Speeches of
Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee
Swamy Chinmayanand
Shri Lal Krishan Advani

on
AYODHYA ISSUE
Mr. Speaker, I move that “this house expresses lack of confidence in the council of Ministers.”

Mr. Speaker, The no confidence motion moved by me is just in one line. I have given no reasons in the motion, nor it is necessary to do so.

Mr. Speaker, In parliamentary democracy, the opposition often brings motions of no confidence against the government. After Shri Narasimha Rao took office of the Prime Minister he sought a vote of confidence of the house as per directions of the President. At that time also BJP had voted against this motion seeking confidence. The members of the opposition parties who are sitting here today had then walked out of the House. I have not brought this motion to create a crisis for any one.

Mr. Speaker, Let the stand of every one become clear. This no confidence motion is not a mere ritual. As a result of the events which took place after 6th December, on 6th December and before 6th December our country is again on the cross road of destiny. We are very sad on what happened at Ayodhya on the 6th December.

When I was coming to the House I read on a dome, that it is not an assembly where there is no elder, he is not an elder whose conduct is not based on ‘Dharma’; it is not ‘Dharma’ where there is no Truth; and it is not truth if it leads one to deceit. What ever I speak today in the House will be truth and nothing but truth.

I want that today there should be a frank discussion. If today’s debate establishes that we are at fault and determines the extent of our responsibility, we are willing to accept the same. We had given an assurance to the Prime Minister.

We tried our best to fulfil the same but we could not ensure its observance. I understand the anguish of the Prime Minister though not of Arjun Singh. The top leaders of BJP, RSS and Vishwa Hindu Parishad tried their best to check Kar Sewaks. Video tapes recorded this and a large number of press correspondent who were present there witnessed these efforts.
We have apologised to the press correspondents who were assaulted. The assault on the press correspondent and the damage to their camera’s took place because the Kar Sewaks did not want their actions to be recorded.

C.B.I. enquiry is taking place in the events at Ayodhya. The findings of the enquiry are not yet available. I would like government to place all facts available with them in the House. We are placing before the House facts available with us. Large number of Kar Sewaks assembled there did not take part in this demolition, only a small number participated in it. I am prepared to go even to the extent to advise these persons who caused damage to the structure to come forward and admit their role and be prepared to take responsibility and the punishment for the same.

Ram Temple will not be built on deceit. The Temple will be built on the foundation of moral principles and ‘faith’. If the intention was to demolish the structure there was no need to assemble so many Kar Sewaks there. After every 3 months, the Mela is held at Ayodhya. If the intention was to cause damage on the sly or by deceit there was no need for any Kar Sewa. It is in this context that whatever happened there has caused great distress to us.

I had made a promise in this House. On 5th December I addressed a meeting at Lucknow. Kalyan Singh had filed an affidavit before the Supreme Court. In the course of his speeches during the tour Advani Ji was expressing again and again the hope and his faith that the decision of the Lucknow Bench of Allahabad High Court in the pending Land Acquisition case would be pronounced. We had asked the Central Government, the Government of Utter Pradesh had also made a request to Central Government, to take steps to get the judgement expedited. We could not anticipate the judgement, but we were anxious for an early pronouncement of the same. How long should this case have lingered. The Central Government declined to join us and the State Government to make a request to the court to pronounce its judgement at an early date. The Kar Sewa was scheduled to commence from 6th Dec. The Kar Sewaks who had assembled wanted to have an opportunity to do some work; this opportunity was not available. All efforts were then made to control the situation and to wait for the court judgement till 11th. The leaders were making all efforts to deal with the situation. The organisers of RSS were appealing to their workers not to go near the structure or to cause damage to the structure. Appeals were made in the languages of Kar Sewaks including South Indian languages that
if there is any swayamsewak, he is not to go near the structure. This all was not said to create any illusion.

The press correspondents who were present there told me that when the structure fell Advani Ji looked sad and had tears in his eyes. It is for this reason that Advani ji tendered his resignation and expressed sorrow for what ever had happened and took responsibility for the same. Kalyan Singh ji tendered his resignation. If you say that all this was only a show then you do not usher in either correct politics or further the cause of genuine secularism in the country.

I want that true facts should be brought out as I know that this is a period of crisis and great challenge for us. Our party is considered a disciplined organisation and enjoys the reputation that we do what we decide. Today, the situation has created difficulty for us.

Which group is this from where did it come? Who organised it? This is what we want to know? I repeat that Kar Sewaks who participated in the demolition of the structure should come forward, reveal their respective role and if they are punished, they should be willing to face consequences of their actions. Ram Temple cannot be built without sacrifices. It cannot be built in this manner. There are other aspects also of this problem. It is not a structure which has been demolished; under the structure there was a temple too. There was no Namaz being offered in the mosque. Entry in the mosque was prohibited but prayers in the temple were permitted by the court order. Now some member may say that earlier it was a mosque, idols were placed there. This is true. Idols were placed there and I do not want to go in the old history of the place. But I want to ask the Hon’ble members that were the idols not installed there on account of the faith that this place was the birth place of Ram. At that time there were no signs of Vishwa Hindu Parishad or signs of Bajrang dal. But the people in that area had this faith and belief. I want to point out that I feel deeply grieved that on this question the depth and intensity of the feelings of the majority community is not still been appreciated. At a time I also did not understand this I had reservations when Advani Ji started his rathyatra when I express my feelings some newspapers come out with the stories that the BJP is double faced. Sometime BJP shows its soft attitude face and sometimes it adopts hardline. Mr. Speaker, I beg your pardon that I got straged. I had said that it would do no good. But the tremendous public response it received and then the mistakes committed by our opposition parties and the manner in which Shri Mulayam Singh decided to deal with this movement the way so much so that it was declared
that one section will have the right to keep arms illegally, aroused the intense feelings of communalism.

If my friends is pained to bring the name of Mulayam Singh during the discussion, well I may say “then CM” who was soft by name but ‘cruel’ in his doings......

Mr. Speaker, why the present situation became grave? People assembled in large number. I can understand the distress of the Central Government. This same was the case with the Kalyan Singh Government. If people assemble in large number and they take some wrong action then how to bring then under control were confident. (Interruption)

Rajesh Pilot has right by said on that day that you are mobilizing so big a gathering, it will go beyond your control, but we had not that feeling (Interruption)

An Hon:ble member: Al said so.
Shri A.B. Vajpayee: No, all members had not said so and your saying saying has no meaning.

If the Prime Minister felt hurt when things happened contrary to his confidence we also felt equally hurt on this account. Kalyan Singh resigned. Advani ji resigned, but no one is prepared to take responsibility for this on behalf of the Central Government. Arjun Singh says he had warned earlier. If Arjun Singh had warned, why did he not resign from the Council of Ministers as he felt that the course of action adopted by the Prime Minister was not the correct one...

NIC unanimously authorised Prime Minister to deal with the situation appropriately. Whatever Prime Minister did was in accordance with his judgement. In view of this Prime Minister cannot escape responsibility.

People had assembled for Kar Sewa. They wanted to do Kar Sewa. But they felt that the High Court had not delivered the judgement. So all they could do was to bring sand from Saryu river and drop it in ditches and bring water and pour it on the platform. This they had done earlier also. So a group out of them decided against doing this and instead attack the structure and demolished it. This was bad. But the reaction to this and outside the country is rather over action. For this our point of views and the approach towards the problem and the attitude of the government in dealing with are the things which are in no way less responsible for this. We have failed to tell the world that this was a disputed structure. We have all the time been saying that this is a Masjid. We did not say that it was only a structure of masjid; but in this structure there is a temple in which regular worship
takes place. We did not say this dispute has been there for the last 500 years. There are similar precedents in the world. A Church was built by Russians when they captured Warsaw. After the 1st World War when Poland gained independence the first thing they did was to demolish this church. This is history. When Toynbee came here he taunted us that it can only happen in India that those mosques remain to stand which were built after demolishing Temples. I go to attend the meeting of the U.N. General Assembly as part of Indian delegation every year.

There also this issue figure in discussion. They do not know the root cause of the problem. They do not know that it was a temple on this site; they do not know that the remains which have come out after excavation and now after demolishing this confirm that there was a temple at this site. Had the world known this fact, had the world been told these facts, this whole tumultuous would not have arisen. Had the world known the mosque was built after demolishing the temple, the world would have definitely asked the muslims to settle the matter amicably. You moved a Bill, it was enacted.

Mr. Chauhan who is sitting here moved the Bill that all religious places which existed on 15th August 1947 would remain in tact in the same manner as these were. The movement of time should stop, the wheel of change should stop. There is danger to secularism so stop where you are. Stand as you are. These temples are there since generations. These idols of stone and monuments of stone also convey some thing. There are legends behind these stones, these also touch our emotions. You will also to appreciate that when you excluded Ayodhya from the scope of the Bill, you recognised this fact. You could have included Ayodhya as well in the Bill and said that it would remain as it is in the present position. We passed the Bill, we are Parliament, so done is done. But this did not happen because you were aware that the situation in Ayodhya was different. The position of Ram Temple was different, you acknowledged this then what happened? Other parties also who accepted this, desired that you should find a solution for Ayodhya and there should be no conflict on it anywhere. I also accept this position that the case of Ayodhya is different. Thousands of mosques were built on temples. When I went to Amroha from where my friend Mr.Chauhan comes, I had stated that the invaders cannot be accepted as representatives of Islam. I heard Mr. Gulam Nabi Azad on radio on that day saying the demolition of temples in Pakistan and Bangladesh were not in accordance with the tenets of Islam. But
then was demolition of temples in this country could be accepted as the tenets of Islam? So I do not accept Aurangzeb and others who destroyed temples as true representatives of Islam. We entertained hopes that our Muslim brothers would say that a wrong was done at that time. But they did not happen and exhibited intransigence. This went on during this period certain developments took place in the country which had its effect on Hindu Community and Hindu Psyche. The terrorist and secessionist activities in Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and Assam compelled the majority community to wonder as to what was happening in our country. Shah Bano case made this question more fundamental. We in B.J.P. used not talk of a common civil code only because there were series of discussions on this subject with former respected Sar Sanghchhalak guruji of RSS. We were of this opinion that one of the Directive Principles of the constitution i.e. Article 44 is there and as such there should be a common law for all in the matter of marriage. The common civil code will strengthen the unity of the country. He persuaded us to understand that there are different marriage laws in different communities and he said that unless different communities come to an agreement the ruler should not interfere in the matter. He quoted Manusmiriti of more times. Shri Chandra Shekhar said of this and we agreed not to raise the demand in this connection. But the intention of the framers of the constitution was clear. I have carefully gone through the debates of the constituent Assembly. But the members of Muslim League, present representatives as well as former representatives continue to take stand that they will brook no interference of Indian State, Indian Republic or Indian Parliament in the matter of their marriage laws. Why they will not do so? so they not own a common citizenship?

