

# DALIT VOICE

[The Voice of the Persecuted Minorities]

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## CHRISTIANS & THE R.S.S. FASCISTS

RSS, India's fascist force, has at last succeeded in engineering perhaps the biggest communal clash between Hindus & Christians in the sub-continent's southern end of Tamil Nadu, ending in the death of 6 Christians, but unofficially over 16, on March 1. The war is continuing. The controversial Vivekananda Rock Memorial at Kanya Kumari & the historic mass conversion of Untouchables to Islam of 1981 have been used by the RSS to spread its wings. And today this Hindu high caste organisation is the fastest growing force in the land of Periyar E. V. Ramaswamy who once led the country's most powerful movement (Dravida Kazhagam) of the low castes. The difference between the Poona communal riots of Feb. (DV no. 10) & the Nagercoil incident of March is that while the former was directed against Muslims, the latter was against the Christians, India's two most persecuted minorities. Communal riot has been the trump-card of RSS. It whips up communal passions by telling the poor, low caste, illiterate *shudras* that if they are suffering, unemployed, it is because of the minorities who are pictured as the enemies of Hindus. As the high castes control the property & the privileges including the govt., it is very easy to fool these gullible masses. Their "Hindu feelings" are roused, "sentiments wounded" by the "anti-Hindu", "anti-national" work of the minorities. This is the aim of the current series of "Hindu unity conferences" all over India, and at Nagercoil on Feb. 13-14 when Christian priests and nuns were abused in most vulgar language. TN religious leaders and swamis had attended this meeting. The result was the March 1 killing of poor, innocent fishermen who happened to be Roman Catholics. The death toll is actually over 16. The RSS-Christian dispute is 20 years-o'd. The Vivekananda Rock Memorial, RSS outfit, was built exactly for this purpose to terrorise the poor Christian fishermen. In 1980 & 81 there were series of clashes between RSS & Christians. This trouble had been going on since 1963. The dispute resulted in the closure of the ferry service between the mainland and the Rock Memorial in 1981. The Memorial financed by India's biggest Hindu capitalists has destroyed the traditional fishing industry. The TN govt. has been consistently siding with the RSS. The March 1 killing of Christians, therefore, did not come as a surprise to us. What happened at Mandaikadu, near Nagercoil, the scene of the police-firing on March 1? As the

press in India is in the hands of the high caste Hindus, whose sympathies are with RSS, we cannot expect it to speak out the truth. That is why both the *Hindu* & the *Indian Express*, the two "national" English dailies, have preferred to remain silent although both have given a glowing picture of the RSS work in TN. It is only the *Statesman* that published a fairly good investigative report on March 7. But even this report did not say why the police opened fire on Christians. As for our civil & human rights heroes, less said the better. People's Union for Civil Liberties holding its national convention at Madras & attended by India's leading lights of liberty — V. M. Tarkunde, Rajani Kothari etc— had nothing to say about the police-firing except passing a bald resolution demanding judicial probe. But Marxists did not pass even a resolution. The police-firing is said to be due to the loud-speaker war between Hindu & Christian participants at their respective places of worship. But the *Statesman* sp. correspondent S. Rajappa's report says "the Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help is situated two kms. beyond the Mandaikadu temple." A press report said the police opened fire "when a Christian mob allegedly attempted to force its way into the Hindu temple." But the *Statesman* says: It is customary for people offering worship at the temple to bathe in the sea. A rumour spread that some women returning after their bath were molested by men who had congregated in the church compound. Clashes followed. On Monday night, a crowd collected at the church compound. Police tried to disperse them. When lathi-charge failed, they fired 46 rounds. Six bodies were returned after post-mortem. But according to the parish

