The administration formed peace committees to maintain communal harmony. The peace committees had representatives of various political parties and religious organization. These were the very people who instigated communal violence.

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
			Dead	Injured			
October 1989-90	Bhagalpur, Bihar	Ramjanmabhoomi-Masjid controversy	Hindus, 896 Muslims		Bhagalpur Communal Riots Inquiry Commission	submitted its report after six years but the members was not unanimous in their findings of the riot. While two members of the commission blamed the BJP-VHP and the Muslim fundamentalists for the riots, the Chairman Commission held the Congress responsible.	center for crime, and the politicization of crime. There are a large number of Muslims in and around Bhagalpur. Many Muslims are either weavers or in the powerloom business. Some Muslims are well-to-do businessmen or property owners. The intelligence sources and the people were well aware of the likelihood of riots breaking out, but did not stop the Rath Yatra procession and allowed it to pass through a Muslim dominated area. There is intense rivalry between two factions of the Congress here, which is reflected through gang wars even before the riots. Gang rivalries emerged during the dispute between the Hindus and the Muslims in the celebration of their festivals. The Superintendent of Police played a blatant partisan role during the riots. Along with Bhagalpur city around 206 villages were affected. 3000 powerlooms were looted and burnt. 1100 Hindus and 900 Muslims arrested
October 1990	Patna		18-100+				7 houses and 5 shops burnt and 8 Mosques damaged; large scale damage to property.
November 1990	Indore, Madhya Pradesh	Rath Yatra organized by the BJP	7 Hindus, 6 Muslims	150	demand to set up an Inquiry Commission was rejected by the Chief Minister		riots here continued for 5 days in which a Mosque was destroyed and a Temple desecrated.

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
			Dead	Injured			
December 1990	Hassan, Mandya, Madikeri and Mysore, Karnataka		60		Interim Report an organization called the CFD	blamed a local organization, the Hindu Yuva Sakti for the events leading to the riots	After S.Banagarappa took over the Chief Ministership from Veerendra Patil, he formed a state level committee for bringing communal harmony
October 1990	Hyderabad	the arrest of the BJP chief, L.K.Advani, in Bihar	165	350			BJP and RSS exploiting the Rath Yatra, Kar Seva and Ram Temple to ignite communal passions. The MIM too joined the fray.
December 1990	Hyderabad	a fight between two gangs of land grabbers belonging to different communities; stabbing of a hawker boy	134				It was assumed that the killer must be Muslim, and soon 150 persons allegedly belonging to the Congress went on a stabbing spree. In this incident 20 Muslims were killed. The Majlis retaliated by killing migrant construction workers and each time a construction worker was killed, the BJP went on a procession with the body. This instigated further violence and the riots lasted for 10 days, The riots stopped after the resignation of the Chief Minister Chenna Reddy.
April-July 1991	Baroda	a boy was hit by an auto rickshaw					a result of aggressive electioneering by the BJP; since the atmosphere was already tense this small incident was only an excuse to start the riots. The city once again witnessed communal frenzy on the occasion of Muharram. The frequent riots in the city are a result of communal politics. Moreover, the city is very congested with Hindus and the Muslims living almost in segregation. There is a high rate of unemployment, poverty and lack of education, which exacerbates the riots.

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
			Dead	Injured			
May- November 1991	Benaras, UP	Rioting began on Election Day when the Hindus allegedly prevented the Muslims from voting; In November the riots began with the Kali religious procession organized by Nav Sangh Club. Its members were divided into two groups, one of which was led by the BJP-VHP-RSS. When the procession entered a Muslim locality, slogans were shouted, and crackers were burst. Rumors spread that the idol was broken by the Muslims.	50+				In Benaras, a large number of Muslims are weavers and they suffered the most during the riots. The rioters were led by the PAC. Most of the Muslims are weavers though some have turned entrepreneurs and are prosperous. The present phase of riots in Benaras is also a result of the growing competition between the prosperous Muslim entrepreneurs and traditional Hindu traders. The police force in Benaras after the Ram Janmabhoomi episode was highly communalized. Between 1967 and 1991 Benaras witnessed 12 communal riots. In November 1991, Instead of the anti-social elements it was the police that looted and terrorized the Muslims.
May 1991	Baroda, UP		4 Hindus, 24 Muslims				Communal riots erupted on the Election Day, because the BJP was upset that it would to lose the Meerut city seat. The Janata Dal candidate received the Muslim and Dalit votes while the BJP got the Hindu votes. There was thus a complete polarization of votes.
October 1992	Sitamarhi, Bihar	a religious procession taken out by one community was stopped by another community	44				The violence soon spread to 13 more villages in the area.

