Ideas of Homeland and Politics of Space
A Study of ‘Muslim Localities’ of Delhi

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Abstract

Ideas of Homeland and Politics of Space: A Study of Muslim Localities of Delhi

The thesis investigates community-space relationship in colonial and post-colonial Delhi. Examining the process of identification, demarcation, organization and/or re-organization of space on the basis of religious demographics, the study questions the dominant imagination of ‘Muslim space’ as an objective, homogenous and permanent category. The research relies on extensive use of archival sources from national and local government, Urdu, Hindi and English-language newspaper reports and oral history interviews. The thesis particularly focuses on Shahjahanabad, that later became Old Delhi, to trace the story of the gradual transformation of caste/craft based shared community spaces into religion based ‘segregated’ pockets during the period of 1940-1977.

The study argues that the notion of communal space in Delhi is a product of a long historical process. The discourse of homeland and the realities of Partition not only demarcated space on religious lines but also established the notion of ‘Muslim dominated areas’ as being ‘exclusionary’ and ‘contested’ zones. These localities turned out to be those pockets where the dominant ideas of nation had to be engineered, materialized and practiced. Consequently, these localities were looked at differently over the period: in the 1940s, as ‘Muslim dominated’ areas that were to be administered for the sake of communal peace; in the 1950s, as ‘Muslim zones’ that needed to be ‘protected’; in the 1960s, as ‘isolated’ unhygienic cultural pockets that were to be cleaned and Indianized; and in the 1970s, as locations of ‘internal threat’ – the ‘Mini Pakistan(s)’ - that were to be dismantled.

The thesis starts with colonial Delhi where codification of cow slaughter practices; the demarcation of routes of religious processions; and the sectarian identification of residential wards, defined residential space and more specifically the electoral constituencies as ‘Hindu dominated’, ‘Muslim dominated’ or ‘mixed’ areas. The legal and administrative vocabulary that was deployed to establish such community-centric claims and counter-claims on urban space by
political elite in the 1940s illuminates the ways in which a discourse of ‘homeland’ was gradually emerging in colonial and early post-colonial periods.

The thesis then moves on to the post-Partition period and explains the ways in which parallel imaginations of homeland, specifically the reconfigured idea of ‘Pakistan’, produced new imageries of communal space. It discusses the debates around ‘Muslim zones’, Muslim ‘refugee camps’ and ‘evacuee’ properties to unpack the issues of belongingness and identity of Delhi’s Muslims that termed Muslim dominated areas as ‘communally sensitive’ in the 1950s.

The thesis then explores the controversies around meat practice (its production, sale and consumption) in the 1960s — to understand how an economic activity of slaughtering animals was turned into a ‘Muslim’ practice and placed in a binary opposition to selective Brahmanical vegetarianism claimed to be ‘Hindu’/‘Indian’ sensibilities. The consequent politics of space around Idgah slaughter-house, meat shops and the locality of Qasabpura is investigated to make sense of the contest over Muslim localities.

Finally, the ‘operation urbanization’ of the 1970s focusing on the re-organization of city space and communities through redevelopment, resettlement and population control is scrutinized. The thesis examines local politics and administrative policies to see how the authorities zeroed in to end Muslim ‘segregation’ through forced clearance and sterilization in Jama Masjid and Turkman Gate areas during the National Emergency (1975-77).

The study thus seeks to show that ‘Muslim localities’ are discursively constituted political entities that may or may not correspond to the actual demographic configuration of any administrative urban unit.
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and of course gossips. Informal discussion on the theme with them has always enriched my insights.

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Indian words are italicized, and defined, on their first appearance in the thesis. If they appear subsequently, they have also been provided in the glossary for convenience.

Ashraf: Elite
Azan: Call for prayer
Bada Janwar: Big animal
Bade ka gosht: Meat of big animals
Bhartiakaran: Indianization
Bhartiya: Indian
Biradari: Brotherhood; occupational community
Chamra: Animal skin
Char Deewari Shaher: City surrounded with four walls
Darwaza: Gate
Dilliwala: Inhabitant of Delhi
Fasil/Deewar: Wall
Fatwa: Religious sanction
Firqaparasti: Communalism
Gali: Street
Ghaddari: Betrayal
Halal: Islamic way of slaughtering.
Hawan: A collective Hindu religious practice to please the God of fire for a wish.
Hunar: Skill
Ilaqa: Region
Jahil: Uneducated
Jhatka: Sikh way of slaughtering, also prevalent amongst Hindus.
Kamela: Livestock market
Karigars: Artisans
Kuchabandi: A practice of fencing a mohalla with gates at the main entrance.
Mafad: Interest
Majboori: Compulsion
Maryada: Honor
Mili-juliabadi: Mixed population
Mohalla: Neighborhood
Mohalladari: Neighbourly feeling
Mohalladar: Neighbours
Namaz: Muslim prayer
Nasbandi: Sterilization
Nazul land: Government land
Pucca: Concrete Structure
Purna Swaraj: Complete independence
Qatl-e-aam: Massacre
Qaum: Community
Qaumi ittehad: Communal harmony
Qurbani: Religious sacrifice
Qasab: Butcher
Samaj: Society
Sanskriti: Tradition
Shuddhi: Purification
Suba: Province
Subedar: Head of Suba
Thana: Police Station
Ulema: Religious scholar
Umma: Community
Wakf: Property donated for the welfare of the Muslim community.
Zabiha: Islamic way of slaughtering.
Zila: District
Abbreviations

CAD: Constituent Assembly Debates
CAD (L): Constituent Assembly Debates (Legislative)
GOI: Government of India
RSD: Rajya Sabha Debates
LSD: Lok Sabha Debates
DMCD: Delhi Metropolitan Council Debates
MCS: Metropolitan Council Secretariat
MHA: Ministry of Home Affaires
PMS: Prime Ministers Secretariat. It was renamed as PMO – Prime Minister’s Office – after 1980.
SCI: Shah Commission of Inquiry
SCI: Supreme Court of India (court cases)
DDA: Delhi Development Authority
DMC: Delhi Metropolitan Council
DIT: Delhi Improvement Trust
TPO: Town Planning Organization
NCR: National Capital Region
MPD: Master Plan of Delhi
DAG: Delhi Ajmeri Gate Slum Clearance and Rehabilitation Scheme known as DAG
DAA: Delhi Administration Act, 1956
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Introduction

The post-Partition violence in Delhi in 1947-1948 created fears of aggressive communal reactions from Hindu and Muslim political organizations. Jawaharlal Nehru, it seems, was quite concerned about the possibilities of targeted violence against Muslims mainly by Hindu political organizations like Hindu Mahasabha and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which he defined as communal groups. This fear led to a close watch on such organizations. Intensive official inquiries of riots were conducted to analyze the extent and nature of their involvement in riots in north India, particularly in Delhi. A few years later, reflecting on the possibilities of any backlash from Muslim equivalent communal groups, Nehru, in his letter to Chief Ministers, dated 3 September 1954 wrote:

I do not think there are many Muslims connected to these organizations…the Muslims do not and cannot think of any deliberate aggressive activity. Both by virtue of their number and their general position in the country, they are frustrated and weak and they know well that any aggression on their part will lead to their own suffering.¹

This letter was written just before the time when in October 1954 the so called ‘Muslim zones’ – or Muslim-dominated areas protected informally by the Indian government for the safety of Muslims – were opened up to resettle Hindu and Sikh refugee populations in evacuee Muslim properties. It was done after many debates in the Parliament as well as in other official and non-official circles. These zones were called ‘mini Pakistans’ and had been broadly seen as an anti-Hindu act of the Nehruvian government. Although Nehru, in his letter, pointed out the vulnerability of Muslims to highlight the danger of growing majority communalism, the collective spatial strength of Muslims in Delhi was also seen by the pro-Hindu element as an internal threat to the unity, integrity and even to the secular idea of India. The concentration of

Muslims as an imagined homogenous community in specific gali, mohalla, ilaqa inevitably established these spaces as problematic sites in dominant national discourse. It was articulated more profoundly after a war with Pakistan in the mid-1960s. M. S. Golwalkar, popularly known as Guruji, the chief of the RSS, in his book *Bunch of Thoughts*, argued:

All over the country wherever there is a masjid or a Muslim mohalla, the Muslims feel that it is their own independent territory…there are so many Muslim pockets, i.e., so many 'miniature Pakistan', where the general law of the land is to be enforced only with certain modifications…(it) implies a very dangerous theory fraught with possibilities of destruction of our national life altogether. Such 'pockets' have verily become centres of a widespread network of pro-Pakistani elements in this land.³

Nehru’s statement on possible ‘collective aggression resulting in collective suffering’ of Muslims who themselves were in dire need of security and Golwalkar’s definition of Muslim ‘territory’ being a danger illustrate the complex matrix that constitutes the relationship between Muslims and their living space in India, particularly in Delhi, after Partition.

This complexity had its deep roots in the discourse of ‘homeland’, which was translated and reformulated in different ways at different times.⁴ The encounter between the colonial management of Indian territories and the debates around representation on communal lines produced a wider discourse that concretized the community-space relationship in the 1940s. The idea of Pakistan, in this sense, with a schematic imagination of Muslim nation, provided a political vocabulary by which the collective actions or reactions of different ethnic, religious or caste groups were all articulated from a ‘totalist’ perspective.⁵ For example, the vaguely

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² The terms like gali, mohalla and ilaqa are used to define the geographical stratification of space. Gali is a street, mohalla means neighborhood, while the word ilaqa refers to an area, locality, and region or even for a country in Urdu. I use the word ilaqa (singular) or ilaqe (plural) to demonstrate the widespread contestation of space in Old Delhi. There could be many Muslim/Hindu/Sikh mohallas in a Muslim ilaqa and vice-versa.


⁴ The discourse of homeland with reference to the multiple ideas of India, which gradually emerged in the 1940s, is discussed in chapter II of the thesis.

⁵ Shail Mayaram has used the term ‘totalist’ to refer to the dominant paradigm by which diverse actions/reactions of different social groups were articulated. See: Shail Mayaram, ‘Partition and Violence in Mewat: Rites of Territorial and Political Passage’ in Steven I. Wilkinson (ed.), *Religious Politics and Communal Violence* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005), 60-70.
enunciated demand for a Dalitsthān in Central Provinces and an Achchhuṭsthān in Bakarganj district in east Bengal, Scheduled Caste Federation’s call for Rajasthan or a separate Raĵaṃsti Kṣhtriya homeland for untouchables in northern Bengal just before the Partition, demand for an autonomous Pakhtunistan by the elected representatives (called Khudai Khidmatgars) of North West Frontier Province at the time of Third June Plan, and assertions of Khalistan, a Sikh nation on religious lines, found overt expressions in the late 1940s. Interestingly, all these regional or ethnic assertions were seen through the perspective of dominant Hindu or Muslim identity and were ultimately reduced to the theory of ‘two-nation’ by 1947.

This study investigates these complexities of the community-space relationship in colonial and post-colonial Delhi. Examining the process of identification, demarcation, organization and/or re-organization of space on the basis of religious demographics, it questions the dominant imagination of ‘Muslim space’ as an objective, homogenous and permanent category—a ‘ghetto’. It tries to understand the long socio-political and administrative process of the transformation of caste and craft based shared community space into segregated communal pockets during the period 1940-1977. The study uses Old Delhi, which includes Shahjahanabad, the Mughal capital, to chart this process. The presence of a large Muslim population in this part of Delhi in the colonial period, its symbolic presence as an inseparable constituent of capital city

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7 For instance, the Mewat movement that urged for the creation of a ‘Mewat Province’ from the territories of Alwar, Bharatpur and Gurgaon was projected as a claim for a separate Meo-raj/Mevistan or another Pakistan in print media and official reports. The Meo ethnic community actually never adhered to their religious associations, but the collective assertion, which was ethnic in nature, was projected as predominantly religious. See: Shail Mayaram, ‘Partition and Violence in Mewat, 60-70. A recent study on Partition by Shamsul Islam argues that although the concept called ‘two-nation’ was articulated by Allama Muhammad Iqbal and propagated by Jinnah and Muslim League to describe Hindus and Muslims as two nations, the philosophy was initiated by Hindu nationalists at the end of the nineteenth century in Bengal which led to the formation of Maha Hindu Samiti (All India Hindu Association) and Bharat Dharama Mahamandal. It was later propagated by Hindu Mahasabha in the 1920s. In an attempt to release Indian Muslims from the guilt of Partition and communalism, Islam makes a case for patriotic Muslims who strongly stood ‘against partition’. The work unfolds a field for a critical investigation of the discourse of homeland. See: Shamsul Islam, *Muslims Against Partition: Revisiting the Legacy of Allah Baksh and Other Patriotic Muslims* (New Delhi: Pharos Media & Publishing, 2015).

8 The Oxford English Dictionary defines ‘ghetto’ in two senses, (a) ‘An area of a city where many people of the same race or background live separately from the rest of the population; Ghettoes are often crowded, with bad living conditions.’ (b) ‘An area of a town where Jews were forced to live in the past’ ‘Oxford English Dictionary’, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2017). Thus, ghettos, especially in terms of a ‘space’, symbolize those areas of urban cities which are inhabited by the minority/marginalized/poor communities. In other words, it is suggested that a ghetto might have a closed and isolated community, and a confined and stagnant living pattern. The word basti is used in Hindustani for ghetto or colony in the same way like Muslim basti, Bangali (Bengali) basti, and so on. Nehru frequently used the word Muslim basti or bastiyon for Muslim ilaqe especially after the creation of Muslim Zones in the late 1947 mainly to define the economic backwardness of these areas as well as to address the problem of security see: Kumar and Prasad (eds.), *CWJLN*, Second series, Vol. 40, 190.

(British and now independent India) and the postcolonial/post-Partition developments have converted this particular urban space into an important battleground of communal politics. Within this historical context, Old Delhi as a site is explored to make sense of four crucial urban developments.

The transformation of the traditional caste, craft and class based mohallas of Shahjahanabad into spaces demarcated on religious lines, initially for religious processions and later for electoral representation, marks the first major urban process in colonial Delhi. The classification of ‘Hindu’ and ‘Muslim’ as colonial administrative categories changed the spatial profile of galies, mohallas and ilaqe in the 1940s. In fact, every locality of the city turned out to be Hindu or Muslim around the time of Partition. The second major transformation began in 1947. The post-Partition migration of a large number of Hindu and Sikh refugees to Delhi and Muslims to Pakistan not only reduced the proportion of Muslim population, but also led to the internal movement of those Muslims who decided to stay back in Delhi towards Muslim-concentrated areas for the first time. The emergence of Muslim Refugee Camps, ‘Muslim Zone’ and the debates on Muslim evacuee properties intensified the communal demarcation of households, galies, mohallas and ilaqe again in the early 1950s. The planned urban development of Delhi underlines the third crucial transformation of the city in the 1960s. The evolution of urban educated middle-class upper-caste sensitivities around eating habits, cultural practices and hygiene aggravated the contest over Muslim localities. The cow protection movement and the legislative debates on meat control in the Delhi Metropolitan Council in the late 1960s became reference points to identify Muslim localities such as Qasabpura (inhabited mainly by Qureshi or Muslim butcher community), and areas around the Idgah slaughterhouse, Kishanganj, Bara Hindu Rao, and Sadar Bazar as unhygienic backward sites. And finally, the political configuration at local and national level and the ‘spirit’ of}

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National Regeneration Programme of Congress government transformed the city space into clearance, redevelopment and resettlement zones in the 1970s. In this highly exhaustive urban, ‘secular’, ‘neutral’ policy discourse, Muslim concentrated areas – Jama Masjid and Turkman Gate – of Old Delhi were re-defined as pockets of ‘internal threat’. These ‘mini Pakistans’ had to be re-organized through clearance and population control during the time of national Emergency in 1976.

II

The literature on Partition, in particular that scholarship which has explored its ongoing effects provides an indispensable point of departure for this thesis. The aftermath contested the conventional narratives of Partition and the contours of high politics, both in terms of its epistemic foundations as well as the contents of analysis, significantly in the late 1990s. It has tried to understand the meanings of Partition for those who survived through it and encounter ed its intense and long term consequences by recording their oral testimonies. The complexity of the administrative aspects of the Partition itself and the multifarious formulations of identities are the main emphasis of these writings. The works of Veena Das, Urvashi Butalia, Ritu Menon, Kamala Bhasin and Gyanendra Pandey have tried to understand the violent experiences of these survivors and have restored their hitherto silent voices and memories in the histories of Partition. These works have explored inter alia how women’s body became the symbol of national honour and a site to inscribe the political programmes of the two nation-states.

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But more importantly, this historiography has explored the impact of Partition on the formation of religious, regional and caste identities in postcolonial India. Gyanendra Pandey proposes three Partition theses: ‘Partition of imaginations’, ‘Partition of boundaries’, and the ‘Partition of nationalities’. He argues that these Partitions discursively constituted Hindu, Sikh and Muslim national identities specifically in terms of territorial associations. These divisions led to a complete reconstitution of identities, belonging, citizenship and nationhood in postcolonial India and even localities or spaces were demarcated as Hindu space and Muslim space. Vazeera Fazila Zamindar and Haimanti Roy look at this identity formation from the vantage point of different contending and contesting administrative categories. Zamindar tells us that ‘Partition was a long administrative process of the making of two nation-states’. This process systematically defined and redefined notions of belongingness by categorizing the north Indian Muslim families as ‘refugees’, ‘evacuees’, ‘intending evacuees’ and ‘loyal citizens’. It paved the way for new political categories: Muslims as minority in India and Muslims as Muhajirs in Pakistan. Haimanti Roy, diverting slightly from Zamindar, explains that although minority communities were fragmented on both sides, these groups continuously changed the given notions of territorial nationalities. New strategies were evolved by minority communities on both sides to manipulate the administrative categories for their successful survival. In this sense, they were not the silent recipients of these administrative categories. Instead, they frequently contested these categories through protests, continuous and ‘long migration’ and successful negotiations with the respective states. Joya Chatterji also makes a rather similar point. Zamindar’s argument, according to Joya Chatterji, overemphasizes ‘bureaucratic rationality’ or...
even governmentality to define minority communities as mere receivers of official categories. Chatterji argues that such categories were produced by ‘complex, often violent, interactions between governments and a range of non-state actors, who forced their ideas of nationality, justice and entitlement on to the statute book’.\textsuperscript{21} This is a valid point. For instance, the administrative moves taken up by the Nehru government in 1947 to create certain safe Muslim pockets or zones are seen as unproblematic entities in Zamindar’s narrative. She looks at the concept of ‘Muslim zone’ merely as a state protected and promoted formation. The insecurities amongst Muslims in the wake of targeted violence that resulted in the internal movement of population to form segregated pockets in Delhi are reduced to state intervention. Therefore, Zamindar somehow fails to look at the complex social relations configured as the aftereffect of the process of Partition. Joya Chatterji tries to fill this gap by looking at the impact of Partition on the transformation of Bengali Muslim community. She argues that Partition was not a marker of any kind of ‘permanent settlement’ of communities. Instead, it started a new process of ‘constant small Partitions’ which resulted in the ‘permanent displacement’ of Muslims in West Bengal. It produced a kind of ghettoization of Muslims who were in search for security and a community space for cultural assertions in a Hindu-dominated West Bengal.\textsuperscript{22} Chatterji provides a critical understanding of community-space relationship.

Although these works recognize the diversities amongst religious and regional identities, they seem to define communities with an assumption of homogeneity. In this specific sense, they somehow underestimate the internal complexities of community identity. Papiya Ghosh, on the contrary, looks at the regional and caste dynamics of post-Partition Bihari Muslim identity. She argues that the Muslim biradari (caste) politics of Bihar has always challenged the homogenous ‘corporate Islamicate identity’. According to her, the politics of Partition intensified internal caste fragments and become a reference point for backward biradaries to assert distinctive identities to acquire political rights in post-Partition India.\textsuperscript{23}

The aftermath thesis, it seems, is too overwhelmed with the immediate aftermath of Partition. It takes the events of the 1950s as ‘defining’ moments to underline the continuity of ‘Partition’ process as well as to make a broad comment on the subsequent political events and developments. Ted Svensson’s recent work criticizes the continuity thesis and encourages looking at Partition as a rupture – a point of departure. He argues that both states actually moved into a political moment of decolonization to construct new states and categories of citizens. However, in his attempt to define Partition as a rupture, Svensson ignores the continuation of colonial administrative vocabulary, the discourse of homeland and most importantly, the legal-constitutional framework, which was only slightly tweaked for the process of decolonization. Although the Partition studies have come a long way from analyzing the causes to recognizing the grassroots identity formations in its aftermath, the complexity of Muslims’ relationship with Partition particularly in relation to the imagination of their living space in post-Partition Delhi still needs to be examined. This study critically analyzes the idea of ‘Pakistan’ as a discourse of homeland, which continued to influence the politics in the subcontinent for long periods after Partition.

There is a vast and emerging literature on historical character, urbanization and demography of Delhi. However, the growth and evolution of the Muslim ilaq in the postcolonial Old Delhi, which pose a very different challenge to the emerging discussions on city and urban life, have not been systematically researched so far. This study looks at four types of research material on Delhi that contributes to develop a cohesive argument: (a) the historical urban development of Old Delhi in chapter I, (b) the discourse of homeland including secular, Hindu and Muslim India in chapter II(c) the impact of Partition on the demographic profile of the city in chapter III, (d) ethnographic and recent literature on Muslim localities in Delhi, which deals directly with the question of community and space in chapter IV and V to look at the

26 There are exceptions in this regard. Ajay Mehra’s book tries to interrogate the ways in which urbanization is linked to politics in colonial and postcolonial India. However, it focuses mainly on the electoral politics. See: Ajay K. Mehra, *The Politics of Urban Development: A Study of Old Delhi* (Delhi: Sage, 1990). Another edited volume deals with the urbanization of Delhi and the inbuilt conflicts in its development through histories, people, monuments, identities and politics and demographic growth. It provides a comprehensive view of Delhi in which the case study of Old Delhi can be placed and analyzed. Veronique Dupont, Emma Tarlo and Denis Vidal (eds.), *Delhi: Urban Space and Human Destinies* (Delhi: Manohar Publications, 2000).
administrative processes that led to the forced clearance and sterilization drives of the Muslim concentrated areas of Delhi and its implications.

Stephen Blake and Percival Spear look at the British arrival and governance as drivers of ‘progress’ responsible for the transformation of Shahjahanabad. Blake claims that after British arrival in 1803 the paternalistic bureaucratic empire and Muslim domination were replaced by the ‘new secular style of the early nineteenth century in which Hindus…began to participate on an equal footing with Muslims’. 27 As it became a seat of imperial power, Spear argues, Delhi became a modern city in terms of its urban expansion and political growth. 28 But, this study, while offering a non-controversial colonial history of Shahjahanabad, ignores British policies of classification, categorization, enumeration and mapping of space which contributed to the making of Hindu and Muslim political identities. 29

The works of Narayani Gupta, Stephen Legg and Awadhendra Sharan offer a critical framework for the contextual understanding of the multiple processes in colonial and postcolonial Delhi and the transitions. Between them Narayani Gupta discusses the strategies of British governance which were guided by British stereotypes and their perceptions about Indian society especially in terms of managing a balance between ‘two distinct Hindu and Muslim communities’. This had significant political and socio-cultural impacts on Delhi’s urban life. Delhi was transformed into a communally charged and politically vibrant city after it became the seat of imperial power. 30 Stephen Legg elaborates this argument and looks at the transformation of imperial Delhi as the creation of two different zones of power. He tries to understand the urban governance of Imperial Delhi in relation to the problems initiated by the transfer of the capital, which re-created the city as old and new. For him the division of the city showcases the institutionalized violence employed by the colonial regime. Legg argues that ‘the relation between the New Delhi and Old Delhi was not just one of separation, but also of eclipse. This

30 Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 1-2 and 221-33.
was a local and historical process in terms of prestige, financing, policing and improvement.\textsuperscript{31} Awadhendra Sharan, dealing with the discourse of improvement in the areas of water, animal slaughter and meat, congestion and pollution, looks at the spaces and practices in terms of the multiplicity of urban forms that was organized with the distinction of old city and new city and native and ruling race in colonial period. These distinctions, he argues, are in the form of planned and informal spaces, legal and illegal practices and legal and uncertain conditions in postcolonial India.\textsuperscript{32}

This story of political and urban transformation of Delhi finds a very different expression in the second stream of literature on post-Partition Delhi, which revolves round the massive influx of Punjabi refugees and the growth of rightist Hindu politics. Christophe Jaffrelot argues that the political association of Punjabi refugees with the right-wing Hindu forces and the Congress should be seen in the context of earlier politics of Partition, which began to take shape in the 1940s.\textsuperscript{33} On the contrary, Dipankar Gupta suggests that the Partition violence and the need of immediate rehabilitation was the main reason behind the popularity of Hindu politics amongst the Punjabi refugees of Delhi.\textsuperscript{34} Ravinder Kaur, however, re-conceptualizes the political behavior of Punjabi refugees as a reflection of survival strategies. She explores the gradual identification of Punjabi refugees with the Indian state in the painful process of becoming 'locals' of Delhi.\textsuperscript{35} These studies do not look at the impacts of the communalization of politics and Partition on the production of communal space in Delhi, but they offer a framework for situating the question of the impact of Partition on Muslim-dominated localities in the wider context of violence, uncertainties and issues of survival faced by the victims of Partition. However, Gyanendra Pandey tries to look at Delhi where the Partition violence divided everything into Hindu and


\textsuperscript{32} Awadhendra Sharan, \textit{In the City, Out of Place: Nuisance, Pollution and Dwelling in Delhi, 1850-2000} (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), 1-21.


Islam and led to different kinds of identity formation of Indian Muslims.\textsuperscript{36} Pandey, in this sense, somehow indicates these divisions, but his main concern remains religious identity, not space.

The literature on ‘Muslim ghettos’ in India in general and in Delhi in particular is the third kind of literature that this study is concerned with. Abdul Shaban provides an overview of the relationship between spatial distribution and the cause of crime in Mumbai. He analyses how economic and political interests create socio-religious, cultural and regional ruptures resulting in the ghettoization of religious minorities.\textsuperscript{37} Janaki Nair offers a comprehensive perspective on how the city of Bangalore is conceived and perceived in terms of the spatial practices of different caste, linguistic and religious minorities. She defines the city as the site for a continuous redefinition of Indian citizenship and argues that the Muslim community, even after being a sizeable minority, does not make claims on public space in the way other communities do, because of the way they are treated by the state authorities and the established stereotypes.\textsuperscript{38} Ravi Kumar argues that the state machinery and media construct a dominant image of the Muslim community that leads to ghettoization and the backwardness of the community. He explains that the Muslim ghettos in Delhi represent a complex process of identity formation.\textsuperscript{39} Kumar, Shaban and, especially, Nair thus explore the nuances of Muslim politics to deconstruct the given images of Muslim areas in India, though the deep roots of these tussles or contests in colonial politics that make Muslim space an analytical category are somehow ignored. Jaffrelot and Gayer, however, argue that the roots of current social, political and economic decline of the Muslims should be seen historically. The decline of the Muslim aristocratic culture, the events of 1857, departure of elite and educated Muslims to Pakistan with the Partition, according to them, played important roles in the continuous alienation and ‘minority complex’ amongst Muslims leading towards their ghettoization.\textsuperscript{40} Laurent Gayer argues that the process of Muslim ghettoization


\textsuperscript{38} Nair, \textit{The Promise of Metropolis}, 250-300.

\textsuperscript{39} Ravi Kumar, \textit{Ghetto and Within: Class, Identity, State and Political Mobilization} (Delhi: Aakar Books, 2010), 10-14.

\textsuperscript{40} Jaffrelot and Gayer (eds.) \textit{Muslims in Indian Cities}, 1-22.
needs to be seen as ‘self-segregation’ of the community by evoking ‘class-religion’ dynamics.\textsuperscript{41} But, it seems that Gayer and Jaffrelot place Muslim localities as an oddity in the grand scheme of Indian ‘secular’ space. They do not seem to be questioning the very division of space on religious lines.\textsuperscript{42} The argument that the making of Muslim ‘ghettos’ in Delhi was due to a Muslim search for security somehow reduces the complexity and contest over Muslim concentrated areas, completely ignoring the historic socio-political and administrative processes of the production of communal space. In this sense, Muslim localities are projected as the given ‘other’ or ‘exception’ to what are supposed to be the ‘ordinary’ or more broadly ‘national’ and ‘mainstream’ urban forms and practices.\textsuperscript{43}

John Dayal and Ajoy Bose provide a more specific descriptive account of the events of Turkman Gate, which took place in Delhi in 1976 during the period of National Emergency to unfold the design of institutional communalism resulting, somehow, in state imposed ‘segregation’. They provide descriptive accounts of the clearance, resettlement and sterilization drives that were used as tools to attack the Muslim concentrated locality of Turkman Gate.\textsuperscript{44} This study unfolds a field of investigation to understand how production of communal space becomes a cycle – a process that keeps the contestation surrounding the living space of minority communities, in this case Muslim, alive in different times.