priest eight people were still missing and feared killed in the firing." But it has nothing to say on the provocation for the firing. The Bishop at Nagercoil, M. Arokiaswamy says: "The police opened fire without any warning & when the fishermen were praying at the Catholic shrine far away from the Bhagawati Amman temple." (*Hindu*-March 7) He has held the RSS directly responsible for the attack on Christians. The Govt. statement made in the TN legislature puts the blame on the Christians: "On March 1 nearly 2,000 persons from Pudur village went to Mandaikadu village and ransacked tea shops there. The police issued warnings and began a lathi-charge. The crowd attacked policemen & 25 of them injured. The situation got out of control and the police opened fire. Four persons died on the way to the hospital and two more died at the hospital. Beside 15 others were injured." (*Deccan Herald*, March 4) If the govt. is so sure that it is the fault of the Christians, why it has not conceded the Christian demand for a judicial probe? The pro-RSS bias of the govt. is clear. Be that as it may, the killing of Christians has resulted in unprecedented unity between the persecuted minorities. And the *Hindu* in fact expresses concern over this welcome development. Backlash has begun. *Indian Express* (Madras) of March 9 has front-paged a story headlined: "Mob Attacks RSS Leaders' Houses", and blamed Christians for this. But a Nagercoil dalit comrade writes that they are much more angry with the RSS for trying to Hinduise the Untouchables. "Dr. Ambedkar is being taken over by the RSS & it is taking his photo to dalit areas in vi-

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## RAM SAYS BRAHMINISM IS DESTROYING INDIANS

*New Delhi : Brahmanism and Brahman Raj were the biggest factors responsible for the destruction of India's social and moral fabric. The country faced and recovered from several outside invasions but the greatest harm came from the attack of 'Bramarvad'.*

Jagjivan Ram, president of Congress (J), said in New Delhi on Feb. 18. Speaking at a rally of the Backward Classes, Harijan, Adivasi Action Committee at the Boat Club, he said that everything in Hindu society was decided on the basis of birth and caste alone was the single biggest factor that gave dignity and status to the person. He pointed out, as did other Opposition leaders like Charan Singh, Karpooori Thakur, Chadrawati and Devaraj Urs, that the Constitution provided for special arrangements for the socially and educationally backward classes. Jagjivan Ram criticized those who were against the policy of job reservations and yet advocated reservation of the post of Shankaracharyas for the Brahmans. "Will those who oppose reservation for Harijans oppose reserving the Shankaracharya's post for Brahmans? Will a Harijan be allowed to become a Shankaracharya?" Democracy in India would not be strengthened unless every citizen had equal position and felt that he had a share in State power. The people wielded power in the country only theoretically: in fact the votes were manoeuvred to enable a handful of people to run the "Su tanate from Delhi". The Government had already confined to the dustbin the recommendations of the Kaka Kalekar Commission and now it was afraid to place before Parliament the report of the Mandal Commission on the backward classes. Devaraj Urs said that the caste system was one peculiarity of Indian society and therefore the criticism that castes

were not classes was incorrect. To a great extent, the lower castes also formed the poorer classes. Karpooori Thakur, Lok Dal leader, gave statistics to show that the 5% of the Brahmans were able to get more than 50% of the top jobs in the country. In a Cabinet of 18 members, nine were Brahmans; out of 98 Vice-Chancellors it was 50; out of 500 Secretaries, Additional Secretaries and top bureaucrats the figure was 320; and of the 16 Supreme Court judges, nine came from that rank. Is this justice? he asked, and told assembled people that if they were willing to fight and struggle for their rights, nothing would be able to prevent them from achieving their aims. The rally had three main demands—presentation of the Mandal Commission report to Parliament and its implementation, reservation of jobs for the backward classes and filling up of the reservation quota for Harijans and Scheduled Tribes and Castes, and measures for stopping the daily atrocities on Harijans and backward classes. A leader from Bihar, said that outside Parliament there were two statues, those of B. R. Ambedkar and Motilal Nehru. The Ambedkar statue had a copy of the Constitution under its arm and pointed a finger towards Parliament. "This statue tells us to go to Parliament and take our Constitutional rights", he said. However, the statue of Motilal Nehru had a "danda (stick)" in hand. "This statue prevents with a danda from doing this", he explained. (Statesman-Feb. 19)

