

Changing Nature of Communal Violence in Contemporary India: An Intersection of Politics, Patriarchy and New Sociality

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Abstract:

Communal violence is a violent conflict organized around religious, linguistic or ethnic identities. In India, it has become a dark side of political violence, which is institutionalized and orchestrated for somebody's calculated benefit. A long history is associated with communal violence against women. In communal violence, women are the one who bear the brunt off. Women's bodies are symbolized as repositories of community honour and inability in that of men to protect them become a matter of shame for the communities involve in the violence. Patriarchal control of women's sexuality and opposition to the ideas of women's freedom of choices in relationships was given new dimension by the gatekeepers of caste and community, who created the fiction of 'love-jihad' to camouflage the reality of sexual violence. Since, communal violence in India is an 'institutionalized riot system' it has been urban phenomenon before Muzaffarnagar riots. Riots in Muzaffarnagar took place in rural areas, which indicated how socio-economic structures in rural India are changing towards a new sociality.

Keywords: Communal violence, Politics, Patriarchy, New sociality.

1. Introduction:

Communalism is a collective antagonism organized around religious linguistic or ethnic identities. It is a process of identity formation by one community at the face of other; sometimes this identity formation comes antagonistic to each other and more or less results in a violent manifestation. So far as Indian society and politics concern it has been an on-going socio-political problem since very long time. The term 'communal' denotes a very different analogy in India and perhaps in south Asian lexicons than the term used in other parts of the world. Communalism in western world denotes a system of community life in which virtually autonomous local communities are loosely in federations. It is considered as a political philosophy which upholds communitarian custody of land and enterprise. But in India it pertains to a condition of suspicion, fear and hostility between members of different religious communities. In this juncture communal identities become other facets of religion based identities such as Hindu or Muslim identity. Communal violence or communal riots, similarly means communal conflict between these religious groups. Although communalism and its violent manifestations are seen as inter-religious conflict, in India it is a modern origin, and has taken a shape of dark side of political violence.

Communal violence as a dark side of modern politics has been a remarkable feature of modern Indian history. One very notable point in the series of major communal violence in India, are a very close

interconnection of patriarchy and communal violence. In communal violence, women are the one who bear the brunt off. Here are points to know how women's bodies considered repositories of community honour and identity and how the inability in that of men to protect them becomes a matter of shame for the community involves in the violence. It is for the reason that in the frequent and intense communal riots in recent years, women have systematically been targeted and become victims of sexual violence. Communal violence in India possesses two distinct historical perspectives. The first of these argues that communal violence in India takes back to pre-modern times. It follows that Hindu-Muslim riots in India, today are part of older problems that have been endemic in Indian society for a long period of time. Thus violence between religious communities is something that occurs spontaneously and naturally. The second view is constructivist perspective that views communalism in India as a modern construction and sees communalism as a 'mask' used to promote political, economic and power interests. This is the school of thought that scholars like Paul Brass and Wilkinson belong to. Despite the obvious relevance of the constructivist view, one thing which is very notable is that why some towns and generally cities are more prone to institutionalized riots system and polarising strategies of politicians than others. In this perspective here seems some short of weakness and requires an additional approach to gain a deeper understanding of the dynamic of India's recent Hindu-Muslim violence. The 2013 Muzaffarnagar riots arguably make a unique and recent case of communal violence; locate in area known for its longstanding tradition of inter-communal economic interdependence.

This study also attempts to supplement the academic dearth in the analysis of communal violence by putting the women's question in the centre of communal violence. Since there is a strong collusion between patriarchy and communalism, the explosion of communal violence in Muzaffarnagar, Shamli and adjoining districts of Uttar Pradesh, is the latest in a long series. The collusion between patriarchy and communalism has been starkly exposed in Muzaffarnagar case too.

2. Methodology and Data:

This paper has two, yet connected theoretical frameworks and its applicability to be analysed. Firstly, it concerned with very nature of communal violence and its special distribution in India. A long past and continued intensity of communal violence in India has made it a subject matter of scholarly attention. This has added to our understanding of the phenomenon of communal violence as it has occurred over time space. It was seen that in the 1980s, communal violence was fallout of economic competition where business rivalries and upward mobility of specific communities led to communal riots. A further engagement with the phenomenon of communal violence brought out that weak civic or associational ties in certain towns were factors that led to communal riots. In some states it was seen that political competition became a cause for violence where government that were not dependent on minority support saw prolonged and intense rioting and attack on minorities. Unleashing of what are seen as 'institutionalized riot systems' with rumour mongering, recruitment of participants and other provocative activities. These are considered some influential explanation of the nature of communal violence in India.