This research tries to examine the factors that contributed to these localities emerging as ‘ghettos’, rather than taking them as given phenomena, especially in terms of the embodiment of the idea of Pakistan, which has somehow, objectified the space practices of Muslim community

\textsuperscript{41} Laurent Gayer, ‘Safe and Sound Searching for a Good Environment’ in Abul Fazal Enclave, Delhi’ in Jaffrelot and Gayer (eds.) \textit{Muslims in Indian Cities}, 213-36.
\textsuperscript{42} Also see: Nida Kirmani, ‘Constructing “the other”: Narrating Religious Boundaries in Zakir Nagar’, Contemporary South Asia, 2008, Vol. 16, No. 4, 397-412.
\textsuperscript{43} I use the term ‘mainstream’ to underline the larger objective of Nehruvian state which offered a comprehensive ‘national’ and ‘nationalist’ framework for the unity and integrity of India. The state offered a blue print for making Indian subjects into ideal citizens by focusing on ‘non-controversial’, ‘neutral’ and somehow ‘emancipatory’ mission of urbanization and development. But, this definition of ‘Indian Mainstream’, which was very homogenizing for a diverse society, had multiple implications and manifestations. This study has tried to identify these manifestations around the issues of citizenship and belonging in the 1950s, Bharatiyakaran in the 1960s and re-organization of living patterns of Muslim social groups in the 1970s. See: Kumar and Prasad (eds.), \textit{CWILN}, Second Series, Vol. 28, 1 February -31 May 1955; Pandey, ‘Can Muslim be an Indian’, 608-629; Joya Chatterji, ‘South Asian Histories of Citizenship’, 1070 of 1049-1071 and recent work by Ted, Svensson, \textit{Production of Postcolonial India and Pakistan}; Aditya Nigam, \textit{The Insurrection of Little Selves: The Crisis of Secular Nationalism in India} (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006), 70.
in India. In other words, the study takes the placing of Muslim localities within the aftermath of Partition in Delhi as a vantage point. One question it raises is that of the idea of Pakistan as a manifestation of Muslim homeland in colonial and postcolonial/post-Partition Delhi. How do administrative policies and socio-cultural processes demarcate and categorize the shared community spaces on communal lines - in this case the Muslim localities of Delhi - in different periods?

To further specify this central question, the study identifies a few subsidiary questions that are dealt with in different chapters: How do the idea of Pakistan and a political discourse of separate homeland(s) were translated at local level to present claims and counter-claims on space in Delhi during 1940-1947? How the was idea of Pakistan was reconfigured in postcolonial/post-Partition Delhi and how did it contributed to debatable and contested categories like ‘Mini Pakistan(s)’ - in Delhi in the years 1948-1954? Moreover, it becomes important to see how an economic and cultural practice like production, sale and consumption of meat becomes an important marker of a lower-class Muslim locality and a problem to upper-caste middle-class urban notions of hygiene in the 1960s. And finally, the study examines how ‘neutral’ policies of urban development are translated for an organized state violence to de-construct Muslim spatial collectivity, which is perceived as ‘internal threat’?

III

There could be many ways to describe the relationship of ‘community’ and ‘space’. For instance, community in the simplest sense of the term could be understood as a group of people defined in terms of imagined or physical boundaries. Thus, the collective existence of a community cannot be understood without referring to the space (either as a territory and/or belonging-ness). However, the discursive formation and the changing meanings of this relationship, in our case, should be located in the particular historical context of South Asia. This is precisely what Gyanendra Pandey highlights:

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Community in a pre-capitalist culture defines itself precisely by its *territoriality* and at the same time *temporality*. The onset of communalism, bringing with it profound changes in the material and spiritual resources available to the people, brought a redoubled emphasis on these defining characteristics. From the nation…to that of region…to the level of the tribal tract and the small town and village…the notion of rights over given territories was now obsessively brought forward.46

This formulation tells us that communities always realize their community-hood in relation to a territory; and secondly, there is an important temporal dimension associated to it which makes it dynamic. Pandey argues that these defining characteristics acquire a kind of ‘fixed’ meaning when encountered with the ‘modern-rational’ frameworks brought by the colonial knowledge system.

Sudipta Kaviraj argues that ‘the principle of community construction in traditional India was different. These communities were “fuzzy” in two senses: first, the complex sum of different identities, such as caste, village or region, was fuzzy. There wasn’t any overarching community identity available to them that could claim to represent all the layers of social bonds of an individual. Second, communities were not enumerated’.47 The colonial modernity, Kaviraj reminds us, provided a clearer self-perception to Indian communities through the processes of statistical counting and spatial mapping. Consequently, it became possible to think of a homogeneous community, the exact numbers of its members, its common interests as well as geographical distribution, which led to the further concretization of community and space relationships.

This enumeration of communities and spatial mapping, Sekhar Bandyopadhyay informs us, produced a knowledge which was gradually established as rational ‘facts’ about, what he calls, ‘religio-political communities’.48 In this sense, the transmission of this knowledge through

48 Bandyopadhyay, *From Plassey to Partition*, 263.
education further affected the self-perceptions of social groups, particularly at the local level. The English educated elite started explaining the past, present and future of social groups in a political language of minority and majority. On the other hand, the social groups continued to practice their customs and rituals as per the historically evolved principles of community construction. Thus, the encounter between actual social practices (and conflict) at local level and the dominant majority-minority discourse at the national level affected the ways in which local communities imagined their belongingness. In other words, various ‘imagined communities’ based on regional, linguistic, caste and religious associations came into existence and local conflicts became universalized.

Sandria Freitag’s work on the communalization of local spaces in the late 19th and early 20th centuries is useful to understand the multiplicity of these political manifestations. She makes a crucial distinction between local conflicts that took place on religious processions and festivals in the 18th and early 19th century Banaras and the later more organized ‘communal’ riots. She argues:

Religion provided the vocabulary for expressing a variety of conflicts that arose around public arena activities. This vocabulary often indirectly suggested…the relationship of localized communities to each other and to the urban political economy as a whole. But in the late nineteenth century…the venue and symbolism remained unchanged, the meaning inferred by this symbolism came to be reinterpreted…a religious vocabulary became…a sustained way of imbuing collective expressions of localized, relational community with a more ideological and broad-based definition of the collectivity…and in the early twentieth century the use of religion to express community became linked to the overtly political activity by individuals whose concerted action had implications beyond the locality – or “communalism”.

This discussion elucidates how the colonial policies of categorization, classification, enumeration and spatial mapping of the subject population transformed the fuzzy religious groups into enumerated communities, with specific claims on identity, history -- and also territory. However,

to understand these uniquely defined space and community configurations in terms of urban development, which is often considered as ‘neutral’ and ‘secular’, we need to pay a close attention to the nature of colonial state.

Ranajit Guha defines the nature of colonial state as ‘dominance without hegemony’. Guha explains that since the colonial state was based more on coercion than persuasion, ‘order’ was one of its idioms used by the British officials to establish this dominance over the colonial subjects. He says, ‘order was made to preside over public health, sanitation and municipalization in the large urban centers from the very beginning of the Raj’, by colonial rulers.\(^5^0\) This argument explains that urban development, which is considered to be a non-coercive function of the modern state, also became a contested terrain and defined the space and community relationship from above demarcating the difference between colonial rulers and the colonial subjects.

Partha Chatterjee defines this difference more explicitly and explains that the modern disciplinary institutions in India were guided by a ‘rule of colonial difference’. He suggests that in theory, the modern institutions, introduced by the colonial state, were supposed to possess certain universally accepted characteristics. But in practice, these laws were seen as external and superior to native sensibilities. In this sense, Chatterjee argues that the impulse to modernisation under colonial conditions was managed in such a manner that colonial difference could be maintained and reproduced.\(^5^1\) Following Chatterjee, it could be said that the colonial town planning was a latent manifestation of the ‘rule of colonial difference’ which took a new form in postcolonial Indian conditions. The notions of hygiene, congestion, sanitation and health got associated with the cities like Old Delhi and produced various levels of spatial and social contestations especially when these notions were associated with the construction of social identities. These contestations are revealed in an interesting way in the developments of Muslim ilaqe in late colonial and postcolonial India.

The present study employs the arguments of Guha and Chatterjee on urban policies in a slightly modified manner along with Freitag’s explanation of the production of communal space

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at local levels. Following Guha and Chatterjee the thesis studies the ways in which the urban space in colonial and postcolonial Delhi was sociologically and politically redefined. Employing Freitag’s formulation we explore how the idea of communal space evolved and, as a result, a contested notion of Muslim ilaqe emerged in post-Partition urban history of Delhi.

Clearly, this thesis argues that the community-space relationship, which was formed during the colonial period, could not be taken as ‘yard stick’ to evaluate the postcolonial experiences. Therefore, the immediate and long term impacts of Partition become very important here. The Partition, subsequent violence and massive migration across the borders of newly formed territorial nation-states changed the political context significantly. This led to a new kind of power relations and new forms of contestations. Sekhar Bandyopadhyay very rightly suggests:

There was nothing ‘essential’ about community boundaries in colonial south Asia, as far as political action was concerned: these were constructed by the collective imagination influenced by specific historical contexts. So, as the context changed…. the community boundaries also began to shift.\(^{52}\)

This argument directs us to our second conceptual question which is related to the historical continuities and discontinuities in terms of a transition from colonial to postcolonial Delhi. This question has two related, yet, slightly different aspects which need to be unfolded here: first, how do we understand the historical transition in a general sense, simply to understand the specificities of postcolonial Indian politics. Secondly, how are we to understand events like the Partition of 1947, which drastically reformulated the discourse of identities, citizenship and belongingness?\(^{53}\)

The ‘aftermath of the Partition’ thesis becomes relevant here, especially to explore the question of historical continuity and discontinuity. Bandyopadhyay points out that ‘historians…now look at how Partition impacted on post-colonial history and politics, how

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\(^{52}\) Bandyopadhyay, *Caste, Culture and Hegemony*, 191.

\(^{53}\) On understanding the historical continuity in terms of postcolonial, Leela Gandhi notes: ‘It is a disciplinary project devoted to the academic task of revisiting, remembering, and crucially, interrogating the colonial past.’ See: Leela Gandhi, *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Columbia UP, 1998), 14. The study, in this sense, uses historical continuity argument both in terms of colonial-postcolonial and the Partition and its aftermath.
Partition memory defines community identities and affects inter-community relations, thus emphasizing a historical continuity. Further, as Tan and Kudaisya argue, ‘continuities must necessarily be kept as a backdrop against which the changes which Partition brought about need to be looked at.’ This proposition provides a conceptual ground to examine how the idea of Pakistan continued to be re-invoked and reconfigured in postcolonial India.

This brings us to one recurrent conceptual premise of the study, a focus on the idea of Pakistan rather than the actualities of the creation of Pakistan. Pakistan as an idea generated and somehow intensified a larger socio-political discourse that revolved around the space-community relationship in the late 1940s. This discourse had an intrinsic link with the colonial legal practices that defined communities in terms of their demography and political representation. The Partition of British India turned the idea of Pakistan into a reality. It affected, though not directly, the Nehruvian project of nation building and development in the 1950s. The changed dynamics of national politics and the overwhelming agenda of mainstreaming the minorities in postcolonial India gave new meanings to the language of rights, protest and development. It produced an intrinsically linked discourse of inclusion and exclusion. Although the Indian state, following an unwritten policy, tried to decolonize the process of the recognition of religious identity as official category, the meaning of ‘minority’, which was constitutionalized, was to re-enforce a division between Hindu/majority and non-Hindu/minority. This distinction between Hindu and non-Hindu, majority and minority not only re-established cleavages and differences internal to the categories but also imposed majority culture as a national framework or design.

54 Bandyopadhyay, From Plassey to Partition, 464.
55 Tai Yong Tan and Gyanesh Kudaisya, The Aftermath of Partition 28; Svensson, however, argues that ‘Independence and the Partition ought to be conceptualized in terms of ‘rupture’ and not primarily as a case of continuity between the colonial and the postcolonial or as a ‘failed’ or insufficient reconstitution of sediment substrata of knowledge and power.’ He argues that at the juncture of independence, India and Pakistan found themselves in an open undecided terrain. Thus, what occurred in the period following the disintegration of British India and the integration of sovereign India and Pakistan was the incremental closure of a rare, colonial, moment of openness. The period between 1947 and 1952 was a truly political moment of decolonization i.e. the concomitant constitution of a novel social order and its legitimacy where, according to him, both the states got involved in the ‘proper’ making of majority and minority through constitutions. See: Ted Svensson, Production of Postcolonial India and Pakistan, 26.
56 Faisal Devji has made an attempt to unfold the meanings of Pakistan as a political idea in the context of Pakistan to analyze how it was interpreted by different groups. See: Faisal Devji, Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013).
57 For a discussion on the constitutionalization of minority-majority discourse see: Svensson, Production of Postcolonial India and Pakistan, 114.
Urbanization and development, in this sense, were projected as motivational forces to integrate the minority communities. It was expected that the communities would leave their sediment religious, linguistic and caste associations behind and realize themselves as national subjects. In this context, along with other political and economic processes, the idea of Pakistan also emerged as an antagonistic, adverse, and provocative force – the adversarial ‘Other’- opposed to a culturally integrated, territorially united and above all secular ‘nation’ of India. The ‘fear of disintegration’ and ‘communalism’ continued to be important political tropes for supposed Muslim separatism invoked by the Nehruvian government in the 1950s and the 1960s. The two wars with Pakistan and the evident isolation and marginalization of the Muslim minority in India further added to the anxieties about homogeneous nationhood in the later period.

Partition, in this sense, is treated here as that formative and administrative process which continued to be a reference point for the invocation of the idea of Pakistan in postcolonial India. This study does not envisage the idea of Pakistan in isolation to this formative process and the subsequent violent experiences. Instead, an attempt is made to see the impacts of Partition on the construction of the images of Muslim localities.

IV

The first chapter of the thesis, covering the period of 1803-1940, from British occupation of Shahjahanabad to the construction of New Delhi as the capital of British India, offers a brief narrative of the gradual transformation of caste and craft based shared community space into communally demarcated pockets. It deals with three interconnected, yet, different themes: the formation of religio-political identities through enumeration in the mid nineteenth century; organization of shared space with the codification of dominant customary practices around cow slaughter and religious procession as ‘legal’ rules; and, finally, the administrative demarcation of space into ‘Hindu-dominated’, ‘Muslim-dominated’ and ‘mixed’ electoral constituencies after

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58 Recent study by Islam, *Muslims Against Partition*. 
the 1920s. The chapter argues that colonial administrative mechanisms in the period 1857-1940 created multilayered divisions through categorization, classification, enumeration and mapping of communities and spaces that led to the evolution of the discourse of homeland in the 1940s.

The second chapter discusses the emergence of the discourse of ‘homeland’ in the 1940s that led to the parallel but contested imaginations of nation(s) and their manifestation in the local context of Delhi. Examining the established notions of ‘separatism’ or ‘exclusionism’ which have been predominantly associated with Pakistan demand, the chapter raises a fundamental question: How did Nehru, Jinnah and Savarkar imagine the geographic entity called British India in different ways? The chapter argues that the vocabulary produced by the discourse of homeland led to violent and organized claims and counter claims by communities on public as well as residential spaces as the Partition of South Asia became a reality. The idea of Pakistan, thus, transformed the ‘Muslim-dominated’ pockets and Muslim demographic concentration in ‘mixed’ areas of Delhi into issues for perpetual contestation.

The third chapter examines how these parallel imaginations of homeland produced new imageries of communal space in post-Partition Delhi. Discussing the contours of Nehruvian secular Indian space that expected communities to leave their religious associations behind, the chapter demonstrates how collective presence of minority Muslim community was established, inevitably, as a token of ‘security’ and ‘protection’ in official vocabulary. The chapter discusses the debates around ‘Muslim zones’, Muslim ‘refugee’ camps and ‘evacuee’ properties to unpack the issues of ‘belongingness’ and identity of Delhi’s Muslims that defined the notion of ‘communally sensitive areas’ in the 1950s.

The following chapter explores the controversies around meat practice (its production, sale and consumption) in the 1960s — to understand how an economic activity of slaughtering animals was turned into a ‘Muslim’ practice and placed in binary opposition to selective Brahmanical vegetarianism. The consequent politics of space around Idgah slaughter-house, meat shops and the locality of Qasabpura is investigated to make sense of the contest over Muslim localities. The chapter argues that Muslim localities were perceived as ‘isolated’ unhygienic cultural pockets that were to be cleaned and Indianized according to the growing educated upper-caste/middle class sensibilities of the 1960s.
The fifth chapter scrutinizes the urbanization ‘operation’ of the 1970s that focused on the re-organization of city space and communities through redevelopment, resettlement and population control. The thesis examines various redevelopment schemes, local politics and administrative policies to see how statutory, metropolitan and municipal authorities zeroed in to end Muslim ‘segregation’ through forced clearance and sterilization in Jama Masjid and Turkman Gate areas during the National Emergency (1975-77). It argues that in the 1970s certain Muslim areas of Delhi were seen as locations of ‘internal threat’ – the ‘Mini Pakistan(s)’ that were to be dismantled.

It is important here to clarify that this research does not attempt to write a history of postcolonial Old Delhi nor does it narrate the story of Muslim ilaqe of Shahjahanabad. Instead, it takes history as an important source to excavate the roots of a contemporary question i.e. the imagination of Muslim areas as political and contested category. In this sense, it tries to trace the genealogy of the term ‘Muslim space’. Secondly, the study does not claim to make any comment on postcolonial Muslim politics or the formation of Muslim identity in terms of its caste, class, regional and linguistic variants. These aspects are discussed rather contextually. In fact, the study tries to develop an argument to scrutinize the given Muslim homogeneity and religiosity in relation to the multiple socio-cultural manifestations, which take place in Muslim-dominated streets, mohallas or ilaqe of Delhi.

The thesis is an interdisciplinary exercise, which uses a variety of methods to examine its research questions: archival research, policy analysis, oral history interviews and group discussions. The Annual Administration Report of Delhi, the proceedings from the Home-Political Department of the Government of India and Fortnightly Reports published by the Chief Commissioner of Delhi, available in the National Archives of India, provided the official perspective on local reception of political events and significant developments of the late 1930s and 1940s taking place at national level. I also consulted the Constituent Assembly debates, Parliamentary debates, Metropolitan Council proceedings, various official reports produced by the Ministry of Rehabilitation, policy documents like the Master Plan, Zonal Plans, Five year plans, laws, by-laws, Parliamentary Acts, relevant court cases and other documents for understanding the postcolonial/post-Partition developments in relation to the organization of Muslim-dominated areas. I also used published personal papers like Selected Works of
Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel Correspondence, Gandhi Ji Ki Dilli Dairy and memoirs like Azadi Ki Chaown Mein, to name a few, to understand the ‘mainstream’ and local perspectives.

The documents related to the period of National Emergency were most difficult to access since these papers have been withheld by the Government of India as classified documents. The newspapers and other sources of this period were also not available. In such a scenario, quite accidently, while going through the reserved Index in National Archives, I found detailed investigation reports, conducted under Shah Commission of Inquiry, specifically related to the forced clearance drive, firing and sterilization campaign carried out in Jama Masjid and Turkman Gate areas. The reports established an interesting co-relation between the separate clearance operations carried out at Jama Masjid four months before the notorious Turkman Gate incident and the family planning camp as part of a communal design against the Muslim population of Old Delhi.

The Urdu, Hindi and English newspapers were the second most important set of sources. *The Dawn, Hindustan Times*(HT)*, Times of India* and *Al-Jamiat*, available in Nehru Memorial Museum library and *Jamiat-ul-Ulema* office library, provided different perspectives on the emergence of the discourse of homeland in the 1940s and its re-configuration in postcolonial period. The other vernacular sources were resolutions passed by the RSS and Jan Sangh, pamphlets and books published in colonial and postcolonial periods.

For the oral history interviews, I selected two main types of participants. The first category comprised those who were directly or indirectly affected by the events such as Partition in 1947 and the clearance of shops and houses in Jama Masjid and Turkman Gate areas during the period of National Emergency in 1975-1977. It mainly included residents and shopkeepers belonging to Old Delhi. The second category consisted of key figures like Jagmohan, Chowdhary Shamsuddin and John Dayal, who were at the center of these events. The recording of oral history interviews of local residents who were in their twenties at the time of Partition in 1947 or were active interlocutors in 1976, was a highly sensitive and difficult exercise. As Dipesh Chakrabarty has explained, ‘memory is a complex phenomenon that reaches out far
beyond what normally constitutes an historian’s archive’.\textsuperscript{59} I recorded participants’ narratives on different themes: idea of Pakistan, practice of meat and the clearance operation during the National Emergency. The initial interactions usually resulted in a mixture of emotions – excitement, grief, feeling of loss and hesitation in narrating family histories, cross border relations and trauma of post-Partition violence. Questions that, in their perception, might affect their present existence as Indian Muslim were the most difficult for them to answer or elaborate, for example questions like how idea of Pakistan was perceived in colonial Delhi were something, which were tackled carefully and with some unease. But in the end these oral narratives provided important perspectives and information unavailable in the official archive.

Chapter I

Colonial Encounters, Identities, Conflicts and Space: A Background, 1803-1939

The encounter between colonial perceptions and Indian social realities produced complex social, legal and political structures. This was also the case with the colonial imagination of Indian space that determined not merely the actual management of space as a political territory but also redefined collective identities. This chapter focuses on the ways in which space in Delhi came to be defined in communal terms in the period 1803-1940. This transition is traced in terms of the encounter between different colonial administrative developments and changing socio-political processes. It examines how the British techniques of classification, categorization and enumeration defined the community and space relations as Hindu, Muslim and mixed units of population.

The chapter examines three important themes: First, the nature of colonial administration, which evolved gradually and amalgamated with customary forms of space practices, is traced to see how British policies perceived, defined and categorized space and communities in Delhi. Second, it investigates new forms of demonstrative and aggressive religious rituals in this period that contributed to shaping the claims of Hindu and Muslim communities on public space. It shows how new forms of religious assertion, particularly the reform movements, employed the demarcation of public space for asserting their distinctive identities. Finally, the chapter explores how the encounter between administrative and socio-cultural processes translated into debates on the right to communal representation. An attempt is made to extend the scope of arguments on public arena activities in the colonial context by bringing in an equally complex issue of mohalla associations.1 The chapter intends to offer an interpretative exploration. In this specific sense, the history of Delhi is seen as a site of multiple contestations and varied interpretations to sketch out the continuously changing and evolving meanings of space and communities.2

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2 Sudipta Kaviraj’s argument that colonialism should not only be studied as a historical object but also as a discourse is very relevant here. He suggests that we need to raise a few ‘second order questions’ to make sense of the historical foundations of
Early Encounter: Managing space, communities and conflicts

In 1803, the British East India Company acquired Delhi through the treaty of Surji Arjungaon with the Maratha protectors of Mughal emperor Shah Alam. The Delhi territory consisted of the walled capital city of Shahjahanabad surrounded by an area roughly seven miles in radius (see Map 2). In 1805, following the establishment of the British protectorate, the Company confined the Mughal jurisdiction to the Palace, and established its authority over the lands in and out of the city, collection of revenue and the administration of justice in Delhi Territory. But the Company found it difficult to collect revenue and to deal with the everyday social conflicts in a culturally diverse society without a ‘proper’ system of administration. In 1815, the British Resident Thomas Metcalf introduced a ‘formal’ structure of administration which came to be known as the ‘Delhi System’. Metcalf devised two practical ways of administration. He first identified a few possible collaborators and representatives of different communities in order to manage social conflicts and second he adopted the existing Mughal system of revenue collection with a few modifications. 

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5 Spear, Twilight of the Mughals, 10 and 92; Blake, Shahjahanabad, 169-171.

6 Spear, Twilight of the Mughals, 170-171.

7 Spear, Twilight of the Mughals, 85-88; for a theoretical understanding on the idioms of dominance and power employed by the British rule in India and its implications in the emergence of a specific kind of political system in South Asia see Ranajit Guha, Dominance without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India (Cambridge, Mass.; Harvard University Press,1997), 25-28.
Under the Delhi System, the whole Delhi territory was treated as a province or *suba*. The British Resident was the *Subedar*, the head of the suba. The new administration implemented zoning and grouping of different residential and agricultural units as a useful measure for the efficient

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8 Source: Taken from Narayani Gupta, *Delhi Between Two Empires*, 18.

9 Spear, *Twilight of the Mughals*, 88.
management of revenues and taxes, as well as populations.\textsuperscript{10} Contiguous villages in the territory were formed into groups called \textit{zails}, so that they could be treated as a block or cluster.\textsuperscript{11} In Shahjahanabad, the existing Mughal \textit{Thana} (police station) system was adopted since it was interwoven with different residential mohallas.\textsuperscript{12} Twelve \textit{thanedars} (head of a Thana) policed the town, collected duties, regulated trade and industries and kept a record of the local population and immigrants.\textsuperscript{13} Each mohalla came under the jurisdiction of a Thana situated near to its location. These mohallas were demarcated predominantly on the basis of caste, craft, and class associations.\textsuperscript{14}

British officials found this pattern useful because the mohallas were quite self-sufficient and could easily be managed as zones for generating taxes. In fact, they erected permanent barriers and gates at the ends of streets and alleys so that the mohalla boundaries could be marked clearly within the jurisdiction of twelve thanas. It was done ‘in order to ensure peace and tranquility.’\textsuperscript{15} Most importantly, these caste and craft based mohallas intermeshed deeply with the emerging economic and commercial structures especially with the disintegration of aristocracy and emergence of a powerful middle class in Delhi after British arrival.\textsuperscript{16}

The demographic configuration of Shahjahanabad had three important aspects during the Mughal period. First, religion was not the defining feature of different mohallas; instead, different professions or crafts associated with numerous caste communities were the determining factors in the living pattern of the city. In some cases a community with a particular religious affiliation lived in a specific geographical area. For instance, the areas near the prominent mosques were dominated mainly by the Muslim \textit{amirs} (aristocrats). But these were not known as Muslim pockets and most importantly, they were not contested spaces. In fact, the presence of such concentrations very much reflected the caste or class character of the city. The Muslim amirs represented the upper-caste upper-class groups. Secondly, class or prestige was an

\textsuperscript{10} Spear, \textit{Twilight of the Mughals}, 170-171.
\textsuperscript{11} Spear, \textit{Twilight of the Mughals}, 88-89.
\textsuperscript{12} Gupta, \textit{Delhi Between Two Empires}, 3-11.
\textsuperscript{14} For the caste and craft based demographic pattern of the mohallas of Shahjahanabad see Gupta, \textit{Delhi Between Two Empires}, 52-55and Blake, \textit{Shahjahanabad}, 82-85.
\textsuperscript{15} Blake, \textit{Shahjahanabad}, 178.
\textsuperscript{16} Margret Pernau, \textit{Ashraf into Middle Classes: Muslims in Nineteenth Century Delhi} (Delhi: Oxford university Press, 2013), 266. Also see Narayani Gupta, ‘Delhi and Its Hinterland: the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries’ in R. E. Frykenberg (eds.)\textit{Delhi Through the Ages}, 140-142.
important factor in the traditional demographic make-up of mohallas since it had a crucial place in the overall administrative discourse of Mughal cities in India. Thirdly, the unit of this distinction of space was mohalla, not ilaqa, which was a wider category in terms of spatial mapping. The category of ilaqa evolved at a later period of British administration especially after the 1930s with colonial policies of planning and improvement.