Karpooori Thakur former Chief Minister of Bihar, said: "The policy of reserva-

tion is not casteist but national, not prejudiced but open-minded. The makers of our Constitution were national leaders, not casteist leaders. They were patriots not traitors to this country. The Constitutional provision of reservation must be implemented fully. A Government which violates the Constitution directives is a traitor to the Constitution." Only one section, class, has benefited from this development. When Harijans, Adivasis and backward castes demanded their rights, they were called casteist and criticized in various ways, he said. "Who does the criticizing? The criticizing is done by those whose hold on wealth, power, education, culture, prestige has been strengthened over thousands of years. Five per cent of the people have a monopoly of over 50% of the jobs and 65% of the people have less than the other half of the jobs. This is how power is centralized in few hands," Thakur said (*Statesman Feb 17*) □

### PARLIAMENT GETS TASTE OF BRAHMIN RAJ

New Delhi: A dreary debate in the Rajya Sabha on Feb. 26 on the President's address was enlivened up for a few minutes when the stormy petrel of Lok Dal, Rameshwar Singh, reeled off a series of statistics to show that Brahmins had cornered the lion's share of all the key positions in the country. Building up his thesis that brahmin raj in the country still continued, he said that 50 p.c. of the Governors and Lt Governors in the country were brahmins, as 13 out of 27 belonged to the community, 64 p.c. of the Central Government secretaries were brahmins, 57 p.c. of vice-chancellors were brahmins, 71 p.c. of secretaries of ministers were brahmins

and 53 p.c. of all Cabinet Ministers. In addition, Singh said, out of 56 p.c. of all secretaries to Governor were brahmins, 56 p.c. of all the chief secretaries in the states, 56 p.c. of all Supreme Court judges, 51 p.c. of all additional judges in the High Court 41 p.c. of all ambassadors, 57 p.c. of all heads of public sector corporations at the Centre and 82 p.c. of all public sector corporation at the state level. (*Indian Express Feb. 27*) □

### World Church Action Against S. Africa

The World Council of Churches, supreme international body of the world's Protestant Christians, has withdrawn its custom from three major international banks whose financial dealings with South Africa were judged to be "supporting the system of racism embodied in Apartheid". The WCC is closing its 1-million Swiss Franks accounts with the Union Bank of Switzerland, and transferring from UBS management its S. Fr. 20-million investment portfolio. The two other banks the WCC is breaking relations with are the Swiss Bank Corporation and the Dresdner Bank (Federal Republic of Germany), but currently the Council has no funds in these banks. Apartheid, as everybody knows (we hope), is that barbaric political system by which a small White minority group runs a "Republic" in S. Africa keeping the vast majority of native Black people in absolute slavery. WCC General Secretary Philip Potter in announcing the action said the Council did "not take this action with any pleasure" but rather "out of deep concern for the people of S. Africa, both those who oppress and those who are oppressed". countries: courtesy: *Christian Workers, Colombo.* □

## WHY SHOULD HINDUS CONSIDER MUSLIMS AS A MENACE?

(Hajee Abdul Sattar Sait, MLC, Cong. I, Bangalore)

*In secular India it is unfortunate that discrimination prevails in granting admissions to Muslims in Govt.-aided colleges and professional colleges including medical, engineering etc. The private institutions aided by the Govt. are also not free from the blame.*

In the normal course the entire student population of India vis-a-vis the Muslims should be 7:1. Or 12½% of the student population should be Muslim. My point could be very well proved if statistics are obtained about the total number of Muslims that appeared for any of these examinations, SSLC, PUC, B.A., B.Com., B.Sc. MBBS, B.E. etc. Unfortunately these figures are not available to prove this point. The Govt. could do well to publish these figures. Unfortunately Urdu is also not taught in various institutions even if sufficient number of students are willing to come forward to learn Urdu. The Islamic culture is basically connected to Urdu literature and minus Urdu language in education, the Muslims would lose their attachment and connections to their heritage. There seems to be a calculated attempt to deprive the Muslims of the opportunity to learn Urdu. Otherwise I do not see why the Karnataka Govt. cannot pass orders directing all educational institutions to teach Urdu where Muslims have agitated for teaching Urdu. In this connection, there have been several cases of persecution also. Unfortunately the loss is also national since Urdu, a great language, would be lost to posterity. Due to consequent lack of educational opportunities the Muslims have suffered economically by not getting employment opportunities. Besides lack of suitable Muslim candidates seeking