Will the family planning not be adopt? Will the small family norm, which the foundation of controlling of population, will undergo change simply in the name of religion? The control of population is a problem deserving first priority?. The major obstacle in tackling this problem is those Hindus who do not believe in small family norm; they however take shelter behind four marriages allowed in Islam. I know that in practice four marriages are not taking place. Shah Bano from Indore took her matter to Supreme Court and obtained a favourable judgement. The congress party after this judgement took a decision in a party meeting to go in for a common civil code. Mr. Arif Mohammed vigorously defended Shah Bano’s judgement in the Parliament and his speech was applauded by members of the Congress Party. Later on the
Congress Party changed its stand. Mr. Arif Mohammad and Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi was sacrificed changed his views. Our people felt that this was a policy of appeasement. Do you think such acts do not provoke reaction in the majority community?

Let me take an example of Sharja. Some persons from Kerala have gone there for works. They have a club there where they enacted a play which had won an award in Kerala. This is a play written by a good writer; it is a good play. But this news spread in Sharja that this play was derogatory to Mohammad Sahib; that there is criticism of Islam in it. The persons who participated in that play were arrested and sentenced to an imprisonment of six years. They are at present in jail. I do not know what happened at government level.

Another person went abroad for doing work. That person carried with him a copy of Dharam Satyarth Parkash. He is a religious person and reads Dharam Satyarth Parkash daily. At the airport his luggage was checked. The copy was seized and he was put in jail. We still want to maintain relations with such countries. We do not want to copy them. But news of such occurrences come here; will these not lead to hardening of feelings.

This country can never be anti-religious nor this country can be non-religious. A wrong meaning has been attributed by people to the word ‘secular’. This is why people have developed antipathy to the word ‘secularism’ Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru had written a foreword in 1961 of a book written by Raghunath Singh M.P. In this foreword Pandit ji wrote that problems are being created by the translation of word secularism as it is leading to many misgivings. This translation is not correct. The only interpretation of secularism can be that the state will have no religion and it will not discriminate on the basis of religion. But the problem is that secularism is still being interpreted as. This is not in keeping with our traditions and our culture.

The demolition of structure took place. The expression of regret for this is considered inadequate. We are receiving information that in Pakistan the ministers with the help of bulldozers got temples demolished. Where is the provocation for them to demolish temples? This government here is making efforts to control the situation, police firing are being resorted to. About a thousand persons have died. It is a different matter that when corpse are counted the state wise number of deaths are given, how many persons have died in M.P., Maharashtra, Gujrat, West Bengal and etc. It is forgotten that all who died were
Indian; we have sympathy for all of them; this is not a matter for counting.

You have [imposed ban on] dismissed governments why? What is their fault? Is the dismissal in advance to prevent them from making mistakes? BJP governments have a record of maintaining communal harmony and there were less number of communal riots during the tenure of these governments. The figures speak for this. If the Home Minister speaks truth today then he will have to accept that there were less communal riots in U.P., M.P. and Rajasthan and where ever these took place these were surprised by firm and determined action by Police. No discrimination was made as to who is Hindu or Mussalman. We consider it was the duty of the state. It is not that the state does not discriminate on the basis of communalism when it does, it is wrong and is contrary to the duty of the state. But this is precisely what is happening today. A policy of discrimination is being followed. The BJP State Government have been dismissed why? Did the law and order machinery in these states break down? In Himachal Pradesh there was not even a single incident. Why were these state government dismissed? If it is because the ministers in these government were members of RSS, if so, then what? Were they not discharging their constitutional responsibilities? Were they violating any directions being given by the Central Government. In Indore the government of Shri Patwa sealed the organisation moved the court and the High Court ordered that the office of this organisation could not be sealed. Does this instance go in favour of Patwa’s government or against it. But here pressures were being put on Prime Minister to dismiss BJP governments. The Prime Minister thought that if the alternative was that either he goes or the state governments run by BJP then let the state government of BJP go. If everything is going, save whatever can be saved. This is what was followed. In the process it was ignored whether this constituted a violation of the constitution or was opposed to sound policy. The governments are dismissed because these were manned by members of RSS, but why were the Assemblies dissolved. Could these not be kept under suspension? Have Assemblies not being kept under suspension in the past? Why were these assemblies dissolved? The complaint was against the state governments though even these complaints had no merit—the state governments should have been allowed to work and given opportunity to commit mistakes. This was not done and the assemblies were also dissolved.

I want to give extract from editorials written today:-
“Dissolution is not the only option. When President Rule was first imposed on Punjab in 1951, the Assembly was suspended as, indeed; it was in Rajasthan in 1967, Bihar in 1969, UP in 1970, Orissa in 1971, Andhra Pradesh and UP in 1973. Gujrat and UP in 1976, Manipur in 1977 and 1981, Assam in 1979, Punjab in 1983 and Kashmir in 1986—when it suited the congress.”

This is not an article from BJP. This type of editorials have appeared in papers which are pro-congress. The extract below is from “Jansatta” who is angry with BJP, particular by Advani ji, even that paper had to write this:

“By acting under pressure the Prime Minister’s action can neither be effective nor credible. Up till now Shri Rao had been following the policy of non-confrontation but if he has now to follow Arjun Singh it will be better if he retires.”

There are comments of papers who were preparing back ground for solution of Ayodhya dispute and who were highly critical of us. Kindly read the editorial of ‘Indian Express’ titled ‘Political Nihilism’. I do not know whether these newspapers and comments are placed before the Prime Minister or not. There are many other Newspapers who have commented. I would, however, like to read one extract:

“There was no breakdown of law and order in these states that could even remotely warrant any central action against their governments. While 800 people died in congress ruled states there were over 200 deaths in those under BJP-control. Yet President Shankar Dayal Sharma accepted the reports of the governors that they had apprehensions about maintenance of law and order in these states. The centre itself, open to the charge of criminal inaction provoking some politicians to demand its removal. The dance of violence that stunned Surat and Bombay, generating fears that sense and sensibilities had vanished from the corridors of power, was apt to sweep away the moronic ministers in Maharashtra and Gujrat. Mr. Narsimha Rao’s protective umbrella that saved them was not available to Madhya Pradesh, Himchal Pradesh and Rajasthan where sanity was never shaken.”

This is not our statement; these are views of an independent paper. These views should be weighed. In the light of this we should do some introspection. Now I want to refer to the ‘Ban’. Some organisations have been banned. What is the basis for this ban? These organisations were alright till 6th December, these were patriotic and disciplined. The ban has been imposed on these on account of events of 6th December. What happened on 6th December is not clear yet.
You are talking of appointing a commission, CBI enquiry is still in process, yet the central government have reached a conclusion and banned these organisation. Why have these organisations been banned, kindly produce the evidence, the basis for the ban is ridiculous.

I was member of this House when in 1961 unlawful Activities Bill was presented. Shri Yaswant Rao Chauhan presented this bill. While allaying apprehensions of members Shri Chauhan explained that the law will be used for taking action against secessionist forces. I also spoke at that time and stated that you would rope in every body in the name of ‘integrity’ and impose ban. When you declare their activities unlawful they will go under ground. You want to check activities but how will you do so? You can arrest persons but can you win the battle of ideologies by doing so? I am raising a fundamental issue. In this country the fight is not for just establishing a temple, this is a battle for ideology. What constitute nationalism for this country, where are the roots of this country? What are the roots which provide nourishment to this country and sustain it. It is true that different people came to this country; they came centuries ago and their several generations have lived here, there were different states yet this country remained one nation. There was no need for passport for movement. For visiting religious places no permits were needed. This was one country. This oneness was based on some foundation and strength. We talk of the Ganga-Jamna Culture. The place where Ganga and Jamna meet is called ‘Sangam’ But after the Sangam Ganga advances taking every one along.

The other day I had quoted Nehru ji. While addressing the students of Aligarh Muslim University he said that you are Muslims while I am Hindu but the cultural inheritance of this country provides ‘thrill’ to you. Nehru ji had used the word ‘thrill’, while in this country there is opposition to the use of the word ‘Van&\'de Matram’. Should it be so? These are minor matters which have no bearing on religion. If in a Government function I say how is it a religious activity. We have moved together, we have talked together, we have lived together, does it not express a feeling of nationalism.

There has never been differences in this country on the basis of religion. But now those signs are visible. I am worried about it. I have asked my party as to whether the incidents in Jamia Millia do not influence other youths. By appearing and compromising with one set up fanaticism you cannot stop the other type of fanaticism. I regret the demolition of the structure. but such persons have also met me who have said that this structure was a black spot of 400 years old and there
was no other way of removing it. I am afraid of these kind of feelings. We should find solutions to these problems in a peaceful manner and through discussion but we should not allow such problems to remain hanging for long. They should not be allowed to develop into a cancer. Sardar Patel got Somnath constructed and our Rstrapati Rajendra Babu attended it, Nehru it was very happy.

Rajender Babu went there, temple was constructed the problem got solved. This was not kept hanging, it was not allowed to linger in the court. Forty years have passed the court has yet to decide about Ayodhya dispute. We had a talk with P.M. to refer this to Supreme Court under Article 143. There was delay in this also. It was hoped that the structure could be kept separate while construction could start in 2.77 Acres. In the three or four years likely to be available some solution could be found in respect of the structure. This was also not accepted. Try to understand the changing perceptions in this country. My friend Shahabudin is sitting here. I am calling him a friend. My party members do not like this. But this is a cultured way of behaviour. When I was Foreign Minister Shahabudin was working in my ministry. He had a reputation of being a progressive Muslim as he had been associated with student federation. I wanted to send him to one country. I would not like to name that country—but that country asked us to send some one else. That was a fundamentalist country. That was the reputation of Shahabudin. Then he left Foreign Service and started law practice. My party members accuse me that I brought him in Janta Party. Now there has been complete transformation in Mr. Shahabudin and he is editing ‘Muslim India’. If ‘Muslim India’ paper comes out then why will ‘Hindu India’ not come out. I know Shahabudin Sahib is very articulate and he will give a fitting reply to this. In Muslim India he publishes a lot of material. But this is harming the atmosphere. Shahabudin Sahib will recall that in 1986 I had stated in a Public meeting at Bombay that a solution would be found in respect of Ayodhya problem. I had given two proposals. Muslim community should willingly give this whole structure to Hindu who believe that this is the birth place of Ram? You ask for proof of it. ‘Faith’ is a big thing. Muslims could say we live in this country, you live with us, we have to live together, and therefore, if you believe that this is the birth place of Ram, we give it you. I told him that the second part of this should be that after getting the structure Hindu would say that our dispute has ended. This structure would not be demolished. The Temple would be constructed else where. Shahabudin Sahib did not accept this. He wrote
me a letter that we could hold further negotiations regarding this. I have still got that letter. This was no solution.