In this study the main sources for analysis of the 2013 Muzaffarnagar riots are secondary data, as the research based on the information that is derived from fact-finding reports, newspaper articles and from secondary literatures. The fact finding reports that are subjected to an in-depth analysis for this study are obtained from ANHAD (Act Now for Harmony and Democracy)'s Report of "Evil Stalks the Land", Centre for Policy Analysis(2013a & 2013b) report, Citizen's Enquiry Team(2013), Muzaffarnagar

Adhikar Jan Manch(MAJMA), National Commission for Minorities Report, Tata Institute of Social Sciences(TISS) (2014) and other relevant literatures relating to the scope of the research.

This study attempts to conduct an explorative and qualitative analysis of the 2013 Muzaffarnagar riots. Since Muzaffarnagar riots is a unique case of rural phenomenon and riots occurred just a year before General Election, the study uses instrumentalist theory of electoral incentives by Steven Wilkinson and Paul Brass's 'institutionalized riot systems' and Ashutosh Varshney's theory of civil society as well as Ashghar Ali Engineer's theory of economic competition as the main explanation.

3. The Muzaffarnagar Riots -2013: (Events leading up to the riots):

There are different narratives of the real cause of Muzaffarnagar riots. The sequence of events started with an incident on 27 August, 2013 around 1 P.M. in Kawal, in which two Jats of neighbouring Mallikpura village, killed a Muslim boy following an altercation. Soon a Muslim mob lynched the two men. According to the dominant narrative, a Hindu Jat girl from the Jat majority village of Mallikpura, was repeatedly harassed by a Muslim boy from Kawal. In order to defend their community's honour, two brothers of the girl killed the Muslim boy. Subsequently, the two Hindu Jat brothers were lynched to death by a Muslim mob out of retaliation. However, according to other narrative and the first information report, the altercation was over a trivial matter concerning motorbikes. Some Dalits in the village told that the boy and the Jat girl were in a relationship and the Jats tried to prevent him from meeting her. It would be case of honour killing, they say. On August 29, a video circulating among the Hindus showed two men being beaten to death by a Muslim mob, creating the impression that it was the recording of the killing of two Jats in Kawal. The police confirmed that it was a two-year old video from Pakistan, which was available on Youtube. Nevertheless, although violent incidents are nothing uncommon in this highly crime-prone district of Uttar Pradesh, the incident was given a communal colour.

In the days following the Kawal incident, the communal tensions in the Muzaffarnagar district rose as reprisals against the Muslim community were carried by Hindu Jats, with Muslim reacting here upon in a similar manner. Despite the imposition of an official ban on public meetings, a Muslim gathering was held on 30 August, 2013 in the town of Muzaffarnagar after the Friday prayers. At this meeting the communal tensions were addressed by district and state level Muslim leaders whom are affiliated with political parties and inflammatory speeches were delivered. As the fake mob-lynching video began to stoke communal tension in the area, a few Jat leaders called for a panchayat, a sort of general body meeting of Jats to discuss pertinent issues, in Lisarh on 5 September 2013. During this panchayat a mahapanchayat, a large communal gathering, was announced for 7 September 2013 in Nangla Mandour and participants were allegedly asked to come armed. This time the mahapanchayat was called to defend Jat honour against the aggressive Muslims. Many prominent regional leaders of the BJP such as Hukum Singh, Sangeet Som an Suresh Rana attended the meeting along with Naresh and Rakesh Tikait, leaders of the Bhartiya Kisan Union. These local leaders addressed an estimated 40000 Hindu Jats at the mahapanchayat. The BJP's narrative of the altercation in kawal became the main theme at the mahapanchayat. The leaders called the Jats to defend the honour of "their women". The mahapanchayat came to be known as Bahu, Beti Bachao Mahasammelan(Save your daughter-in-law and daughter). After the meeting, the dispersed crowd attacked Muslim homes en route to their respective villages. This marked the start of communal riots. In the following two days, the violence spread through the district and its adjoining districts, fuelled by rumours, and the organized Hindu Jat mobs attacking the

Muslim communities in numerous villages and towns. Eventually the army brought an end to the violence.