This configuration of Delhi’s social life was clearly reflected in the celebration of certain local festivals. The religious processions and celebrations were common occasions participated by the people across caste, class and religious boundaries: their routes were not contested spaces. Similarly, religious celebrations and processions were observed equally by the Mughal court because of the religious associations of courtiers, nobles, amirs, other upper-classes and most importantly the army chiefs and soldiers. It did not, however, mean that religious differentiations were insignificant for the residents of Shahjahanabad. As Percival Spear also notes, ‘Communal life in the city was tranquil but not quite idyllic. There were no communal riots during the period, but there was always an undertone of tension […]around the] sacrifice of cows.’ Apart from the cow-centred religious conflicts, tussles were more sectarian (between Shia-Sunni and among Hindu sects including the Hindu-Jain conflicts) and more localized in nature.

Religious encounters and space

The encounter between Christian values, evangelical proselytizing techniques and Hindu and Muslim religious practices produced new forms of identity after the arrival of British in Delhi. The Baptist Missionary Society, established in 1818, brought new institutionalized forms of conversions. The Society encouraged public preaching, religious lectures, distribution of written

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17 Spear, Twilight of the Mughals, 195.
18 Blake, Shahjahanabad, 150 - 153.
21 Spear, Twilight of the Mughals, 195.
messages and public debates on religious philosophy. Because of its emphasis on monotheism, Baptism generated much interest especially amongst Delhi’s socially and economically marginalized Hindu caste groups. At the same time, it created a competitive atmosphere and made religion, or more specifically religious distinctiveness, an important social marker of identity.

The initial Muslim response to the emerging challenge of Christianity was equally forceful, which paved the way for a search for an authentic and codified form of Islam. But unlike the full-fledged reform movements of late nineteenth century, religious leaders of this period only aimed at identifying the reasons behind the relative marginalization of Muslims. The Waha’bi leaders also resorted to public debates, lectures and publication of provocative materials. Initially, these debates and discussions instigated tension only between Muslim religious scholars and Christian missionaries. But, the conversion of two prominent Hindus during the 1850s disturbed the relation between Hindus and Christians as well. Hindu reformist leaders became sensitive about the conversion of lower caste communities to Christianity. Re-conversion of these communities into Hinduism turned out to be an intrinsic feature of Hindu reform movements that acquired an organized form after the 1870s. Hindu reformists emphasized the public display of religious practices and rituals and most importantly the re-conversion (shuddhi) of those who converted to Christianity. Thus, the organized debates between

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26 Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 9.
Christian missionaries, Muslim maulvies and Hindu pundits became an important aspect of Delhi’s cultural life during the 1850s. In this sense, religion did not remain a ‘private’ affair; it began to define community boundaries quite sharply in the urban life of the city. These provocative debates generated fear of religious riots among the British officials. As a result, such dialogues were officially banned in 1857.

The overtly modern forms of proselytization had a deep impact on the formation of community identities. The reformist tendencies, propagated by the Hindu and Muslim upper-caste-upper-class played an important role in the gradual identification of culturally diversified communities into homogenous religious entities in Delhi. The ritualistic aspects of religion that used to be performed inside the confined domains of religious places of worship-mosques, temples or shrines, became issue of communal conflicts. Public preaching of religions transformed the public space into a contested entity. The public space that was once shared equally by all communities now turned into a site of violent ideological struggles. It was for these reasons that religious processions and cow slaughter emerged as the most contentious political issues.

**Cow, customs and conflicts**

As British rule unfolded, its policy of conflict management set the terms of discourse for colonial politics. The cow sacrifice had never been a conflict between Hindus and Muslims of Delhi before the arrival of the British. It was always dealt with at local level by employing certain kind of context specific restrictions. However, the cow became the most visible symbol of religious difference between Hindus and Muslims in the nineteenth century. It is to be noted here that alongside Muslims and a few lower caste Hindu communities, the British were also beef-eaters. There was a high demand for beef among British officials and in the army cantonments, which

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28 Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 12.
29 Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 15.
30 Ian Copland argues that there was no uniform principle on the slaughter of cows in pre-colonial India. It differed in every princely states based on the size and requirement of Hindu and Muslim population divided regionally. Ian Copland, ‘What to Do About Cows? Princely State Versus British Approaches to a South Asian Dilemma’, Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 68, no. 1 (2005), 60-62.
actually led to the regularization of cow sacrifice. British policies contradicted previous royal proclamations on the prohibition of cow sacrifice, especially on occasions of Muslim religious festivities. Even after the onset of Company rule, the last Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar, used to sacrifice camel, not a cow, on the day of Bakra-Eid in order to avoid conflicts and to show respect for Hindu sensibilities.\(^{31}\) Indeed Mughal rulers, since the time of Babur, had prohibited cow slaughter on Eid.\(^ {32}\) British officials discarded such arrangements and codified the practice of slaughter by issuing orders and decrees which had the effect of allowing cow slaughter under certain circumstances. They identified a group of people as community representatives in order to manage such social conflicts which in turn led to a new politics of legal petitioning. The selected community representatives would approach the Company court in Delhi, especially on the question of cow sacrifice. The official response of the Company to these petitions actually expanded the scope of the debate on cow slaughter.\(^ {33}\)

The interaction between the selected community representatives and British officials produced new power equations in society. It had two implications: first, the dominant class within each religious community acquired a legitimate right to represent a group or community in official terms. The community elite articulated their arguments in an administrative language, thus defining categories of representation. Secondly, customary practices, which in the past were not entirely codified and prevalent as unwritten social norms, gradually became fixed, codified and legalized. Most importantly, the definition of customs, interpreted and presented by upper-caste elite, established a set of Hindu and Muslim practices as legitimate. Some of the older caste-centric rituals and practices prevalent amongst Hindus and Muslims gradually became irrelevant in the new administrative set up.

The Company recognized customary practices as fundamental sources of law in Delhi.\(^ {34}\) However, different community representatives defined their customary practices from their own perspectives, providing conflicting narratives of religious norms. In fact, it became difficult for the officials to judge the veracity of these contradictory claims. For example, in a dispute over cow-sacrifice in 1819, the British Resident issued an Order and allowed Muslims to sacrifice

\(^{31}\) Spear, *Twilight of the Mughal*, 196-197 and 170-171.


\(^{33}\) Copland, “What to Do About Cows?”, 60-62.

cows on Eid day within the boundary of their own houses. This order was re-issued in 1835. The Order stated that ‘Mohemmadans are allowed to kill cows at the Eid in their own houses and at the accustomed places where it would not be offensive to the Hindoos (sic).’ But the Order soon became contentious as Hindu petitioners insisted on complete ban on cow slaughter, while, Muslim representatives claimed for the extension of this right.

The Company’s response to cow and meat regulations in Delhi was based on the administrative measures it set up in Punjab, especially after 1845 which asserted that the British officials were ‘expected to extend equal rights to all native religions and to align with none.’ The officials actively committed themselves to concede Muslims their reasonable right, while regulating the exercise of this right in a manner that it did not cause offence to others. This conflict management had two important aspects: first, the legalization of the practice; and second, the delimitation of the community space. These norms were developed in 1849 for Punjab with a purpose to regulate the slaughter of cow and of other animals and ensure that it was as inoffensive to the general public and to Hindu sensibilities as possible. Several restrictions were imposed ordering that animal slaughter would not be permitted within 300 yards (about 274.3 meters) of cities, towns or villages where the Hindu and Muslim population was mixed or living in close proximity. Demarcated spots were to be provided for the shambles and butchers’ shops in every large town away from any religious places of worship or fakir’s huts. It also mandated that beef, though slaughtered outside, would not be exposed for sale in shops within towns.

In 1852, a major dispute took place in Delhi, which led to the issuing of a set of instructions in this regard. It was ordered by a Magistrate that ‘a list be prepared of the individuals who were in the habit of making sacrifice and that the rite may be observed at certain places where it used to be observed before.’ This order was followed and every Muslim who sacrificed cow registered their names in the thanas. However, Muslims of the city found this norm rather problematic due to the inconveniences they faced in registering their names.

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35 Spear, Twilight of the Mughal, 195.
36 Spear, Twilight of the Mughal, 195.
37 Quoted in Awadhendra Sharan, In the City, Out of Place: Nuisance, Pollution and Dwelling in Delhi. C. 1850-2000 (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), 75.
38 Sharan, In the City, Out of Place, 75-76. These norms were applied in Delhi in 1853 by Thomas Metcalf since the Delhi territory was a part of the Punjab province.
39 Spear, Twilight of the Mughals, 196.
Moreover, determining the nature and kind of animal sacrifice well in advance was a difficult issue. Besides, the cow being a big animal was also bought by more than one person for slaughtering on Eid day. Consequently, Thomas Metcalf issued a decree in 1853 introducing rules that were devised for the Punjab province. He allowed cow slaughter on festive occasions in Delhi and re-established the previous order of slaughtering cows within Muslim houses.\textsuperscript{40} Consistent with its historical stance, the Mughal court in Delhi, particularly Bahadur Shah Zafar, was not in favour of this decision: when Muslim petitioners approached the emperor to revoke the Magistrate’s order and get permission for unrestricted sacrifice, he categorically refused to accept this demand and argued that cow sacrifice should not be treated as the essential requirement for Islamic faith as Muslims might sacrifice other halal animals.\textsuperscript{41} In 1854, Hindu representatives filed a petition against the official order.\textsuperscript{42} This petition was declined by the British officials on the ground that the feelings of both sides must be considered and that there would be no change in the existing practice.\textsuperscript{43} However, this legal action did not solve the problem and massive riots took place in 1853 and 1855 when Eid and Ramlila festivals coincided. Troops were called out by the Resident in order to prevent clashes.\textsuperscript{44} Similarly, shortly before 1857, Metcalf permitted Muslim butchers (Kasai/Qasab) to slaughter cows in a locality that was largely Hindu. This order led to violent clashes between the two communities.\textsuperscript{45}

Cow sacrifice thus became an important factor in dividing the urban space by creating boundaries on religious lines. The British administrative intervention on this issue defined community space. The listing of people for ensuring peaceful and limited cow sacrifice redefined the act of sacrifice as a community affair, while the identification of a clearly marked public place replaced the common space of the city governed conventionally by mohalla panchayats. In conjunction, these initiatives consolidated religious identities and their association with demarcated sacred spaces. In practice, terms used in these official orders – such as ‘not offensive to the Hindu community’, ‘habit of cow sacrifice’, and Muslim ‘houses and accustomed places’

\textsuperscript{40} Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 53-54.
\textsuperscript{41} Spear, Twilight of the Mughals, 197. The word ‘halal’ means ‘permissible’ in Arabic. It is associated to any object or an action which is permissible to use or engage in, according to Islamic law. Halal animals mean the animals whose meat is permissible by Islamic law for human consumption.
\textsuperscript{42} Spear provides an interesting contextual background to this petition. See: Spear, Twilight of the Mughals, 194-204.
\textsuperscript{43} Spear, Twilight of the Mughals, 196.
\textsuperscript{44} Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 53-54.
\textsuperscript{45} Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 53-54.
–officially classified and demarcated spaces where religious practices of particular communities would be permissible.

The events of 1857 further politicized and complicated this issue. Cow emerged as a strong political symbol with potential to be manipulated by all political actors. For instance, Emperor Bahadur Shah put a complete ban on cow slaughter on Bakra-Eid after the sepoys seized control of Delhi from the Company officials. Listing of cow-owning Muslim households, undertakings from Muslim residents and butchers and special police protection to cows, buffaloes and bulls were some of the measures taken by the Mughal court to make sure that no slaughter of these animals took place in the city. It was done to encourage the Hindus and Muslims of the city to unite against British power. Farooqui indeed argues that the British rulers waited for the occasion to turn it into a communal clash so that they could regain control of the city. There were even rumours that a group of Muslim jihadists were planning to slaughter a cow in front of Jama Masjid to appropriate the mutiny and re-establish Muslim rule in Delhi. Such contested symbolism of the cow, and more generally big animals (like buffalo, ox and bull because it was hard to differentiate between the meat and bones of these animals without proper inspections, and there was a potential that the site, smell or exposure of this meat might be confused with cow meat and trigger violence) had an important political role to play in post-1857 period.

II

Reorganization of city and marking of communal space, 1857

The events of 1857 played a crucial role in the reconfiguration of space and identities in Delhi. A strong vocabulary of loyal and disloyal emerged out of the scenario of 1857 to differentiate between those who supported British rulers and those who helped the rebels. The direct involvement of the Mughal emperor, a number of Muslim sepoys and some Muslim religious

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46 Farooqui, Besieged, 155.
47 Farooqui, Besieged, 155.
48 Farooqui, Besieged, 157-158.
leaders in the violent events of May 1857 shaped the British perceptions about loyal Hindus and disloyal Muslims. The actual implication was reflected in the selective clearance and resettlement of particular areas after the British re-occupation of Delhi.49

British forces employed three measures to selectively punish the rebels, especially Muslims, to prevent any possible future threats. First, they captured most of the Muslim religious places of worship, which were seen as symbols of Muslim presence and Mughal power in the city. It was argued that the mosques were the principal rallying points of Muslims and some, like Jama Masjid, had been used as strongholds in the street fighting.50 Following this policy, the major mosques, including Jama Masjid, Fatehpuri Masjid, Idgah and Madrasa Gahziuddin were occupied by British troops and were used as barracks for years. The Jama Masjid was deliberately desecrated and turned into a stable. The Fatehpuri Masjid was sold to a Hindu trader called Lala Chunna Mal, while the Zinat-ul-Masjid was used as a bakery for a long time. In fact it became an unwritten British policy that mosques, ‘… can never be allowed to remain in the hands of Muslim population.’51

Secondly, a selective clearance drive was also carried out to ensure security and better surveillance. Kuncha Chelan, famous for being one of most culturally advanced mohallas of the city, where some of the most talented poets and artists of Delhi resided, was devastated with one thousand four hundred (1,400) deaths.52 The whole population was driven out of the area after four days of continuous killings and looting by the British forces.53 After the revolt, the area from Red Fort to the Kashmiri Gate was identified as the ideal location for British cantonment. Many properties including havelies (mansions), palaces and even places of worship, such as the famous Akbarabadi mosque, were destroyed during this drive.54 On the contrary, many small temples and a large part of Dariba, where a number of loyal Hindu merchants had acquired shops, were left as a concession after a number of petitions were filed by the community Panchayats.55

49 Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 21.
50 Spear, Twilight of the Mughals, 220-221.
51 Spear, Twilight of the Mughal, 220.
52 William Dalrymple, The last Mughal: The Fall of a Dynasty, Delhi, 1857 (London: Bloomsbury, 2006), 386.
53 Dalrymple, The last Mughal, 386.
55 Spear, Twilight of the Mughals, 221.
Thirdly, a selective resettlement policy was employed. After the initial re-conquest of Delhi, British forces started targeting the mohallas, which were still inhabited by disloyal Muslims. For example, around sixty Muslims were captured from mohalla Ballimaran on account of their reported disloyalty.\textsuperscript{56} In terms of the re-admission of the local population, initially only Hindus were allowed back into the city at the initial stage under proper restrictions in January 1858. The Muslim population was allowed back into the city only after a petition was filed by Delhi Muslims to the government in December 1859; eventually, they were readmitted by an order in 1860. The protection tickets or permits were issued to ensure restricted and registered entry of Muslim inhabitants, but their properties were still kept under official control. It was asserted that ‘Muslims should not be employed around Delhi except those who remained faithful and these should be treated with special favor.’\textsuperscript{57} After long debates on the treatment of the guilty and the possible systems of punishment, the British decided to confiscate the properties of Muslims and some guilty Hindus. They were asked to provide proof of innocence to claim their properties back. Many properties of those who could not demonstrate their loyalty were finally confiscated and later sold or auctioned out to the upper-caste-middle class Hindus and Jains of the city as part of a compensation scheme.\textsuperscript{58} Such selective treatment of population not only disturbed the caste and craft based demography but also turned areas with Muslim presence in Delhi into contested zones.\textsuperscript{59} Every living space, which was used by the community as a group for practicing religious rituals and customs, was identified as a problematic site.

In the post-1857 period the population profile of the city changed, as fewer Muslims remained in Shahjahanabad after these events.\textsuperscript{60} The ratio of Hindus and Muslims in 1845-46 was 54 percent and 45 percent respectively (in a total population of 160,000). The city population dropped drastically during and after 1857. The census of 1864 records the presence of 142,000 people in Delhi after the uprising; the ratio of Hindu to Muslim had also shifted though not so drastically, with Hindus now accounting for 60 percent of the population and Muslims for

\textsuperscript{56} Dalrymple, The last Mughal, 386.
\textsuperscript{57} Spear, Twilight of the Mughal, 220.
\textsuperscript{58} Dalrymple, The Last Mughal, 386.
\textsuperscript{59} Dalrymple, The Last Mughal, 443-447. The official report by W.W. Hunter ‘Indian Musalman’ insisted upon the factor of ‘Jihad’ (a religious war) on the other hand, Sayyed Ahmed Khan’s Asbab-e-Baghawat-e-Hind (Causes of Indian Revolt) broadly argued that the lack of Indian participation in governance was the main reason behind mutiny. See: Shan Mohammad, (ed.) Writing and Speeches of Sir Sayyed Ahmed Khan (Bombay, Nachiketa Publications Ltd., 1971).
\textsuperscript{60} Dalrymple, The Last Mughal, 461-462.
39 percent.\textsuperscript{61} Most of the affected Muslims and some Hindus migrated to Jaipur, Hyderabad or other places. Among those who remained in Delhi, there were many children and women of impoverished Mughal and other aristocratic families, who now settled mainly in areas near the city walls, such as the Motia Khan area of Paharganj, Qutub, Nizamuddin and the Purana Qila.\textsuperscript{62}

In the 1860s, the economic structure of the city also changed. The British started the expansion towards the western suburbs with the construction of Sadar Bazar and the railway line. Rapid and widespread industrialization took place in Delhi around this time with the emergence of a number of mechanized industries such as cotton mills, clothes manufacturing units, flour mills, and printing presses in Sadar Bazar and adjacent Sabzi Mandi areas.\textsuperscript{63} By the 1880s, Sadar Bazar became a hub of economic and commercial activities, largely controlled by Hindu and Jain traders. These traders were the main beneficiaries of selective post-Mutiny British measures that somehow also reinforced their supremacy in the traditional caste-based social composition. The economic success of this middle class was compatible with Delhi’s traditional occupation hierarchy. The \textit{Banias} (a trading caste involved mainly in the business of groceries), \textit{Sahukars} (money lenders) and traders did not find any difficulty in operating within modern forms of commercial activities such as financial transactions, commercial banking and insurance.\textsuperscript{64}

As a result of these political, economic and demographic developments, the character of Delhi’s different mohallas also began to change. The Mohalla as an administrative mechanism, which was closely knitted with thanas, collapsed with the abolition of \textit{Kotwali} system due to the renewed British intervention.\textsuperscript{65} The \textit{kuchabandi} (the traditional administrative model of the mohallas marked with a clear boundary and a gate) which was strengthened by the British in pre-1857 period, was now abandoned as it was found to be a serious threat to security. But the residential caste and craft make-up of the mohallas continued to function on traditional lines, as people who managed to return to the city mainly resettled in their own mohallas. However, the actual class –communal configuration of the \textit{mohallas} changed as the upper-caste-middle class Hindus and Jains occupied many confiscated properties of Muslim owners in different mohallas. These mohallas had a considerable number of Muslim nobles before 1857, but they now suffered

\textsuperscript{61} Blake, \textit{Shahjahanabad}, 173-175 and Gupta, \textit{Delhi Between Two Empires}, 3-4.
\textsuperscript{62} Gupta, \textit{Delhi Between Two Empires}, 23.
\textsuperscript{63} Blake, \textit{Shahjahanabad}, 84 and Gupta, \textit{Delhi Between Two Empires}, 39 and 54.
\textsuperscript{64} Pernau, \textit{Ashraf into Middle Classes}, 10-15.
\textsuperscript{65} \textit{Kotwali} means police headquarters. Here it is referred to the Mughal system of policing.
a downward mobility. The biggest change in terms of the caste and craft based living pattern could be seen in the areas near the city wall. Many Mughal families settled in and around the walls with the lower class/lower caste communities and got involved in handicraft production for a living. This changed social and economic composition of the city did have an impact on the power structure and communal make-up of the residential areas; however, the mohalla as a living pattern of the city based on caste and craft associations continued to function, even without the practice of kuchabandi.

Municipality and Political Representation

The period from 1858 to 1863 was a period of political transition in terms of the establishment of ‘proper’ British colonial rule in India. Delhi territory was transferred to the provincial government of Punjab. A responsive government with Indian participation along with strong policing and military arrangements was adopted by the British for the effective governance of the city. Following the ‘principle of loyalty’, the British identified the western educated elite and the landed gentry as possible allies in rule. Apart from wealth, land, Khilats (Khilat symbolizes a Mughal tradition of offering a dress or shawl to honor a person with award, designation or status) and titles, participation in local governance was offered as reward to these groups after the establishment of municipalities. The middle class and upper-caste Hindu, Jain and some Muslim merchants were selected for such positions in Delhi.66

The Councils Act was passed in 1861, introducing a ‘consultative mechanism’ in matters of governance.67 Following this, Municipalities were formed at local levels under the Police Act of 1861. The Delhi Municipal Committee was established in 1863, replacing the Kotwali system. The city and suburbs were divided into fifteen wards. The twelve intramural wards were roughly based on the Mughal Thana divisions. Each of these wards was controlled by a non-official


67 Peter Hardy, The Muslims of British India (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 117.
member of the government. The city suburbs including the British cantonment and the Civil Lines areas also came under the municipal jurisdiction.

The organizational structure of the municipality and its powers could not be called responsive in the formal sense of the term. The municipality was actually a site where different interests – British, local, sectarian, religious and commercial – intersected with. On the one hand, loyalty towards the British was an established principle for being nominated to this body, while the members had very limited role to play in actual decision making. The municipalities were not fully supported by the government and were ‘encouraged to generate their own funds’. This mechanism of city governance eventually empowered a few middleclass-upper-caste groups which were the main sources of funding. This class acquired power to initiate and implement policies to secure their own economic interests, consolidate social hierarchies and ensure wider political gains. The formation of municipalities and other institutional bodies can also be seen as a reflection of a balancing act of the government. In order to avoid any conflicts like that of 1857, the Muslim loyalists were incorporated in British supported institutions like Jama Masjid Committee and the Delhi Society apart from the municipal committee. This particular composition of administrative structure was designed to restrict the possibility of disloyal Muslim groups taking over any kind of influential position within the local government of the city. Such perceptions continued to be the guiding force behind all British policies until the 1880s.

However, British attitude towards the Muslims began to change after the 1880s. The principal descriptor of ‘disloyalty’ was replaced by a new technique of favouritism. The Ripon reforms introduced self-government for municipalities, including Delhi, in 1881; this highlighted the need for representative responsive government, and created a new vocabulary of majority-minority communities. It created serious political differences between the Hindu-Jain and Muslim members. The Hindu and Jain members were in favour of elected representation, while the Muslim members rejected it. Evoking India’s unique social diversity, the Muslim leaders made a strong case for a consultative system. It was suggested that a Western electoral system –

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68 Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 85.
69 Farzana Shaikh, Community and Consensus, 95.
70 Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 70.
71 Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 73-79.
72 Hardy, The Muslims of British India, 117.
based on majoritarianism—would give more power to the Hindu majority and that, therefore, there should be a system of separate electorates for the representation of the Muslims. Following these demands of the Muslim elite, the principle of separate electorates was accepted in later years.  

Representative self-government was introduced only partially in Delhi. Separate identification of communities on religious grounds became a feature of representative government with the  

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73 For a discussion on separate communal electorates in Bengal legislative council see Shaikh, Community and Consensus.
73 Shaikh, Community and Consensus, 111.
74 From Narayani Gupta, Delhi Between two Empires, 161.
75 Delhi was the only district in Punjab which was denied full self-governance due to the fear of communal clash and its strategic location. For details see Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 111-115 and 143.
introduction of restricted franchise in the first Municipal elections in 1884.\textsuperscript{76} Narayani Gupta reports that although the first election results did not show any religious polarization, it created communal tension among religious communities at local level. There was a majority of Hindus among the voters, but six Muslims were elected against five Hindu members. According to her, the official reports of the time also suggested that ‘the leading people of the town…have expressed the fear that the elections may have helped to accentuate the differences already brewing between Hindus and Muslims’.\textsuperscript{77} It was further noted that voting in twelve intramural wards was on communal lines in comparison to the other three extramural wards.\textsuperscript{78}

The introduction of a representative system at the local level also had some direct political-communal implications. It encouraged religious organizations to speak on behalf of the social group they claimed to represent. Anjuman Islamia’s active campaign for the inclusion of all eligible Muslim voters into the electoral registry and the increased incidence of religious riots in Delhi in the late 1880s are good example to underline the fact that the collective and concentrated presence of a social group turned out to be a tool to make a wider political claim.\textsuperscript{79} The formation of the Muslim League in 1906 in Dhaka further intensified this debate in Delhi. The Hindu and Jain members of municipality supported joint electorate while Muslim members demanded weightage system or separate electorate. In fact, they expressed ‘fears’ of ‘Muslim marginalization’ by a Hindu majority in the municipal committee. It was argued that Muslims would not be able to win a majority in a particular ward if it had a large presence of educated Hindu residents who could press their claims more sharply. The 1909 reforms, which made it mandatory to establish communal representation at different levels of governance, galvanized the debates on Muslim representation in Delhi.\textsuperscript{80}

The introduction of local government transformed every ward into a political spatial category. The replacement of thanedars and Kotwali system by a nominated non-official middle-class upper-caste Hindu and Jain loyalist superseded multifarious local interests and, initiated a process of the politicization of space practices. The electoral representation on communal lines after 1881 transformed each ward into an electoral unit that acquired a new character of being a

\textsuperscript{76} An open ballot system was followed. Twelve municipal members had to be elected out of the total number of 24 members of the Municipality. Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 119.
\textsuperscript{77} Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 120.
\textsuperscript{78} Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 119-121.
\textsuperscript{79} Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 121.
\textsuperscript{80} Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 118.
Hindu or Muslim majority area. These were gradually established as fixed spatial categories of electoral politics with the emerging vocabulary of minority and majority communities.

Re-formed identities and public space

The search for an authentic religious past and assertion of a collective religious self, led towards more institutionalized forms of Hinduism and Islam in the post 1857 period. The Christian missionaries extended their activities immediately after the re-capture of Delhi, offering shelter to economically and socially marginalized sections of society, especially during the famine of the 1860s. A number of Christian basties (colonies) emerged in Paharganj, Sadar Bazar, Mori Gate, Turkman Gate and Delhi Gate areas as the population of converted Christians increased.\(^81\) Although there were only 997 'Native Christians' in Delhi district as per the Census of 1881, this was the largest Indian Christian population in any district of the Punjab province.\(^82\)

Jones argues that the growing trend of conversion was seen as a serious threat to the collective existence of Hindu community in Delhi. Moreover lower caste Hindus were converting not just to Christianity but to Islam. The anxiety about conversion was reflected in the religious dialogues and public debates, which took more organized and violent form in the 1880s with the participation of the Arya Samaj and various other Hindu organizations.\(^83\) These debates led to aggressive display of religious rituals and practices. Singing of religious songs, chanting religious slogans during processions, public hawans (a collective Hindu religious practice to please the God of fire for a wish) and distribution of religious-polemical literature such as pamphlets emerged as legitimate religious practices. This massive display of religion transformed the public spaces such as Chandni Chowk and Ramlila Maidan into contested zones.