While concluding I say Ayodhya is a tragedy. As I said earlier the country is at crossroad. This is not a time for finding faults. The more you accuse us the more we will rise. The more you suppress us the stronger will we emerge because you are not understanding the perceptions and feelings of the people. You are not aware of the immense harm done by the Prime Minister’s announcement that the mosque will be rebuilt there. Where was the need for you to make this hurried announcement. Was this announcement made under external pressures? Why don’t you decide whether there was a mosque or a temple? Now that place is under central control. Ask the Archaeological Survey of India to do excavations there and to determine whether there was a temple there or not. Let this be settled once for all.

Chander Shekhar ji wanted to do something and he had the support of Rajiv Gandhi ji also. Chander Shahkar ji started negotiations. He held talks in good atmosphere, and a number of documents were also collected. Some result was about to come but his government fell. This government may also not go before some results come out. We have to reach some conclusion. Our faith is that a temple was there at that site. If this is established and the court confirms it then this will have to be accepted.

- If efforts are not made in this direction and the matter is allowed to drift further it will not be good for the country. We had not laid the foundation stone, that happened during congress rule. At that time congress was in power both at the centre and the state. If in the period of Rajiv Gandhi a foundation stone of a good work was laid, will it be wrong to complete that work. We want to complete that work and we will complete that work. You can put us in jail. What has Advani ji done? Advani ji was arrested in the morning when Lok Sabha was in session. See the charges, how ridiculous are these? Advani ji was making appeals for not demolishing the structure. See this in Video tape. You can ask the press correspondents. You have spread such rumours that Advani ji was exhorting the Kar Sewaks to give another push to the structure. This is to improve the credibility of the government for arresting Advani ji. The Lok Sabha was in session, Advani ji is the leader of opposition. I know Advani ji is an honest man, he is so great a man that if he has committed a mistake he would have admitted it. Advani ji has not been released yet. May I ask what is the difficulty in releasing Advani ji. You say that he can take bail; if you release
him and he is able to make a statement here, heavens won’t fall. Why are you being obstinate? You do not want that the discussion should take place in normal setting. You don’t want the truth about Ayodhya incidents to be revealed. We want truth to come out and if we are found at fault we will accept the same. But you are acting in a partisan manner. I have not spoken at length about the role of Central Government. How the matter was dealt with by the Prime Minister, how for two months nothing was done. How contradictory things were conveyed to the Sadhus.

This is correct that on the last date the Prime Minister was anxious and firm that the structure should remain in tact. Central Reserve Police was deputed. The question is why Presidents rule was not imposed at 12'o clock? Why there was no intervention by the centre to deal with the situation in Ayodhya? The Home Minister should tell what were the intelligence reports. What was the assessment of the government which was functions there, and the government officers who were present there on the spot. Only by finding fault with us nothing will be gained and you cannot get political advantage by just throwing blame on us, if you fail to find the solution of the problem. There is need for making a fresh beginning. Ayodhya is a challenge which can also be converted into an opportunity. Whether we want to convert it into an opportunity or not will depend on the policy we follow. I have no confidence that this government will be able to do so. I do not have faith because Prime Minister is perhaps not able to take decisions or his colleagues do not allow him to take decisions. If Dharatrastra is surrounded by Durodhan and Dushashan then even, if he wants he cannot follow the ‘Path of justice and truth’.

Reply of Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee on 21.12.92 on the No-Confidence Motion against Narasimha Rao Government in Lok Sabha.

Sir I am sorry that I could not listen to all the members as I was not present here, but I have tried to go through their speeches.

I regret that the debate could not be held on the line on which I initiated my discussion and expressed the views. Allegation and counter allegations continued to be hurled and will continue here-in after too. It is easy to allege imputations, but difficult to introspect. If the version of the 6 December incidents could be so easy to make out as some
of my friends, sitting here have tried to do, things would have been different. I see Shri Pilot and then minister after ministers seem to be competing with each other to show their allegiance towards the P.M. Although these ministers are after all the members of the same cabinet which take decisions in the matter. I have no objection but cannot I even comment upon it?

I shall therefore, mention a small matter and then I would take up the serious part of the discussion. On that day Shri Pilot stood to unfold the mystery about the demolition of the structure at Ayodhya and stated that the military training was given to these persons, who were responsible for demolishing it. He said that a training camp was organised at Serkhage, near Ahmedabad and then he also told the name of the Brigadier. You have not allowed the name to go on record. Next day there were reports in the newspapers about the conspiracy in demolishing the structure. This conspiracy must be of those persons who received training and if the trainer was a military personnel, I feel sorry why Mr. Pilot should not have been able to find out the truth. There is an institution in Sirkhage which provides training for International Security and the Brigadier is connected with the Congress Party. He was appointed at the post by a Congress Chief Minister. He has issued a statement that he has been appointed Chairman of Water Pollution Board. I am not criticising it. He is giving rifle training and so also for the Judo. There is nothing objectionable in it. I am not putting any imputation on the Brigadier nor on the Congress Chief Minister. But you can make inquiry of this whole matter. After all you are the Minister for Communication. Don’t you keep even a little of the Communication. Mr. Speaker Sir, Shri Pilot had put allegation in your presence and a voice was heard from that side that if the allegation proved to be wrong Mr. Pilot should resign. I am not asking for his resignation, he is my friend. But I do have the grievance against spreading such type of sensation.

You have appointed a Commission to inquire into the incidents of happenings at Ayodhya. We have welcomed the appointment of the commission as we are also interested to know the facts. But before the facts are found out and Commission gives its findings you are influencing the Commission and this is the matter which is more significant. Secondly a vicious atmosphere is being created against us in the whole country; no body knows what will be the consequences of it. We are sorry, whatever happened in Ayodhya (intrusion) Prime Minister says that he was assured. I expected that of the discussion
could be on the line, what I said on the first day, we could have reached to some conclusion. But I want to make it clear that the discussion that took place during these 3-4 day would not help us to reach at any right conclusion. Prime Minister was confident that the assurances will be honoured. We also believed so and the Prime Minister and the whole Government also believed that the structure at Ayodhya will be safe and the matter of 2.77 acre land would be delinked, the decision of the Lucknow Bench will be announced and those who gathered there for Kar Seva would be able to do so. This was our belief. Now you will say that you treat your belief to be a belief and our belief strands no ground. You will say your own belief is really a belief but ours is conspiracy. How can there be two yardsticks of measuring the same belief; but nobody is prepared to accept it. Had the judgement been delivered before 6th December, which was given on 11th December.

Shri Somnath Chatterjee: how could it happen.

Atal Behari Vajpayee: Mr. Chatterjee: would say how can you ask for the judgement of the Court. He is eminent lawyer and knows all sorts of legal tricks. We are simple persons but we know that the government did not accede to our request to p(.'tition before the Lucknow Bench for an early judgement.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, these are the questions which must be replied to and I thought these will be replied to during the course of discussion. Would it not be better that we should not have been indicated till the findings of the inquiry are knowy, remarks should not be pass on us, we should not be put to stand on the accused box.

Prime Minister Shri Narasimha Rao: Sir, I would like to make one thing clear at this stage. For the information of Atalji, I want to tell him that the Central Government is not party to the proceedings in the Lucknow Bench. We have been made parties because the Land Acquisition Act happens to be a Central Act. Only to that extent. We are not substantive parties. This may be noted please. (interruption)

A.B. Vajpayce Sir, the Prime Minister is again talking of Legalities we are talking of the belief at the moment and I do not want to name the colleagues of the Prime Minister Cabinet, just not to put them in embarrassing position, who had assured us of early pronouncement of the judgement; and what was the hitch for the High Court had both the Governments appealed to the court for it.

Mr Speaker Sir, Swamiji had given elaborate account on the question of Ayodhya; there is no answer to it. I say that let the inquiry be over, let the findings come out, we also want to know what happened?
At least you inform me. I want to know from the Prime Minister.

(interruption)

Shri Ram Naik: Please stand up and than speak (interruption) we have heard you, now you listen to us (interruption) Shri Ram Naik: There are parties here who have no morality of any kind; one day they talk of abolishing article 356, the other day they support it. I do not like such parties.....

Kalyan Singh Government filed affidavit in the Supreme Court and could not honour it. He, therefore, resigned. You did not accept the resignation and dismissed the Kalyan Singh Government. What a great deed you have done (interruption) Kalyan Singh Government was duly elected government; if Kalyan Singh had committed any contempt of the court, there could be proceedings against him in the court and the court would decide to punish him or not. He is responsible before the people, he has admitted his moral fault and resigned but you did not treat him as a duly elected Government should have behaved with another duly elected Government. (interruption)

Mr. Speaker Sjr, I want to ask the Prime Minister that while he has given two reasons for the dismissal of Kalyan Singh government; what are the reasons for dismissing Rajasthan, M.P, H.P. Governments. One Govt. was dismissed on the pretext that he sent Kar Sevaks. When Kar Sevaks were sent, there was no ban on Kar Seva in the orders of the Supreme Court. Supreme Court has allowed the Kar Seva.

We have been asked to spell out the reasons for moving this motion of No-Confidence. Our leaders are in the jail, our three governments have been dismissed, legislative assemblies have been dissolved and now they are talking of banning the BJP. I have been told that there is one Home State Minister who has issued a statement that the BJP should not be allowed to function as a political party? And you are asking us to spell out the reasons for moving the motion of No-Confidence. Under such circumstances should we repose confidence in you? Should we congratulate you? Should we pat your back for all this? Whatever happened at Ayodhya on 6 December that was not good but is it good what is happenings in the country thereafter? I would like to remind my friends that may be today BJP is the victim of such treatment, but I would like to let you know one thing that at the time when there was large massacre in Bihar, Congress-I leaders came to us and asked for the BJP support for imposing President's Rule in Bihar in order to dismiss Laloo Government, we replied in negative as we did not believe as such.
We said we don’t believe in it. The Prime Minister says that “Article 356” lies in shambles in Lucknow and what happened in Himachal Pradesh? Why the Rajasthan Government was dismissed. Crime? sent the Kar Sevaks. Kar Sevaks could come from all parts of the country. Is the Constitution to be interpreted in such a way? See the definition of article 356. Solo Sorabji, who is not the lawyer of my views said.

“The basic condition precedent for imposing President’s Rule under Article 356 of our Constitution is that a situation has arisen in which the Government of the state cannot be carried in accordance with the provisions of this constitution. The fact that the Chief Minister who helps the Government in a BJP ruled state belongs to a banned organisation cannot by itself, lead to the inference of failure of the constitutional machinery”.

Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee: Sir, I am grateful that my friend Inderjeet has also to admit................

Shri Inderjit Gupta: Moral responsibility and constitutional responsibility are two different things.

Shri A.B. Vajpayee: I am talking of moral responsibility at the moment. Inderjit Gupta has asked to go slow-a bit slow, but who will allow the Prime Minister to go slow at the hour. Someone’s eye is on the MP and the other one is dreaming to roam about in the Raj Bhawan at the high altitude of Himachal Pradesh. Is there any directive which the Central Government sent to these three governments and they refused to comply it with? Is it not a fact that these Governments were working in accordance with the constitution? Is it not a fact that these government informed that they would comply with the directives.” They why these governments were dismissed? Mr. Speaker Sir, Is it not a fraud upon the Constitution? Is it not the mis use of the article? Prime Minister is only talking of federation, but it is not federation. It is union in our Constitution, but union exists with federation; roots are shaking not only on account of what happened. But also on account of what you did thereafter. These who live in glass houses, should not throw stones on others.

Mr. Speaker Sir, what were the conditions or apprehension which made the Government to dismiss these governments. I can understand the position of Mr. Arjun Singh. He was under the impression that he had got the chance to win the lottery of Prime Minister ship. I am not talking of Churuhat Lottery. But I am somewhat baffled with the speech of Sharad Pawar; possibily it was first speech and he wanted to
influence every body but he forgot, that he was speaking in Lok Sabha and not in Shivaji Park in Bombay. Somebody says the Government was asked to call army but it did not. If State Government can control the situation without calling army Defence Minister (Shri Sharad Pawar: Should have done.) Shri A.B. Vajpayee: Yes, the State control led it. This can not be made the basis of dismissal. Sharad Pawar him self stated many times that army should not be called in internal disputes, army should be utilised to the minimum and now action is taken against M.P. Government. Whereas in Bombay riots took place inspite of calling the army and several lives have been lost. I have number of stories to tell the way deaths occured there. But I would not like to mention them as it would bring a bad name to the country but you have stated that people belonging to Bajrang Dal went there to create riots in the garb of Home Guards.

Defence Minister (Shri Sharad Pawar): Such a complaint was received.

Atal Behari Vajpayee: Have you any proof ? (interruption) It is matter of serious concern and you believe only on hearsays (interruption) You are going against our organisations. Mr. Speaker Sir, whenever the communal poison spread in the country, we are always held guilty. If we have spread this poison then we are the devotee of Lord Shankar who can keep this poison unto our own throat and it will only do good to the country. But this matter is not so simple.

Mr. Speaker Sir, the ban was imposed on organisations for no basis (interruption) what was their guilt before 6th December. Just now Jaffer Sharif Sahib was speaking. I have before me a old speech of his, delivered in Lok Sabha on 19 Dec. 1989 from which I quote and if I am wrong, I may be corrected. “I want to tell my BJP friends present here that I also attended the Shakha of RSS”. I am not talking of this for the purpose of any imputation upon him. I have stated this only in the context that there are several people connected with Sangh Shakha and there is nothing to object about it. R.S.S. was a patriotic organisation (interruption) Mr. Speaker Sir Defence Minister Shri Shared Pawar knows R.S.S. very well, he had been with us in the Government. It was in his times that the demand was made.

Yes, today you have offered explanation. You have already taken the position, but today you talked wisely and after giving due thought. Keep yourself to it. (interruption) The fact is the fight of ideology can not be won with ban

RSS was also banned earlier. I felt hurt to know that, the murder
of Gandhiji was referred here. I have got the report of justice Kapoor commission which I do not purpose to read. It is better if we do not drag Gandhi in between our fight. I want to ask the house that suppose those who murdered Gandhi, whether they are in this house or out of this house, come and say that we murdered him and committed mistake and we wish to remorse for this sin, would you not give them the chance? Nathu Ram Godse was not connected with R.S.S. rather he used to criticise the RSS, he wrote against RSS in his paper and that is document.

What I want to say that even if you allege political imputations, there are number of issues but don’t drag Gandhiji, he has given us Swaraj, Swrdeshi Self Reliance and asked us to honour our language and these are the things which we have to take from him and let us use Gandhiji as right means for right purpose.

Now you will question us whether we have believe in Gandhiji and I will counter question you whether you believe Gandhiji? But this type of discussion will take us nowhere. Gandhiji is a personality and he should not be dragged in this manner. (interruption)

Mr. Speaker Sir, I was going to congratulate Telegu Desam (interruption) for showing protest against the dismissal of three governments (interruption)

Mr. Speaker Sir, the speech delivered by Sh. Sharad Pawar then in Maharashtra Assembly was really farsighted one.

The fight of ideology can not be fought in such a way. Prime Minister may remember when I told him on that day in the presence of Home Minister that one day you have to fight against the BJP, But don’t fight with Ram.

But this is no way to fight with BJP that you ban it, you de-recognise it, you deny it to participate in elections. Ideology should be fought with ideology and this is what I am telling you and warning you.

Sh. Chandrasekhar has protested the arrest of Shri Advani, he is openly condemning all what happened in Ayodhya. But he has protested against the arrest of Advani. He has protested against the dissolution of the Governments. Members of DMK, ADMK, have spoken to me, some Congress members also met and said that the PM did not want to dismiss the Governments but the forces sitting right and left to him, made him helpless to do so.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, just now the ban has been imposed but how this ban has been received with humiliation “Kerala High Court suspend
ban on Jammat" You have banned Jammat also. Why? Three organisations were sufficient. For appearing to be secular, it is not necessary, if you have put three Hindu organisations on the mat, you also ban the muslims organisations. Nobody was going to raise a finger against you on secularism. If it all the finger rises, it is our finger because your secularism is no secularism in reality. This does not keep balance, it is only concerned with the vote bank. This balance bent on one side in the case of Shah Ban. Your secularism is not shy of asking vote in the name of Christian Government in Mizoram. But this will not go on like this........

Shri Vilas Muttemvar (Chimour): Don’t you care for the Vote Bank? Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee: Now it is so. It is a dangerous game that is why Advani ji has stated, which was objected to that whatever is happening in the country will ultimately benefit his party but the country might have to suffer. Some people said to him that you should at least work in a manner which did not harm the country. He replied that we did not want to do any thing which harm the country, but the game was not going to be one sided. Now you do not allow Advaniji to come here, now you do not allow him to speak. Advaniji resigned but you are not prepare even to attach any importance to it.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, ban is imposed and the ban is only receiving humiliation. No reason has been given for the ban. You have recently decided to appoint a tribunal. Couldn’t you have waited for 30 days? Tribunal could consider the facts. You are a great supporter of judiciary, you don’t want anything to do arbitrarily, you continued to wait for hours in Ayodhya. I am not blaming the Prime Minister, for it. You say “Noora Kusti is going on” I have won from Lucknow and I do not know what is this “Noora Kusti”, which style of wrestling this is?.

Mr. Speaker Sir, the dilemma which was before the Kalyan Singh Government, the same is faced by the Central Government now Kalyan Singh had stated right in the beginning that he would not fire on Saints. This is no secret. Kalyan Singh had opened his card. But why the tear gas was not used, why the rubber bullets were not fired, these are the matters required to be inquired into. Why the administration was in shamble. These were not the orders of Kalyan Singh. (interruption)

Mr. Speaker Sir, when the news about the demolition came here then you could have taken the administration in your hands without caring for the State Government and Mr. Pawar could even send the
army. But why was it not done. Why didn't you also think it a right
course? Because doing so was inviting a great blood shed. All this
which happened was very wrong.

Non can bring the dead back, comrade, who can bring anybody
back. There were people who were crushed under the Chinese Tank
at Thiaman Square who will bring them back? Those who gave their
life for the sake of fighting for the democracy in old communist countries,
who will bring those life back? Don't talk such things.

Mr. Speaker Sir, what type of this ban is imposed what was the
need of this ban? Couldn’t you wait for 30 days? We have had some
inkling of your future programme when we see what you did and what
happened to Archeologist day before yesterday? Will you not allow
the archeologist to call a press conference in Himachal Bhavan of Delhi?

Many more evidences have been received in Ayodhya which prove
there to be a temple and which was destroyed. (interruption) Why are
you afraid to face this fact. If such evidences are there, you challenge
them. (interruption) you may go to the court. You may ask to go to
the court and the govt. can constitute a court. (interruption)

Mr. Speaker Sir, this offer was made earlier. Prime Minister knows
it and other members of his cabinet also knows it. Matter was to be
referred to the Supreme Court, under article 143 or under 138, and this
reference was to be made to the Supreme Court in just one line. Whether
there was a temple earlier which was destroyed and the mosque built
there on. (interruption) *

We asked for a package, launching a Kar Seva on 2.77 Acre land,
refer the matter to the Supreme Court and full protection to the structure,
But you did not agree to it. (interruption) Sir. is the Government ready
now. Mr. Speaker Sir, I was speaking about what happened in Ayodhya.

Mr. Speaker Sir, I have already stated that there was a discussion
with Saints and VHP and Shri Sharad Pawar participated in the
discussion. (interruptions) you want to know the package and say it
was wrong. The proposal that emerged was that the matter may be
referred to the Supreme Court, or the other hand saints stressed that
they should be allowed Kar Seva on 2.77 acre land and all were of
the opinion that the disputed structure should be fully protected.

Shri Sharad Pawar: It is correct when you talk of Supreme Court.
reference. It is also correct when you say of the protection of structure.
But the proposal which you made for 2.77 acre was not agreed to by
any one.

Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee: But that is what I say that this package
was not accepted. I will not mis-guide this house. Now I leave out the old discussion. Now a new situation has arisen. The structure is demolished. Those who demolished, taking it to be mosque also in fact demolished the temple, for which I feel agony and anguish. (interruptions) Out of excitement they just forgot that there was a temple where people worshipped, Arti was performed and there was no Namaz. Had you told all this, there would not have been riots; you should have told that it was a disputed structure which was more a temple and less a mosque.

Shri Sharad Pawar: V.H.P. called structure a black spot.

Atal Behari Vajpayee: I do not know, what VHP said (interruptions) Mr. Speaker Sir, There was a discussion between saints and Governments, there were also certain talks between Sharad Pawar and VHP. BJP was not the party in these discussions: I therefore, do not know what transpired.

Shri Sharad Pawar: The difficulty is that you do not have knowledge of all things.