employment, there is a positive effort of communal forces to deprive the Muslims of their share in the Govt. jobs. Otherwise how one could explain that there is not a single Muslim High Court judge and similarly in all important government jobs? Even considering that Muslims are not brilliant enough, I fail to understand why they are not able to get jobs in proportion to their population at least as class IV employees. No Govt. could be considered secular unless it creates perfect balance and provides opportunities to minority communities in the matter of providing suitable jobs. A memorandum was submitted to the Karnataka Govt. signed by 80 legislators including Muslims and non-Muslims seeking corrective action on the part of the Govt. but unfortunately no action so far. The Havanur Commission that went into this question gave only 6% reservation to the Muslims which is not in proportion to the Muslim population (Vol. 1, Part 1 Chapter XIX Page 186). Even the justice that was sought to be done by the Karnataka Govt. by classifying the Davesu tribe as a "backward tribe" thereby trying to undo a little injustice to Muslims is being sabotaged by not less a person than the Director of Medical Services, Dr. Y. P. Rudrappa, who seems to be working hand-in-glove with A. K. Subblah, president of the State BJP. If the majority community sincerely believes in secularism

## Dalits Hounded Out in TN Villages

*(Labour Press Service, New Delhi)*

Konna'am is a tiny village, about 10 kms from Arkonam. This is in the North Arcot District of Tamil Nadu. All the fertile land in the village belongs to the Reddiars, a Hindu community. There are 350 Reddiar families in the village. There are about 20 dalits families living in 18 huts. They roughly have 100 members. The dalits here, like elsewhere have been tolerated merely to carry out the menial tasks. They have been so docile that they were not allowed to bury the dead at the common burial ground of the village. The dalits protested against this. On the Tamil New Year day, the father of the local landlord, Kuppareddy, died. The dalits were asked to beat the drums for the death ceremony. They refused to carry out the orders. Tension spread in the village. The leader of the Hindus, Kuppareddy, had to hire men from distant villages to beat the drums in the funeral ceremony. In retaliation on Jan. 16 1982, the dalits of Konna'am were severely beaten by the Hindus. A dalit woman who had recently delivered a child was raped by four Hindus. She later identified these individuals and complained to the Police. All this was reported to the police as well as the Revenue authorities. The injured dalits were given treatment at the government hospital as outpatients. They were also warned not to publicise the rape of Malliga, a 21 year old. In spite of the best efforts of the local administration, the matter could not be hushed up. MGR's henchmen actively connived in this attempt. Meanwhile many people's organisation proposed a relay hunger strike at the taluk office. All the dalits had been staying at the taluk

office afraid of returning to their village. Both the collector and the RDO being Hindus did precious little to settle their grievances. The Peoples' Action Committee advised the dalits to seek shelter at the nearby Mu'vai village. While the country celebrated Republic Day the dalits organised a protest march at Arkonam. Later the Konna'am dalits left for Mu'vai village. The police have been posted at Konna'am. But their purpose is to harass the dalits not to aid them. The dalits demand the right to the common burial ground be restored to them. Dogs and pigs can bathe in the common tank, but the dalits are not even allowed to draw water from it. The separate tank meant for them has also been encroached upon by the landlord. This should be vacated. The rapist Hindus should be arrested and brought to trial. Property like bags of rice, cattle and utensils looted by the caste Hindus should be returned. The dalits have resolved to continue their struggle. Comrade Eumalai of the Dalit Cultural Front, Madras, is coordinating it. Belchi, Pipraha, Kafatla, Doli and Sadhopur, they are all signposts of Hindu tyranny. The casteists cannot stomach that the dalits have dared to disturb the putrified Hindu social order. Gujarat was just a pointer. But the battle has been joined. □