4. Background of the Riots: (Manufactured Violence in a fractured community):

Communal violence in Muzaffarnagar is a unique case of rural phenomenon as rural has been its epicentre, and it has proceeded from the rural to the urban. Before it, there was a general understanding between academia that communal riots in India are an urban phenomenon, which proceeds from urban to rural. Why has the site of communal violence shifted from urban to rural areas in contemporary Uttar Pradesh?.

It has been discussed that Muzaffarnagar is based on an agrarian economy. The district is part of an agriculturally rich region that has gained from the Green Revolution in the 1970s and the 1980s. Despite the fact that Muslims are present in large numbers, they hardly own land, as the fields are predominantly owned by the Hindu jats. Jats have dominated land ownership in large part of western Uttar Pradesh and the Green Revolution further strengthened the position of Jats. As agriculture forms the prime source of income in the area, a feudal and patriarchal system has emerged over time, which provides the Jats with substantial economic power in the region. As landowners, they have been patron or 'jajmans' to artisan service and labour castes that are largely backward (pasmanda) Muslims. The economic and political power of the Hindu Jat farmers has traditionally been protected by Rashtriya Lok Dal and Bhartiya Kisan Union. The relationship between communities has been hierarchical, the economically weak, both Hindus and Muslims were exploited by the elites particularly Jats. Nevertheless, due to their economic interdependence, this did not lead to communal violence. The Jats and other communities lived peacefully in the region, with the landowners taking care of their workers' basic needs.

After 1980s, during the advanced stage of Green Revolution, this region witnessed a drastic change in agrarian relations. The number of big and middle farmers declined rapidly, and the size of land holdings has become smaller through subdivisions. Neoliberal economic policies, decline of state subsidies to agriculture, rising cost of farming inputs, growing stagnation in farm production and ecological precarity have all further weakened the position of Jat farmers. Agriculture is hardly a profitable or preferred occupation for most of the rural population. Recent studies have shown that the Jajmani system has nearly ended and labour relations have become largely contractual and temporal. The village economy has also diversified with more than 40 per cent of the men working off the farm and outside the village. Face to face interaction among different communities and individuals that used to take place at various sites, such as at the farms or common sitting places in the village, has declined. A substantial number of villagers spend more time in urban sites than on the agricultural field. Independence from jajmani relations, combined with universal suffrage and introduction of the panchayati raj institutions, has not only created political competition between Jats and their clients, but also changed their mutually dependent economic interests into competing ones. Vertical unity has given way to horizontal alliances between artisan, service and labour castes.

The unequal but stable relationship between Hindu Jat farmers and Muslims changed when trends of lower class mobility among Muslims emerged. In the years prior to the riots, Muzaffarnagar Muslims community seems to have economic progress due to several reasons. The Muslim community's access to resources improved through patronage networks of the that time ruling Samajwadi Party (SP), which relies on the votes of Muslims. While the Jat farmers were facing agrarian crisis and stagnant productivity, the Muslims started to have more economic successes in trade and commerce, with the

ones working in other parts of the country sending their income back home. This decreased the economic dependency of Muslims on their unequal relationship with the Jats, and therefore changed the relationship between the two communities.²⁸ Another reason that had been strengthening the cleavage between Hindu Jats and Muslims, was the exclusion of the Jat community from the affirmative action category of Other Backward Classes (OBC) in the post-Mandal commission period. As the Jats had been the leaders of backward caste consolidation, the exclusion made them feel isolated, marginalized and politically neglected.

These changing socio-economic and political trends caused large resentment among the Hindu Jats, as they felt it threatened their powerful position, and their control over the region. Whereas the Hindu Jats traditionally had controlled the local institutions, and had exercised large influences on the voting outcomes of the elections, their traditional hold over society was now undermined by the new Muslim leaders, and the economic mobility among the Muslim community. This supposedly made the Hindu Jat farmers susceptible to the polarising strategies of politicians in the run up to the 2014 general election.

5. Complicity of Politics and State Machinery in Producing, Sustaining and Benefiting from Communal Violence:

Analyses of the secondary literatures as well as the observations of the fact-finding reports support the polarising tendencies of politicians at the basis of Muzaffarnagar riots in run up to the 2014 general elections. As the state of Uttar Pradesh has been the hotbed of India's general elections, seeing the facts it accounts for 80 of the total 545 parliamentary seats, every political party leaves no brick unturned to capture those seats. The western part of state, where the districts of Muzaffarnagar and Shamli are located, accounts for 14 parliamentary seats, and is dominated by the Hindu jats. This electoral opportunity has long made the region of electoral interest for the Hindu right-wing-party, the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP). For BJP, the region has been a tough as it faced great electoral competition, since the Hindu jat community was politically divided among political parties such as the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) and Indian National Congress.