Shri A.B. Vajpayee: Well, you have given some relief to me. Now what the government wants to do? What it intends, what is the confusion, one day it says that structure will be rebui, if it is to be rebui than there were two domes under which the idaols of Ram Lalla were there. There were a columning of Kasauti, there was a stone with many inscriptions, will all these be given the same shape? Now Sharad Pawar says one thing, PM says some thing else (interruptions) what will be built there? (interruptions)

Mr. Speaker Sir, my submission is that still there is time and you should try to find out an urgent and permanent solution of this problem. If we had the desire to take advantage of it in the election we would have asked the saints that there was no need of Kar Seva now, as there were going to be no elections wait for some time more. But saints were not to be deterred that way as they were concerned with the construction of temple and not with the votes...(interruptions)

Now whatever the Governments wants to do, it should take the house and the country into confidence. I may put one suggestion that more excavation may be carried out there to know whether there was really a temple. And the muslim leaders have already promised (interruptions)

Shri Syed Shahabudin (Kishanganj) We hold no promise (interruptions) you have deceived, now there will be no short cut, now only law will decide, none else.
Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee: Good, my friend Shahabudin said it before this full house. I have got his letter of July 4, 1987. This letter was written to Prince Anjum Kadar, who is a Shia leader. The built mosque was claimed to be of Shias. Buta Singh ji would also remember of those efforts that Shia were of the opinion that this dispute should come to an end, if Hindu majority feels that Ram was born there and there was a temple which was converted into mosque after the destroying the temple then Shias could shift it but Shahabudin did not allow it to happen and he wrote a letter and today he has come out openly.

"Even if shift is permissible under some school of thought, there is no reason at all to opt for shift. In one flash, shift would open this line....I remain absolutely and totally opposed to the mischievous idea of shift proposed by the RSS which you appear inclined to accept. Please reconsider.

Mr. Speaker Sir, we also said that we did not want to destroy the mosque, we wanted only to shift it with full honour. This may be constructed at some distance in which we were prepared to do Kar Seva, and give our contribution. (interruptions) but this could not happen.

Shri Ibrahim Suleman Sait (Pânhnâni) Mosque can not be shifted, location could not be changed.

Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Since yesterday we are listening the out cry about the constitution stressing that judiciary should be respected. But at the same time it has also been said that law of marriage cannot be unison, because it is against shariat, Sharit is 'Divine Law'. We do not want to bring any harm to one's belief but can you give a little thought that if the other society also becomes adamant to that extent in its beliefs, then what will happen. After all what is important about the mosque for my muslims brothers, in Ayodhya? Is it only that mosque there?

Ayodhya is one and only one-that is the holy place of Ram Janamsthan. It is a matter of belief. No one can prove it by reasoning or facts. Yes, belief is there. If you have the belief in the matter of marriage that it is a matter which carries the seal of God, then how can you discard the belief of others. Then Ram is a Maryada Purush, Rashtra Purush. His temple must be only on his birth place...(interruptions)

Mr. Speaker Sir, I appeal to this house and I wish to end my discussion in the same spirit as I began the discussion. I had stated that the country was at cross road. Do not fight with another type of
fundamentalism by encouraging one type of communalism and fundamentalism. But you are doing the same.

Let us have a new beginning. As I stated in the beginning that this opportunity should be availed of. But instead you have dismissed our governments, all right. You will ban, we shall go before the people and remember, we shall come back with better strength. You do know the mood of this country. And if you feel that we shall be wiped out. I will appeal to the PM to dissolve the Lok Sabha and go to the people and then you will know, what the people decide.
Swami Chinmayanand
Mr. Speaker Sir,

Just as one enters the House finds the words ‘Dharma Chakra Pravarthanaya”. The words are inscribed prominently right behind your Chair. Still, we find that the word Dharma Nirapeksha. (Secular) freely traded upon. This is in spite of the fact that there is no mention of the word Dharma Nirapeksha in our constitution. Instead, we find ‘Pantha Nirapeksha” I am not sure about Members using the word “Dharma Nirapeksha”, what regard they have for the constitution and the Parliament? However, this is certain that the use of the word raises some doubts about the truth. The Truth no longer remains an absolute truth, but it is reduced to the level of a mere point of view. That is the problem. The validity of the truth does not depend upon the one who speak it. It is also dependent upon the fact as to how one understands it.

The Saint Philosopher, Acharya Shankar as well as the noted scientist Einstein both have held that truth is relative. Probably, both of them meant that the perceptions of the speaker as well as the listener are equally important. Whatever is being said that should be clearly understood. So both the points of view should be presented in the House. Only then we may discover the whole truth. Otherwise, it is not the truth but merely a point of view. Einstein and Acharya Shankar did not belong to any political party. They are well known philosophers and thinkers. Both of them held that the truth is relative.

The problem is that we do not realise this fact. We try to see the truth according to our own perceptions, our own mental disposition, within our own limitation and with a view to exploit the possibilities of using it for our purpose. Such considerations break the truth to pieces. The same thing happened yesterday. My education has been such, the school of thought I had the privilege to be a disciple of, has the courage to speak the truth ignoring the different points of view. I have been a follower of traditions of Acharya Shankar and Arobindo. It is my firm conviction that the day, any society, any culture, any assembly, loses the courage to speak and to listen to the truth, it would lose its identity as a society, culture or assembly.
The Word “Dharma Nirapeksha” did not find its place in the constitution when it was framed. We all know that the word “Panth Nirapeksha” was brought into the Constitution through the 42nd Amendment Bill, which was brought before the Parliament in 1976 and was approved on 3rd January, 1977. We all know about the state of affairs in the Lok Sabha at that time. Citizens throughout the country had their fundamental rights suspended and there was a state of emergency. I hope the House is well aware of all that and there is no need to remind it. I feel, had our Constitution makers being as committed to the sentiment of “Panth Nirepeksha” or “Dharma Nirapeksha” they would have given expression to it in the constitution itself. This was not done. It came about 29 years later according to the information I have with me.

I would like to emphasise that the people of this country, our sages and saints and those associated with the country’s freedom struggle all have acknowledged the greatness of the religion. Be in Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya or Bal Gangadhar Tilak or the people who wrote a commentary on Geeta in Jail. Be it Mahatma Gandhi, whom the Human Resource Development Minister had referred to yesterday. All these people have been the guiding spirit for our nation and the humanity as a whole. They are my ideals and I have reverence for them. We have talked about Mahatma Gandhi, but I would like to point out that there happened to be two other Gandhis also who were assassinated. You may put the blame on the RSS for the murder of the Mahatma Gandhi and derive whatever political mileage you may like to have. I would ask what were the circumstances, what were the motivations and who were the people behind the assassination of one of the most capable and powerful leader, the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, that too by her own security guards. The Nation still asks these questions, and no satisfactory reply has been given till this day. You have found an easy explanation in holding RSS responsible for the murder of Mahatma Gandhi but I would like to ask as to who inspired, who inflamed the passions, who created the vicious atmosphere that her security guards became her assassins. Have you held anyone responsible for this? Now I turn to the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, he too was killed within the country. Till this day, it has not been decided who were responsible for this heinous crime.

Mr. Speaker Sir, I say with folded hands and I say not as a politician but as a Sant that assassinations should not be linked with politics and should not be used to take political advantage. These
assassinations are a slur on us. No matter who did it. We all should agree that those guilty should be fully exposed, it should be kept outside the purview of the politics.

There have been accusations and counter-accusations regarding those responsible for the incidents at Ayodhya. Everyone has tried to evade one’s responsibility. Well I am not here to evade any responsibility nor I attribute blame on anyone. BJP, RSS and VHP are being held responsible. I feel I am more to be blamed and so are the Sants and Mahatmas of this country. The Sants and Mahatmas had simply demanded that the temple should be constructed at the Ramjanam Bhoomi. It is a question of our faith. Kar Seva Samiti was headed by the Shankaracharya of Jyotish Peeth, Swamy Vasudevananda, the Renovation Committee was headed by Paramahansa Vamdeva Ji Maharaj. I feel that circumstances are now some what different than those prevailing till sixth of December. The Government functionaries have been to the Shankaracharya and his Guru Swamy Shankaranandji and got a statement from him. We believe that you are not in a position to deny the fact that Sants had insisted on the construction of the temple at the Ramjanam Bhoomi as Lord Ram a symbol of the country’s faith. The Ram Janambhoomi Sangarsh Samiti was constituted way back in 1984. It consisted of religious leaders, the VHP, the BJP and the RSS did not have any representative in it. These religious leaders had given an ultimatum on 19th January, 1986 at Lucknow. Sir, Shri Vir Bahadur Singh then headed the U.P. Government and Shri Arun Nehru happened to be the Minister of State In-Charge of Security at the Centre. According to that ultimatum if the lock was not removed till the 8th of March, 1986, the Sants would go there and break open the lock Their message was quite clear. You know, no attempt was made earlier to get the lock removed. Immediately after the ultimatum, all of a sudden an advocate was made to file a Court case at Faizabad. The case was filed on 25th of January and on the first of February we had the verdict. The temple was unlocked. I want to state that a definite time frame was fixed at that time as well. The deadline was March 8, 1986 and we had the court verdict well before the deadline fixed by the Sants and Mahants. This led religious leaders to believe that if they fix a deadline now the Government would arrange to get a court verdict before that.

I would like to refer to another instance. Shri Buta Singh had referred to a date that is 4th February 1989. It was the occasion of Kumbh Mela. Respected Dewarha Baba, Brahmachari Prabhu Dutt
Maharaj and other prominent Sants were present at Prayag at that time. A decision was taken in their presence and according to that Shilanyas ceremony was to be performed on the 9th November 1989. I would like to remind the House that the place of the proposed Shilanyas site was not without dispute. Till the 7th of November, 1989, it was a disputed land. You people had talks with the leaders of Vishwa Hindu Parishad on the 8th of November, 1989 and we do not know what transpired at the talks. The land was no longer disputed. The Court clearly held that the peace of land was outside the purview of the dispute. Shilanyas ceremony was performed on the 9th of November and subsequently, it was suddenly told that the land was disputed. I just want to emphasise here that this caused lose of faith in the Government, in the minds of the religious leaders. The date that is 9th of November was decided by the Government. Nor the Government was headed by any other party. It was of you people I firmly want to underline the fact that on both the occasions you gave a clear signal to the Sants that whatever the date they decide upon you managed to get the cooperation of court and find a way out. Kar Sevaks can do their job and go back after doing the needful. On this occasion also, the pattern was tried to be emulated. Without naming anyone I would like just to say that such efforts were made. I am astonished that the Supreme Court worked day and night continued its sittings till eight p.m., heard long discussions lasting five hours daily on the Ayodhya issue. But on the other hand, the Allahabad High Court which had completed the hearing on the case on the 4th November did not bother. From 4th to 11th December there was no sitting of the High Court. The court did not realise as to how sensitive the issue was.