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and has faith in the Constitution which is supposed to be secular, it should ensure that in the educational and employment field injustice and imbalance meted out to Muslims is eradicated. This is the only proof that they could give to their secularism to the world. If this is not done the Muslims are bound to be looked upon as a menace to the society and regarded as a source of trouble in the same manner as coloured people in America. □

## **DALITS MUST JOIN HANDS WITH MINORITIES**

(Syed Iqbal Ali, Pullman, USA)

In USA, Indians, most of them from upper castes, propagate the vast Indian culture and civilization minus dalit and Muslim persecutions. From any standard, Hindus are the most intolerant people in the world unless they are bound by the circumstances. They have exploited the weaker sections of the society from centuries. Buddhism, Dravidianism, Islam, Christianity and lately Sikhism have had bitter experiences. Hindus feel proud in building and maintaining shelters for the cows but do heinous crimes against Muslims and dalits. The people of India, specially upper caste Hindus, believe in *Ahimsa Parmo Dharma* to the extent it serves their needs and satisfaction. It is deplorable that the newly-educated and emerged elite from these oppressed communities do not represent the needs of their brethren. The Brahman-dominated political parties are very successful in fooling the unfortunate masses by selecting "Sarkari Muslims" and dalits even though they do not or have marginal hold among people. However, the quality of secularism offered by the Indian government is worse than the open communalism of Pakistan, which has proportional representation for the religious minorities and dalits in all public services and professional institutions which are supervised by the Ministry of Minorities Affairs. The policy of the government to have reservations is a political stunt and has made dalit youth less ambitious and qualitative. Nevertheless, we find dalit class in India lacks political and historical education. The co-

mmunal-oriented education imparted to the youth makes them elite who are future tools for future operations. Similarly, Pant, Patel and thousands of Samporandans have succeeded in eliminating Urdu from the national scene. Urdu is a national language which possesses rich culture and heritage. Indira Gandhi and her party shed crocodile tears on the deplorable condition of Urdu in India but have done nothing to give it rightful place it deserves. They have even failed to modify the high school syllabus to include Urdu as compulsory subject for people who declare Urdu as mother tongue in UP, Rajasthan, MP etc. Despite resentment among Muslims and Hindus who declare Urdu as mother tongue, Hindi and Sanskrit are compulsory at all levels of education and Hindi is the sole medium of instruction in these states. All aforesaid anti-Urdu policies have resulted in a complete generation gap among Muslims and the young generation cannot read, write and speak even their mother tongue. The communal Hindus, dominating film industry, have gone to the extent that they do not acknowledge Urdu as language while all the dialogues, stories and songs are written in Urdu. All oppressed classes in India should organise themselves to get salvation in India. Unfortunately, they lack financial, cultural and intellectual resources and even the will to do so. The Brahmans have adopted a policy of divide and rule. The Quran clearly depicts the present situation as follows: "Lo Allah changes not the condition of a people until they change that which is in their heart." (Quran : 13 : 11) □

### Letters to Editor :

Dr. Gangadhar Pantawane, (Dalit writer), Aurangabad : I am sure DV has made a history publishing the most needed organ for the oppressed community. I am also running a journal devoted to dalit literature since 1968 in Marathi. The yearly Dalit Writers Conference is conducted by our journal, *Asmitadarsha*. On Feb. 13 & 14 we had a very big meeting of writers at Ulhasnagar, near Bombay. I have read DV with keen interest & I think DV will surely give the new life to the oppressed people of India.

R. R. Wankhede, Sibsagar, Assam : There is big demand for DV here as the journal has impressed many dalits.

N. S. Ramaswamy, director, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore : Glad to note that you are making concrete achievements in many fields. I read DV with great interest & asked our library & other friends to support you.

Rev. P. A. Augustine, Catholic Church, Petra dt. : I am sure you have received a number of subscriptions from this area. I will watch with interest the growth of DV.

Fr. L. S. Pais, Moodbidri, DK dt., Karnataka : Congratulations on your dauntless writings. We want people like you to speak out the truth fearlessly. We support your fight for truth & justice.