As the BJP needed to recover the lost ground in Uttar Pradesh, the party increased the communal tensions between the Hindu jats and Muslims. A close look at the riots would help understand that the Muzaffarnagar riots, as with most riots, were nothing but a systematic and organized attempt by the BJP and its close ally the Sangh Parivar to polarise votes in western Uttar Pradesh before the 2014 parliamentary elections. Spreading rumours, circulating fake videos of the Kawal incident on social media, giving provocative speeches and touring the region intensely had been the effective polarising tactics of the BJP.

As discussed in the previous section, the political space of the western Uttar Pradesh had traditionally been in the control of RLD and Bhartiya Kisan Union, that formed a parallel system of governance. In the months preceding the riots, the division between the communities was systematically built up by the Hindu nationalist organizations like the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, its affiliates and the BJP. This was done by the two-pronged political strategy of the Sangh Parivar. Firstly, the BJP's campaigns, in the last few years, have specifically targeted rural areas of western UP, dominated by an agrarian population. The Muzaffarnagar riots were different in the sense that almost all violent incidents during the riots triggered in rural areas and subsequently advanced to cities and nearby towns. In the history of riots in independent India, most riots have advanced from cities to villages. In western UP, the BJP has institutionalised two aspects of its communal program specifically targeting the notion of 'honour'

amongst the rural jats. One is what the Sangh Parivar calls “love jihad” while other is its rumour mongering machinery. The Sangh Parivar campaigns claim that the good looking young Muslim men are identified and trained in madrassas to woo Hindu women. They are given mobile phones and motorbikes, which they use to pursue Hindu women. The Hindu women eventually fall for them. Hindu nationalists also claim that if the women resist, these men would then indulge in rape, molestation or eve-teasing. The activists then backed this theory with unsubstantiated and manufactured figures, photos and fake videos. The Jats view these alleged actions by Muslims as a serious affront to their ‘honour’.

In such a polarized environment, the second strategy of the Sangh Parivar is to project fights in villages as instances of communally charged violence. Events in the Muzaffarnagar riots also give this picture. BJP activists marched in Kawal village at the funeral ceremony of the two jats killed on 28th August. They came in droves on tractors and wreaked havoc in the Muslim colony of Kawal. They also raised anti-Muslim slogans and campaigned extensively against them.

Furthermore, from several fact-finding reports it becomes clear that the BJP was not only party to gain politically from communal violence. The ruling Samajwadi party(SP) state government has also acted according to its political calculation, since it was crucial for the SP to maintain the support of the Muslim community. Although SP failed in its calculation from sharp political polarisation. The failure to protect the Muslim community against the one-sided violence of the Hindu Jats, took away any possible benefit from the SP from the polarisation of the electorate, and the party lost most of its support of the Muslim community.

Political scientist Steven Wilkinson, in His book ‘Votes and Violence’, made this observation back in 2005, arguing that politicians have the power to both cause and prevent riots, through their control of state governments that are responsible for law and order. Such complicity of the state has been observed by Harsh Mander, former member of the National Advisory Council. He visited Muzaffarnagar relief camps as part of the fact-finding team organized by the Centre for policy Analysis last month. His conclusion from these visits involves a complicit state. “It is possible for riots to start sporadically, but it is not possible to sustain the violence without the collusion of the government,” he said. The Muzaffarnagar riots that continued unabated for a week exemplifies a great extent the theory of ‘institutionalized riot systems’ in a changing sociality in rural areas.

6. Violence against Women in Muzaffarnagar Riots:

The uniqueness of Muzaffarnagar riots was not only in its rural phenomenon, one other phenomenon which is perhaps more noteworthy than other was its patriarchal nature and a case of direct collusion of patriarchy and communalism. According to some reports, the immediate cause of communal riots in Muzaffarnagar was the case of sexual harassment of a Jat woman by a Muslim man. The Muslim man was later beaten to death by the two brother of the Jat woman, and then two jat brothers were lynched by a Muslim mob in vengeance. In Mahapanchayat called by Jat leaders on 7 September, inflammatory speeches and frenzied slogans of ‘Bahu bachao Beti bachao and ‘Bahu beti ki izzat bachao’ were used to mobilize men of the dominant castes by convincing them that ‘their women’ were in imminent danger. The notion of protecting community honour was invoked to justify a direct call for targeted violence against minority women immediately after the Mahapanchayat. In their narrative sexual harassment or sexual assault against ‘our women’ by the men of other communities are not the individual rights of women, but the act is a deliberate attempt of dishonouring a particular community. These kinds of act become a matter of shame and dishonour not for women victims but for male members of community. It