The difficulty arose because of the impression created in the minds of the Sants and Mahants. I would like to repeat the call for Kar Sevaks was given by them and not given by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, the BJP or RSS.

I take the blame right here and now. Till yesterday, nobody was prepared to own responsibility. Today I come forward to own the responsibility for the entire sequence of events....

The U.P. Government had contacted me, at that time. They wanted me to contact the Kar Seva Samiti people. Mr. Speaker Sir, I want to tell the House that the members of the Kar Seva Samiti were Mahatmas and I was told to contact them. Just as I told the House yesterday, I had written a note to the Supreme Court. My note said that I was in the contact of members of the Kar Seva Samiti and all of them are
saints. They had given definite assurance that they would not allow any contempt of the Allahabad High Court. The Supreme Court also had given a directive that no construction work should be undertaken on the 2.77 acres of land. The Court had also appointed an observer whose job precisely was to oversee that no construction material is taken there. The entire attention was centred on the construction work. In the same context, when enquiries were made from me I told them that according to the Sants they have no intention to do anything that may amount to the contempt of the Court. I had stated this after contacting Sants.

I wish to make it clear that if the Sants and Mahatmas had not given the assurance, I would not have written any such note. I know fully well that if any false statement is made or undertaking is given before the High Court or the Supreme Court, I could be hauled up and face the punishment. Had I slightest doubt about the assurance given by the Sants I would not have committed in writing to put the noose around my neck. I fully believe that the Sants were fully committed to what they said. My conviction was based on the fact. The Sants at a meeting on the 5th of December passed a resolution. All the Sants had unanimously said that the Kar Seva would be conducted on the 6th in such a manner that there would be no contempt of the Allahabad High Court. The resolution was released to the press as well. I would like to say that the Sants and Mahatmas tried their best to ensure that the resolution was fully adhered to. But it happened on a number of occasions that the situation takes an undesirable turn and it became difficult to keep it to its chartered course. I had said it earlier if like what happened on November 9 and on March 8, 1986, when the lock was opened and the Shilanyas ceremony was performed, had the government tried to find a way out Kar Seva could have been performed without the contempt of the High Court. Had full efforts been made to find such a way out, Kar Sevaks probably would have confined themselves to the said limits.

Among prominent Sants whom I had contacted were the founder of Bharat Mata Mandir, Satya Mitranandji Maharaj, Vidyanandji Maharaj of Kailash Peeth, Rishikesh. The Sants had said that they have always respected the constitution and the judiciary and would not do anything that goes against the dignity of the institution.

Mr. Speaker, the main concern at that time was only to ensure that no construction work takes place at the 2.77 acres peace of land. That time, the entire attention centred around the fact no construction

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work should be undertaken till the verdict of the Allahabad High Court is available. For this very reason immediately after the discussion on Ayodhya in Parliament. I rushed to Ayodhya and on the third of this month, so that I could convey to the Sadhus and Sants that they should not take any contrary decision. I contacted them on phone, they had scheduled to meet on the 4th but it was postponed to the 5th so that they could await my arrival at Ayodhya. The meeting was held on the 5th and a unanimous resolution was passed as I have stated earlier. At that time we did not have even the slightest inkling that the disputed structure could be damaged in any manner and anyone would indulge in such act. I say this with full honesty and in the name of God. I did not have any such thought even in my wildest dreams.

Those who expressed doubts, well I would not like to say anything about them. On one hand, the Prime Minister was anxious to impress upon us that there should be no contempt of Court during the Kar Seva. He was talking about the directive of the Supreme Court and he wanted us to ensure that whatever was to be done it should be under the guidance of the observer of the Supreme Court. On the other hand, some people were busy organising “Peace March” to stop the Kar Sevaks and to prevent any Kar Seva. Kar Seva was permitted by the Supreme Court on the condition that there would no construction work. Had any peace march been organised, to ensure that no construction work takes place and to ensure that no damage is done to the structure that would have been understandable. But peace march was organised, people went upto Faizabad simply to stop the Kar Sevaks, they courted arrests. Well, these people, belong to the same party, which has been and is in power at the centre. Their Government did not ban any Kar Seva and the only directive was that there should be no contempt of the Allahabad High Court. I say this to make it clear that the conduct of the party in power and their Government was at variance.

Mr. Speaker Sir, situation goes out of control on many occasions. It is not only the BJP, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad or the Sants and Mahatmas who had no control over the situation. There are many occasions when a situation takes an undesirable turn. What happened was undesirable, we never wanted it. Please don’t get excited. I would draw the attention of Mr. Balram Jakhar, he yesterday said that had any attempt been made to stop the Kar Sevaks, some of them would have been injured. Some would have died in such a situation and probably things would not have come to such a pass. In this context,
I would like to remind that when Mrs. Indira Gandhi was assassinated, the entire Delhi was in flames. Thousands of people were getting killed. How many of you had come out to stop this madness. How many of you sustained injuries in that process? At least we do not find any such happening. No sign of hurt or injury is visible on you. May be you know better.

That was an occasion when the situation had been out of control. The then Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi was asked to comment on this by the press. With a touch of innocence Mr. Rajiv Gandhi had made a one sentence comment. "When any big tree falls such things do happen". I recall this simply to say that the situation goes out of control on a number of occasions and nobody is there to own responsibility.

I don't hold anyone responsible. All that I want to say that the situation had gone out of control. May I add something more? When the Akal Takht came under heavy fire who had passed the orders? That was a place of worship and faith and people were hurt because of that. The extent of people's hurt can be gauged from the fact that the place was repaired and renovated out of the money from Government Treasury. When people got it back they demolished the entire structure and rebuilt it. Today, the Government says that they would rebuild the Temple and the Mosque from the money taken out of the Government Treasury. I hope that half the expenditure would be borne by the Centre and half by the State Government. I would like to know as to what constitutional provision gives you permission for that.

Another thing I would like to know, two days ago the House has passed a resolution. It used the words the 'Babri Masjid' for the disputed place. I would like to know the status of that structure. The Allahabad High Court had also talked about the status. If the House is told about the status I would support the resolution. What is the view of the Court regarding the status of the structure. Is it of the Babri Masjid or is it a disputed structure? The dispute is being that of Ram Janam Bhoomi and Babri Masjid. I would like to say that Pooja is being performed there and this is being done under the formal orders of the Court. It was said in a telecast on Doordarshan on the 7th of December that the mosque would be built at the site. At the same time, the regional news bulletin by the Lucknow Station of AIR said that the idols are there at the site and Pooja is being performed. This would continue and no restriction would be placed on the worshippers. You came to monopolise the truth. I don't know what is the truth. Double
talks is being indulged in. The Home Minister should clearly spell out what the status is of the structure. What is the view of the Court? You say with assumed innocence that the law had been violated for five hours. Constitution was trampled upon, the contempt of the Court was committed and a slur was caused on the face of the nation. I say you hang Shri Kalyan Singh. But at the same time, the construction work continued for 36 hours, walls were torn apart. Foundation was dug. The idol of Ram Lalla was installed. Who was in power at that time? All these happened when you had taken over power in the state. You had opened the way for Shilanyas. You had opened the lock. The construction of the temple started during your rule. You may wriggle out of the responsibility now, but history would not be written from the Government pen. History will recall all these incidents.

If the agitation, if the passions aroused following the demolition of the structure can be pacified by hanging me, please do that, I offer my body, I don’t have any children of my own. Still about a dozen children are under my care. These children became orphans because of the terrorist violence. I hope somebody will take care of them. I belong to the tradition of Dadhichi, who offered even his bones.

The first court case started in 1885, when Congress was born. Thus the dispute was borne along with the Congress. The Human Resource Development Minister expressed the view that the Court case should linger on for another ten twenty years. It apperas that the Congress needs an issue to make different factions fight over. The party wants to do it for its own gains. Had the gravity of the situation realised in 1949, the dispute would have been solved long ago. On the one hand late Jawaharlal Nehru was speaking about removing the idols and on the other hand, the then Chief Minister, Mr. Govind Vallabha Pant was in favour of keeping the idols. This resulted in the resignation of District Collector. I say this only to emphasise that we should realise the gravity and try to restrict ourselves from the wrangles, we should have taken courage in our hands and come forward to find a solution. On the 9th of May, I had made a request to the Prime Minister but inspite of my being an MP, my request was not exceeded to. I had to take the support of my friend, Mr. Jitendra Prasad, who is from Shajahanpur. I had made a request to him that some Sants wanted to meet the Prime Minister and he should arrange a meeting. He agreed and on the 9th of May Sants met the Prime Minister and the talks lasted one hour. The Prime Minister had said at that time that he would like to separate this dispute from politics. If there is no politics on the subject, there
would be no difficulty in the construction of the temple. Sants had said that we are not interested in politics. All they want is the temple and if the Prime Minister sought any cooperation from them they would be more willing to extend that. Shri Jitendra Prasad was also present. Nine Sants attended the meeting. For two months after the meeting nothing was done. When Kar Seva started on the 9th of July, the Prime Minister suddenly came to action and he requested the same Sants to give three months time. That was done. I have already told the House on the third of this month as to how these three months period was utilised.

I would like to know that this question had cropped up when Shri V.P. Singh was in power. When Rajiv Gandhi was in power, this question had caused a turmoil in the nation's politics. At the joint sitting of both the Houses of Parliament, the President had given this issue the uttermost priority in his speech. In spite of that the issue was allowed to linger on. During the talks held on 16th October a suggestion was made by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad that an archaeological study should be made and excavation done. The Babri Masjid Action Committee had agreed that independent archaeological experts to make a study and that should be made known to the House. Even during the time of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Shri B.B. Lal had been asked to make an archaeological study of the sites connected with Ram, be it Chitrakoot or Ayodhya. Excavation were done and report prepared. I ask the House and those who speak in favour of secularism that why no Government had the courage to solve the issue on the basis of archaeological findings. I would like to thank Mr. Chandra Sekhar who made every effort to solve the issue. Has the suggestion of archaeological study been accepted and the study process been initiated on the 16th of October all of us would have come to an agreement. But the suggestion was set aside. Our Muslim brothers had already committed that if they find proof of a temple being there earlier, they would withdraw their claim. No benefit was taken out of this suggestion.

I must thank you Mr. Speaker. The step you have taken will help us also. If the House can be adjourned for 'Namaz' today tomorrow it may be for the 'Vrata' of Santoshimata or for the worship of 'Hanuman'. It is a good augury.

Today an atmosphere is being created that anyone whom you like may be called a traitor and you may claim that patriotism is your monopoly. When Laldenga was made the Chief Minister, was he not a member of banned organisation? Did not he have charges against
him for his unlawful activities outside the country? Was he elected member of the State Assembly? Did not you give him six month’s time to arrange the majority support? I would like to remind you that you did not think in terms of banned organisation at that time. The Country expects honest and moral conduct from you. A political intrigue have to be given up.