Dr. A. R. Shaikh, Poona : We heard about your commendable work to unite the persecuted minorities, maintain communal peace, & neutralise the Hindu atrocities on dalits & Muslims. We want to know more about you and the books produced by the DSA.

Mazharuddin, Ill, USA : I am in agony hearing the sad news of the slaughter of

dalits in Deoli, Sadhupur etc. Such brutal killings indicate the working of the Hindu mind. No Shankaracharya, Arya Samajist or anybody has protested about these murders. But it is these very same people who made such a noise when a handful of dalits embraced Islam. Not even Vinoba Bhave has said anything to condemn the killings, but he went on "silence" to mourn the killings of cows. Vajpayee did the padyatra while his people are busy slaughtering dalits. I share the sorrow of the victims. Your govt. will not protect dalits & minorities. The Moradabad tragedy is the proof of it. Dalits must themselves protect their own lives. Organisations and persons working for dalits must ponder over it. If there are 120 million dalits in India, the sheer number will be able to solve their problem. Muslims of India are also on the same lines as dalits. There are 43 Muslim countries in the world but no outside help is offered to Indian Muslims to solve their problems. Dalits may seek the support of revolutionary movements in the world. There are many liberation movements going on such as IRA, Palestinian etc. I read DV with great interest. The slaughter of dalits in Deoli is not the last one. It will continue as long as caste system lasts & dalits remain in Hindu fold. Killing the oppressed & minorities has become a way of life in India.

R. L. Biswas, Calcutta : Send DV to my house as in the office it has started giving unbearable problems for obvious reasons. We are treated as second-grade citizens as we can't be called slaves. Slavery is abolished only on paper but it is widespread.

R. Elumalai, Dalit Cultural Front, Madras : When I was in Delhi, I met some

comrades along with Tapan Bose who has produced a film on Bihar landless labourers, yet to be cleared by censors. They have all sincerely conveyed their greetings to DV. Labour Press Service edited by Com. Ravi is helping dalits.

P. R. Kambale, Bombay: Thoughts spread by DV are so important that dalits who can understand them will get completely changed as it happened with me. As you rightly said, entering politics is useless. What is needed is educating dalits as DV is doing. Without destroying Hinduism, we can do nothing. I am reading your book and also spreading the message of DV.

S. Mohan Das, Nagercoil, TN: The entire region of ours is in the grip of RSS and they are busy planning communal riots. They held a conference here on Feb. 13 & 14 to "promote Hinduism."

Rameshchandra Parmar, president, Gujarat Dalit Panthers, Ahmedabad: Congratulations for your missionary zeal & dedication to raise our Voice. It is the opinion of Gujarati dalits that the selection of articles, & reports are excellent. Every piece is thought-provoking. Many are translated and published in our journal, *Panther*. One correction to your report in DV no. 9. Prof. Arun Kambale is member of the five-man, Central Committee of the Dalit Panthers. The other members are: Gangadhar Gade, Ramdas Athawale, Bapurao Pakhidey, & myself. Maisaheb Ambedkar is the adviser. I have translated your two books into Gujarati. But no money to publish them. Searching for a good friend. We are organising dalits, Muslims, tribes & other progressives to fight RSS & its front organisations.

Dr. Aruna Rajgopal, professor of Agronomy, Madurai: Glad to read in the *Vid-*

*uthalai*, Tamil daily of the DK from Madras, that you have won your case against the *Indian Express* & that you have been reinstated. Hearty congratulations on behalf of dalits. Your victory proves that justice & truth will ultimately triumph. The TN govt. has given a state award to my Tamil book on horticulture.

Dr. S. H. Alvi, College of Eng., Riyadh University, Saudi Arabia: I have read two issues of DV and greatly impressed by it. Your task is difficult, but carry on the noble cause. Muslims in India should try to help the dalits to the maximum & Islam says so. Islam does not believe in inequality on the basis of birth. Quran says all are equal. I was in Libya for two years, now here, but I don't find any thing like caste system in these countries.