Riots after the demolition of Babri Masjid

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
			Dead	Injured			
December 1992	Surat	A bandh was called by a Muslim organization which did not have much of a following among the Muslims. The bandh was followed by the damaging of a dyeing mill and soon the situation deteriorated into a riot.	Less than 200, 95% Muslim				Surat has a considerable population of Muslims who are mainly into the trading business, and have a close business relationship with the Hindu traders which was the reason attributed for communal harmony in Surat. The unemployment level in the city was also low. But, from the late 80s, there was growing incidents of crime as migrant workers who are not rooted in its culture have settled in the city. The hate campaign by the RSS-BJP combine also added fuel to the situation. The Babri Masjid Action Committee and other Muslim leaders also played with the emotions of the Muslims. The atmosphere in Surat was tense and the Babri Masjid incident provided the opportunity for organizations to start the riots. The manner in which large scale looting and burnings took place revealed that the riots were pre-planned.

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
			Dead	Injured			
December 1992, January 1993	Bombay	the repeated showing of the debris of the Babri Masjid by BBC instigated more violence; a Muslim mob attacked a temple which added to the fury 1993 - the Shiv Sena seemed to have been preparing for these riots	400+ and 600+ mostly due to police firing and mostly Muslims		Justice Srikrishna Commission	blamed the Shiv Sena chief, Bal Thakeray and Sena activists for the riots. It blamed them for their 'political role' in fomenting communal frenzy and organizing attacks on Muslims. On the role of the Congress government in the State, the Commission observed that inefficient political leadership, vacillation for political reasons and conflicting orders issued to the Commissioner of Police resulted in a dilemma to shoot or not to shoot.	
December 1992	Bhopal		143, majority Muslims				30,000 Muslims were displaced. On 9 th December mobs of Hindu men entered Muslim homes, ransacked their belongings, often killing a family member. The main victims during these riots were the poor Muslims and also the middle-class Muslims of BHEL township of Bhopal. The state government was not able to provide the adequate security to the people and the police also played a vital role in aggravating the situation.

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
			Dead	Injured			
March 1995	Madras	A blast in the Hindu Munnani office in Madras	4				The bomb was planted by a Muslim youth who was also responsible for planting a bomb in the RSS office in August 1993 when 13 people were killed. The Munani was targeted because of a provocative speech delivered by its State President, Rama Gopalan. There was a powerful blast in Rameshwaram where a BJP activist was also stabbed to death; over the years, there has been an increase in the activities of the RSS-VHP. The Muslim population in the state is quite prosperous as compared to Muslims in other states but again with an increase in the flow of Middle East money there has also been an increase in the Muslim fundamentalist activities in many parts of the state.
April, 1995	Chitradurga, Karnataka	a quarrel between two groups of bus agents belonging to two different communities	1	2			The state has become communally sensitive after the BJP expanded its political base here. It did not have a past history of communal riots
April 1995	Kerala	Riots broke out between Christians and Muslims.	2		visit by members of the National Minorities Commission		A place of worship was damaged in the riots and fishing equipment worth several lakhs destroyed
June 1995	Rankhandi, UP	Hindus objected to the construction of a mosque. After the Mosque was finally constructed, a crowd collected and destroyed it	1 in police firing				The Muslims alleged that the police were a silent spectator. One of the Samajwadi Party leaders alleged that the violence was designed to punish the SP workers by the Mayawati government. Though the village Rajputs supported defusing the conflict, the attitude of the village head was instrumental in instigating the violence.

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
			Dead	Injured			
July 1995	Palmau, Bihar	four Muslims were killed in a quarrel over a boundary wall	5				local police in the State are highly communalized and the corrupt state of affairs further aids in the occurrence of communal violence
September 1995	Madras and Hyderabad	Communal clashes occurred on the occasion of Ganapati procession	2 in Hyderabad	100+			In Madras stones were pelted on Muslims who were offering prayers in a Mosque. It was alleged that the Hindu Munnani leaders had a hand in the clash. The riots in Hyderabad were more serious due to a past history of communal riots in the state.
January 1998	Kanpur	an attack on the Imam of a mosque; the protests following it turned to clashes between Hindus and Muslims	1				The police claimed that the clashes were an outcome of the Lok Sabha elections which were to take place. Kanpur has also been communally volatile in the past and in the recent years, with the organization of rallies and processions by the BJP the number of such incidents has increased further.
February 1998	Ajmer, Rajasthan	alleged to have been started by some communal element among the shopkeepers outside the Dargah of Ajmer Sharif		25			The city has a large population of Muslims and the riot was. There are shops owned by the majority community outside the Dargah but houses are of the minority community, and miscreants set these shops and houses alight. A memorandum presented to the Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral alleged that the police entered the Dargah with their shoes on and lathi charged the people offering prayers and also fired in the air.