The Cow Protection Movement and the re-conversion or shuddhi (purification) movements were two important developments, which sharpened the intra-community conflicts during this period. Various cow protection organizations, which were initially established in the

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\(^81\) Gupta, *Delhi Between Two Empires*, 55 and 81.
\(^82\) Jones, ‘Organized Hinduism’, 212.
\(^83\) Jones, ‘Organized Hinduism’, 212.
United Provinces, identified Delhi as a center of activities in North India.\textsuperscript{84} The Arya Samaj-led Shuddhi movement further communalized the atmosphere in Delhi. These organized Hindu religious groups published polemical literature depicting Muslims either as Kasai (butcher) who kill and eat cow or as converted Hindus who’s Shuddhi was inevitable.\textsuperscript{85} Although this kind of literature was distributed mostly in the United Provinces, it had serious impacts in Delhi. The upper-caste-middle class Hindu and Jain community overwhelmingly supported these two movements.\textsuperscript{86} This aggressive Hindu assertion became so intense that Muslim religious leaders called for united action with Christian missionaries to stop the spread of Hindu re-conversion efforts.\textsuperscript{87}

These developments had a few direct impacts on social relations and spatial practices. First of all, religion and religious belongingness were discussed, debated, displayed, asserted and claimed aggressively in public. The ritual practices, the spaces occupied by Hindus and Muslims and most importantly the claims of communities on public spaces became highly contentious. This was the reason why the mere presence of Muslims, even when it was not directly related to the ‘cow’ or ‘meat’, was likely to generate conflicts. Secondly, these religious conflicts also affected commercial relations. The Hindus and Muslims started boycotting economic relations with each other during and after such communal confrontations. It badly affected the trade and commerce since both communities were economically interdependent. Commercial activity was dominated by the upper-caste -middle class Hindus while most of the artisans and laborers were Muslims. There were many incidents when Hindu landlords evicted Muslim vendors from the pavement, which they occupied near their houses. Such situations were resolved only after the intervention of British officials.\textsuperscript{88}

\textsuperscript{84} Gyanendra Pandey, \textit{The Construction of Communalism in North India} (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992), 163 - 166.
\textsuperscript{86} Jones, ‘Organized Hinduism’, 207-209. Although these organizations were divided on ideological lines, there emerged a consensus on the supremacy of Hindu rituals and adherence to the protection and uplift of Hindu culture.
\textsuperscript{88} Gupta, \textit{Delhi Between Two Empires}, 120.
Legalization of the slaughter of animals was a matter of serious concern in post-1857 period. Killing of animals, whether for food or for religious sacrifice on Eid, had been restricted to slaughter-houses outside the city walls. Beef, however, was permitted for sale within the city, unlike other towns where the 1849 rules were enforced. The Municipal authorities gave more structured definition of ‘public space’ by imposing a fine on the ‘encroachment of Roads’, ‘unauthorized structures’ and for carrying on ‘offensive trades’. These categories were defined specifically for commercial purposes; however, such measures also identified zones and spheres claimed by different communities. It brought together the slaughtering of animals, selling of meat and associated trades under the definition of ‘offensive trades’, which might cause nuisance to public due to religious sensibilities as well as public hygiene, and restricted these commercial activities by imposing, as Gupta puts it, a fee on slaughterhouses. Furthermore, cow slaughter was strictly prohibited within the walled city.\textsuperscript{89}

But regularization of slaughter with strict legal limitations and paying respect to religious feelings and sensibilities required delicate balancing acts. The rules of 1849 lacked any clause for penalty in the instance of a violation of law in relation slaughtering and selling of meat. However, the later legal developments, especially, the Act IV of 1872, mandated that the sale of beef could take place only when it was subject to rules to be prescribed by the government from time to time. Furthermore, it was felt desirable that the slaughter be conducted as privately as possible so that those who were opposed to the practice were not offended. Simultaneously, provisions were to be made for sacrificial slaughter by the Muslims without undue restrictions.\textsuperscript{90} The key was to gather information with ‘great tact’ and avoid ‘innovation’ ‘to alter or restrict local usages as little as possible’.\textsuperscript{91}

The anxieties about sites of slaughter, both for animals for sale and/or for ritual sacrifice, were often mixed with sensitivities around the transportation of meat within the cities. It was stipulated again and again that the number of shops would be restricted and they be situated only in Muslim localities with stricter licensing provisions for both shops and slaughterhouses. In the

\textsuperscript{89} Gupta, \textit{Delhi Between Two Empires}, 127-129.

\textsuperscript{90} Sharan, \textit{In the City, Out of Place}, 77-78

\textsuperscript{91} Quoted in Sharan, \textit{In the City, Out of Place}, 78.
context of such anxieties, cow slaughter continuously acquired political meaning that could easily be manipulated by the elite. These claims around the body of cow were more organized after the beginning of cow protection movement, which turned it into a question of Hindu identity.

By the 1870s the shops selling meat in the ‘Hindu-dominated’ areas (situated at Kashmiri Gate, Mori Gate and the Phatak Habsh khan) of Delhi were closed and transferred to the meat market near Mor Sarai. The only meat shops that remained were in the ‘Muslim quarters’ of the city.92 Although the presence of these meat shops did not create any major conflict, the slaughtering, exposing and selling of meat became controversial that tended to limit the claims of the Muslims on the public space. There were numerous incidents where carrying of meat or beef through the streets by butchers were criticized by the municipality and raised concerns among British officials.93 As a result, meat practice became an issue of everyday conflict between the two major communities of the city seeking to mark out their exclusive spaces.

Bakra-Eid turned out to be a critical period of festivity in the city since it was the most comprehensive of all Muslim festivals. It involved a number of activities, such as selling of animals, slaughtering, transportation of meat, and movement of people throughout the city for three consecutive days. The British government therefore took special measures to ensure its smooth celebration by employing stricter provision of licensing for the slaughter of animals, for sale of meat as well as for sacrifice on Bakra-Eid day.

Two official proclamations are relevant in this regard. Following the provisions of the Act of 1872, the Deputy Commissioner explicitly banned the slaughter of horned animals within the municipal areas of Delhi after 1880. It was allowed only in the slaughter-houses, which would remain open on the day of the festival and two succeeding days only until 2 pm. In addition, cattle were strictly not allowed to be brought into the city or paraded through streets and bazaars, except in three delimited zones. Even within these zones, the use of certain bazaars was prohibited. Each zone had one gate through the city wall through which cattle could be brought in, accompanied by no more than seven people. The number and name of the owner had to be noted on the animal. Once the cattle had been killed, the flesh had to be carried back.

92 Gupta, *Delhi Between Two Empires*, 129.
93 Gupta, *Delhi Between Two Empires*, 132.
through the same gates, covered in cloth and not being displayed or exposed in such a manner as to ‘hurt the feelings of others’.  

The second proclamation was related to special measures that had to be deployed to deal with situations arising out of any unpleasant incidents during Bakra -Eid. It included close monitoring of the situation by the magistrate and police, and the issuing of Criminal Procedure Codes to prevent breaches of peace to maintain order. These measures remained in force for twenty years and were renewed in 1904 with some modifications. It was decided that there should be fixed programs for policing the city and the main routes of religious processions on the occasion of all important annual festivals, especially Bakra-Eid, Muharram and Dushehra (Ramlila) every year. The date of the procession, time and area had to be notified in advance by the concerned community for taking cow processions or any other religious processions. In this sense, every gali (street), mohalla and ilaqa came under the purview of an administrative mechanism defining and categorizing each according to its perceived communal character. Thus, the urban space of Delhi, which was previously mutually shared by the two communities, increasingly became divided into communal domains.

To prevent any general conflict over transporting meat through the streets for sale, the government in 1881 ordered that beef should not at all be exposed for sale in towns. This order provoked reactions among the local Muslim population in Delhi. The Muslim organizations such as the Anjuman-e-Islamia started taking a stand on the regulation of meat shops in the city. They strongly claimed for the Muslims’ right to expose meat for sale on the streets. This conflict took a serious turn after the introduction of communal representation and debates on the weightage system. A confrontation between the Hindus and Muslims took place on the regulation of meat shops in 1906 when Municipality passed by-laws to impose control over the sale of meat. Although the Municipality did not have power to prohibit meat shops in any particular locality (even if it had a large Hindu population), there was a general consensus that meat shops should be managed in an organized way for the maintenance of hygiene in the city, especially after the outbreak of plague epidemic in Delhi. However, as the Municipality tried exercising power on

94 Sharan, *In the City, Out of Place*, 80; also see Stephen Legg, *Spaces of Colonialism: Delhi’s Urban Governmentalities* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 122-123.
96 Legg, *Spaces of Colonialism*, 124.
97 Gupta, *Delhi Between Two Empires*, 130.
the regulation of meat shops, the issue took a communal turn. It was proposed that the butcher shops should be removed from the crowded areas and resettled at a projected new slaughterhouse near Idgah which was to be constructed by 1915. The butchers of the city protested against this proposal and argued that the grain shops (owned by Hindus) were more responsible for spreading plague. Most importantly, they claimed that these by-laws were an interference with their religious customs and were actually unjust since the majority of Delhi’s inhabitants were meat-eaters. The Qureshi community approached the British authorities and successfully secured the revocation of the by-laws.

The educated Muslim professionals in the Punjab province, who were already demanding separate electorates and trying to develop an argument for a separate Muslim identity, polarized the community on such issues. The Amritsar newspaper *Vakil* criticized Municipalities and argued that these by-laws were guided by the Hindu prejudice against Muslims rather than the sanitary requirements. Moreover, the Lahore *Observer* extended these reactions and tried to connect it to the experiences and grievances of a pan Indian Muslim community. It said, ‘We warn the Muslims of all India to be on their guard. The Hindus in other Municipalities might do things against Muslims if they (Muslims) are not careful’. This debate strengthened the arguments of the Muslim League for separate electorates in Municipalities at a later stage.

Cow slaughter and selling of meat as practices associated mainly with Muslims were constantly questioned by officials on the grounds that these could lead to riots as they hurt the feelings of local Hindus. In this sense, the meat shop fell into the category of offensive trade and a commercial activity gradually acquired communal character. Furthermore, the city was divided into *ilage* at a later stage. These *ilage* were organized to carry out water supply, drainage and public health, and like the electoral wards, they produced new and complicated communal configurations. The debates on separate electorate and weightage system concretized these categories.

The period 1857-1911 is as a period of political interaction between new forms of urban organization and the changing cultural life of communities. This encounter had some very important outcomes. First, with the increasing realization of permanent religious identities, any

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98 Gupta, *Delhi Between Two Empires*, 146.
100 Gupta, *Delhi Between Two Empires*, 149.
violation of collective customary practices was understood and projected by the community elite as a threat to the cultural and religious rights. In fact, the political-administrative language of cultural and religious rights and the arguments based on majority-minority classifications constituted the vocabulary of community life in Delhi. Secondly, communal representation gave an opportunity to emerging political elite to manipulate administrative policies for their own legitimacy. That was the reason why even the commercial interests were defined in communitarian terms. Caste, sectional and occupational identities were relegated to margin and religion as an administrative political category was established at local level. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the Muslim and Hindu ilaqa were formed on the basis of specified collective cultural practices but the caste and craft-based Mohalla as a unit continued to survive in Delhi. That was the reason why Hindu caste groups living in Muslim ilaqa and Muslim caste groups living in Hindu Ilaq remained an important feature of the demographic pattern of the city.

III

New and Old Delhi: Politicized identities, Hindu-Muslim constituencies and contested space

The declaration of the transfer of capital from Calcutta to Delhi in 1911 brought changes to the city space. The debates around the planned extension of the city centered on the growing administrative concerns related to ‘congestion’ ‘improvement’ and ‘hygiene’. In fact, the distinction between residential and commercial areas became an important principle of space management. The administrative framework governing the proposed new capital is very relevant for understanding the relationship between the ongoing political debates in the city (which eventually became ‘old’ Delhi) and formation of a colonial capital. It must be noted that colonial state did not propose any significant legal changes in terms of the status of Delhi as capital. Delhi remained within the jurisdiction of the provincial government of Punjab. Thus, the Cantonment Act was not extended to Delhi and the degree of effective self-government was reduced given
the increasing political and religious activities. The Municipality’s territory and authority was also condensed. However, it was empowered to make by-laws in 1913.\textsuperscript{101}

\textit{Slaughtering, selling and hawking}

The most significant development that the Municipality brought out was in relation to the categorization of certain commercial acts as nuisance, which further complicated the tussle around meat and eventually led to the communal demarcation of space in legal terms. The Delhi Municipality wanted to put some control on the sale of meat in the city market for reasons of hygiene. A set of municipal by-laws, rules and directions were issued and implemented in 1913. These by-laws established a comprehensive legal framework. It defined: ‘any act, omission, place, animal, or thing which causes or is likely to cause injury, danger or offence to the sense of sight, smell or hearing, or which is, or may be, dangerous to life or injurious to health or property’ as a nuisance to the public.\textsuperscript{102} At the same time, ‘animal carcasses…putrid or putrefying substances other than sewage’ were classified under the category of ‘offensive matters’.\textsuperscript{103} As a result, the shop owning butchers (Kasai) were forced out of the city to the Municipality market. The butchers protested against this decision and went on a strike. This act was also seriously condemned by Muslim leather merchants and Muslim representatives in the Municipality. They supported the butchers and criticized the Municipality for the coercion and pressure which sought to push them out of Delhi city. Consequently, the Kasai community was given a concession by the Municipality and a ‘limited control’ was enforced. Meat was allowed to be sold by hawkers only in Muslim-dominated mohallas of the city – a demographic spatial concept that now seemed to have been well entrenched.

The second most significant development that later concretized the official demarcation of space on communal lines was the construction of a slaughter-house away from the crowded quarters of the city. It was a crucial decision. There were two large slaughter yards under municipal control – one for cattle and the other for sheep and goats-situated at a little distance outside Turkman Gate. The condition of these slaughter-houses was insanitary with no proper

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{101} Gupta, \textit{Delhi Between Two Empires}, 188-189.
\item\textsuperscript{102} Quoted in Sharan, \textit{In the City, Out of Place}, 3.
\item\textsuperscript{103} Quoted in Sharan, \textit{In the City, Out of Place}, 5.
\end{itemize}
inspections or sanitary arrangements.\textsuperscript{104} The proposal to construct a new abattoir, in this sense, was contingent upon the broader principal of improvement and, to some extent, conflict management. The new slaughter-house, however, produced a new set of complications. The Hindu and Jain communities protested against its establishment since it was built near the Jhandewalan temple.\textsuperscript{105} To respond to these grievances, the Government marked out the routes of cows to be taken to the abattoir –keeping in mind the religious configuration of different localities. But this demarcation of routes made it highly probable that a conflict would occur whenever cows were taken to the slaughterhouse. For instance, serious riots broke out during 1924 and 1925 on the occasion of Bakra-Eid when cow processions clashed with the Hindu festivities of Dushehra. Muslim members of the Municipality requested the government to establish a new slaughter-house at Bara Hindu Rao, a Muslim-dominated area, to avoid possibilities of such clashes in future. However, this demand was completely ignored by the officials.\textsuperscript{106}

By the early twentieth century, the cow turned out to be the most significant symbol of differentiation between Hindus and Muslims of Delhi. The official demarcation of boundaries, which aimed at controlling communal conflicts, actually exaggerated religious differences. The Administrative Report of Delhi 1924-25, for instance, noted a violent communal clash between a ‘Mohammedan boy and some Kahars (potters) at a well in which the boy was beaten badly.’\textsuperscript{107} It resulted in a small fight between two groups of people that the police effectively controlled. This incident, however, was recorded in a different way in the explanation of the nature of communal occurrences in the same report. According to the report, in order to provoke the Hindus of that Mohalla, the Muslim group tried to take cows through that locality. It says, ‘the riot was caused by Mohammedans (sic) attempting to take a cow for sacrifice through a Hindu Mohalla, in spite of a prohibition order by district magistrate […] Mahemmadan (sic) gangs (attacked) on several Hindu houses and temples in side streets’.\textsuperscript{108}

\textsuperscript{104} It was only after the Municipal by-laws in 1912 that the improvement of slaughter-houses came into focus. Following that, the time of bringing cattle for slaughter to slaughter-house was fixed (3 and 11.00 a.m.) and the inspection of animals before slaughter became compulsory. Sharan, \textit{In the City, Out of Place}, 84-85.
\textsuperscript{105} Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 200.
\textsuperscript{106} Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 218.
\textsuperscript{107} Report on the Administration of Delhi Province for 1924-25 (Calcutta, GOI Central Publication Branch, 1926), 3.
\textsuperscript{108} Report on the Administration of Delhi Province for 1924-25 (Calcutta, GOI Central Publication Branch, 1926), 11.
This symbolic use of cow to arouse communal feelings was not confined to urban areas. Confrontations of this kind took place in villages situated at the city’s outskirts, such as in Jangpura in 1927. According to the Delhi Administration Report:

On a representation from the Hindus the slaughter of cows in the village was forbidden and it was permitted only in the neighboring slaughter-house at Nizam-ud Din. When animals were being taken there, the Hindus attacked the Mohemmadans (sic) and the police had tried to rescue the cows.

It is important to mention here that village Jangpura was a stronghold of Arya Samaj activities and was getting exposed to the cow-protection movement in the wake of Hindu reform movements.

This increasing communalization of space resulted in more administrative control attempting to have clearer demarcation of space. The riots of 1924 intensified police arrangements for regulating all the festivals in the city – Moharram, Ramlila and Bakra-Eid. Revised and more intensive special police measures were implemented, specifically for the celebration of Bakra-Eid festival because it involved the movement of people and activities throughout Delhi for consecutive three days. In 1934, the Scheme for Police and Other Dispositions in the event of a Communal Riot in Delhi, called CRS, was revised for policing the city for Bakra -Eid. Its purpose was: ‘To guard places of worship, picket “danger spots” and prevent gang attacks in mohallas, where one community is weak…’ Consequently, every ward falling in the category of ‘sensitive’ pockets was policed and every street was patrolled and monitored for ‘disturbances’.

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109 Cow processions by Hindus and Muslims in the later stage were a practice which emerged out of the modern legal and political framework. The procession by Hindus involved the parading of a decorated cow through different routes to the temple for worshipping. This practice emerged with the Cow –Protection movement after the 1880s and became a prominent Hindu tradition in north India. On the other hand, Muslims adopted this new form and started parading a decorated cow before sacrifice on Eid day. This practice became highly contentious with the construction of slaughter-houses outside the city wall in Delhi and the mapping of routes going through different Hindu/Muslim-dominated areas.


110 Quoted in Legg, Spaces of Colonialism, 128 and 146.

111 Legg further explains that the intension behind these strict police arrangements was to stop the rioters from entering into New Delhi and Civil Lines, which housed Delhi administration and the local elite population. Legg, Spaces of Colonialism, 129.
The identification of streets and routes on the basis of Hindu and Muslim areas classified the urban topography in terms of community identities. The domain of religious conflicts, thus, extended from cow processions to the deliberate use of music in religious processions, massive wedding celebrations passing through the areas where mosques were situated. Four out of ten major riots, which the Administrative Reports recorded as ‘genuine’ communal conflicts in terms of their nature, occurred during the decade of the 1930s and were centered on these issues. The communal situation had become so sensitive that it was difficult for authorities to differentiate between an ordinary conflict which involved a Hindu and a Muslim and a real communal disturbance. The Fortnightly Report of January 1939 suggests, ‘It is difficult to say what constitutes a “disturbance of a communal character”. Delhi is full of hooligans and it is hardly correct to describe every fight in which one side is Hindu and the other Muslim as a communal disturbance’.\(^{113}\) It perhaps implies that ordinary encounters often became entangled with religio-political identities and their claims converted everything into Hindu and Muslim.\(^{114}\) Consequently, the areas which were in close proximity to Hindu or Muslim-dominated localities became the most sensitive communal areas.

**Politicized religious identities and self-defence**

The reformist Hindu and Muslim religious organizations further intensified the differences between communities. In fact, these groups transformed into political units and started evoking a new language of community interests.\(^ {115}\) For example, the Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Mahasabha, an umbrella organization of Hindu reformist and orthodox movements established in 1915 in Banaras, shifted its headquarters to Delhi in 1925. It claimed to represent the ‘official’ voice of the Hindu community.\(^ {116}\) The Jamiat-Ulema-i-Hind was also founded during the Khilafat

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\(^{113}\) ‘Press Note’, Office of the Chief Commissioner, Delhi, GOI, Home. Poll. - (I), 1939, File No: 22/1/39. NAI.

\(^{114}\) ‘Press Note’, Office of the Chief Commissioner, Delhi, GOI, Home. Poll. - (I), 1939, File No: 22/15/39. NAI.

\(^{115}\) A number of Hindu and Muslim organizations emerged in Delhi during and after 1930s. Walter Andersen, ‘The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh-II: Who Represents the Hindus?’, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 7, No. 12, 18 March 1972, 633-640; Jones, ‘Organized Hinduism’; Also see significant archival files: ‘Information Bureau Report (IBR)’, 1939, Government of India (GOI), Home-Political (Poll.) (I), File No.: 71/39, National Archives of India (NAI). Further references could also be found in Fortnightly Report (FR), GOI, Home-Poll. -(I), 1939, File No.: 18/4/39. NAI; ‘(IBR)’, April 1946, GOI, Home-Poll. -(I), File No.: 15/4/46. NAI; FR, Delhi, September 1946, GOI, Home-Poll - (I), File No: 18/9/46. NAI; FR, Delhi, May 1946, GOI, Home-Poll (I), File No: 30/5/46.NAI.

movement in 1919. The Muslim *ulema* (Islamic scholars) utilized this platform and represented themselves as the authoritative religious and political voice of India’s Muslims.\(^{117}\) The participation of Muslim religious elite in the Khilafat movement intensified the discourse of communal politics in India; however, it did not have a significant impact on Delhi.\(^{118}\)

In 1926, the assassination of Swami Shraddhanand, an Arya Samaj associate, by a Muslim and the outburst of riots in Bareilly in the same year deeply affected the communal atmosphere in Delhi. The Hindu-Muslim tension intensified and ‘community-based self-defense’ mechanisms emerged as a new form of communal mobilization. Organizations such as Arya Vir Dal and Arya Raksha Samiti along with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (which also started sending its recruiters and cadres to different parts of the country) emerged in Delhi to provide an organized defense to Hindus.\(^{119}\)

These political-religious movements were also intrinsically linked to the caste-class configuration of the city. The caste-based tussle among Hindu and Muslim groups and the conflicting commercial interests of community elites became entangled with the political ideologies of religious reform movements. For instance, the Arya Samaj began an aggressive *Shuddhi* campaign in the areas in and outside the city wall inhabited by the lower caste-lower class groups in the name of Hindu inclusion. The Samaj received significant support from the Jat community, which started settling in the city after its westward expansion. This aggressive Jat support increased the prospects of violent Hindu movements as the Jat community had played a very active role in plundering during riots and the political instability in the past. Similarly, the Muslim butchers had been a disgruntled group ever since the Municipality had enacted its regulations about the sale of meat. The support given by the Muslim organizations and Muslim leather merchants of the city to butchers was also very significant in this regard. The issues of cow slaughter, selling and screening of meat and the cow processions were actually appropriated by Muslim elites as an exclusive community issue. Like the Jat community, the Muslim butchers were the ‘front soldiers’ during the communal clashes—not merely because of religious reasons but also because of their direct association with the production of meat. It is to be noted that the

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\(^{117}\) The Khilafat movement (1919–22) is considered to be an important aspect in the history of communalism in India. Freitage argues that the conflicts that took place after 1920 in India were communal in nature with a Pan-Indian overtone unlike the more localized and religious occurrences of nineteenth century. See Freitage, *Collective Action and Community*, 1-25.


butchers, *Chamars* (Hindu, Muslim, and Christian), Muslim leather merchants and Muslim shoe-merchants were parts of a long economic chain, which was sustained and somehow controlled by the money floated by the upper-caste Hindu and Jain money lenders in Delhi. The political-appropriation of Butchers, Chamars, Jat and other lower caste groups by the religious organizations tended to change these other forms of social relationships in the city.¹²⁰

*Representation, space and constituencies*

Such conflicts had direct impact on the issue of communal representation. The debates on Municipal reforms under the Reforms Scheme and the recommendations of the Decentralization Commission from 1918 onwards re-established the relationship between space and communities as political categories. The issue of separate electorate became important again in the Municipality. The questions such as *who represents whom* gradually evolved and finally transformed into the famous debate on mixed/joint versus separate electorate. After a long discussion, the system of separate electorate was finally extended to the local administrative body in Delhi. It was decided that one Hindu and one Muslim candidate should be elected from each double-member constituency. The Chief Commissioner elaborating the law explained that,

> The point of introducing two members in each ward was to avoid friction caused by Hindu-Muslim contests. It follows that in each ward Hindus must vote for a Hindu candidate, and Muslims for a Muslim. Otherwise, in some of the wards where Hindus predominate, they would control the election not only of the Hindus but of the Muslims also.¹²¹

The reason behind the implementation of separate electorate and rejection of joint electorate given by the Commissioner was that the Municipality members were, ‘Free to give unreserved

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¹²⁰ Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 219.
¹²¹ Quoted in Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 214.
expressions to communal demands resulting in considerable communal tension in the committee’s deliberations…”

The notion of separate electorate became more complicated in the 1920s. The Reforms of 1919 had already provided for separate electorate for smaller minorities like Sikhs, Anglo-Indians, Christians and Europeans. In the 1920s representation of religious sub-groups such as Shias and most importantly of commercial and professional groups like merchants and bankers, emerged as points of discussions. The Municipality passed a resolution in 1924 in favor of joint electorates. It was proposed that a voter should cast two votes, one for a Hindu candidate and the other for a Muslim candidate. But in view of the changed political scenario the officials rejected this proposal. The 1924 riots on Bakra-Eid festival over cows taken to the Idgah-Jhandewalan slaughter-house were crucial in this discussion. The Muslim members overwhelmingly opposed the Municipal resolution for joint electorate and made a plea for separate electorate in order to safeguard community’s interests.

By the 1930s, separate electorates were established as an official norm at all levels of government. The Delimitation Commission of India (1936) provided the provision of separate electorate at the level of assembly. Thus, the whole Delhi territory was treated as one Chief Commissioner’s Province along with British Baluchistan, Ajmer Merwada and Coorg. It was divided into Federal Assembly and Council of State Constituencies. The Assembly constituency was further divided into two seats: General Constituency and Mohammedan Constituency. For the Council of State there was provision for only one General Constituency. The communal electorate for Federal Assembly defined the Muslims of Delhi into one singular electoral unit and at the same time demarcated the spaces permanently as minority or majority spaces, or more precisely, as Hindu or Muslim constituencies. Communal demography thus began to define political space in Delhi. It is, however, important to emphasize that the franchise was limited to particular landed and educated classes of Hindus and Muslims, who were more inclined towards their commercial and professional interests.

122 Quoted in Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 216.
123 Gupta, Delhi Between Two Empires, 216.
Conclusion

The relationship between community and space that was being defined during the period 1803-1940 produced a complex matrix of identities and politics in Delhi. The British administrative mechanism created multilayered divisions through categorization, classification, enumeration and mapping of communities and space for the efficient management of social and economic life in the city. It transformed the shared common space of Delhi into a structured public space defined through mapping of routes, scheduling of processions and police patrolling. It created a strong division between public space and community space by confining the performance of certain practices within the boundaries of demarcated space ‘inhabited’ by a particular community. As a result, notions such as Hindu-dominated, Muslim-dominated and mixed localities emerged (Appendix 1). This transformation of social groups into homogeneous religious communities produced complex configurations. First, the practices associated with meat that were historically shared amongst numerous caste groups, not only in relation to its consumption but also as an economic activity, became contested. This contestation escalated from meat being stigmatized in the first stage, to being politicized in the second and communalized in the final stage during nineteenth and twentieth centauries. In this sense, meat practice became a marker of communal space. Second, the official vocabulary of minority-majority communities, evolving norms of community-based electoral representation and notions of legalities and illegalities in relation to the performance of religious and cultural practices infused a sense of ownership among communities.
Chapter II

Contested Homelands: Territorial Nations and the Idea of Pakistan, 1940-1947

The process of political association of space and community that had started in Delhi in the late nineteenth century came to its fruition at a pan-India level in the 1940s through the idea of Pakistan and the politics around it. Partition studies, it seems, often struggle to understand whether the idea of Pakistan was imagined ‘sufficiently’ or ‘insufficiently’.¹ This argument is based on a strong assumption that the idea of Pakistan was a manufactured doctrine, intended to dismantle the territorial integrity of India. The post-Cabinet Mission political debates on the future of British India and the actual (violent!) process of Partition are taken as evidence to justify such claims. Consequently, the guilt of the Partition of South Asia is somehow transferred to Muslims permanently.² It is therefore, important to situate the idea of Pakistan in the wider discussion of ‘homeland’, which tried to define India in varied forms and gave numerous interpretations of community-space relations in the 1940s. This chapter focuses upon this discourse of homeland to show how it reinforced the demarcation of space into ‘Hindu-dominated’, ‘Muslim-dominated’ and ‘mixed’ areas. It also looks at the ways in which the ownership of space was claimed by various communities to perform cultural and religious practices in the 1940s. Following this logic of ownership, the chapter tries to explore the imposed sense of ‘insecurity’ that led to the political elite making spatial claims in an organized way.