becomes a challenge to the so called patriarchal notion of men's masculinity as a symbol of protector and keeper of women. It, hence, is the duty of men to protect their women (community honour) from the violators (men of other community), and simultaneously inflict violence to the women of other for the same purpose of dishonouring them. At this juncture, women bear the brunt of on two fronts. Firstly, they become the soft and easy target during communal violence. Secondly, during peace time women are led to abide by several community norms painted in dark patriarchal colour regarding their public appearances and space of activities. The problem lies in the very construction of women's identities in India in general and western Uttar Pradesh in particular which is also notorious for an 'imagined threat of love jihad' and 'honour killing'.

In our society, women are seen repository of community honour and markers of identity of a particular community which entails greater ramification for women during communal violence. This section analyses the act of physical sexual violence against women in Muzaffarnagar riots on case by case basis. Data have been drawn from secondary sources which are primarily based on Neha Dixit's essay on Sexual violence during the 2013 Muzaffarnagar riots in the book "Breaching The Citadel" from Zuban's project on Sexual Violence and Impunity in South Asia and her reports titled Thread Bared as well as Shadow Lines (Chilling account of the rape survivors of Muzaffarnagar riots-2013) by Neha Dixit.

In September 2013, communal violence in Muzaffarnagar and Shamli, resulted in 60 deaths, seven rapes and 40,000 displaced according to Uttar Pradesh state government records. Unofficial figures that claim 200 deaths, 1,20,000 displaced and hundreds of unreported mass rapes. In a region (western Uttar Pradesh) which has been already notorious for the hot bed of the bogey of love- jihad and honour-killing under auspices of patriarchal khap social system, the patriarchal notion of protecting women's honour was used to instigate communal riots in Muzaffarnagar. As a result women's bodies were used as battlegrounds to establish the superiority of one community over the other. The survivors of this sexual violence were systematically silenced because of religious and patriarchal pressures- erasing the acknowledgement of violence against women from public memory. Only seven Muslim women dared to file complaint against sexual violence.

7. Indivisible Rapes, Mass Rapes and Violence against Women

The above mentioned seven women, who dared to lodge complaints of gang rapes, had most importantly, the support of their family and the help provided by activists and members of civil society. But conversations with women across relief camps within two weeks of the sectarian violence suggest incidents of large number of mass rapes between the morning of September 8 and September 9, 2013. Documenting the incident of sexual violence is very difficult and traumatic on the part of women victims of communal violence. Most women from the relief camps, set up immediately after the riots, responded with a tutored reply when the question was brought up. 'We ran away before something happened but we know that it happened to someone else', they would say and then go on to attribute any descriptions of what happened to another woman. The reasons behind this are many. Apart from social stigma, these women faced several personal grave harms and crisis, such as dead or missing family members, loss of property and livelihood.

A series of interviews conducted by this researcher corroborates one specific incident of mass rape in the compound of the house of one Sudhir kumar, the elected head of Lankh Bavdi village, also known as Billu Pradhan. Close to thirty Muslims were given false assurance of protection from angry Jat mobs and told to gather at Billu Pradhan's house on the morning of September 8, 2013. The gates were shut and

over nineteen women were raped and sodomised by twenty to twenty-five Jat men while they watched their children and family members maimed in front of their eyes.

Shabana, thirty, who was present in Billu Pradhan's courtyard that day recounted the horror to this author at the Idgah camp. 'They came at eight in the morning, a group of about twenty Jat men. I was cooking while my husband, a washer man, was about to leave for work. As soon as we heard the commotion, my husband, two sons and I fled. Even as we were running towards Billu Pradhan's house, we saw our house being set on fire.' It was in this mayhem that Shabana lost track of her two sons. The couple reached Billu Pradhan's house and were taken inside the gated compound. 'Within half an hour, a group of men from the village entered the compound and attacked us. They hacked my husband right before me. They stripped several of us. Took our honour.'