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
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February 1998	Coimbatore	riots followed the blasts that killed 60 people it was alleged that the blasts were organized by the al-Ummah and al-Jihad organizations, aided and abetted by the ISI			P.R.Gokulakrishna Commission of Inquiry	a definite lapse on the part of the police personnel, deputed for surveillance and checks, who ought to have discharged their duties more rigorously, vigilantly and intelligently.	The target of the attack was allegedly L.K.Advani who was to address an election meeting in the city. The police arrested some 500 people in connection with these blasts. Coimbatore had witnessed communal riots in 1997 as well and the Hindu Munnani activists were alleged to have played a key role in those riots. While L.K.Advani escaped the attack, BJP got a lot of sympathy votes. Coimbatore has also been a center of Muslim fundamentalist activities and the BJP has been trying to expand its political base in the city.
May 1998	Moradabad, University Press	Rioting broke out after an acid bottle was thrown on the 'taziah' procession allegedly by BJP supporters	3	50			Around 80 people were arrested including several political leaders who tried to visit the riot affected areas. The Moradabad riots took a serious turn mainly due to the alleged involvement of the political parties.
June 1998	Hyderabad	riots started when a Muslim mob coming out of a Mosque near the Charminar in the old city went berserk and attacked shops in the area. The trouble began after the circulation of an anonymously produced pamphlet lampooning the religious sentiments of Muslims	4	16			the army was alerted and the Union Home Ministry was urged to send the Para-military force. There were different reasons given for the occurrence of the riots but all pointed the responsibility of the different political parties. An ex-mayor of the city who was accused of distributing these pamphlets surrendered, and there were five more arrests made in this connection.

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
			Dead	Injured			
July 1998	Bardoli and Sanjeli, Gujarat	the VHP and Bajrang Dal activists terrorized the Muslim community over some Muslim boys marrying tribal girls	2				The VHP consider the tribals as Hindus and held 'dharma sabhas' in these villages. After every such event, Muslim shops were looted and burnt. The police was asked to stay away and threatened with being transferred. Marriages between Hindu girls and Muslim boys are opposed by these organizations and Christians too have come under attack in many parts of Gujarat. Some 200 copies of the Bible were burnt by the Sangh Parivar activists claiming that they were a means to convert the people.
October 1998	Nalanda and Mungher, Bihar	clashes erupted over the issue of immersion of the Durga idol in the Katrapar locality in Nalanda	3	39			The leaders of various political parties tried to gain political mileage out of the incident. In Munger, 27 people including three policemen were injured.
October 1998	Ahwa and Dang districts, Gujarat	the BJP and Bajrang Dal attacked Christian churches					Though a peace committee was constituted by the state home minister, the committee members traded charges and Christians were even accused by the members of being 'naxalites'.
December 1998	Suratkul, Karnataka	an eve-teasing incident involving a Muslim boy and a Hindu girl	12		CM JH.Patel ordered an inquiry		The riots continued in January the following year and were encouraged by the Hindu Jagran Vedike
January 1999	Manoharpur, Orissa	Graham Staines, an Australian-born Christian Missionary was burnt alive along with his two children by VHP activists led by Dara Singh			The Wadhwa Commission	concluded that Dara Singh was responsible for the killings, but did not see the hand of any other communal organization.	After the Babri Masjid attack when the VHP and Bajrang Dal could not attract the support of the masses, they started following a new strategy by attacking churches.

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
			Dead	Injured			
January-July 1999	Ahmedabad	riots broke out after two people were killed on the occasion of Mahavir Jayanti and Idul Fitr. Riots broke out again in July after an Indo-Pak cricket match	1				In the second incident, there was an organized attempt to distribute crackers among the youngsters. The cricket match incident was followed by the Kargil war, when demonstrations were held against Pakistan in which both Hindus and Muslims participated. However, in many demonstrations objectionable slogans were raised.
July 1999	Harda, MP	a communal mob confronted the police and the Deputy Superintendent of police was killed.					Curfew was clamped in the area and the violence continued for a couple of days. About 90 persons were arrested in this connection.
September 1999	Surat	violence broke out during the Ganapati festival	7	27			The riots were a result of a dispute over the route to be taken by the procession
December 1999	Auranagabad	a procession of Muslims and the Samajwadi party members to mark the seventh anniversary of the demolition of Babri Masjid was lathi-charged by the police			government ordered a judicial enquiry		The Shiv Sena had flooded the whole area with saffron flags just before the riots. Several journalists were injured in the police lathicharge. The police had also permitted the Shiv Sena to organize a religious ceremony just before the riots broke out.
December 2000	Kolhapur, Karnataka	riots broke out when some people of the minority community did not close their shops after a bandh was called by the Shiv Sena over the killing of an Army Jawan in a bomb explosion in Kashmir		a few injured			The shops which did not close were stoned by a 10,000 strong crowd.