Thus, the chapter discusses a few important questions. How did the dominant political ideologies define the geo-political space of British India and its relationship with different communities, specifically the Muslims? What were the local manifestations of this discourse in Delhi? How were the conflicting notions of homeland, especially of Pakistan, and the associated political negotiations received at local level? How were the narratives of ‘difference’ understood at local level and did they lead to new claims and/or denial of claims by communities on space? And finally, how did it define the community-space relation in terms of Muslims in Delhi?

I

Discourse of homeland: Ideas of India and contested demography

To understand the nature of the discourse of homeland, two important aspects of colonial politics need to be underlined. The colonial legal-administrative categories provided a space for varied interpretations of India as a political entity. The legal arrangements for proportional representation on communal basis under the Indian Councils Act of 1909 and the Government of India Acts of 1919 and 1935 did identify Muslims as a minority entitled to separate political representation. This recognition of Muslim exclusiveness provided a framework to envisage a distinct territorial space for Muslims envisaged politically. This kind of imagination was contingent upon the ways in which colonial legality was instituted. It gave a powerful language to the political elite which constructed historical narratives, manipulated the present differences and proposed different designs for envisaging ideal forms of nation.

Secondly, British India as a territorial entity had a complicated form. Apart from various British administrative provinces, there were a number of princely states with a very distinct relationship with the colonial state. In such a scenario, imagining or proposing a concrete set of schemes for a separate or united independent nation state would be difficult. Moreover, since all

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3 Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India* and Robinson, ‘Nation Formation’.
4 Chowdhary Rahmat Ali’s famous pamphlet ’Now or Never’, in which the word ‘PAKISTAN’ was used for the first time, is a good example. The pamphlet employs the available legal vocabulary to demand a separately governed nation state. G. Allana, *Pakistan Movement Historical Documents* (Karachi: Department of International Relations, University of Karachi, 1969), 407-411.
the political actors were principally concerned with British India, the fate of the ‘space’ governed by the princely states was not entirely clear.\(^5\)

Let us look at two different ideas of homeland that emerged in the 1940s. On the one side there was the imagination of a culturally diverse yet territorially united India. This position was shared by Jawaharlal Nehru, the main leader of Congress and Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani, the leader of the Jamiat-ulema e-Hind. On the other end was the idea of a culturally homogenous political space or nation-state – either an exclusive Muslim state of Pakistan or an undivided Hindu nation-state called Akhand Bharat, in which there would be no place for non-Hindus. Both Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Muslim League and Vinayak Damodar Savarkar and Hindu Mahasabha seemed to subscribe to this position, for very different reasons (Appendix 2).\(^6\) These two dominant imaginings of nation-space not merely demarcated the community-space relation in different ways, but also affected the complex configuration of local politics. Thus, it will be worthwhile to discuss these ideas for making sense of the local political discourse in Delhi of the 1940s.\(^7\)

Nehru’s imagination of a culturally integrated and territorially united India presents an idea of a composite and secular India. For Nehru, ‘nationalism is essentially a group memory of the past achievements, traditions and experiences’.\(^8\) Although he was less interested in the territorial make-up of India, the unity of different regions including British India and the autonomous princely states was so essential for him that he tended to reject all possibilities of divisions. For instance, he suggested: ‘to accept the principle of the division of India or rather the principle that there should be no enforced unity may lead to a calm and dispassionate consideration of its consequences and thus to a realization that unity is in the interests of all’.\(^9\) In

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\(^6\) Jalal has argued that Jinnah did not initially want partition but would prefer a federal India with autonomy for the Muslim majority provinces. But it can be argued that the idea of exclusive space for Muslims or Muslim majority provinces being the homeland of Indian Muslims was present in his thinking. Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge: South Asian Studies, 1994).


\(^8\) Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, 516.

\(^9\) Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, 527.
this sense, the idea of secular Indian homeland constructed by Nehru had a limited space for such assertions or ‘nations’ aspiring for self-determination. According to him,

Whether India is properly to be described as one nation or two or more really does not matter. For [the] modern idea of nationality has been almost divorced from statehood. The national state is too small a unit today and small states have no independent existence…The national state is thus giving space to multi-nation[al] states or large federations.10

The Nehruvian idea of the Indian nation was ever-evolving. He constructed a secular narrative of Indian past. He emphasized the ethnic and regional trans-national character of political encounters and cultural traditions which contributed to the making of this nation space. For him, India was a space for a federation of diverse nations.11

Madani formulated the idea of a composite and united India from a theological perspective. He argued that all faiths deviated initially from Islam as different sects, but later organized themselves into different religions due to the messages delivered by various prophets (avatars). Referring to Quran he said, ‘mankind was but one nation’. In this sense, he argued that India was also a land of prophets who came to spread the message of Islam before Prophet Mohammad.12 Thus, they shared a common religious heritage. In terms of Muslim political claim over space, he elaborated, ‘Like the Aryans, Greeks, Egyptians, and Turks, Mongols et all who have come… and settled…Muslims too have made India their permanent homeland’.13 He, in this sense, argues for a collective possession of this space shared by all religious communities. While differentiating between a nation called qaum and religious community called umma, he suggests that Muslims are a part of Islamic umma in terms of belief but they are an inseparable part of India as a nation.14 In fact, according to him, Muslims have a greater claim over this

10 Nehru, The Discovery of India, 528.
11 For a critical study of Nehruvian secularism and the idea of united India see: Aditya Nigam points out, ‘to Nehru it was ‘national unity’ and the cause of ‘Indian Freedom’ that was paramount. It mattered little to him…that the entire ethos of that ‘unity’ and ‘urge for freedom’ was under-girded by a Hindu nationalism.’ See: Nigam, The Insurrection of Little Selves, 70. Also see: Khilnani, The Idea of India; Chatterjee, Nation and Its Fragments. Aditya Nigam, The Insurrection of Little Selves: The Crisis of Secular Nationalism in India (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006.). Also see: Sunil Khilnani, Idea of India (New York: Hamish Hamilton, 1997); Partha Chatterjee, Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).
12 Madani, Hamara Hindustan Aur Uske Fazail, 3.
13 Madani, Hamara Hindustan Aur Uske Fazail, 8.
14 Madani, Hamara Hindustan Aur Uske Fazail, 9-10.
space than Hindus because they submerge completely in the soil of this land after death. He argues for a united India based on composite heritage. However, Madani, like Nehru, does not try to dilute the collective religious self. Instead, he argues for assuming religious identity with rights of religious freedom and a policy of non-interference in each others’ beliefs and practices.\textsuperscript{15}

Jinnah, on the other hand, was not interested in the historical construction of the Indian past like Nehru or theological construction of composite claims since his ‘exclusionist’ argument cannot incorporate the cultural encounters and the specifically the evolved Indian Islamic traditions. Deconstructing the given definition of the unity of India, he claims that Hindus and Muslims are two distinct nations who must have an equal right over this space. According to him, ‘Mussalmans are a nation according to any definition of a nation, and they must have their homelands, their territory, and their state’.\textsuperscript{16} Therefore, the category of culture and civilization for Jinnah, like Nehru, is important for his description of the idea of India. But, he attempts to highlight ‘differences’ to claim Muslim homeland. Jinnah, in this sense, seems to work out two possible principles to define the idea of space. He suggests: ‘geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments…that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority…should be grouped to constitute independent states in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign’.\textsuperscript{17} Secondly, he explains that, ‘in the parts of India where Musalmans are in a minority, adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specifically provided…for them and other minorities, for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them’.\textsuperscript{18} Jinnah, emphasizing differences, aspires for a political right to self-determination to establish a legal claim on the space ‘occupied’ by the

\textsuperscript{18} Pirzada (ed.), \textit{Foundations of Pakistan}, 312.
Indian Muslim community. For him, ‘nation does not live in the air. It lives on land, it must govern land and it must have a territorial state’.

Savarkar proposed an idea of politically, ethnically and religiously demarcated territorial Hindu Indian space. Defining a strong ‘Other’, Savarkar proposed a territorial nation, which categorically denies all claims of self-determination by other communities. For Savarkar Hindusthan (as Sanskritised from the Persian term Hindustan) meant the land of Hindus. He explained that the ‘first essential of Hindutva must necessarily be … (the) geographical one. A Hindu is primarily a citizen…of “Hindusthan” and claimed the land as his motherland’. According to his conceptualization, only those have a claim on this space, ‘who love the land that stretches from Sindhu to Sindhu, from the Indus to the Seas, as their fatherland consequently claim to inherit the blood of the race that has evolved, by incorporation and adaptation, from the ancient Sapta Sindhus can be said to possess two of the most essential requisites of Hindutva…of one nation and one race—of a common fatherland and…common blood’.

Savarkar constructed an essentially Hindu idea of India, which is even greater than Hinduism. He established an exclusive Hindu claim on the lands and territories of India. The idea of having a homeland, in his conception, meant emancipation of the sacred Hindu space called Bharata (India) from the influence of alien cultures –Islam and Christianity – which have not only destroyed Hindu Vedic cultural heritage and traditions but have also traumatized and desecrated the Hindu race. It could only be achieved through the transfer of power to Hindus.

The comparative analysis of these contextually formulated dominant political ideologies of homeland reveals that the space as geographic phenomenon and its association with

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21 Savarkar, Hindutva ke Panch Prarn, 54-5.
22 Savarkar, Hindutva ke Panch Prarn, 17. The Indus River, mentioned in the abstract from Savarkar’s book, flows from Tibet into Jammu and Kashmir (India) and the rest of north-western region called Pakistan now. The river is the greatest river on the western side of the subcontinent and is one of the seven sacred rivers of Hindus. It was the birthplace of the early Indus Valley civilization.
community was articulated in very different ways in the 1940s. Nehru’s space was shared and evolutionary; Madani’s space was sacred and Jinnah’s space was community-based. In contrast, Savarkar’s space was also community based but it was defined quite categorically in terms of religion and race. These ideological positions defined the claims of communities over space in terms of their legal and political right to perform cultural and religious practices. These ideas of ‘homeland’, thus, established certain new definitions of ‘secularism’, ‘nationalism’, and ‘communalism’ and most importantly of communal (religious) identities. Interestingly, the identity of Muslims in post-partition north India emerged as the victim of this discourse—primarily because its place in the evolving ideas of India, Pakistan and Hindu Rashtra (state) had always been contested.

‘Imagined’ and ‘real’ Space: Designs of a ‘Muslim India’ called Pakistan

The idea of Pakistan became the most important reference point for understanding the notion of ‘Muslim homeland’, which was pursued, countered, analyzed and negotiated in high politics after it was proposed as a political demand in 1940. Therefore, it became a political compulsion for the Muslim League to provide concrete plans for realizing a territorial nation. Various schemes were drafted by Muslim Leaguers to visualize geographic representations of Hindu and Muslim nations on Indian space. These schemes articulated the so-called Muslim demand by arguing for a division of space into ‘majority provinces’ and ‘minority provinces’ based on the concentration of Muslims and Hindus, with a guarantee of effective safeguards for minorities.

25 Karim Rezaul, Pakistan Examined with the Partition Schemes of Doctor Latif, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan and Others (Calcutta: The Book Company, 1941); Yusuf Meherally (ed.) Pakistan by Babu Rajendra Prasad (Bombay: Allied Publishers, 1940) and B. R. Ambedkar, Pakistan or the Partition of India (Bombay: Thaker and Company Ltd., 1946).
26 A few tentative schemes were proposed by members of Muslim League in the late 1930s. The Pakistan scheme proposed by Sayed Abdul Latif (1938) broadly talks about creating a federation of Muslim and Hindu cultural zones by clubbing the Hindu-dominated and Muslim-dominated regions into different blocks. He suggests the transfer of population and a Public Law of Indian Nations as a safeguard for those who are bound to remain in Majority Cultural Zones. He suggests that the Hindu and Muslim zones ‘should fulfill the cultural and political aspirations of every unit and secure to each a free home-land in proportional extent…of the total population of India.’ Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan Scheme (1939) proposed that British India and the Princely States should be divided in seven zones on regional basis under a Federal Executive. The federation should consist of Viceroy and Council of seven Ministries. The seven regional legislatures would have representatives of British India and Princely States with at least one-third of Muslim ministers. India should remain a dominion and achieve self-governance in stages. The confederacy scheme by ‘Punjabi’, as the scheme is called, advocates a confederacy of India based on different cultures/religions and regional lines. It argues that the sub-continent of India should be divided into different (five) countries on cultural lines and re-assembled in a confederacy of India. He rejected the exchange of population and suggests that the presence of minorities in each cultural zone will work as a guarantee of safeguards for all. See: Rezaul, Pakistan Examined.
The Aligarh scheme designed by Sayed Zafrul Hussain Qadri of Aligarh argued that India should be divided into several wholly independent states – Pakistan, Hindustan, Hyderabad and Bengal, with the possibility of a Delhi and a Malabar province as well.\textsuperscript{27} Focusing on a three states formula, he explained that Pakistan and Bengal should be recognized as the homeland for the Muslims and Hindustan the homeland of the Hindus; with no restriction on migration between these states. He suggested that ‘Muslims in rural areas of Hindustan must be persuaded not to remain scattered as negligible minorities, but to aggregate in villages with a predominantly Muslim population’.\textsuperscript{28} He further proposed that ‘In Hindustan Muslims are to be recognized as a nation in a minority and a part of a larger nation inhabiting Pakistan and Bengal’.\textsuperscript{29} Thus, according to him they should not be deprived of their separate religious, cultural and political identity, and should be given full and effective support by the Muslim majority provinces. Additionally, according to him, ‘an accredited Muslim political organization will be the sole official representative body of the Muslims in Hindustan’.\textsuperscript{30} He advocated effective constitutional safeguards and separate electorate to protect the religious, cultural, political and economic rights of Muslim sub-groups in Hindustan and non-Muslim minorities in Pakistan, including Sikh, non-caste Hindus etc. According to the scheme, the three states of Pakistan, Bengal and Hindustan would enter into a defensive and offensive alliances to accommodate and safeguard the ‘sub-groups’ living in each state.\textsuperscript{31}

This imagination of homeland, especially by Aligarh school indicates the ambiguities inherent in the idea of a territorially defined national space based on the construction of homogenous identities. First of all, the schemes or the idea of Pakistan placed the space and community relations in a paradox: it defined space as a fixed entity demarcated by legally codified boundaries, while pursuing claims on that space from the perspective of subjective associations, such as belief systems, cultural practices, belongingness and the communities’ right to self-determination. Thus, it created a permanent tussle between the ‘imagined’ and ‘real’ spaces for Muslim communities. For instance, the demarcation of Muslim ‘majority provinces’ and ‘minority provinces’ put the identity of North Indian Muslims in a complicated matrix: on the one hand they had their ideological association with that ‘ideal’ or ‘imagined’ space

\textsuperscript{27} Rezaul, Pakistan Examined, 150.
\textsuperscript{28} Rezaul, Pakistan Examined, 151.
\textsuperscript{29} Rezaul, Pakistan Examined, 151.
\textsuperscript{30} Rezaul, Pakistan Examined, 152.
\textsuperscript{31} Rezaul, Pakistan Examined, 150-52.
(‘majority provinces’), but they had to relate to the ‘existing’ or ‘real’ space (in ‘minority provinces’) on the other. Furthermore, they were classified as ‘sub-national’ groups, as according to Jinnah, ‘Muslims in the United Provinces are not a national group; they are scattered. Therefore, in constitutional language, they are characterized as a sub-national group who cannot expect anything more than what is due from any civilized government to a minority’.32 Interestingly, this ‘sub-national group’ could be a part of the ‘religious collective’ Jinnah was arguing about, but not of the territorial space which he was claiming for.

Secondly, these divisions were proposed on the basis of established official categories of Muslim-dominated, Hindu-dominated and mixed areas. This imagination of homogenous cultural zones led to the conceptualization of space populated by the majority community as ideal and uncontested. On the other hand, it, quite obviously characterized the ‘mixed’ spaces like cities, localities, mohallas and galies as units that were inherently contested. Such classifications re-enforced the need for a minority community like the Muslims to stick together and form their exclusive cultural zones as a guarantee of ‘security’ in regions dominated by Hindus. In this sense, it objectified the collective presence of Muslims in certain demarcated spaces and made such Muslim majority zones unacceptable to other ideas of homeland, such as Akhand Bharat and inclusive/secular India. Furthermore, such classifications consolidated the process of the codification and legalization of collective claims on space based on cultural practices and community identities at local level. But a question should be raised here: were people aware of such an imagination of ‘Pakistan’ in Delhi, as they did not even belong to a ‘minority province’?

**Popular meanings of Pakistan**

It is important to note that the idea of Pakistan was compatible with the political realities of the 1930s and the 1940s. It was not a break or rupture which de-stabilized the already communalized discourse of late colonialism. In fact, Pakistan became a point of reference even for those who favored communal harmony and the unity of India. Therefore, it is worth looking at the popular

32 Ahmad, *Some Recent Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah*, vol. 1, 492. The speech was delivered at the annual session of AIML in Karachi on 15 November 1942.
imagination of the idea of Pakistan in Delhi in the mid-1940s. This aspect could be explored at two levels: what Pakistan meant for Muslims in Delhi and how it was contested?

A respondent named Zameer Saheb recalls his school days in the early months of 1947.33 He says, ‘we were given Muslim League badges and a Jinnah cap which we wore proudly. As students we were not interested in the political debates on Pakistan but these things made us Muslim in that particular context.’ Pakistan had to be a territorial space owned by Muslims. However, the territoriality of this space was not at all important for common Muslims, because it produced an imagined Muslim space. Muslims who supported the League in Delhi, according to Mirza, were aware of the fact that ‘Pakistan would be established but where it would be established, whether or not their own houses, mohallas or even the city would become a part of it did not even come in people’s minds’. It shows that when their ideas were translated into the realities of Partition only then they came to know that their ‘Muslim’ identity needed to be configured with the new territorial ‘nation(s)’. The Congress leader Maulana Abul Kalam Azad also subscribed to this aspect in his book. He noted, with reference to Jinnah’s message to North Indian Muslims to stay in India as a loyal minority: ‘As I talked to them (League supporters) I realized that these men had formed a picture of Partition, which had no relevance to the real situation… these Muslim Leaguers had been foolishly persuaded that once Pakistan was formed, Muslim(s) whether they came from majority or minority province would be regarded as a separate nation and would enjoy the right of determining their own future’. 34 Azad explained that the Muslims of North India had created an illusory idea of Pakistan in their mind, which was beyond the realities of Partition. Pakistan, in this sense, meant a ‘legal’ claim on the space – galies, mohallas, localities - where they lived to perform cultural and religious practices. According to Zameer Saheb, ‘Pakistan meant a right to be able to live in their own way wherever they are [were]’. On the question why his family did not move to Pakistan, Zameer Saheb replied, who would like to leave their belongings, house or surroundings where their ancestors have grown. It’s not only that, going to Pakistan even in that period of violence was considered as ghaddari (betrayal) with the neighbors and qaum. He explained, ‘There was mili-juli abadi (mixed population) in our mohalla and there had never been any conflict. People from here actually went to Pakistan secretly, mostly during nights, because of the shame that they were not

33 Interview with Zameer Saheb (name changed), Delhi, 28 March 2014.
only breaking *mohalladari* (the collective feelings of living together) but also leaving their fellow Muslim brothers behind. There were only few, mainly Leaguers, who went willingly, otherwise it was a *majboori* (compulsion) due to the fear of violence and hopelessness.

This does not however mean that the making of Pakistan was never debated in Delhi. There were Muslim League campaigns in Delhi and people participated in them, though there was not much enthusiasm. A local respondent, Mohammad Sayeed, who belonged to a traditionally Congress supporter family with a history of active involvement in freedom struggle explained that the ‘demand of Pakistan created divisions within Muslim families. There was a time especially after 1945 when there were Muslim Leaguers and Congressmen within families creating severe ideological disputes among brothers, fathers and children’. He explained further, ‘Leaguers were criticized in families as *firqaparast* (sectarians) and the enemies of *qaum* (nation) and *qaumi ittehad* (communal harmony), responsible for destroying peace for the benefit of a bunch of selfish leaders’. Congress Muslims used to highlight the inherent obscurities related to the idea of Pakistan to underline the weaknesses of Muslim League’s political mobilization. The Government of India’s Fortnightly reports of September, 1946 on the political situation in Delhi, quite rightly confirm this aspect even after the failure of Cripps Mission. It notes that Muslim League leaders ‘appear to have been unsuccessful in endeavoring to persuade local Nationalist Muslims, who have always been fairly strong in Delhi, to join the Muslim League’.

There is an interesting caste and class dimension here as well. Zameer Saheb and Mohammad Sayeed belong to relatively educated upper-caste influential families. They studied

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35 Another family, who used to live at Pahari Bhojla, Chitli Qabar area, faced the similar situation. Violence was the reason why they initially decided to leave and then unpacked everything hearing the news of trains crossing the border only with dead bodies. They chose to die in their mohalla if they had to. Group discussion, Delhi, 17 April 2014.

36 Interview with Mohammad Sayeed (name changed), Delhi, 23 May 2014. A Pakistani serial called ‘Dastan’ situated in the context of pre-and post- Partition Punjab beautifully visualizes these ideological divisions within families, while the film *Garam Hawa* (Directed by M.S. Sathyu, 1974), written jointly by Shama Zaidi and Kaifi Azmi based on an unpublished short story by Ismat Chughtai, deals with the same issue in the context of pre-Partition Agra, United Provinces (UP). But, it was not a case only amongst Muslim families. The ‘Hindu’ families were also divided on the exclusionary idea of Akhand Bharat. An example is the Hindi film entitled *Dharmputra* (Dir. Yash Chopra, produced by B. R Chopra, 1961), based on Acharya Chatursen Shastri’s novel *Dharmputra*. Considered to be the first Hindi film on Partition, the film underlined the ideological conflicts between the exclusionary ideas of Akhand Bharat and Nehru’s imagination of a composite India quite beautifully in an upper-caste Hindu family. It features an upper-caste Hindu family bringing up an ‘illegitimate’ Muslim child, who (unaware of his biological parents) later turns into a hardcore Hindu nationalist amidst the backdrop of the Partition.

37 Interview with Mohammad Sayeed (name changed). Delhi, 23 May 2014.

38 ‘Fortnightly Report (hereafter FR)’, September 1946, Government of India (hereafter GOI), Home-Poll. (I), 1946, File No.: 18/9/46, National Archives of India (hereafter NAI). Similar expression was made by the Special Intelligence Bureau Report (hereafter IBR) in 1944 regarding the activities of Muslim National guard in Delhi. For details see: GOI, Home-Poll.- (I), February 1944, File No.: 17/2/43. NAI.
in Anglo Arabic School, which was exposed to political campaigns like the Anglo Sanskrit School, Hindu College and St. Stephen College in Delhi.\textsuperscript{39} Thus, they were somehow aware of the debates and negotiations taking place in high politics. On the contrary, another resident from the area known as Haji Babuddin (changed name), born in 1928 and educated only up to class IV belongs to Manihar biradari (a caste group constitutionally recognized as an Other Backward Class or OBC). They were involved in bangle manufacturing and selling and had a different view point on how Pakistan was perceived or received in Delhi. His family shifted from Pahari Dheeraj to Ballimaran area during the Partition riots in 1947. He is a Chowdhary (head) of his biradari for more than thirty years. On the question on Pakistan, he said it very bluntly, ‘Please excuse my rudeness, but educated people like you are responsible for the Partition of this country. Common jahil (uneducated) people like us had nothing to do with siyasat (politics) or Pakistan because it meant nothing to us. It was only the occupation of the educated, who discussed and debated it’\textsuperscript{40}. After a long pause he spoke again, ‘Educated and ashraf left India well before the qatl-e-aam (massacre) started in Delhi because they knew how and when the Partition would happen and how they could migrate safely. It was the poor who suffered the most. They had nothing to take or leave behind except a hope’.\textsuperscript{41} He said, with a sense of betrayal, ‘First Jinnah and his followers betrayed us by demanding Pakistan for their mafad (benefit) and then came the Indian government. Our biradari (occupational association) and hunar (skill) was our only saviour. We were provided protection in Delhi only after the Hindus and the government realized that economy cannot survive if karigars (artisans) were not saved or stopped from leaving because of fear’.\textsuperscript{42} Haji Sahib’s accounts open an untold narrative, a version, which explains an important aspect of the making of Muslim ilaqe in postcolonial Delhi. Not all Muslims could easily reconcile the realities of their existential space with the ideological contours of the imagined space of their nation. But despite there being so many variations in


\textsuperscript{40} Interview with Haji Saheb (name changed), Delhi, 17 October 2014. A short story titled ‘\textit{Naya Qanoon}’ written by Saadat Hassan Manto offers an interesting subaltern perspective. Although the story does not deal with the context of Partition, it highlights how the life of common people does not get affected by the changes taking place in high politics. See: Saadat Hassan Manto, ‘\textit{Naya Qanoon},’ in \textit{Saadat Hassan Manto Dastavez} (New Delhi: Rajkamal Prakashan, 1993), Vol. II, 27-35.

\textsuperscript{41} Interview with Haji Saheb (name changed), Delhi, 17 October 2014. Begum Anees Qidwai also makes this observation quite categorically. She observes: ‘the so called nawabs, begums and the affluent people of the city … had not taken shelter anywhere nor did they help the needy … it was only the small shopkeepers, karkhansas (small-scale industry) owners, artisans and lower class people in these camps. Delhi’s aristocrats – the ashrafs who were proud of their high culture and language had … already fled to Pakistan in early September (translation).’ Qidwai, \textit{Azadi Ki Chaon Main} (Delhi: National Book Trust India, 2000), 50.

\textsuperscript{42} Interview with Haji Saheb (name changed), Delhi, 17 October 2014.
‘Muslim opinion’, Pakistan became a strong marker of Muslim distinctiveness and ‘separatism’ in popular parlance leading to an anti-Pakistan and anti-Muslim environment in the city. But, a question should be raised here: was this ‘separatist’ or ‘exclusionist’ perspective solely associated with the demand for Pakistan?

II

Contested Gali, Mohalla, Ilaqa, City and the Nation: Discourse of ‘homeland’ and its local manifestations

The developments that took place in high politics during the period of the 1940s produced a vocabulary of ‘homeland’ that could be discussed, debated, negotiated and achieved. It gave a rather fuzzy shape to conflicting ideas of struggle for autonomy from colonial rule and from the domination of the immediate ‘impure’ ‘other’, to establish a legally constituted ‘land of the pure’. The discourse that was generated around cultural and/or religious ‘differences’, collective claims and the denial of claims on the so-called secular public space at the beginning of twentieth century, was further strengthened after the 1940s. Most importantly, it acquired an official language. While it was negotiated at the highest political level by different actors, every locality ‘dominated’ by a particular community inevitably turned out to be its ‘homeland’, where the communities claimed a ‘legal’ and ‘political’ right to perform their cultural or customary practices without hindrance from others. The political elite, who put forward these collective claims on space and their denials of the rights of rival groups to the same spaces, started organizing for violent confrontation in the early 1940s. It took a highly aggressive form as the call for ‘direct action’ justified the communal anxieties in Delhi after 1945. This overwhelming propaganda for self-defence, however, had a direct link to the developments taking place in high politics.

43 The word Pakistan and Khalistan refer to the ‘land of the pure’. The imagination of Akhand Bharat was also based on the notion of pure Hindu blood for the creation of Hindu Rashtra.
The beginning of Second World War in 1939 and the changes in England’s political regime unfolded a phase for political negotiations in the Subcontinent. It provided an opportunity to parties to present their cases in the language of legal/constitutional rights. The colonial rulers proposed various plans for India’s independence in return for support from all parties and communities for its war efforts. For their part, the Congress, at the Wardha meeting of its working-committee in 1939 and at the Lahore session of the party in 1940 played an important role in intensifying the Indian push for ‘freedom’. The Congress demanded *Purna Swaraj* (complete independence) while the Muslim League aspired for independence with a guarantee of autonomy for Muslim majority provinces in return for cooperation during the War. The Hindu organizations, being out of official negotiations, presented their claims for Akhand Bharat strongly as a pressure group in two ways: they criticized Congress policies and the Muslim League’s demands and they appropriated or translated favorable Congress policies in order to give their exclusionist agenda of cultural nationalism a political voice. The British proposals were declined by both the Congress and the Muslim League on political grounds, including the Cripps mission’s proposals in 1942 for full dominion status and limited self-rule for India after the War. In fact Cripps Mission was criticized equally by the Muslim League and Congress. As a result, the Quit India (*Bharat Chodo Andolan*) or non-cooperation movement was launched on 8 August 1942 in response to Gandhi’s call for immediate independence for India after failed negotiations with the British. The movement, however, was boycotted by the Muslim League and leading Hindu organizations. They decided to stay away from the movement to show solidarity with the Raj in an anti-Congress gesture.\(^\text{44}\) In the wake of such political atmosphere, the advocates of different ideas of homeland turned towards the need for the militarization of youth for self-defence and the ceremonial representation of different homelands – a gesture to mark their aggressive physical presence on the streets of Delhi.