Shabana's story was further corroborated by another victim, twenty year old Rubina from the Malakpura camp, whose cheek was bitten off. 'There were loudspeakers, Bollywood songs blaring while they raped us. Some boys were also playing the dhol outside the gate.' That morning, her mother had asked her to leave for Billu Pradhan's house along with her younger sister. She told her she would follow with the rest of the family. 'Two men held me by my arms as they bit several parts of my body. Three men raped me then, one after the other.' Her parents and the rest of the family have been missing since then.

Sabra, forty, another inmate at the Idgah camp, while talking about the rape of her two daughters in billu pradhan's house is concerned that no one will marry her teenaged daughter, Saju. She said, 'My husband Ajiman and his first wife Almiyat, who was also my elder sister, were with me and my three daughters, including Saju, in Billu Pradhan's house that morning. My elder son had asked us to stay there while he went to arrange a vehicle. Ajiman and Almiyat were attacked with a sickle on the neck.' It was difficult for Sabra to recount what followed with her girls. 'The first pulled my elder daughter and stripped her. Two boys dragged her to the ground and took turns raping her. Then they grabbed my second daughter and hit her private parts with batons. She started bleeding and was pushed to a corner. They then proceeded to assault the other girls.' That day, when the gates were opened after an hour, Sabra rushed out with Saju and others into the jungles close by. They had to walk a whole day and night to reach Kandhla where the volunteers of the camp there came to their aid.

It is important to note that the first response at any of these camps to questions of sexual violence is immediate denial. In Gangeru, a small town in Muzaffarnagar district dominated by Shia Muslims, the Arabia-Islam-Hurdu-Islam madrassa had provided refuge to over 400 people from twenty- one villages nearby. The stigma associated with rape was a major impediment in accessing medical help for sexual violence survivors. Shama, in her late twenties from Gangeru camp, told me, 'it's painful to urinate and defecate. I can't tell the camp doctor. The women in the camp have given me herbal medicine.' Shama's husband Iqbal and his younger brother Tahir were both killed in Lankh Bavdi on September 8. Her husband ran a horse carriage for a living; it was found burnt at the house later. 'I went to Billu Pradhan's house with my six children,' she recounts. 'They twisted both arms of my three-year old daughter and threw her. They were young boys whom I had fed so many times in my house. When I ran to rescue her, they thrashed me with a baton, and then used it to rape me, as they did to four or five other women.'

Similarly, Mehraz, another survivor from the Loni camp revealed that the rioters specifically shouted, 'Musalmanon ki laundiyaon ko rakh lo(keep all the Muslim girls).' 'My breasts were attacked with the sharp trowel, she told me 'There were eight to ten boys who seemed to be on a mission. They'd strip a woman, attack her and rape her. Then they'd strip a woman, attack her and rape her. Then they'd grab the next one, within minutes.' Billu Pradhan, who was not named by anyone the woman this researcher

spoke to as raping women himself had, according to Mehraz, vanished after the first twenty minutes. 'When the gates of Billu Pradhan's house were unlocked, I had no clothes on me. My husband and daughter had hid in a jute sack under a charpoy. We all ran as the Hindu boys chased us. But somehow there was news of the police reaching the village. The boys turned back.' Her twelve-year-old son had been left behind as Mehraz had fled with her eight-year-old daughter and husband Akbar Qureshi. The house was attacked by group of ten or fifteen men and her son burnt alive. His charred body was found later. Mehraz, was among the only few women who spoke, forthrightly, about the sexual assault on her. However, she never registered a case. While women after women in several camps talk in hushed tones about what happened on the fateful morning, the people residing in Lankh Bavdi village remained defiant.

8. Conclusion:

Nature of communal violence is changing which sees a clear intersection of politics, patriarchy and new sociality, as we have seen in Muzaffarnagar riots. Riots in Muzaffarnagar originated in the background of changing socio-economic milieu of rural areas of western Uttar Pradesh. In the guise of protecting women's honour, love-jihad, cow protection and patriotism, the Hindu right forces polarized the Jats against Muslims for electoral benefits. The riot was a strong case of 'institutionalized riot system' as Paul Brass has said about the nature of riots in India. A riot starts for whatever reason but it cannot sustain without the complicity of state machinery. Muzaffarnagar riots were not the exception of this assumption. Collusion between patriarchy and communal violence was starkly exposed again in Muzaffarnagar riots. On the name of 'Apni Bahu beti ki Izzat Bachao' (protect the honour of our daughter-in-laws and daughters) unleashed targeted violence against Muslim women.

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