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
			Dead	Injured			
January 2001	Kishtwar, Jammu	after the Jama Masjid was gutted due to a short circuit					The state came under the spell of communal politics after the emergence of the Jamaat-i-Islami which began as a cultural organization. After it won 5 seats in the Assembly elections, it started showing its communal colors. There are many other communal organizations that have come up now in Kashmir and terrorist activities further encourage communal violence. Over the years the BJP has also gained some political mileage in the state.
March 2001	Nalanda, Bihar	two groups clashed on the occasion of Holi in Shambhu village	8	6			Superintendent of Police brought the situation under control
March, 2001	Kanpur	the protest march taken out by the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) over the burning of a copy of the Quran turned violent					The procession was fired upon by the PAC killing 12 persons, all young Muslim boys. The PAC was itself a party to the looting that followed. The SIMI has spread communal poison over the years and instigated the minds of Muslim youths through provocative posters. In spite of its controversial role the PAC is deployed as soon as a disturbance emerges.
April 2001	Beawar, Rajasthan	a VHP-BJP procession was stoned and miscreants threw bottles of acid on it		24			The procession was taken out to demand the arrest of people who were involved in the construction of a religious structure in a village near by.

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
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June 2001	Chamrajnagar, Mysore	violence erupted after the murder of a youth belonging to the minority community					12 persons were taken into custody after the riots. Arson and looting took place on a large scale but there was no loss of life.
June 2001	Jamner, Maharashtra	following an incident of eve teasing					Many people came out into the streets carrying swords and began looting and burning property. The population of Muslims in this town happens to be quite substantial, whereas Sarpanch and the MLA both belonged to the BJP. Those involved in the looting and arson fled the town and were not arrested even several days after the incidents.
July 2001	Moradabad, UP	a gang of miscreants attacked the houses of the minority community	6				no one was arrested. The police said that the motive behind the clashes could have been robbery. But, a deputation of the Jamait-ul-Ulema visited the village and refuted the police theory, because those killed were very poor and had hardly anything in their houses worth robbing.
August 2001	Amravani, Maharashtra	Shiv Sainiks attacked Muslims who were taking their oxen for slaughter	2	30			The police arrested 70 persons in this connection.
August 2001	Ahmedabad	hawkers belonging to the minority community were beaten up in the Maninagar area.	1 in police firing	10, including 4 policemen			Four Bajrang Dal activists were arrested for inciting violence.
October 2001	Malegaon, Maharashtra	arrest of a Muslim youth distributing pamphlets outside a Mosque	13, including 3 in police firing	several			

Year	Location	Communities/Organizations involved/Reasons	Casualties		Inquiry Commission	Result	Remarks
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February, 2002	Ahmedabad, Gujarat	the burning at Godhra, of a coach of the Sabarmati express which was coming from Ayodhya, carrying kar sevaks	2000+		More than 30 reports have been prepared by various committees. On March 6, 2002, inquiry committee under Justice (Rtd.) KG Shah and Justice Nanavati established	Their common finding has been that it was a one-sided carnage and not a riot in the usual sense.	The violence continued for about a month. The administration as well as the government did nothing to control the violence and right-wing organizations like the VHP and Bajrang Dal got full support in spreading violence. The Modi government benefited from all this as the BJP won the Assembly elections in December, 2002.
February 2002	Kaithal, Haryana	linked to the Gujarat violence					Mobs pulled down a Mosque and considerable damage was done to property. The police made feeble attempts to stop the mob, which later demolished the Maceseum of Pir Nurani Badshah and extensively damaged three others.
March 2002	Bhivani district, Haryana	a mob of 300 persons were incited by rumors of cow slaughter					two mosques and 15 shops and houses belonging to the Muslims were attacked
March 2002	Rajasthan	violence occurred on the occasion of Muharram. The immediate reason for the violence was the organization of a yagna in a temple by the VHP, BJP and Bajrang Dal					The population of the area comprises 25 percent Muslims and was once considered to be a stronghold of the SIMI.

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October 2002	Sholapur, Maharashtra	riots began when some Muslim organizations led by the Muslim Vikas Parishad gave the call for a bandh to protest against a Christian Baptist priest in the US describing the Prophet as a terrorist	9	115			The protestors went in procession after prayers on Friday afternoon and threw stones at a Navratri pandal. The Hindus retaliated and riots broke out.. 500 arrested.
March 2003	Gujarat	Celebrations over India's win against Pakistan in the World Cup turned violent	1 in Gujarat	several elsewhere			Similar incidents also took place in Vadodara, Gorakhpur, Gajrawadi, Kolkata and Bangalore
May 2003	Marad, Kerala		9	several			Marad was a case of planned attack when some well armed men came and killed members of a particular community.

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