The militarization of youth resulted in the emergence of various organizations called armies, guards or *senas* (armies) that re-enforced the display of collective strength as a weapon of defence. These efforts for ‘strengthening’ the community were visible especially in the residential blocks built to accommodate government officials in Karol Bagh and other areas adjacent to New Delhi. The formula of self-defence was so heightened that it manifested in the

collection and storage of domestic weapons such as *lathies* (long wooden batons), chippers and knives in this period. The Fortnightly Report of June 1940, for example, notes that ‘there has been a boom in lathies the price of which is said to have risen from As. /3/ to As. /7/’. Such organized efforts for self-defence, as discussed in the earlier chapter, became an important aspect of political assertion after the 1940s. For instance, the Hindu Mahasabha overtly argued and campaigned for the militarization of Hindu youth.46

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45 FR, Delhi, June 1940, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.: 18/6/1940, NAI.
Copy of a Circular Memorandum dated 27.8.41, reg. Hindu Militarization Board, issued by V.D. Savarkar, President, All-India Hindu Mahasabha.

After discussion with leading members on the Defence Advisory Committee and the Defence Council the following tentative plan has been fixed and you are requested to work it out.

There are the different Hindusabhas and Hindu Militarization Boards working locally in order to send Hindus to the Army. But above them all a Hindu Militarization Board should be formed to execute whatever suggestions these local Hindusabhas on the Committee and the Council referred to above as these latter extent or the other. It is necessarily they who are now to give effect in so far as it lies in their power. It is, therefore, that Barrister Jammadas Mhta, Syt. Kalikar, Sir Jawala Prashad Srivastva, Laln Ram Saran Das, Rao Bahadur Rajah should constitute the executive body. The Hindu Militarization Board with powers to co-opt any other Hindu member of the Defence Committee or the Defence Council who could be relied upon to help devotedly to further the cause. This Sub-Committee should try to begin with, to work out the following plan:

1. The Sub-Committee should try to move the authorities to appoint at the Government expenses at least a couple of clerks to help the members in conducting all necessary correspondence etc. in connection with the Military recruiting and propagating. They should also be in contact with the Civil Defence member in the Executive Council and move him to sanction these appointments if it could not be done otherwise. Even if they fail in this, the Committee should appoint a clerk on their own account.

2. The different Hindusabhas and the local Hindu Militarization Boards will collect all complaints and grievances regarding recruitments, the test examination, the questionnaire for the test, promotion, treatment, propaganda requirements etc. which are found essential to encourage the Hindus to join forces. Then they will communicate whatever the members on this Sub-Committee who represent their respective provinces, for example, Barrister Mehta will be responsible for all such matters which reach him through these local organizations from Maharashtra and Bombay. Syt. Kalikar will be responsible for Nagpur & Berar. Sir Jawala Prashad for U.P., Lala Ram Sarandas for Punjab and R.B. Rajah, if he agrees for Madras.

As soon as these grievances etc. reach these members on the Sub-Committee, they should get them sorted, examined and those which are substantial should be forwarded immediately to the different departments concerned with a view to set matters right and in necessary cases they should demand explanations from these different departments.

3. The office of this Sub-Committee as well as individuals should always keep ready in a well tabulated form containing information regarding the number of Hindus and their proportion to the Muslims in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Ordnance factories and other war manufactures which were raised or started since the war began.

4. Instead of having a Central Board at Delhi for the selection of Commissioned Officers etc. there should be independent boards for different provinces and their selections should be final. This Sub-Committee should try its best to secure the appointment of a staunch Hindu Sanghatanist member, preferably one of them, on the selection boards. They should fight for this in an uncompromising way openly that Hindu interests in recruiting etc. can never be best served unless a staunch Hindu

Figure 2.1: Copy of a circular regarding Militarization Board issued by V.D. Savarkar, 1941-1

47 ‘IBR’ on … Hindu Militarization Board, 1941, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.: 200/194. NAI.
(5) This Sub-Committee should move immediately that
one or more of their members and some leading Hindu princes should
be sent to pay visits to the overseas theatres of war wherever Hindu
soldiers are fighting. This is a matter of urgent importance and
must be taken in hand immediately.

(6) The propagandistic activity on an All India scale should
be taken in hand by the Defence Council as well as the Defence
Advisory Committee. Should move these bodies to issue a Governmental
publication as soon as possible at the Government cost and get it
distributed by Governmental means and broadcast throughout
India. This booklet should contain full information regarding all
the three arms, the Army, the Navy and the Air-forces, as well
as the Military and Technical manufacture in connection with the
qualifications of the recruits, to the pay, the test and duties
expected of them, promotions and such other details the knowledge
of which can put those who are desirous of joining the forces, the
technical schools etc., in possession of all information and
show the way how to join them. The pamphlets should also
give the different addresses where to apply for admission, it
should also give a sketch of the rules and regulations in
connection with the schools at Mahr, Bangalore, Dehradun etc.
mentioning the prospects which the successful candidates can
look forward to in that line. Such a booklet constitutes at
present a crying need. The Hindu Mahasabha receives a number
of Hindus desirous to join the Army and Military Schools and
Workshops but do not know where to go and what to choose and whom
to address for want of detailed information referred to above.
Our Sub-Committee should try its best to get these pamphlets
published by the Council or by the Military authorities or failing
that they must, on their own account, get all the information
from the Adjutant General or other authorities and publish this
booklet on behalf of the Sub-Committee itself. The Hindusabhas
all over India should receive copies of this booklet through
government agencies; at any rate these booklets must be available
to the Hindusabhas and other persons at all important book-shops
and stands.

All such information should be translated by the
Government in Vernaculars and distributed free to all people at
great gatherings such as jatras and conferences.

(7) The Sub-Committee should take up these details to
begin with in hand. It should look upon itself as an organization
with more or less Governmental powers and prestige and should help
the Hindu Mahasabha in getting its difficulties removed and supply
it with all authoritative information which is not strictly confiden
tial from the Government point of view and should secure all
Government assistance without which the Hindu Mahasabha cannot
press on the work of Hindu Militarization as effectively as it is
possible to do with the Governmental help. This Sub-Committee
should try to be in the closest contact with the Hindu members in the
Executive Council (Central).

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C.L. 9-9-41

Figure 2.2: A copy of circular regarding Militarization Board issued by V.D. Savarkar, 1941-II

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48 'IBR' on … Hindu Militarization Board, 1941, GOI, Home-Poll.-(I), File No.: 200/194. NAI.
In fact, this was one of the reasons why the Sabha supported British war efforts and campaigned enthusiastically for the involvement of Hindu youth in the British army. Interestingly, various other communal outfits, both Hindu and Muslim, made training and discipline important aims. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Rashtriya Seva Samiti, Hindu Rashtra Dal, Lok Sena and Arya Veer Dal aimed at training Hindu youth in *lath*ī, squad drill and physical training.\(^4^9\) A Muslim National Guard was organized on similar lines in 1940 with a particular agenda of physical training and youth discipline.\(^5^0\) Interestingly, organizations like Congress Sewa Dal, Majlis-e-Ahrar, Khaksar Volunteer Corps and others also organized themselves for self-defence.\(^5^1\) These organizations started marching on the streets and mohallas of Delhi with a goal of marking their presence and to infusing sense of security among their respective ‘communities’.\(^5^2\) It seems that each ‘homeland’ had to be achieved locally in order to be heard ‘nationally’.

There had already been various public ceremonies through which these multiple ideas were translated and displayed at local level. Gestures like flag salutation ceremonies, conferences, political processions and military training acquired legitimacy from local conflicts. The term ‘Pakistan’ was formally introduced in Delhi in April 1940 by the Muslim League (ML). It celebrated ‘All-India Pakistan Day’ followed by nine salutation ceremonies. It was followed by several ‘All India Muslim conferences’ and meetings in later years, which according to the Fortnightly Reports, concentrated on ‘separate electorates for the Constituent Assembly, and on “safeguards” to be prescribed by Muslim representatives themselves’.\(^5^3\) In fact, *Dawn* newspaper, established in 1942 in Delhi with a claim to advocate the cause of all Hindustan’s Muslims, started referring to the north-west (Punjab, Northwest Frontier Province, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan) region of India as Pakistan after 1943 with a column ‘Pakistan News’.\(^5^4\)

\(^{4^9}\) ‘IBR’ on ...Hindu Militarization Board, 1941, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.: 200/194. NAI.

\(^{5^0}\) ‘IBR’ on the activities of Muslim League and Muslim National Guard: ‘IBR’, 1943, GOI, Home-Poll. - (I), File No.: 17/2/43. NAI. On State Muslim League, ‘IBR’, 1943, GOI, Home-Poll (I), 519/3/43. NAI.

\(^{5^1}\) Andersen, ‘The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh-II’; For an official note on Khaksar Movement see: ‘IBR’, 1939, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.: 71/39.NAI. Further references could also be found in FR (hereafter FR), April 1939, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.: 18/4/39; ‘IBR’, April 1946, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.: 15/4/46. NAI; FR, Delhi, September 1946, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.: 18/9/46. NAI; FR, Delhi, May 1946, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.: 30/5/46. NAI and FR, Delhi, March 1943, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.: 28/3/43.NAI.

\(^{5^2}\) Interview with Haji Saheb (name changed), Delhi, 17 October. On Khaksar Movement see: ‘IBR’: GOI, Home-Poll.-I, 1939, File No.: 71/39.NAI.

\(^{5^3}\) FR, Delhi, April, 1940, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.: 18/3/40.NAI.

\(^{5^4}\) *The Dawn*, 1942 onwards.
The use of Jinnah cap and Pakistan flag was also promoted to endorse and show Muslim association with the League and its drafted Pakistan demand.\textsuperscript{55}

![Jinnah Cap Advertisement](image)

\textbf{Figure 2.3: An advertisement published in the \textit{Dawn}, 1946} \textsuperscript{56}

It is important to note here that opposition to the British war campaign by Congress and other parties was successful in calming the communal atmosphere in Delhi. Congress, Ahrar Party and the Jamiat along with other left parties raised concerns about government’s ARP (Air Raid Precautions) policy and the merits of rationing for the poor to overcome the war time food crisis and the lack of basic amenities in the regions including Delhi. These campaigns, coupled with the successful mobilization of the masses against British rule which tended to reduce communal tensions: the fortnightly reports recorded a very low number of reported communal incidents during the period 1942-44. Congress especially achieved great support not only in urban Delhi but also in its surrounding rural areas.\textsuperscript{57} In fact, Nehru, Azad and other leaders of the Congress

\textsuperscript{55} \textit{The Dawn}, September 1945 and onwards. Also see: Mirza Abul Hassan Ispahani, \textit{Qaid-E-Azam Jinnah: As I Know Him} (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1976), 37-41 and 67-83.

\textsuperscript{56} \textit{The Dawn}, 27 June 1946.

\textsuperscript{57} FR, Delhi, January 1944, GOI, Home-Poll. (I), File No.: 18/1/44. NAI; FR, January 1945, GOI, Home-Poll. (I), File No.:18/2/45 also see: FRs for the period of 1942-1945.
were received with much enthusiasm according to official reports of this period.\(^{58}\) But, political activities such as symbolic celebration of ‘independence’ kept different ideas of a homeland alive in Delhi. Congress, along with Jamiat-ul-ulema -e- Hind \(^{59}\) and Ahrar Party started celebrating Independence Day on 26 January.\(^ {60}\) Following this, Muslim League decided to celebrate Pakistan Day on 23 March with flag salutation ceremonies in different parts of the city.\(^ {61}\) Similarly, apart from organizing Akhand Bharat Conferences, Mahasabha and RSS declared the same day (23 March) as anti-Pakistan day to agitate and stand against Muslim League and the Congress’s policy of negotiation with the League or Muslims. Several meetings were held in Delhi by Hindu organizations including Mahasabha, Arya Yuvak Sangh and RSS. Similarly, the pro-Congress Muslim organizations such as Anjuman-e-Saif-ul-Islam or other anti-League Muslim groups joined the anti-Pakistan platform. They also held large meetings to emphasize the need for Hindu-Muslim unity and to condemn the demand for a ‘separate Muslim nation’.\(^ {62}\)

Due to local conflicts, however, these political campaigns resulted in anti-Muslim polarization in Delhi and throughout north India. Hindu organizations, including Mahasabha, in UP and different parts of Madhya Pradesh initiated a mobilization drive to stress upon joint Hindu-Sikh action against the demands of Pakistan.\(^ {63}\) It was also a manifestation of the feeling of Sikh isolation if India, especially Punjab were to be divided into Hindu-dominated and Muslim-dominated provinces. The Sikh religious processions, which were already going through a transformation in the 1930s, took an aggressive anti-Muslim turn in the 1940s in Delhi.\(^ {64}\) The deliberate gatherings outside mosques and intentional disturbance during the prescribed and

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\(^{58}\) FR, Delhi, September 1942, GOI, Home-Poll.-{I}, File No.: 18/9/42. NAI. The FRs for the entire war period after 1942 could be referred in this relation.

\(^{59}\) Jamiat-ul-ulema-e-Hind was founded during the Khilafat movement in 1919. Initially, the Muslim ulema (Islamic scholars) of all schools utilized this platform to be a religious and political voice of Muslims but after the collapse of Khilafat and non-cooperation movement, only Deoband ulema remained in the organization. The Jamiat worked closely with Congress and opposed Muslim League. In 1940, Azad Muslim Conference was organized on behalf of the Jamiat- ul-ulema in Delhi to voice its opposition to the demand for Pakistan while reiterating religious and cultural safeguards in future constitutional set-up of India. See: Ziya-ul-Hasan Faruqi, *The Deoband School and the Demand for Pakistan*, (Calcutta: Asia Publishing House, 1963), chapter IV. Also see: FR, Delhi, March 1942, GOI, Home-Poll.-{I}, File No.: 18/3/42. NAI.

\(^{60}\) FR, Delhi, January 1942, GOI, Home-Poll.-{I}, File No.: 18/1/42. NAI.

\(^{61}\) FR, Delhi, March 1942, GOI, Home-Poll.-{I}, File No.: 18/3/42. NAI.

\(^{62}\) FR, Delhi, March 1940, GOI, Home-Poll.-{I}, File No.: 18/3/40. NAI.

\(^{63}\) FR, UP, January 1940, GOI, Home. Poll. - {I}, File No.: 18/1/40. NAI.

\(^{64}\) The FR of UP noted that the Sikhs were coming closer to Hindus in opposition to Muslims particularly on Pakistan scheme during that period. In meetings, separately organized by the Sikh leaders and Hindu Mahasabha, stress was made to join hands with each other. The report says: ‘At an Arya Samaj Meeting in Pratapgarh one speaker threatened the Muslims that the Sikh would drive them out of India as the Jews were driven out of Germany.’ See: FR of UP, April 1940, Home. Poll. - {I}, File No.: 18/4/40. NAI. Furthermore, the other report noted that the ‘Hindu Mahasabha is becoming popular. A meeting was organized in Lucknow and claims were made that the Hindus were in majority and therefore they had the right to rule the country. These organizations joined hands with Sikhs on Guruparva and chanted slogans like: ‘Hindustan Hinduon ka na kisi ke baap ka’ (Hindustan belongs to no other than Hindus). See: FR, UP, January, 1940, GOI, Home-Poll.-{I}, File No.: 23/1/40. NAI.
‘legally protected’ daily prayer times were the main features of this aggressive anti-Muslim display. The Sikh religious processions were organized in commemoration of the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur who was killed by Emperor Aurangzeb. The ceremony involved the transfer of guru Granth Sahib (holy text) moving through different ‘sensitive’ routes from Old Delhi to the newly developed/extended areas of Delhi/New Delhi (from Gurudwara Sis Ganj in Chandni Chowk through Jama Masjid, Ajmeri Gate to the Paharganj Bazar area). The government had to make special police arrangements for defining the time, route and the form of processions for the Sikh community to ensure that they did not reach the mosques situated in ‘sensitive’ areas at times of evening prayer (Asar, Maghreb and Isha). This demarcation of certain time(s) and space also contributed to the process of establishing ‘sacred’ symbols for conflicting cultural claims and the re-mapping of the public space in Delhi for religious celebrations.

Moreover, the Sikh community, which never shared the symbolism created around the sacrifice of cow or the consumption of meat, also joined anti-meat/anti-beef campaigns along with Hindu organizations, as discussed in the previous chapter, in apparent anti-Muslim mobilization in the city. As the realization of a distinct religious identity acquired an organized form, the Sikh leaders also articulated their demand for a political right to claim the space they possessed. The demand for Khalistan – a ‘pure’ land for the Sikh community of India - started taking a shape after 1942. This demand did not evoke much enthusiasm since the Sikh population was small in Delhi. But the anti-Muslim/anti-Pakistan platform became politically powerful, as Master Tara Singh and other Sikh leaders expressed their desire for an independent state in joint conferences with Hindu organizations.

These developments show how anti-Pakistan agitation developed into a general anti-Muslim platform in Delhi as religious and cultural differences were politicized. It contributed both to the discourse of homeland and to the collective marginalization of Muslims under the imagined as well as imposed notion of an idealized homogeneous nation. Thus, conflicts between struggles for ‘freedom’ from British rule and from the rule of the majority resulted in anti-Muslim polarization in areas where Muslims were in minority. Such imagination of the

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66 FR, Delhi, February 1942, GOI, Home-Poll.-(I), File No.: 18/2/42, NAI; Also See: FR, Delhi, January, 1944, GOI, Home-Poll.-(1), File No.: 18/1/44. NAI.
‘other’ consolidated and resulted in aggravated communal tension as negotiations in high politics failed to arrive at a mutually agreed space for all the nationalities.

The Cripps Mission of 1942, against the backdrop of Second World War, initiated political negotiations for freedom in India. Against all odds, the British government established that ‘Congress could not speak for the whole country’. These significant developments in political negotiations brought the Muslim League to the forefront of the bargaining table along with the Congress and the British government. After the unsuccessful talks between Gandhi and Jinnah in 1944, political configurations in high politics changed dramatically. The Shimla Conference in 1945 was yet another unsuccessful effort to negotiate a settlement that failed due to League claiming the status of the sole representative of Indian Muslims. Congress wanted to invite other Muslim organizations to represent Indian Muslims but the British officials refused to acknowledge or call on such representative bodies. These developments established that only a power-sharing arrangement between the two major parties could prevent communal disputes between Hindus and Muslims and determine whether British India would be better off unified or divided. As Azad recalls, ‘The Conference marks a breakwater in Indian political history. This was the first time when negotiations failed, not on the basis of political issue between India and Britain, but on the communal issue dividing different Indian groups’. In fact, the Cabinet Mission in 1946 officially rejected Jinnah’s claim for an independent sovereign Muslim state with six provinces (Muslim majority provinces of Bengal and Assam in the northeast and the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan in the northwest) as a non-viable concept. On 16 May the Mission offered a three tier structure of a loose federal government for the Union of India, including both the provinces and the princely states. It proposed that there would be a Union government at the top, which would look after defence, foreign affairs and communications. The Union would also have limited financial powers to perform these functions. All residual powers would be vested in the provincial governments with a will to form groups; each group could also have their own executives and legislatures and could decide what provincial subjects to take on. The Mission Plan suggested that a Constituent Assembly should be formed, which was to be elected by the constituted provincial assemblies, to draft a constitution for the whole of India. The Constituent Assembly was to split into three sections:

Section A was to combine Hindu majority provinces, Section B Muslim Majority provinces and Section C Bengal and Assam. The princely states would be given adequate representation at the Central Constituent Assembly. It was suggested that once a constitution was finally settled for all three levels (Union, Group and Province), the provinces would have a right to opt out of any particular group, but not from the union; they could also reconsider the constitution after an interval of ten years. An interim government was to be formed to manage everyday matters until the constitution was ready. The Muslim League accepted the plan because, as Jalal argues, it gave Jinnah something he wanted to achieve by evoking the demand for Pakistan as a political tactic.\textsuperscript{70} In fact, the plan was a reflection of the Pakistan schemes which had been discussed and debated after the introduction of the two-nation theory. Congress, however, had some reservations. It was not only that complete freedom, the prime objective of Congress, still seemed to be a distant goal; Congress also objected to the proposed association of Assam and NWFP, in both of which it had achieved a majority in recent elections, with other Muslim majority provinces. The creation of a Sikh majority province in Punjab was another important factor. Apart from all, the Congress wanted to have more powers with the central government to intervene in the crisis or extreme breakdown of the law and order situation. Consequently, Congress rejected the plan; yet, it decided to participate in the Constituent Assembly. The short-term plan to constitute an Interim Government could also not work out since Congress wanted to include a Muslim candidate among its own nominees. For Jinnah it was a complete betrayal by the Congress. On 29 July, in response, the League Working Committee withdrew its approval of the Mission’s long-term plan and gave a call for ‘Direct Action’\textsuperscript{71}.


\textsuperscript{71} For details see: Bandyopadhyay, Plassey to Partition and After, 451. After the failure of Cabinet Mission and the negotiations between the Congress and the Muslim League, Jinnah called for “Direct Action Day” on August 16, 1946 to demand for Pakistan. The Direct Action Day was supposed to be a peaceful protest against the policies of Congress and British government as Jinnah claimed in various pamphlets and posters issued through The Dawn newspaper. Muslims were urged to observe the day through nationwide strike, protest meetings and demonstrations to explain the meaning of Pakistan and the reasons for rejecting the Cabinet Mission plan. But in the communally charged atmosphere throughout India and especially in Muslim League ruled Calcutta it took a violent form. Calcutta was the scene of horrific riots with 3000 dead and more than 20,000 injured. Some chroniclers have put the number of injured at over 100,000. The riots continued for five days in the absence of any effective measure from Muslim League headed government. The ‘Great Calcutta Killing’ as it is regarded in history, destroyed all hopes for a negotiated settlement between ML and Congress. For details see The Dawn and Hindustan Times, 14 -31 August 1946; Debjani Sengupta, ‘A City Feeding on Itself: Testimonies and Histories of ‘Direct Action’ Day’ in Monica Narula, Shuddhabrata Sengupta and Ravi Subramaniam eds. Strange Days: The History and Geography of Turbulence (New Delhi: The Sarai Programme, 2006), 288-95; Bandyopadhyay, Plassey to Partition and After, 451-52. Suranjan Das, Communal Riots Bengal,
How was the high politics received at local level? The Fortnightly Reports of August 1946 observed that the religious polarization on political lines increased in Delhi after the formation of the Interim Government. The reports also noted that specifically after Nehru was invited to form an interim government by the British, the ‘Congress right-wing is becoming more and more apparently fascist’ with a feeling of success and ‘it is possible that many of the more moderately minded Muslims of Delhi who so far have not joined the League, will now do so in the same way as many, if not most, of the members of the Hindu Mahasabha have now become members of the Congress or Congress supporters’. The reports also observed that the League’s propaganda that the British Raj was simply going to be turned into a 'Hindu Raj' was creating an atmosphere of distrust and fear among Muslims. The activities in Delhi intensified with the continuous failure of negotiations between Congress, Muslim League and colonial rulers. A C.I.D. Daily Report anticipated just before the Cabinet Mission in April 1946:

Following the exciting speeches made by the Muslim League leaders at the Muslim League Legislators Convention held in Delhi…communal bitterness has been greatly aggravated by both Hindus and Muslims who are believed to be collecting lathies, swords, hatchets etc. for offence and defence should the Cabinet Mission fail to solve the Indian political situation.

It should not however, be assumed that people embraced the homogeneous ‘Hindu’ Indian or ‘Muslim’ Pakistani identities without raising any questions or transformed themselves according to this given framework of difference. Neither was it the case that local conflicts always did not have a ‘communal’ overtone; nor that people were always migrating from ‘mixed’ localities to segregated pockets. But the constant use of the vocabulary of communal identity by educated

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72 FR, Delhi, August 1946, GOI, Home-Poll.- (I), File No.:18/8/46. NAI. Also see, FR, Delhi, September 1946, GOI, Home-Poll.- (I), File No.:18/9/46.NAI. Also see, ‘Jinnah Ex-Rays Congress Cabinet Resolution’, The Dawn, 14 August 1946.

73 ‘IBR (Abstract from CID Daily Report)’, 1946, GOI, Home-Poll.- (I), File No.: 4124/46.NAI.
upper-caste and upper-class community elite produced and organized the ‘differences’ into clearly identifiable ‘other(s)’ – either ‘non-Muslim’ or a ‘non-Hindu’.

In the past, local issues were the main causes of communal clashes in Delhi, such as the Queen’s Garden dispute around the restoration of a Shiva temple, Hyderabad Day agitations, trajectory of meat and religious processions. But now the claims of the communities were expressed in a new language acquired from Pakistan or anti-Pakistan agitations. The Provincial Mahasabha, which used to focus its election campaigns on the elimination of meat shops, particularly beef, in the city, rejection of separate electorate and weightage system, now incorporated the anti-Pakistan campaign in its municipal election agenda. The other Hindu religious groups such as the Arya Samaj and Arya Veer Dal and Sikh religious groups joined the election campaigns and strengthened the evolving discourses on ‘Hindu’ and ‘Muslim’ nation(s).

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74 Tamas (Directed and written by Bhishm Sahani, 1971) based on a Sahitya Academy Award winning Hindi novel Tamas (1967). It tries to highlight the complex caste, class and religious identity configurations and politics in the backdrop of Partition violence.

75 There was a disputed site in Queens Garden, Old Delhi. The Hindu organizations claimed that it was a temple of Lord Shiva while Muslims alleged that it was a shrine, which had been destroyed to develop Queens Garden. This dispute took a violent turn after the 1930s because many Delhi based and other Hindu organizations from U.P, M.P and Berar region, along with the Hindu Mahasabha and RSS, got involved in this issue. Shiva Mandir or Queens Garden agitation resulted in many processions, arrests of volunteers of Hindu organizations and organized attacks. However, the conflict was mainly between the government and these groups, apart from a few incidents involving Muslim associations. A brief statement submitted by the Home Member in Legislative assembly, states an incident in which a Muslim resident of Chitli Qabar stabbed a Sadhu at the disputed site. It resulted in a communal clash. But, there was no organized claim on the site from any Muslim group mentioned in official reports. The Muslim organizations were mainly involved in Hyderabad Agitation. In February 1938, the Indian National Congress (INC) passed the Haripura Resolution declaring that the princely states were ‘an integral part of India,’ and that it stood for ‘the same political, social and economic freedom in the States as in the rest of India.’ The Nizam, in reaction, banned the newly formed Hyderabad State Congress (HSC). A serious conflict emerged between the Indian National Congress and the Nizam of Hyderabad on the issue of constitutional reforms. The HSC initiated a Satyagraha (agitation) against the Nizam on 24 October 1938. The Arya Samaj-Hindu Mahasabha combine also launched their own satyagraha on the same day for the protection of Hindu civil rights. A number of protests were organized in Delhi in support or against Nizam of Hyderabad followed by flag salutation ceremonies, Hyderabad Day and anti-Hyderabad agitations, Nizam Day and anti-Nizam Day observations. In response to these developments, INC refused to back the Satyagraha and on 24 December, 1938 the State Congress suspended the agitation. The Central Nizam Committee, according to the FR, was the organizer and key participant of these agitations in Delhi. The Ahrar Party and Muslim League also assured their support ‘in any practical measures against the Hindu agitators’ (FR, Delhi, June 1939, GOI, Home-Poll. (I), File No.: 18/06/39.NAI). The Hindu Mahasabha and Arya Samaj played a key role in organizing strikes and marches along with other Hindu groups against the ‘alleged pro-Muslim policies of the Congress’ and the Nizam (FR, Delhi, April 1939, GOI, Home-Poll. (I), File No.: 18/04/39.NAI.). It took a violent form on 22 January 1939, when a group of sadhus played music in front of Fatehpuri mosque during the march. Mahasabha continued the agitations till it was replaced by anti-Pakistan processions. The issue, in this sense, was actually not ‘local’ but it played an important role in communal polarization and intensifying the ideological differences between political groups. See: ‘Press Note’ issued by the Office of the Chief Commissioner of Delhi, 23 January, 1939, GOI, Home-Poll. (I), File No.: 22/15/39. Also see ‘Statement Showing the Number of Disturbances of Communal Character which Took Place in The Delhi City from 1930 Up-to-Date’ submitted by the Home Member in response to a Legislative assembly question number 726, 27 February, 1939, GOI, Home-Poll. (I), File No.: 22/15/39. NAI. Further references on both issues can be found in FRs of this period: FR, Delhi, June 1939, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.: 18/6/39. NAI; FR, Delhi, July 1939, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.: 18/7/39. NAI; FR, Delhi, August 1939, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.: 18/8/39. NAI; FR, Delhi, June 1939, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.: 18/9/39. NAI; GOI, Home-Poll.-I, 1939, File No.: 22/15/39; FR, Delhi, April 1944, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.:18/4/39; FR, Delhi, July 1939, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.:18/7/39; FR, Delhi, October 1939, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.: 18/10.39 and FR, Delhi, July 1940, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.: 18/7/40. NAI.