Devassy Val'akkunnu, Kerala: Congratulations for your courage & earnestness in fighting for the oppressed. The articles & specially the editorials have impressed me a lot. Conversion may perhaps be an immediate solution to the social problems of dalits but it shall never be a permanent one - it is religious slavery in preference to social inequality.

Rashid Qndri, editor, *Prince Weekly*, Margoan, Maharashtra: We liked DV very much. Your editorial, "Who is Bluffing: RSS or Govt.?" is translated and published in our Urdu weekly as we found it very useful to our readers.

Murlidhar Barsode, Bombay: All the books of the DSA are giving inspiration to dalits. We thank DSA for this historic service.

M. Puttaswamy, (KEB) Mandya: I had an opportunity to read DV, the articles of which impressed me so much. Every dalit must read DV. Please make me a subscriber. □

## 960 UNTOUCHABLES KILLED IN 2 YEARS

New Delhi: 960 Untouchables were murdered in 1980 and 1981 in the country, Nihar Ranjan Laskar, Minister of State for Home, informed Parliament on Feb. 27. Total number of crimes during these two years against dalits was 26,748. Uttar Pradesh, according to the statement giving State-wise figures of crime, topped the list with 236 murders in 1980 and 214 till December 81. [Indian Express Feb. 27] □

### POSTERS WARNING MUSLIMS

Jagjivan Ram, former Deputy Prime Minister of India, said in Delhi on Feb. 6 that posters threatening Muslims were appearing in the city and in other parts of the country. These were creating terror among Muslims. If the Government was secular, why it could not prosecute the people for publishing such material.

"Freedom demands sacrifice and love", Jagjivan Ram pointed out and asked the poor people to rise and unite so that Moradabad, Biharsharief, Aligarh, Pune, Sadopur, Saharanpur, Narainpur, Belchi and Jamshedpur communal incidents were not repeated. In the country whose Government played Holi with the blood of the poor people, this festival should not be celebrated. Those people, who talked of a "Hindu Rashtra", perhaps did not know that Muslims were as much part of India as Hindus, he said. (Statesman Feb. 7) □

### CPM attack on Christians

Bombay: A member of the Gananmata mission in the Talasari area of Thane district, Bro. Valentine Rodrigues, was allegedly attacked by a group of CPM activi-

sts with lathis on Feb. 28 on the suspicion that he was a member of the rival Kashtakari Sanghatana. A mission statement said that Bro. Rodrigues was returning from the mission hospital at Vadoli on his motor cycle when he saw a large lathi-wielding group marching across the road from the direction of Vadoli village, which is known to be a stronghold of the CPM. Sensing trouble, he stopped his motor-cycle to wait for the group to cross the road but he was attacked from behind by some six men who shouted that he was "one of them". The reference was apparently to the Kashtakari Sanghatana, which was holding its meeting that day at Talasari. The Sanghatana was started by two Jesuits of the mission, who have now fallen out of the church authorities in this largely tribal area of the Warlis. Its activities have been resented by the CPM which has a base in the area and refuses to make distinction between the sanghatana and the church. Sunday's incident is the third since the rivalry turned violent in October, 1980, when a church in Shisne was damaged by CPM activists. A year later, CPM activists allegedly forcibly harvested the paddy of three adivasi Catholic families at Shi onda village. A CPM MLA from the area is also alleged to have threatened the mission priests. [Times of India March 4] □

### TRIBAL DEMAND

Jagdalpur (Bastar): About 20,000 tribals who gathered for conference at village Semba'pur in Bhanjpratapour tehsil of the district on Feb. 6 have demanded declaration of Bastar as a Union Territory, reports UNI. □