You have talked about constructing the Mosque. The very next day a question was asked and you got non-plussed. A question was asked where the temple will be located and where would be the mosque. I repeat this question to you. That you swear in the name of Ram, you should also remember that Ram was prepared to sacrifice his life to keep his words. Will you construct the mosque where Ram was born. Will you build the mosque where the idol of Ramlalla is installed. Will you demolish the temple to build the mosque. Earlier you had been demanding the construction map from us. Now we ask for the map. Tell us precisely where the temple and mosque are to be constructed.

You talk of the construction of mosque. Without awaiting the Court decision whether it is a mosque or a temple. The place is recognised as a temple and it should be considered as such until the Court verdict is available.

You have imposed curfew. You have stopped the devotees going there. Restrictions are being imposed on the performance of worship. No Arti is being performed there. You have stopped all this. Whatever the offerings were made there from time to time you have stopped that. Such information to this effect trickles down to us. Right to worship is our fundamental right and you cannot curtail that. I would say that all those people in the country who has sensitivity were deeply hurt because of incidents in Ayodhya on the sixth of this month. But what did you do at such sensitive moment. You immediately announced plans to construct the mosque. False charges were levelled against Shri L.K. Advani for his arrest. It is wrong to say that his arrest had brought about change in the situation. Secondly, you had issued warrants against seven persons. What was their role at that time. You should have framed correct charges in the FIR and then arrest them. I would not like to repeat the charges you have mentioned but you should have made announced investigation into the charges.

It has not been established that the charges you have levelled are true. And the seven persons against whom you have issued warrants to arrest on false absured charges include Hon’ble Members of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. You have resorted to political arrests. You
should have banned the BJP and then arrested them. You imposed ban of Vishwa Hindu Parishad and arrested members of the BJP. It appears that your target is BJP. Had you been honest in your dealings and arrested those persons whom you should have, there would not have been the type of resentment being witnessed today.

I would like to respectfully submit that it is only today that temple-mosque structure has been demolished. But in Pakistan and also in Kashmir the demolition of temples has been going on since long. Hon'ble Minister for Parliamentary Affairs is present in the House. I had demanded from him way back in August that arrangements may be made to facilitate the pilgrims going to the yatra of Amarnath. But what extent did you respect the sentiment. No law could be enacted till this day. Whenever the question of the sentiment of Hindus and their self respect was raised by anyone we call him as communal and un-patriotic. The Hindus till this day begged of you to respect their sentiments. But they would no longer do so. They are searching a way out so that their sentiments are respected. Let anyone prove that the Ramjanam Bhoomi is not there. I had spoken about the subject earlier and I had said that no attempts should be made to stifle the sentiments and faith. That faith flows like Ganga. The country till this day has not fought for a mosque or temple. This struggle is for the Janambhoomi. Everybody in the House knows about the importance of it.

Had this not been known, the Prime Minister would not have gone to Prayag on November 14 to address public meeting. Why had he gone there. He knew it fully well that he had gone to pay tributes to the Janmabhoomi of Pt. Nehru I feel that was only proper. But if the country holds Pt. Nehru, Rajiv Gandhi and Indira Gandhi's Janmabhoomi as sacred so should be the Janmabhoomi of Ram. Until it is proved wrong that the temple was there it is your duty to respect our faith. We fought for fundamental right.

I have some more to say. Those who talk about Patriotism, I would address this question to them. Barring two or four years, you have ruled over the country for the last 45 years. You have led the country to economic mess. Is it your proof of patriotism. You brand us as communalists. But the responsibility of country's economy is yours. I would like to ask as to what was the burden or foreign debt when Shri Narasimha Rao took over as Prime Minister and to what extent it has increased. In the name of patriotism countrymen will ask question, patriotism is not the preserve of one person or the other. Chandrashekhar Azad, Ram Prasad Bismil and Sardar Bhagat Singh
all of them uttered the word 'VANDE MATARAM' when they made the supreme sacrifice. The House knows fully well as to what respect as to you have given to these words. There are so many factors which have led to the arousal of passions. It is the job of those who constituted the government at the Centre. I would only like to convey through the House that I respect all religions or communities and their sentiments. But at the same time I wish that all respect from the faiths of all religions and communities.

I would like to conclude that Ramjanambhoomi temple is a historical, spiritual and religious place and our sentiments are attached to that place, Please try to find this truth. I do not say as to what you should do. But no comment would be tolerated by the country men until the truth comes out. I do not know what would be the reaction, if any comment is made before that.

Thank you.
Shri Lal Krishan Advani
BJP is unequivocally committed to secularism

— L.K. Advani

Last Year, a Calcutta daily asked me to identify a day or moment in my life which I regarded my happiest. I named October 30, 1990, and more specifically, the moment I heard the BBC broadcast that kar sevaks had overcome all obstacles and broken all barriers put up by the Mulayam Singh government, penetrated into Ayodhya and performed kar seva. 

Ironically, this year's kar seva day at Ayodhya, December 6, turned out to be one of the most depressing days in my life. Of course, most others there were ecstatic with joy, a mood I just could not share. I have seldom felt as dejected and downcast as I felt that day. 

My sadness, however, did not stem from any disenchantment with the Ayodhya movement, or with the path the party had chosen for itself, or, as the trite phrase goes, that we had been riding a tiger which we could not dismount.

* In fact, the post-demolition developments have fully vindicated our misgivings about the opponents of this movement, and have reinforced our resolve to pursue the path more vigorously.

There were three very specific reasons for my distress.

Firstly, I felt sad the December 6 happenings had impaired the reputation of the BJP and the RSS as organisations capable of enforcing discipline. True, a very large percentage of the over two lakhs assembled at Ayodhya were not members either of the BJP or of the RSS. But that did not absolve us of our responsibility.

Secondly, I felt sad that a meticulously drawn up plan of action where under the UP Government was steadily marching forward towards discharging its mandate regarding temple construction, without violating any law or disregarding any court order, had gone awry.

The BJP’s action-plan contemplated delinking the dispute about the structure from commencing construction at the shilanyas site (within the 2.77-acre acquired land), negotiating about the structure while the construction work proceeded apace, and if negotiations failed, resorting to legislation.

Courtesy: Indian Express
If State legislation was blocked by the Centre, we intended to seek a national mandate. We were thus working towards achieving our objective peacefully, and by the due process of law. Not only the BJP, but the RSS, the VHP and the sants were all agreed on this approach.

If the exercise contemplated has now been short-circuited in a totally unforeseen manner, the above organisations can certainly be blamed for not being able to judge the impatience of the people participating in the movement.

No one can deny the manner in which courts had been dragging their feet on all issues relating to Ayodhya, and the obstructive and obtuse role of the Centre had tried the patience of the people to the utmost limit.

The third and most important reason for my unhappiness that day was that, in my perception, the day’s incidents would affect the BJP’s overall image (not electoral prospects) adversely, and, to that extent, our cause would suffer a temporary setback.

When I speak of a setback, I am not at all thinking in political terms. In fact, politically, these events have boosted the BJP’s poll prospects no end. The Congress, the JD, the Communists—all are frantically exerting themselves to ensure no elections are held for at least a year.

After the three State Assemblies controlled by the BJP were dissolved, Congress spokes man V.N. Gadgil said elections would be held within six months.

It did not take Arjun Singh even 24 hours to come forth with a contradiction, saying polls in these three States would be held after one year!

In a recent article (The Hindustan Times, December 17, 1992), former Statesman editor S. Sahay has noted: “The feedback is that were elections to be held today in UP, Congress candidates would find it difficult to retain their deposits.” Reports pouring in from other parts of the country are no different.

Despite what our adversaries have been saying about us day in and day out, we have never regarded Ayodhya as a ladder to power. Through this movement, the BJP has only intensified its ongoing crusade against the politics of vote-banks, and the politics of minorityism, which we believe is gravely undermining the fabric of national unity.

The Ayodhya movement, according to the BJP, is not just for building a temple. It is a mass movement—the biggest since independence—to reaffirm the nation’s cultural identity.
This reaffirmation alone, we hold, can provide an enduring basis for national unity, and besides, the dynamo for a resurgent, resolute and modern India.

It is slanderous to say the Ayodhya movement is an assault on secularism. It is wrong to describe even the demolition of the Babri structure as negation of secularism. The demolition is more related to lack of a firm commitment in the general masses to the rule of law, and an exasperation with the frustrating sluggishness of the judicial process.

I remember very well the Bhagalpur episode of some years back. The whole country felt outraged that undertrial prisoners—they may have been notorious dacoits—should be so cruelly blinded by policemen. But when I visited Bhagalpur, I was surprised to find that among the people at large there was little disapproval of what the police had done. Many lawyers of Bhagalpur actually came out in defence of the police action!

The BJP is unequivocally committed to secularism. As conceived by our Constitution makers, secularism meant pantha-sama-bhava, that is, equal respect for all religions.

Secularism as embedded into the Indian Constitution has three important ingredients, namely (i) rejection of theocracy; (ii) equality of all citizens, irrespective of their faith; and (iii) full freedom of faith and worship.

We also believe India is secular because it is predominantly Hindu. Theocracy is alien to our history and tradition.

Indian nationalism is rooted, as was India's freedom struggle against colonialism, in a Hindu ethos. It was Gandhiji who projected Ramrajya as the goal of the freedom movement. He was criticised by the Muslim League as being an exponent of Hindu raj. The League did not relish the chanting of Ram dhun when at Gandhiji's meetings or his insistence on goraksha (cow-protection).

The League, at one of its annual sessions, passed a formal resolution denouncing Vande Mataram as "idolatrous." All this never made leaders of the freedom struggle apologetic about the fountainhead of their inspiration.

Unfortunately, for four decades now, in the name of secularism, politicians have been wanting the nation to disown its essential personality. For the Left-inclined, secularism has become a euphemism to cloak their intense allergy to religion, and more particularly, to Hinduism.
It is this attitude which the BJP characterises as pseudo-secularism. This attitude is wrong and unscientific. Coupled with the weakness of political parties for vote-banks, it becomes perverse and baneful.

In October, 1990, the day V.P. Singh stopped the rath yatra, and put me and my colleagues in the yatra behind bars, A.B. Vajpayee called on the President, and informed him the BJP had withdrawn support to the National Front government.

It was obvious to all that Mr Singh’s government had been reduced to a hopeless minority. But he did not resign. Instead, he convened a special session of Parliament to vote on a confidence motion tabled by him. He said he was doing so mainly to precipitate a debate on secularism and communalism. We welcomed the debate, and challenged him not to confine it to the four walls of Parliament, but to take it to the people.