76 ‘IBR’, February 1940, GOI, Home. Poll.-I, File No.: 20/2/40. NAI.
Anti-Muslim/anti-Pakistan and anti-Hindu/anti-majority speeches became regular features of the campaigns for Municipal elections in Delhi in the 1940s.\(^{77}\)

Additionally, the national level debates, schemes and counter schemes for Pakistan, proposals made by B.R. Ambedkar on the ‘validity’ of a cultural nation and its demand for self-reliance or autonomy, were constantly re-enacted at the local level consolidating both the pro-Muslim and anti-Muslim platforms.\(^{78}\) However, it was ‘nationalist’ politics – which defined the dissident voices as reactionary, separatist and above all against the spirit of nationalism– that seemed to acquire wider acceptance. Although there were serious differences between the exclusionary idea of Hindu Rashtra promulgated by the Mahasabha or other ‘Hindu’ organizations and the Congress’s inclusive idea of India, the opposition to Pakistan and to Partition constituted a common ground. This debate produced and established new categories - ‘nationalist Muslims’, ‘pro-Pakistani Muslims’ - compartmentalizing the Muslim political identity into fragments.\(^{79}\) A question however still remains: How was it manifested at local level in terms of the demarcation of space on religious grounds? Did it change the traditional mohalla associations?

\textit{Contested Public space and ‘secular’ residential quarters}

The process of the demarcation of public and residential spaces intensified in the galies and mohallas of Delhi in which Muslims formed a minority after the Cabinet mission’s proposal of the division of India into Hindu and Muslim majority zones. Although the Cabinet Mission failed to arrive at a consensus between the two parties, it seemed that the senas and guards that were trained for collective defence committed themselves to achieve their cherished goals. The presence of a Muslim minority in Delhi turned it into a contested terrain.\(^{80}\) It led to a series of communal riots. Most importantly, it reinforced the official demarcation of the communal geography in multiple ways (Map 4 demonstrates the areas in Old Delhi which were officially

\(^{77}\) FR, Delhi, March 1940, GOI, Home. Poll. - (I),File No.: 18/3/40. NAI.

\(^{78}\) See Yusuf Meherally (ed.), \textit{Pakistan by Babu Rajendra Prasad}; and B. R. Ambedkar, \textit{Pakistan or the Partition of India}.


categorized as Hindu-dominated, Muslim-dominated and mixed). This demarcation was reinforced every time there was a need to make arrangements for cow processions, regulation of meat and meat shops, police arrangements for Bakra-Eid, Diwali or Dussehra festivals, municipal elections and communal clashes.
Map 4: Demarcated Hindu-dominated, Muslim-dominated and mixed areas

81 Source: Author
The denial of Muslim claims on public spaces could be seen in many reported incidences involving Hindu religious organizations. A series of such complaints were registered by various residential bodies with Delhi police. For instance, the residents of Circular Road made a complaint to the Senior Superintendent of Police, Delhi, on 21 of May 1946 about an organized communal clash that took place in Ramlila Maidan. It stated:

Some people from the city gather in Ramlila Ground…parade in the military lines and train themselves in the use of knives etc., shout slogans, salute the yellow flag…(they) deliberately interfere in the harmless and non-serious squabbles and turn them into communal quarrel and disturbances....a mild argument started between a Hindu and Muslim which as usual was settled. These…trained young men…started (it)…afresh and made it a Hindu-Muslim tension…There happen to be a structure…to which they…(call ) “temple”. Lathies and other fighting equipment are concealed in the “temple”. (They)…took out…lathies…(and) attacked…Musalmans who happened to be very few in numbers…These disturbances … are not uncommon…in spite of the police order.(They) remain near the “temple” parading, shouting slogans…it is apparent that since the recent political negotiations, they have taken a very aggressive and threatening attitude.82

Interestingly, copies of such complaints were submitted to the *Dawn* newspaper, to the Delhi branch of the All India Muslim League and the Provincial Muslim League, along with the local administrative authorities. It shows how local incidents could at once be linked to wider politics of homeland.

Although there were differences among the Muslim League and other ‘Muslim’ organizations on Partition and the Pakistan schemes, the politics of ‘difference’ had its roots in local grievances growing around the issue of cow, meat, its regulation and consumption. And the rival claims over public space extended with the expansion of the urban space. For example, an incident took place during the Bakra-Eid in November, 1946 in the Paharganj area of Delhi. The police patrol and surveillance along the defined routes remained the same as in previous years, but the parading of cows and/or the taking of cows to the slaughterhouse created problems in the

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82 ‘Letter to the Superintendent of Police’, 21 May 1946, GOI, Home-Poll.- (I), File No.: 21/5/46. NAI. For Police Report, 1946, GOI, Home-Poll.- (I), File No.: 22/5/46.NAI.
newly developing areas where there was no defined or prescribed route for such a purpose. The Paharganj area had been developed more recently, along with Karol Bagh, at the time of the construction of the new capital and the New Delhi railway station. A number of residential quarters had been developed in these areas for housing the government servants. The ‘non-Muslim’ population of the area extended its territorial claims on public space by objecting to the movement of the procession from the mosque in Paharganj to the Idgah in Sadar Bazar.  

The procession was taking the traditional route on Bakra - Eid day when a group of Hindu and Sikh residents forced it to divert and go through the newly built Chitra Gupta Road. This intervention resulted in a serious riot. The Chief Commissioner’s account of the incident brings out the complexities surrounding the legalities of cultural rights and the ineffective role of authorities:

Today only two cows had to be taken in procession. Yesterday when an attempt was made to take one cow by an authorized route, Hindus objected...a settlement was more or less reached. This morning, however, the Muslims wanted to take out the procession by another route to which Hindus objected. The Deputy Magistrate tried to settle the dispute again and his proposals were accepted...an attempt was made to take out the first cow through one of the routes which was the subject of discussion...This was objected to by a crowd of some 200 Hindus who became rowdy and turbulent...it seems to have been assumed that the route alleged by the Muslims was the one followed in previous years but it appears that detention was hotly denied by the Hindus...the denial should have...the necessity of the District Magistrate prescribing some route. Having regard to sentiments of the Hindus on the spot and insistence of the Muslims of what they conceived was their right, precautions should have been taken...the cow was not brought there to be an eye-sore and a cause of provocation to both the parties.[Emphasis added.] 

The riot continued for nearly a week and spread across Sadar Bazar, Ajmeri Gate, Darya Ganj, Faiz Bazar and Kashmiri Gate. The government took a very critical view of these riots since the

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83 Cow procession signifies the new forms of public festivals, which emerged with the increasing zeal to revive old religious observances and to infuse religious meanings into previously secular festivals. For details see: Freitag, Collective Action and Community, 41.

84 ‘Chief Commissioner’s Report to the Home Secretary’, November, 1946, GOI, Home-Poll. (I), File No.: 7/11/46.NAI.

Paharganj area came under the New Delhi municipality. It was to employ intensive surveillance and policing measures to control such incidents in future. In terms of intelligence, house searches, the listing of ‘bad characters’ of both communities in the city, the close observation of the activities of militant communal organizations, the enforcement of strictly patrolled curfews, the deployment of Criminal Procedure Code, the strict patrolling of highly ‘communal mohallas’, ‘mosques and temples’ were declared as specific measures in order to detect ‘doubtful strangers’. Although a ‘Scheme for Police in the Situation of Communal Riots in Delhi’ known as the Communal Riots Scheme (CRS), was implemented in 1876 to control rioting in the city, it was revised for policing the city for a continuous three days on Baqr-Id in 1934 and again in 1946. This was done to control communal riots from spreading towards New Delhi. The scheme aimed at thorough investigation of activities. Its purpose was to guard places of worship, picket “danger spots” and prevent gang attacks in mohallas, where one community was weak. Consequently, every ward falling in the ‘sensitive’ category was policed and every street was patrolled and monitored for ‘disturbances’. The scheme brought every gali, mohalla and ilaqa under the purview of administrative mechanism that described and categorized each with its communal character. At the same time, the revised Communal Riots Schemes (CRS) exemplify the re-conceptualization of Delhi’s urban space into communally demarcated zones of Old Delhi and non-accessible ‘secular’ quarters situated in extended New Delhi. Old Delhi, in this sense, was considered to be a political/communal space in contrast to the new administrative/secular space of New Delhi. The technologies of mapping, scheduling and categorizing, as discussed in the previous chapter, continually intensified the contestation of public space, while at the same time clearly defining, marking and legalizing ‘permitted’ community spaces and cultural practices. Although the efforts at communal harmony were also encouraged by local government which included the formation of mohalla peace committees, broadcasts on communal harmony and the need for mutual celebration of each other’s festivals, the continuous contests over homelands and defence techniques continued to perpetuate the mental divisions of space.

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86 Legg, *Spaces of Colonialism*, 47.
88 Civil Defence Committee Mohalla Turkman Gate, ward no. 8, Delhi is an example in this regard. The committee organized various meetings involving Hindu-Muslim members of the respective ilaqa (Turkman Gate and mohalla Qabristan) during and after April 1946 due to the increasing communal hatred in the city. See: ‘Letter signed by the Mir Mohalla, on behalf of the Civil Defence Committee, Mohalla Turkman Gate’, May 1946, GOI, Home-Poll.-I(I), File No.: 1/5/46. NAI.
Figure 2.5: Demarcated Hindu and Muslim area for police arrangements during Baqr-Eid celebration under CRS, 1946

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89 ‘Police Orders for Id-Ul-Zuha’, 1946, GOI, Home-Poll (I), 1946, File No: 7/11/46. NAI.
But this contestation did not remain confined to public routes of religious processions alone - it was being gradually extended to the residential spaces as well. While the established authorized route for the cow procession, which was taken by the Muslims, became an issue, the Hindu residents of Chitra Gupta Road and Square Road (the ‘new’ authorized route, which the procession was forced to take) submitted a number of complaints to the Home Member of the Government of India against shifting the trouble ‘from Paharganj on to the Government quarters…(that) had at (sic) no other occasion been the scene of any trouble’. It shows how a practice was being defined as troublesome and unacceptable in the public spaces of the city. This was a reflection of an emerging urban mentality that combined a Hindu upper-caste version of secularity with notions of demarcated communal space. A complaint registered in 1946 by the President of Anjuaman-i-Islamiya, Islam Nagar, Karol Bagh, and New Delhi after the Bakra -Eid celebration can be taken as evidence in this regard. The letter said:

On the …day of Baqr-Id the Hindu and Sikh residents of the locality tried to raise a quarrel with the Muslims…(on) “Cow killing”…one Mr. Ansari sacrificed a cow on Id Day at the slaughterhouse and brought meat under cover. In the evening some bones…were given by Mr. Ansari to sweeperess (sic). Those the sweeperess (sic) threw in the dustbin…the dogs spread these over on the road. Hindus and Sikhs on seeing the bones…raised a hue and cry…They collected on the spot in hundreds armed with lathies and other weapons and began to pass offensive…remarks…They were heard to say “pour kerosene and set fire to Ansari’s House.” They are…likely to harass the Muslim residents who are in a hopeless minority in the locality.

This incident and the complaint demonstrate how the exclusionary notions of homeland were being localized and exercised aggressively on the streets of Delhi. The demarcation of public spaces on religious lines problematized the presence of a minority community and its claims on public space. Meat practice was the most important issue around which such organized aggression appeared in the residential quarters of Delhi to claim those spaces for particular

90 ‘Letter to the Home Member from the residence of the Government Quarters of Chitra Gupta Square Road, Dilkusha Square and Aram Bagh’, New Delhi, 21 November 1946, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.: 21/11/46. NAI.
communities. From 1946 notions of security became another important issue that led to further contestation in the government quarters.

*Local homelands: The Unsecured majority/minority spaces and a call for ‘safeguards’*

The need for self-defence against an imagined ‘Other’ intensified a desire for being surrounded by fellow community members. This sense of insecurity produced a strong threat perception. A section of government servants, the educated middle class, were carriers as well as victims of this perception. They reinforced notions of self-defence and demarcated zones for ensuring collective ‘security’. This was reflected in the support and sometimes even active participation of these officials in the activities of guards and senas. For instance, the residents of the Karol Bagh area wrote to the Senior Superintendent of Police and the Chief Commissioner, Delhi on 24 April 1946:

> We…beg to state that for the last four or five days several groups…roam around the quarters during night time with big lathies and naked *kirpans* shouting out threats of various kinds…the manner in which they shout and the attitude they usually adopt is thumping their lathies on the ground and the way in which they use their torches[,] throwing light on the sleeping residents of quarters… constitute[s] a menace to the peace-loving residents of the quarters….we feel that the(se) activities…are giving a cause for alarm…we are anxious that these activities be stopped as early as possible so that the fear they are creating in our minds may be alleviated.92

The letter does not give any clue that can identify this group of people who were harassing the residents. But, in the given scenario, it could be assumed that the group belonged to some Hindu organizations active in Old Delhi. Another complaint was filed by the Anjuman-e-Islamia of Government Quarters in Karol Bagh, on 22 April 1946, to the Senior Superintendent of Police, Delhi. This complaint is a reflection of how in an atmosphere of communal distrust caste and regional associations of communities were reduced on religious identity. The complaint said:

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92 ‘Letter to the Senior Superintendent of Police from the Muslim residence of Double Storey, Government Quarters of Karol Bagh’, 24 April, 1946, GOI, Home-Poll.-{(I)}, File No.: 25/4/46. NAI.
These (communal) feelings have … crept [into] the minds of Government servants living in the locality and our Hindu brothers are spreading various rumors(sic)…we are being threatened and terrorized…therefore…our duty is to [present] the following facts…for necessary precautionary steps - (1) There are approximately 550 quarters…in this locality…Muslims occupy nearly 150 quarters only scattered all over the area…[the] remaining 400 quarters are occupied by Hindus and in most of them two or three families are living. Moreover, the whole locality is surrounded by Hindu population of Devnagar and Regharpura etc…all laborers, shop keepers, milk sellers are Hindus. Taking all these facts in consideration the Muslims are here in a negligible minority and feel insecure (emphasis mine).  

The letter further mentioned training in guerilla warfare or military drill by the Hindu youth under the auspices of various Hindu organizations on a regular basis at different spots in Old Delhi. It was against this backdrop of fear of being a minority that political mobilization took place in the localities. However, as we will see below, the majority community also shared this threat perception, albeit in different ways.

The official recognition of League as the ‘sole’ representative of Indian Muslims and Pakistan, as a legitimate desire of scattered and diverse Muslims of India, resulted in a different kind of polarization in Delhi. Jinnah, declared 16 August 1947 as ‘Direct Action Day’, as discussed above, to ‘achieve’ a nation of his dream. The Dawn newspaper published Direct Action Day pamphlets and full texts of the resolution for the ‘achievement’ of Pakistan quite boldly, and called for ‘the nation to carry it out’. The pamphlets claimed that ‘might alone can secure their right’, while stressing the need for discipline. The Provincial Muslim Students Federation called for a strike on 16 August 1946 and the Delhi Provincial Muslim League carried out flag salutation (the official term used in Fortnightly Reports) ceremonies in different wards of the city. The League sent appeals to the government officials to co-operate with its agenda and follow the non-co-operation policy. It used congregational prayers, particularly the Juma prayer, as a political tool for disseminating their message. 

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93 ‘Letter to the Senior Superintendent of Police from the President Anjuman-e-Islamia’, 22 April, 1946, GOI, Home-Poll.-I), 1946, File No.:25/4/1946, NAL.
95 ‘Muslim India Observes Direct Action Day’, The Dawn, 18 August 1946.
96 FR, Delhi, August 1946, GOI, Home-Poll.-I), File No.:18/8/46, NAL. The League tried to capitalize Muslim congregational prayers as an expression of Muslim solidarity for the demand of Pakistan. For instance, on the Jama-tul-Vida prayers which mark
the last Friday of Ramadan had great relevance for Muslims, but the League’s paper tried to represent it as a Muslim reaction. At the same time the Hindu political organizations also posed this collective presence in the same way to create the same expression. See: ‘Many Thousands Muslims Offer Juma-tul-Wida Prayers at Delhi’, The Dawn, 25 August 1946. Also see: FR, Delhi, August 1946. GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.:18/8/46,NAI; and ‘Letter to the Secretary, Home Department from Hindu Bharati Sabha, Anand Nagar, Karol Bagh, Government Quarters’, 22 August 1946, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.:23/8/46, NAI.

The Direct Action Day did not produce any communal clash in Delhi. The Delhi report expressed its surprise: ‘with the present temper and bitter communal feelings that now exist; there have not been serious communal clash in other parts of the country’.

The news of violence coming from Calcutta, however, intensified the atmosphere of distrust and threat. The Hindu residents of government quarters also started calling for defence and precautionary safeguards. This threat perception put particular localities in the category of ‘unsecured’ spaces. A letter from the President of Hindu Bharat Sabha was written on 22 August 1946 to the Secretary, Home Department, Government of India, on behalf of the residents under the subject of ‘Maintenance of Law and Order and safeguarding the Life and Property of citizens’.

It said:

What has followed the Muslim League “Direct Action Day” on 16/8/46 in Calcutta has caused nervousness all rounds…We the Hindu residents …are under the grip of a similar but intense danger and request…for taking necessary measures to protect our lives and property against any possible onrush. Intense and brisk activities on the part of the members of the so-called minority community in this area…their steps to organize and equip themselves have confirmed our fears especially regarding the outcome of their Juma-Ul-Vida (sic) celebrations…the report is current that they are determined to launch an organized mass offensive on a scale bigger than even that of Calcutta…we request…for some extra precautions for Friday the 23rd August, 1946 in order to safeguard our lives and property.

Such examples reveal that as the claims and counter claims on space became violent, the notion of security/insecurity was perceived and articulated in a mutually exclusive way in the Hindu and

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98 *Dawn*, 18 August 1946.
99 *FR*, Delhi, August 1946. GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.:18/8/46. NAI.
100 See a report sent by the Secretariat of the Governor General to Home Ministry to declare Muslim League an unlawful association under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908. It contains newspaper reports describing violent campaign of Muslim league activists and National Guards against non-Muslims during the month of August, 1946 in West Bengal. See: ‘Report on Muslim League and Muslim National Guard’, May 1947, GOI, Home-Poll.–I, File No.: 17/5/47. NAI.
101 I found only one complaint filed by the Hindu residents living in these government quarters in comparison to a number of complaints by Muslim residents in the National Archives. Although there are FRs which record the presence of Ahrar Party, Muslim League National Guards and especially Khaksar Tehreek in Delhi, there is no record of organized trainings camps and violent and attacking group gestures conducted by these organizations in resident’s complaints. However, the interview with Zameer Saheb (Int. Zameer Saheb, 28 March 2014) and some FRs suggest that there used to be marches and training campaigns by Ahirs but these were not at an alarming scale and were mainly anti-British. In fact, Ahrar Party and Khaksar Tehreek were once banned from taking out marches or wearing uniforms due to their anti-British stance. For details see: ‘IBR’, October 1946, GOI, Home-Poll.-I, File No.: 08/10/46. NAI.
102 Letter to the Secretary, Home Department, Government of India from the President of Hindu Bharati Sabha, 22 August 1946, GOI, Home-Poll.-I File No.: 23/8/46. NAI.
Muslim quarters to highlight their religious and cultural differences. The educated middle class replaced the hierarchy of traditional classes in the municipality and placed themselves as community representatives—or mediators who established a link between the grand ideas and local realities by translating, defining and normalizing the political discourse of their choice at a local level. These developments brought the contestation and communalization of public space into the residential quarters since 1946. The Fortnightly Report for the first half of September 1946, for instance, explained the communal situation and the role of government clerks in Delhi in the following words:

The inauguration of the negotiation between the Viceroy and Mr. Jinnah have (sic) slightly eased the communal tension, but…it is still very high, particularly among Government clerks, who…form a high proportion…in Delhi. Often educated in communal institutions and unaccustomed to the rough and tumble of less sheltered walks of life, in which members of all communities must inevitably mix freely. Their alarm at the prospect of communal strife is pathetic and they seem to have little recreation other than the study of communal politics. Their feelings are accentuated by the inevitable jealousies in matters of promotion etc. and since they mostly live in specifically built quarters, they are scarcely able to get away from this artificial atmosphere. A potentially dangerous feature is the growth of communal volunteer organizations, viz. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Dal, Azad Hind Dal, Congress Sewa Dal and Muslim League National Guards…there has been an increase in enthusiasm in attendance at these functions—particularly among the Government clerks…political speeches emphasizing the need for self-defense are too frequent and…encourage these movements.103 (Emphasis added)

The statement in the report is a reflection of how the educated middle class living in well defined residential areas used modern democratic structures to reformulate communitarian social ethos and thus reproduced the broader national political discourse of Partition at the local level. In this sense, the desire for a communally segregated and demarcated space was displayed mutually either to make a wider claim or deny the existence of the imagined ‘other’ in Delhi. But a question remains: was it only in the newly-developed government quarters where this kind of

103 FR, September 1946, GOI, Home-Poll.-I), File No.:21/9/46,NAI.
assertion of religious identity resulted in violence? Did this communal discourse never manifest in violence in the traditional mohallas of Old Delhi?

Zameer Saheb, who used to live in a mixed locality near Darya Ganj and was quite aware of the discourse of high politics of that time, as explained earlier, told proudly that,

There were around fifty percent houses of Hindus in our gali and there was an intersection that still connected our gali to Jatwara (a mohalla of Hindu Jat community) but we never had any riots. Some Leaguee and Jansanghi (members of the Muslim League and the Jana Sangh, an RSS affiliate) who never [in the past] dared to disclose their siasi (political) associations, [now] started arguing openly. There were rumours of killings and kidnapping every other day which were shown as Hindu-Muslim issue to give them a siasi rang (political colour). For Dilliwalas (Delhiites) Mohalladari and ankh ki sharam (Neighbourely feeling and general etiquettes) were important factors which were mutually respected; that was the reason why it did not become violent. But there is no doubt in saying that shehar ki hawa kharab thi (the atmosphere was bad in the city). There were fears that the debates on Pakistan could take a violent colour at any time. Everybody was worried what will happen – Azadi kab milegi, Pakistan banega ya nahin, bantwara hoga ya kya hoga? Aisa lagta tha jaise Azadi mulk ki qurbani liye bina nahin ayegi (When would we get freedom, whether or not Pakistan would be created, would Partition happen or what else might happen. It was as if freedom would not arrive without exacting sacrifices from the nation).\footnote{Interview with Zameer Saheb (name changed), Delhi, 28 March 2014.}

Zameer further explained that ‘the areas outside Purani Dilli (Old Delhi) like Sadar Bazar, Karol Bagh, Paharganj, Sabzi Mandi were communally sensitive areas.’ When enquired why it was so, he gave an interesting explanation: ‘they were people who came from different regions outside Delhi. They had no neighborly associations with each other. They were not like Dilliwale who had been living together even after having different practices.’ K. R. Jain (changed name), a retired professor, once a resident of a relatively mixed area of Old Delhi (Tiraha Behram Khan, Darya Ganj) reflected on this aspect in the same way. He explained that, ‘it was the fringe element that created problems or tried diverting minor conflicts into a communal issue. The local people used to live side by side. They had differences like my family was strictly vegetarian, but
we did not have any problems with our Muslim neighbors. The only principle was that we were not used to eat and drink in their houses; but in terms of the feeling of neighborhood we had good relations. It does not, however, mean that there was no polarization in the traditional mohallas. It indicates that the ‘Other’ was constructed rather than given, and while it was more palpable in the newly developed areas of Delhi, it also affected the traditional mohallas in the 1940s, dividing traditional neighbors, the mohalladar, into warring communities. Complaints registered by the residents of government quarters reflected what Haji Saheb, the head of Manihar biradari, contended during personal interview: Pakistan was ‘the occupation of [the] educated’ in Delhi. But the idea was spreading across the city.

Changing political identity of space: Idea of secular India and local constituencies

The political representation of communities in terms of local constituencies was to be the first task in the making of Nehruvian India that needed to be re-arranged as the Partition became inevitable after Third June Plan. The need for reorganization of local administrative bodies led to an interesting development. The Delhi Municipal Organization Enquiry Committee (DMOEC) circulated a structured questionnaire among various organizations including public bodies and ‘respected’ individuals in Delhi in the month of May 1947 to reflect upon some critical issues. It included subjects such as the re-organization of constituencies, separate electorate and minority safeguards in the light of the Third June Plan. On the basis of its findings, the report, published in 1948, noted:

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105 Interview with K.R. Jain, a retired Prof. of Political Science and an old Communist party activist, 18 December 2014.
106 Interview with Haji Saheb (name changed), Delhi, 17 October 2014.
107 The questionnaire enquires: ‘will it be necessary or desirable to reserve any number of seats for any community and if so on what basis?’ Furthermore question no. 7 asks ‘should the electorate be joint or separate community wise, and if the latter on what basis?’ Report of the Delhi Municipal Organization Enquiry Committee (New Delhi: Government of India Press, 1948), 84-5.
108 The plan, also known as the Mountbatten Plan, was announced on 3 June 1947 by the British government. It accepted the principle of the Partition of the Sub-continent into two independent dominions. The Indian Independence Act 1947 was the implementation of June 3rd Plan. Severe riots started in Punjab, West Bengal and UP after this declaration. Pakistan came into existence with the transfer of power on 14 August to Pakistan and 15 August 1947 to India. See: Bandyopadhyay, From Plassey to Partition and After, 405-438.
Most of the Muslim witnesses were…in favor of existing arrangement in the Delhi Municipal area under which the Hindus and Muslims are represented through separate electorates. Most of the public bodies have…held the view that a separate electorates would be harmful and that it should be replaced by joint electorates with the reservation of seats for minorities on population basis. The June third statement…however, quickly brought about a change in representative Muslim opinion placed before the committee in the course of oral evidence…it became clear that agreement was likely on the basis of joint electorate with reservation of seats for minorities.109

This finding of the Delhi Municipal Organization Enquiry Committee underlines that the national level political debates as well as ongoing discussions on the future constitution of independent India played a crucial role at local level. Muslim representation through reservation emerged as a ‘compromise’ formula for future municipal administration of the city by 1949 as an important ‘safeguard’ for minority interests. However, after a long debate in the Constituent Assembly that took place till late 1949, it was decided that electoral representation could only be guaranteed for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in order to avoid any kind of ‘separatist’ politics as well as to establish the secular idea of India substantially. The changes in dominant political opinion with regard to reorganization of constituencies on the basis of total population and most importantly the introduction of adult franchise to infuse the sense of citizenship in every Indian had multiple implications for the Muslims. Firstly, religious identity as an electoral and administrative category (the way it was during British rule) started fading away from official discourse with the establishment of the secular idea of India. But, the constructed and politicized Hindu-Muslim identities kept the contestation for space alive at the levels of gali, mohalla, ilaqa and the city. This contestation took an even more violent form immediately after the division of India. The activists of RSS and Hindu Mahasabha started forced process of the homogenization of galies and mohallas started in the immediate aftermath of the Partition. Delhi, along with the ‘minority provinces’ remained live zones of religious contestation. Secondly, the exclusionary idea of Akhand Bharat, which manipulated the fear of the Hindus immediately after the transfer of power, remained a challenge to the Nehruvian idea

of secular republic of India. Although it was propagated and argued by a fringe element, it continued to characterize Muslim areas as threats to the Hindu/secular fabric of India. Thus, it would be interesting to examine how these notions of homeland were continued and ‘asserted’ at local level in Delhi after August 1947. We will do that in chapter III.