Editorial

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illages to convert them to Hinduism," he says. RSS exercises might have united the Hindus but it has also polarised the persecuted minorities—Christians, Muslims and dalits. ".....its growth has forged an unprecedented unity among Christians of various denominations like Roman Catholic, Church of South India, Lutheran, Salvation Army, Syrians and Pentecostals. Besides, the Christians have also developed fraternity with the Muslims because they too faced similar problems". (*Hindu March* 7) While thanking the RSS for helping this, we call upon dalits to take advantage of this new situation and join hands with their co-sufferers. RSS is fanatically wooing the dalits many of whom attended Mandaikadu temple festival. We don't know what dalits have got to do with temples from which they were kept out for centuries. All over India it is the pro-RSS elements who are committing violence on dalits. Therefore, they should not fall prey to RSS tricks mistaking its new-found love for Ambedkar. They should identify their enemy and choose their allies. And no community has done greater service to dalits in India than Christians. It is a fact of history admitted by Dr. Ambedkar himself. The entire North-Eastern India is today liberated because of the work done by Christian missionaries. Their work for eradication of untouchability, literacy drive, tribal liberation is now part of history. It is true that the Church at least in the South has not fully succeeded in destroying caste among Christians. The fault lies not with the Church but with Hinduism. The Church has admitted its lapses but it must step up ef-

forts to set its house in order. The only problem people are the vast OBCs (Hindu backward classes) who are being used by the high castes against Christians, Muslims & dalits. It is here the DK, the powerful cadre-based socio-cultural organisation started by India's great revolutionary, Periyar EVR, that has to play a crucial role. Veeramani, DK general secretary, assures us that he is very much interested in dalits but some section of the dalits in TN are yet to be convinced of this. They want action & not words. Therefore, it is for him to gain the dalit confidence. And dalits say they are willing to join with the DK. A crucial time has come for DK to educate its OBC followers, wean them away from RSS influence, impress upon them that their "class interests" are with dalits & not with those high caste exploiters. Only this can win the confidence of dalits. The task is urgent—that is to unite OBCs, dalits and persecuted minorities against their common enemy which Periyar has so clearly identified. Political & communal polarisation is taking place in TN as in the rest of India. TN being 100% Dravidian, it will naturally be the intellectual leader for the whole country. The fact that both DK & RSS—the two non-political cultural forces—are growing proves the utter failure of the Indian political system including the Marxist brand. In days to come RSS will be directly confronting the DK. Therefore, it must get ready for the battle. RSS shall lead the exploiters & DK shall protect the persecuted. DK is thus facing the most crucial testing time in its 50-year history. As for the RSS, it is indulging in this game of persecuting the

## COMMUNAL WAR IN TAMIL NADU

minorities as part of its philosophy propounded in its Bible, *Bunch of Thoughts* (Rashthrohana Sahitya, KG. Nagar, Bangalore-19, pages 440-1966) which has clearly identified its three enemies; Marxists, Muslims & Christians. Describing the Christians as blood-suckers, it speaks about a "Christian plan" "to surround the Southern peninsula and make it Christian-dominated. Then the whole of the Himalayan belt was to be captured in the second sweep." (page-185). If the RSS has declared war against its three enemies it is because it sincerely believes in converting India into a Hindu nation. The RSS official journal editorial (March 7) under the headline, "Recognise the Fact That This is a Hindu Country", directs that "the ruling party together with other major parties must declare India as a Hindu nation". India's ruling class has already implemented this directive in some parts like Arunachal Pradesh where Christians are not allowed to enter. Even Mother Teresa was barred. While the govt. there is encouraging Hinduism with funds to Hinduise tribals, Christianity is treated as a foreign religion. Even courts have upheld restrictions on conversion in several parts of India. Every effort is being made to suppress the minorities because ruling class knows that it is difficult to destroy them. As for the dalits, the strategy is two-pronged: separate them from

minorities by Hinduising them and thus ensure their servility. The second one is to deny them education and impoverish them. Dalits being 100% poor, it is possible to do this with ease. Dalit activists should alert their brothers on this danger. The only way to face the new social forces mobilised by RSS is for the persecuted minorities to join hands with dalits. The minorities, particularly Christians, being better placed, educated and alert, besides having international connections, they can undertake this job effectively. The TN Christians have set a commendable example. This is the first time the Christian militancy is vigorously surfacing before which the RSS fascists were forced to retreat & run. Kudos to Christians

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