V.P. Singh was defeated in Parliament that day, but he shied away from accepting our challenge. Events nevertheless move inexorably towards the trial of strength we had asked for.

Seven months later, people went to the polls to elect the country’s 10th Lok Sabha. Unlike as in 1989, when we were part of an opposition combine, the BJP fought the election all on its own and emerged the principal opposition party in the Lok Sabha.

What has gratified us all along is not merely that our numerical strength in Parliament and State legislatures has been growing at a rapid pace, but that acceptance of our ideology in all sections of society and at all levels has been growing simultaneously.

A silent minority has been building up even among the Muslims which appreciates the BJP is not anti-Muslim as its enemies have been trying to depict it, and more importantly, the BJP leadership means what is says, and says what it means, and is not hypocritical like other political parties.

The BJP governments’ track record in the matter of preserving communal peace in their respective States has added considerably to the BJP’s credibility in this regard.

It is the process of widening acceptability of the BJP ideology within the country, and also among people of Indian origin overseas, which has upset our opponents the most. It is this process precisely which may be somewhat decelerated by the December 6 events. I have little doubt, however, that the party can, with proper planning and effort, soon get over this phase.
Arjun Singh played Mulayam this time

It is sad that over 1,000 persons have lost their lives in the aftermath of Ayodhya. It is certainly a matter of anguish. But when one compares this time’s fallout with what has been happening in earlier years over incidents which can be considered trifling, this time’s has been a contained one.

And, in most cases, the deaths that have occurred have been the consequence not of any clash between communities but of security forces trying to quell the violence and vandalism of frenzied mobs.

I wonder how many in Government, in politics and in the media realise that their stubborn insistence on calling this old structure (which was abandoned by Muslims 56 years back and which for 43 years has been a de facto temple) a ‘mosque’ has made no mean contribution towards building up this frenzy. Even so, there is little doubt that the happenings of December 6 have given our opponents a handle to malign the Ayodhya movement as being fundamentalist and fanatic.

Amidst the hysterical breast-beating that has been going on for over a fortnight now, there have been in the media’s voices of reason, a few distinguished journalists who have tried to put the events in proper perspective, and to emphasise that the happenings are unfortunate, but that it is no occasion either for gloating or self-condemnation.

In an excellent article written for the Free Press Journal, (Bombay, December 17, 1992), Mr M.V. Kamath, former editor of the Illustrated Weekly of India, has written: “Let it be said even if it hurts many secularists: in the last five years, several temples have been demolished in Kashmir without our hearing one word of protest from them. There has been no hue and cry made about such wanton destruction....We are lectured to by Iran and some other Muslim countries on our duties. Has Iran ever been ruled by Hindu monarches, and had its mosques pulled down to make a place for temples to Shiva or Vishnu?......We should not bear the burden of history. But neither should we be constantly pilloried. There has to be some way to heal past wounds, but reviling the BJP or the VHP is not the best way. The anger of the kar sevaks has to be understood in this context. They have not gone around demolishing every mosque in sight. It might even be said that they were led down the garden path by Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao who kept promising that a solution was near, even while he was trying to pass the buck onto the judiciary.”

For four decades, pseudo-secularists have commanded an
undisputed supremacy in Indian politics. Jana Sangh’s and the Bharatiya Janata Party’s was, at best, a feeble voice of dissent. Ayodhya has enabled our viewpoint to become a formidable challenge.

Unable to meet this challenge at the ideological and political level through discussion and debate, the Government has pulled out of its armoury all the usual weapons used in such situations by repressive regimes like arrests, ban on associations and ban on meetings.

The demolition of the Babri structure is only an excuse to carry out what they have been itching to do for quite some time. After all, all this talk about the need to have BJP derecognised or deregistered has not started now. Mr Arjun Singh had formally petitioned the Election Commission in this regard more than a year back. The Election Commission rejected his plea. Ever since, the ruling party has been toying with the idea of amending the Representation of the Peoples Act to achieve this objective.

Without naming either the BJP or the RSS. Mr Narasimha Rao himself, in his Presidential Address to the Congress session at Tirupati, had endorsed the idea. When I met him and registered my protest, he tried to backtrack, and maintained that he had in mind only organisations like the Majlis (of Owaisi)!

Elementary political prudence should have restrained the Prime Minister from taking the series of unwise steps he has taken after December 6—banning the RSS and VHP, dismissing BJP Governments of Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh and promising to rebuild the demolished ‘mosque’. But then, history keeps repeating itself in a quaint fashion.

Left to himself, Mr V.P. Singh may not have obstructed the Rath Yatra of 1990. But the internal politics of Janata Dal forced his hand. To prove himself a greater patron of the minorities than Mr Mulayam Singh, VP asked Mr Laloo Prasad Yadav to take action before the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister did so. My Yadav did as he was told, and became instrumental for terminating VP’s tenure.

This time around, Mr Arjun Singh has played a Mulayam Singh to Mr Narasimha Rao. The denouement may well be the same.

In Parliament, as well as outside, a prime target of attack for our critics has been Mr Kalyan Singh. He is being accused of betrayal, of ‘deceit’, of ‘conspiracy’ and what not. The general refrain is that Kalyan Singh promised to the courts, to the National Integration Council, to the Central Government, that he would protect the structure; New Delhi trusted his word; he has betrayed the trust.
None of these Kalyan-baiters ever mentions that along with every assurance, there was an invariable addendum: that he would not use force against the kar sevaks, because he would not like to see any repetition of the traumatic happenings which took place in 1990 during Mr Mulayam Singh’s tenure. This has been stated even in the affidavit given to the Supreme Court by the UP Government.

On December 6 Mr. Kalyan Singh stuck to his stand. When informed that all efforts at persuading the kar sevaks to desist from demolishing the structure had failed, and that protection of the structure had become impossible except by resort to firing, he resigned forthwith.

When political leaders have been driven into such difficult corners, they have been generally inclined to issue oral orders. Bureaucrats have often had to pay the price for such deviousness. If contrast, Mr Kalyan Singh acted in an exemplary manner. He put down his orders about not using force in writing so that the officers are not punished for what was entirely a political decision.

I shudder to think what would have happened that day at Ayodhya if firing had taken place. Jallianwala Bagh would have been reenacted many times over. There would have been a holocaust not only in Ayodhya but in the whole country. Thus, Mr Kalyan Singh acted wisely in refusing to use force.

It is significant that the last phase of the demolition, the clearing of the debris, installation of the Ram Lalla idols with due ceremony, and erection of a temporary temple to house the idols—all happened after New Delhi had taken over the State administration. Yet wisely again, the Narasimha Rao Government made no attempt to use force to prevent it all from happening.

No doubt, it was Mr Kalyan Singh’s duty to protect the Babri structure. He failed to do so; so he resigned. The protection of the country’s Prime Minister is the responsibility of the Union Home Minister. The country should not forget that Mr Rao was the Home Minister, when Ms Gandhi was brutally killed. It can be said that Mr Rao failed to protect her, and that he failed to protect more than 3,000 Sikhs who were killed in the wake of Mrs. Gandhi’s assassination.

Today, I am not arraigning Mr Rao for failing to resign on that score. I am only trying to point out how outraged he would have felt if, say, in 1984 he had been accused not just of a failure to protect, but of actual complicity in the perpetration of those horrendous crimes!

Political observers who have been feeling baffled by the abrupt change of mood of the BJP-RSS-VHP combine from one of regret on
December 6 to one of "determined belligerence" from December 8 onward, must appreciate that it is a similar sense of outrage over all that the Government and our other opponents have been saying and doing that fully accounts for it.

Let it also be realised that once you start circulating conspiracy charges with irresponsible levity, the distrust generated will ultimately boomerang, and get back to its source. I was really amused to read a column by Tavleen Singh in which she summed up the attitude of Congressmen towards Mr Rao in these words: "Those who are still with him charge him only with being indecisive and weak. Those who are against him are saying much more. Even ministers are admitting, albeit privately, that the Prime Minister had adequate information, before December 6, to be prepared for what eventually happened. Some go so far as to charge him with collusion with the BJP on the grounds that he is not interested in a Congress revival in North India as this would make it harder for a Prime Minister from the South." (The Observer, December 18)

Some of our critics have been comparing the demolition of the Babri structure with the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. The comparison is ludicrous. But from a purely personal angle, I can establish a nexus. I was 20-years-old at that time, and as RSS pracharak in Rajasthan. Mahatmaji’s murder also was followed by a ban on the RSS. I was among the tens of thousands of RSS activist jailed at that time, I recall that the accusations and calumny heaped on us then were far more vile and vicious than we are having to face today. The trail of Godse and the Commission of Inquiry set up later nailed all the lies circulated, and completely exonerated the RSS from the libellous charges hurled at it.

The RSS emerged from that first major crisis in its life purer and stronger. It is not without significance that one of those who was spearheading the anti-RSS campaign in 1948—Mr Jayaprakash Narayan—later became one of its most ardent admirers and protagonists.

When the RSS was banned the second time in 1975, JP and the RSS became comrades-in-arms waging an unrelenting battle for the defence of democracy.

In one of his speeches in 1977, the Loknayak observed: "The RSS is a revolutionary organisation. No other organisation in the country comes anywhere near it. It alone has the capacity to transform society, end casteism, and wipe the tears from the eyes of the poor. May God

\[ C \subseteq \{0, 5\} \]
give you strength and may you live up to such expectations.”

Self-preservation is a basic instinct of all living beings. Only a human being can think of, and commit, suicide. There is, however, a rodent found in Scandinavian countries, called the lemming, which in this context is supposed to be unique among animals, and behaves unnaturally.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary describes the lemming as a “small Arctic rodent of the genus *Lemmus*.....which is reputed to rush headlong into the sea and drown during migration.” To me, it seems the Congress Party these days in the grip of a terrible lemming-complex!

Let the Congress do with itself what it wishes. For the BJP, the situation poses a challenge which, if tackled wisely, with determination and a readiness, if need be, to wage a protracted struggle, can become a watershed in the history of independent India.

Let us also realise that intolerance and fanaticism are traits which may appear to give a cutting edge to a movement but which actually cause great damage to the movement. They have to be consciously eschewed. Once that happens, even our Muslim brethren would appreciate that in India there can be no firmer foundation for communal harmony than cultural nationalism.

The present situation presents to the country a unique opportunity. Let us grab it by the forelock. December 6 did not turn out to be as we expected, we did not want it to happen that way. But then, as the famous essayist Sir Arthur Helps has said: “Fortune does not stoop often to take any one up. Favourable opportunities will not happen precisely in the way that you imagined. Nothing does.” Or as Goswami Tulsidas has put it in a somewhat different vem: “*Hoi hai soi jo Rama rachi rakha*”!
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