**Conclusion**

The officially sanctioned and politically legitimated space-community relationships produced a powerful political discourse in the 1940s based on new idioms of homeland. This discourse helped the Muslim League to carve out a plan for Pakistan on behalf of Indian Muslims; at the same time, it was translated in multiple ways to define Muslim space in Delhi. The educated Muslim class, particularly those associated with the Muslim League, propagated the idea of Pakistan as a ‘secured’ space that would ensure the political, cultural and economic rights of the Indian Muslim community. On the other hand, the educated Congress Muslims, who were very powerful in Delhi, looked at it as a political disaster. Despite this clear division of opinion among the educated, Pakistan became the prime marker of Muslim identity in Delhi. Furthermore, the relationship between the Muslim communities of Delhi, divided by caste and class, and the idea of Pakistan was highly complicated, as this imagined land could never coincide with the actual lived spaces. But, in the complex political scenario of the 1940s, Pakistan turned out to be a reference point – not merely for Muslim identity but also for the different notions of homeland.

This configuration of Muslim space/Pakistan strongly differentiated between ‘what is’ and ‘what should be’, making the creation of ‘ideal’ and ‘pure’ nation(s) an unfinished project – something that had to be achieved.\(^\text{110}\) Although this division was very much linked to the transfer of power from colonial state, the discourse of homeland offered blue prints on how the communities should imagine themselves and relate to their spaces. The idea of Pakistan, while pursuing this imagination of an ideal space and homogenous Indian Muslim community for political negotiations, clearly identified who actually belonged to the ‘holy land’. The Muslims of the ‘majority provinces’ were the ones who would live, ‘own’ and have the right to govern Pakistan, while for the Muslims of the ‘minority provinces’ it was an imagined ideal space which

they could look up to for emotional, spiritual and political support, if needed. The Aligarh scheme exemplified this distinction as well as the realization of the weaknesses of Muslims who did not possess a natural right to be in Pakistan. In this sense, it problematized the presence of Delhi Muslims since they did not belong to the space which was imagined as an ideal territorial location for diverse and scattered ‘Indian Muslim community’. In fact, Delhi did not even form a minority province since it was always a ‘mixed’ city with large Muslim concentrations. Yet, Delhi became an important operational site to witness how conflicting ideas of homelands transformed the caste and craft based traditional mohallas on religious lines. The making of India and Pakistan made these Muslim-dominated localities look like residues still to be competed for by the parallel notions of homelands.

The politicization of mohallas and wards in Delhi, which started with the municipal intervention in the nineteenth century, exemplified this tussle. The extended residential and commercial pockets like Sadar Bazar, Sabzi Mandi, Paharganj, Karol Bagh and other areas which developed after the 1860s and later were the sites where this political contestation was played out. These areas were populated by the people who were displaced or moved from the old city to establish commercial units at various points, and communities coming from United Provinces, Central Provinces and other regions of north India. These communities, therefore, had no association with the traditional Delhi mohallas and the mohalladari. They strictly adhered to their regional as well as religious identity while forming complex commercial relations. In fact, they were the main subjects of the local as well as national level political negotiations due to their educational background, political affiliations and economic relations. The religious contestations, in this sense, might have penetrated galies and mohallas in the city due to the politicization and communalization of residential wards and public places; but it manifested violently only in these newly extended localities. That could be the reason why most of the organized Partition riots also took place in these areas in late 1947.

111 K. A. Abbas’s famous Urdu story Sardarji is a revealing example of this tussle. The story is set in the background of a newly developed residential quarter of New Delhi. See: K. A. Abbas, Sardarji and Other Stories (ed. Suresh Kohli), (Delhi: Om Books International, 2014).
Chapter III

Demarcated Space: ‘Muslim Refugee Camps’ and ‘Muslim Zones’ in Delhi, 1948-1955

The complexities of high politics and constitutional negotiations for ‘self-rule’ in the wake of the ‘Quit India’ movement in the 1940s re-established the fact that the contest over space no longer remained ‘localized’. The Boundary Commission, set up by the government in June 1947, divided British India into Hindu-dominated and Muslim-dominated regions – leaving the future of mixed cities for further political negotiations between the new dominions of Pakistan and India which became independent on the 14 and 15 August 1947.\footnote{India Independence Act 1947, 10 and 11 Geo. 6. Ch. 30, 4. See: Neeti Nair, Changing Homelands: Hindu Politics and the Partition of India (Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2011).} The creation of Pakistan, however, did not bring the discourse of homeland to an end; instead, it intensified the ambiguities and obscurities inherent in the schematic imagination of two-nation(s) as territorial nation-states. Partition brought these ambiguities to the surface. The minority communities in India, particularly Muslims, were expected to assimilate into the wider society and to adhere to the ‘given’ framework of constitutional rights as rational and secular citizens.\footnote{For Constituent Assembly Debates on Separate Electorate See: Constituent Assembly Debates (hereafter CAD), Vol. V, 27-28 August 1947, 211-72. Also see: A.G. Noorani (ed.), The Muslims of India: A Documentary Record (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003).} Such expectations made any articulation of minority identity problematic; and the collective presence of Muslims in specific geographic areas made those spaces into contested zones.

The objective of this chapter is to examine this complex process of the division of space in postcolonial/post-Partition Delhi, which made the Muslim areas appear as problematic zones or ‘mini Pakistans’ in popular imagination. It looks at the categorization and demarcation of space, which intensified as well as institutionalized the contest over the Muslim-dominated areas in Delhi. The chapter is divided into three sections: section one examines how Partition violence politicized the Indian Muslim identity in terms of belongingness and citizenship. The second section revisits the space-community relationship and investigates the reconfiguration of Muslim identity in relation to the Muslim refugee camps in Delhi. Finally, the third section looks at the re-settlement of Muslim population in clearly demarcated Muslim zones. This section discusses
the ways in which these protected zones were popularly tagged as ‘mini Pakistan’ in the immediate aftermath of the Partition. The chapter argues that the idea of Pakistan continued to survive in post-Partition Delhi and influenced the remaking of Muslim identity—in terms of the space occupied by them.

I

Divided Homelands: Reconfigured Idea of Pakistan in Independent India

Dilliwalal to a Magistrate: “Are Dilliwalas not permitted (to board the train to Pakistan)?”

Magistrate: “Yes, they (Pakistan authorities) say that the agreement for the transfer of population was only for western and eastern Punjab. So many people have gathered here from each district that there is no room for others. The Pakistan is too small, how would this number of people be accommodated there?”

Dilliwalal (with anger): “Why that idiot (kambhakht) made such a small Pakistan that we (Dilliwalas) cannot be accommodated (emphasis added).”

This conversation unfolds the complex trajectory of Delhi Muslims and the Muslims of north Indian provinces in general. This was, however, neither the sudden outcome of Mountbatten’s plan, nor did it begin at ‘the stroke of midnight hour’ of the 15th day of August 1947. It was the result of a discourse of homeland, which had now taken a concrete form. Everything had to be ‘corrected’ and divided completely and unambiguously—the land, the people, the culture, language and history—for the making of these imagined, and now ‘achieved’, homelands. Most importantly, religious identity intermingled inextricably with national identity—Muslim Pakistani and Hindu Hindustani—in popular parlance, and for some time, in official language.

3 See Begam Anees Qidwai, Azadi Ki Chhaon Mein (In Freedom’s Shade) (Delhi: National Book Trust of India, 2000), 163. Special permits were issued by the Pakistan government for Muslim refugees from Punjab to board the special trains while Delhi Muslims or Muslim ‘sub-groups’ coming from the ‘minority provinces’ were not allowed in Pakistan. Begum Qidwai recorded this conversation at the time of Muslims boarding a train going to Pakistan. (Translation mine). On permit system see Vazeera Fazila Yacoobali Zamindar, The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories (New Delhi: Penguin, 2008), 125, 126-27 and 141-42.
too. A long bureaucratic process of the making of two nations, as Zamindar explains, started to deal with the immediate aftermath of Partition. A Partition Committee was formed which was chaired by Lord Mountbatten and its members were Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Liaqat Ali Khan and Abdur Rab Nishtar. The committee had its first meeting on 12 June 1947. Later this committee was replaced by a Partition Council. In this council, Congress was represented by Sardar Patel and Dr. Rajendra Prasad, with C. Rajagopalachari as alternate member. Muslim league was represented by Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Liaqat Ali Khan and Abdur Rab Nishtar as alternate member. The partition Council remained in existence even after 15 August 1947. With the help of a number of expert committees, the council’s responsibility was to deal with the transfer of staff, organizations, assets and liabilities, finance, defence, trade and economic relations between the two countries. A number of ordinances, agreements and Acts were passed by India and Pakistan for safe transfer of population, temporary settlement of unsettled communities, division and management of evacuee properties and most importantly, for the management of minorities on both sides. Punjab with large number of Hindu, Sikh and Muslim population had to go through this imposed and violent process of ‘homogenization’ through organized transfer of population. Delhi, being the capital of British India, was not only a witness to this violent process of ‘divisions’; it was also a site where official identity of north Indian Muslims and their relationship with the territorial space of India were taking concrete shapes.

The incidents of communal clashes in Delhi in the months of August-September 1947 were not something unexpected. A number of clashes including looting and stabbing, as discussed earlier, actually had begun well before August as the rumours of Partition started circulating. These incidents increased with the news of riots and killings in other parts of India including Calcutta, Noakhali, Bihar, and most importantly in east-west Punjab province leading to an organized transfer of population. But like Karachi, Delhi faced orchestrated Partition violence only in the beginning of September with the arrival of refugees. The influx of ‘Hindu

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7 For Partition violence in Karachi see Zamindar, The Long Partition, Ch. II.
and Sikh refugees’ coming from Sindh and western Punjab created a pool of displaced population that was quite unprecedented.8

Delhi had a population of about 9.5 lakhs (950,000) in 1947 (9.18 lakhs at the time of census in 1941). Nearly five lakhs Hindu and Sikh refugees arrived in Delhi in the immediate aftermath of Partition. This flow of refugees continued as the long process of the partitioning of families and assets continued both in India and Pakistan. Even in 1951, Partition refugees (excluding the local Muslim refugees displaced due to riots) still accounted for 28.4 per cent of the total population of the city. The initial number increased initially with the inclusion of ‘local Muslim refugees’ who did not go to Pakistan and remained displaced within the city.9 In fact Delhi, according to Gyanendra Pandey, ‘became a “refugee-istan” with a staggering number of people displaced from elsewhere seeking…new homes in the city, and an equally staggering number of other – local – refugees imprisoned in their own homes or refugee camps nearby’.10 The situation resulted in a reconfiguration of communal demography of Delhi with the establishment of Muslim refugee camps and Muslim zones.

Hindu and Sikh refugees came with a feeling of being displaced, looted, killed and raped.11 The mixed sense of marginalization, hopelessness and anger resulted in violent clashes and, in some cases, attacks on Muslims in Delhi, who were seen as immediate enemies responsible for their displacement.12 The aggressive Mahasabha and RSS politics,

8 The word ‘refugees’ or more specifically ‘Hindu and Sikh refugees’, ‘Muslim refugees’ or ‘non-Muslim refugees’ were contextually constructed categories. There were constant debates in the Constituent Assembly to denounce the word refugee specifically for the displaced Hindu and Sikh population of Sindh, Punjab and other regions that became parts of Pakistan. It was argued that they should be called ‘sharnarthies’ (people in need of refuge). Later on, the Indian government took a conscious decision to rename refugees as ‘displaced persons’ and refugee camps as ‘relief camps’ in all official communication. Displaced persons included those who were displaced from their homes in Pakistan. Similar debates took place on describing the ‘Hindu and Sikh refugees’ as ‘non-Muslim refugees’. The category of ‘Muslim refugees’ was also replaced by ‘Muslim Evacuees’ to identify those who were displaced from their homes in India. CAD (Legislative), Vol. II, (29 November, 1947), 891-92. For a detailed discussion on refugee identity see: Liisa Malkki, ‘Refugees and exile: From Refugee Studies to the National Order of Things’, Annual Review of Anthropology, no. 24 (1995), 498; Liisa Malkki, ‘National Geographic: Rooting of People and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees’, Cultural Anthropology 7, No.1 (1992), 24-44. E. Valentine Daniel and John Chr. Knudsen (eds.), Mistrusting Refugees (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995). Also see: Zamindar, The Long Partition, 9-10.
11 For critical condition of Sikh refugees see: Carter, Partition Observed, 66-67; Kaur, Since 1947, Ch.1.
12 The official reports suggest that the discontent against Muslims was not local. In fact, there were situations, recorded by the victims, when local Hindus saved the lives of Muslim neighbours. Similar kinds of narratives were recorded by Sikh refugees who were supported by their fellow Muslim neighbours in the Pakistan side of Punjab. See: Carter, Partition Observed, 285 and 326. Pandey, ‘Partition and Independence in Delhi’; Zamindar, The Long Partition, and Christophe Jaffrelot, ‘The Hindu
communalization of the bureaucratic system and state machinery successfully mobilized refugee discontent against the Muslim population of Delhi. Consequently, the Hindu nationalist organizations started a process of cultural homogenization through different ways of killings, forced evacuation of Muslim population and forced conversion (reconversion according to Hindu political groups) of Muslim artisans and other occupational classes from Old Delhi and its suburban areas to Hinduism.

Maulana Azad recollects in *India Wins Freedom*: ‘When the reports of massacres in West Punjab reached Delhi, Muslims in the city were attacked by mobs…Sikh took the leading part in organizing these murderous attacks in Delhi.’ He further explains, in areas like Karol Bagh, Lodhi Colony, Sabzi Mandi and Sadar Bazar, or areas which we identified in the previous chapter as new areas with mixed population, ‘life and property (of Muslims) were no longer safe…the situation became so bad that no Muslim could go to sleep at night with the confidence that he would wake up alive the next morning.’ Azad points out that the police and army played a very dubious role in this rioting situation. He stated that the Deputy Commissioner, M.S. Randhawa, played a key role in maintaining law and order in Delhi because the Chief Commissioner of Delhi, Khurshid Ahmed, was afraid of taking any strong action against the rioters as he thought that his actions might be seen as an act of favour to Muslims. And Randhawa, he explained, who had been seen by the local Muslim population as a fair-minded and strong officer before Partition, was also affected by the communal environment/tension in Punjab and Delhi. While safeguarding Muslim localities, the police officers under his supervision allowed mobs of Hindu and Sikh refugees to engage in some kind of organized attacks. When every relationship was defined in terms of religion, army and police officials could not remain isolated. Azad explains that ‘the majority of troops in Delhi were Hindus and

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17 For a study on the changing attitude of refugees as their anger, born out of sudden displacement, killings and bloodshed, settled down with the gradual settlement policies of the government, see: R.N. Saksena, *Refugees: A Study in Changing Attitudes* (Delhi: Asia Publishing House, 1961).
Sikhs…in a few days it became clear that they could not be relied upon…(for) restoring law and order in the city.’\(^{18}\)

Describing a similar situation, a British resident wrote that ‘September, 1947 will be remembered by Delhi residents as a period of horror. Moslems were being systematically hunted down and butchered.’ Another resident recorded that: ‘Thousands of them (Muslims) were herded into camps …the dead lay rotting in the streets… hospitals were choked…and in imminent danger of attack because of the presence of Moslem staff and Moslem patients.’\(^{19}\) The violence intensified the atmosphere of fear and insecurities and re-enforced the identification of each mohalla on communal grounds. But this time it was Muslim mohallas that emerged strongly as a contested space.

Zameer Saheb, a witness of Partition violence, explains that the feeling of insecurity and distrust even of the police and army were so high that the practice of guarding streets at nights by local residents was established and continued for a very long period.\(^{20}\) Yet on 7 and 8 September 1947 some of the best guarded areas of New Delhi also experienced violence. The violence resulted in a breakdown of trust that forced people to leave his/her immediate surroundings and become a refugee. It is estimated that between 20,000 and 25,000 Muslims were killed and towards the end of October only about 1.5 lakhs of Delhi’s 5 lakhs Muslims remained in the city that did not go to Pakistan.\(^{21}\)

The internal displacement of Muslim population led to a significant reconfiguration of urban residential space in Delhi along communal lines. Hindu and Sikh refugees in search for shelter started occupying the ‘evacuee’ and ‘abandoned’ properties. Initially, these were the properties of those who had left for Pakistan or moved to some ‘secured’ places. This occupation, however, encouraged a section of rioters to forcefully ‘push’ Muslim neighbours out of their homes and occupy their residential and commercial properties. M. S. Randhawa, the Deputy Commissioner of Delhi noted that ‘forcible possession of some vacant houses was an


\(^{20}\) Interview with Zameer Saheb (name changed), Delhi, 28 March 2014.

outcome of “refugees” discontent [sic] who are without shelter (and) wander about from street to street in search of accommodation’. Thus, forceful evacuation of Muslim houses and commercial units and their ‘illegal’ occupation became a specific feature of communal violence in the city during the initial post-Partition period which continued with further migration from both sides. Nehru mentioned it as a dangerous phenomenon in his various speeches. The ‘forced evacuation’ was not only creating another set of displaced persons, but also raising fear and insecurity amongst the Muslims of Delhi. It became an urgent task for Nehru, Gandhi and Maulana Azad to stop such occupations, displacement of Muslim population and their migration to Pakistan by ensuring safety and security of life and property, along with the important and immediate task of rehabilitating Hindu and Sikh refugees. With the intervention of the government, it was decided by the Emergency Committee of the Cabinet (ECC) that the Muslims from Hindu-dominated and mixed areas should be moved to some ‘protected’ places. The Muslim refugee camps and ‘Muslim zones’ was seen as a temporary arrangement for the safety of the Muslims of Delhi. The Special Regiment from South India was called upon to establish law and order and provide protection to these spaces. This virtually meant the emergence of communally defined and ‘sensitive’ residential spaces for Muslims in the nation’s capital.

Unsettled but ‘secured’: Muslim refugee camps

A number of refugee camps emerged to accommodate refugees from different communities, such as Hindu and Sikh refugee camps and Muslim refugee camps. Hindu and Sikh camps had population displaced mainly from the West Punjab and Sindh. The Muslim camps had Muslim population of Old Delhi, New Delhi and others coming from parts of North India including U.P. M.P and Mewat region. Following this, the galies and mohallas of Delhi were re-organized on religious lines either spontaneously or forcibly. Most importantly, the mohallas, which had been

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22 ‘Letter from Randhawa to Khurshid’, 14 June 1947, Home-Police, CCO, Delhi, File No.: 68/47-C. Delhi State Archives (DSA).
24 An Emergency Board of the Cabinet was set up on 6 September with parallel Committees for Delhi and East Punjab by Mountbatten to control the unprecedented partition violence. It consisted of the members of the Cabinet and some high civil and military officers. See: Azad, India Wins Freedom, 230.
traditionally unaffected by religious contestations and had successfully managed to remain ‘mixed’, were also unsettled for the first time. For instance, Sadar Bazar, Karol Bagh, Paharganj and Pahari Dheeraj (with a small Muslim population) were mixed areas (even according to the official classification), which became a site of communal violence in 1947. Muslim residents were either killed or pushed out of these areas.26 In popular opinion, the political and administrative category called ‘Muslim’ got associated with the contested idea of a Muslim homeland in ‘Pakistan’, and as a result those who came under this category seemingly lost their claims on the Indian space.27

Every displaced person was categorized as refugee in that particular context. Two types of Muslim camps emerged in Delhi. The first were the unorganized gatherings of Muslim population in Muslim-dominated areas or religious places of worship, with either no support or minimum assistance from the government. These were popularly called Muslim camps. Most of these sites came into existence quite spontaneously. The Muslims of Delhi, especially from the areas where they were fewer in number, initially started gathering at places which were considered ‘safe’. A number of such places like mosques, graveyards, dilapidated buildings and historic monuments, like Jama Masjid, Idgah, dargahs (shrines), Delhi College (now known as Zakir Hussain College), Nizamuddin Basti turned into asylums. Moreover, the houses of friends and relatives situated in Muslim-dominated areas, houses of Muslim Cabinet Ministers such as Maulana Azad and Rafi Ahmed Qidwai and other influential leaders also provided refuge to the riot victims.28 These were not organized camps since the state had not intervened directly to provide food and security. The Jama Masjid and Idgah camps were ‘managed’ by Muslim voluntary organizations with some support such as food and medical supplies from the government.29

The Purana Qila (Old Fort) and Humayun’s Tomb camps (See: Figure 1, 2 and 3 Purana Qila Refugee Camp and Figure 3 Humayun Tomb Camp) were the second type of camps, once organized and administered by the Indian government. The Purana Qila camp had a different

26 For a reaction to the mixed areas being turned into ‘Hindu and Sikh zones’ in Paharganj, Sabzi Mandi and Karol Bagh see: Al Jamiat, 26 July 1952. Also interview with Haji Saheb (name changed), Delhi, 17 October 2014. Haji Sahib’s paternal family was a victim of Partition violence. They moved from Pahari Dheeraj to the Muslim-dominated area of Ballimaran in 1947. Further references can also be found in Azad, India Wins Freedom, 229.
28 Qidwai, Azadi Ki Chhaon Mein, 52-3. Also see: Pandey, ‘Partition and Independence in Delhi’, 2263.
29 Qidwai, Azadi Ki Chhaon Mein, 37.
status because it became the biggest departure point to Pakistan. Initially, it was set up to transfer some 12,000 Muslim government employees and their families, who had decided to work for Pakistan government through the intervention of Pakistani High Commission. Special trains were operating from Purana Qila to Lahore for them, and this service became more regular by early October 1947. Soon, due to increasing violence in Delhi, this camp was also considered as a ‘secured’ space by the Emergency Committee, especially for Muslims living in mixed or Hindu-dominated areas. Azad explains in *India Wins Freedom*: ‘it soon became clear that it was not possible to protect isolated (Muslim) houses in different parts of the city…we therefore decided that Muslims should be brought together and placed in protected camps.’ Over 50,000 Muslims moved to the camp within a few days with or without the intention to go to Pakistan. They continued to dwell here until early 1948. Muslim residents from other places like Jama Masjid and Idgah camps also started gathering in Purana Qila since there was not enough space in those sites to accommodate the increasing number of local Muslims and the Muslims coming to Delhi from other regions.

![Figure 3.1: Purana Qila Muslim Refugee Camp, 1947-I](image)

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34 Muslims of Delhi left their homes to take shelter in Purana Qila. Photo by: Popperfoto/Getty Images.
Figure 3.1: Purana Qila Muslim Refugee Camp, 1947-III

Figure 3.2: Purana Qila Muslim Refugee Camp, 1947- II


36 ‘With the tragic legacy of an uncertain future, a young refugee sits on the walls of Purana Qila which transformed into a vast refugee camp in Delhi.’ Margaret Bourke-White, 1947.
Figure 3.4: Gandhi’s Visit to Purana Qila Camp, 1948-IV

Figure 3.5: Humayun’s Tomb Refugee Camp-1947

37 Gandhi visits Muslim refugees at Purana Qila in New Delhi, as they prepare to depart to Pakistan in September 1947. Source: AFP/Getty.
38 Source: pic.twitter.com/uK4YoEkpEE.
There were around 121,000 Muslim refugees in Purana Qila and Humayun’s Tomb Camps in the month of September 1947. This number increased to 164,000 within a short while. In early October, figures of 62,000 and 63,000 Muslim refugees were quoted for the Purana Qila and Humayun’s Tomb refugee camps respectively, though some reports put the figure for the Purana Qila at 80,000 or even higher. By mid-September, it was estimated that around 60 per cent of the Muslims of Old Delhi and 90 per cent of them in New Delhi had fled to these camps for refuge as the communal violence increased.  

But, this gathering of Muslim population created other problems in the given chaotic situation of the time. The official status of these camps remained quite ambiguous for some time for two reasons. First, the transfer of administrative staff, as discussed above, which was an official process, took place alongside the migration of common Muslims in the wake of increasing communal violence in the city. Secondly, the bureaucratic machinery, especially the Delhi Administration, which was under the direct control of the Home Minister, Sardar Patel, quite conveniently believed that the management of Muslim camp was the responsibility of the Pakistan government since all the Muslims in refugee camps were actually willing to go to Pakistan.

To start with, there was no organization, administration or resources available in the Purana Qila camp. In this situation, the Pakistan High Commission requested the Indian government to take over its management. It was only after Gandhi’s visit to these camps on 13 September 1947 that the Indian government took over the responsibility to administer the site with the appointment of a Muslim guard on the request of the Pakistan High Commission. But, the conditions in terms of the availability of resources and facilities continued to be a debatable issue. Zameer Saheb, who was around 18 years old at the time of Partition, explains that the conditions in Purana Qila camp were so unhealthy that many people died after they moved there. Dr. Zakir Hussain, Vice Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia and a member of the

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41 Carter, Partition Observed, 223 and 239; Also see: Zamindar, The Long Partition, 34; Qidwai, Azadi Ki Chhaon Mein, 31-40.
42 Pandey, ‘Partition and Independence in Delhi’, 2265.
43 Interview with Zameer Saheb (name changed), Delhi, 28 March 2014. Reports of the outbreak of cholera in Purana Qila and Humayun’s Tomb refugee camps, which caused some deaths, were recorded. It led to the issuance of special permits to control the in-and-out movement of refugees from the camps. See: Carter, Partition Observed, 351-52. For general conditions of Muslim camps see: 238-40.
Emergency Committee, also presented evidence in front of the Emergency Committee explaining that ‘these poor men and women had been rescued from sudden death to be buried in a living grave’.\(^{44}\) It was only in late September 1947 that the Government of India started recognizing the proper maintenance of Muslim camps as its administrative responsibility. Gandhi’s fast in Delhi and Maulana Azad’s famous speech at the Jama Masjid in October 1947 encouraged the Indian government to send a clear message that Muslim camps were also ‘our’ camps, and that these Muslim refugees were ‘our’ citizens. It was done to stop the mass migration of Indian Muslims to Pakistan, which created critical conditions for the displaced population in Karachi, Pakistan. It was only after this loud announcement that Indian officials took overall responsibility for the food supply and maintenance of security at these camps.\(^{45}\)

But, the crisis did not end here. The Indian-ness of the Muslims living in refugee camps came under intense scrutiny.\(^{46}\) The unclear policy of the two governments made the supposed ‘intention’ of Muslim refugees to migrate to Pakistan a defining marker of their national affiliations. Arguments were proffered that all the Muslims who moved to the camps intended to go to Pakistan.\(^{47}\) Although this ‘intention’ factor was much discussed in relation to the management of evacuee property, such assertions were also made during the Emergency Committee proceedings and Constituent Assembly debates. The Emergency Committee reports suggest that it was hard to enumerate the exact number of refugees who left for Pakistan in that chaotic condition. The Committee, thus, recommended that refugees in Purana Qila should be divided into two groups – those wanting to go to Pakistan and those who wished to stay in India.\(^{48}\) Minister of Relief and Rehabilitation, K. C. Neogy, who was given the task of counting the refugees in the camp, claimed that about ninety percent of the lakhs of Muslims in the camp ‘seem(ed) to want to leave for Pakistan’.\(^{49}\) In reality it was hard to estimate, because, as it was noted in a report to Emergency Committee, they ‘have not yet finally made –up their mind’.\(^{50}\)

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\(^{45}\) Carter, *Partition Observed*, 327. Also see: Pandey, ‘Partition and Independence in Delhi’, 2266.


\(^{47}\) CAD (Legislative), Vol. VII, No. 1, 2 September 1948, 777-83.

\(^{48}\) Quoted in Zamindar, *The Long Partition*, 36.

\(^{49}\) Quoted in Zamindar, *The Long Partition*, 37.

\(^{50}\) Quoted in Zamindar, *The Long Partition*, 37.
But, this aspect of ‘intention’ of the Muslims became more complicated when a number of them decided to go back to their houses in Delhi once the level of violence reduced in 1948, especially after the continuous appeals made by Gandhi, Azad and Nehru. Moreover, Muslim refugees started returning from Pakistan as well, with the introduction of a permit system in the same year.\(^{51}\) Although it was difficult to calculate the exact number on the basis of the ‘intention’ of refugees, this highly subjective criterion was used to evaluate and scrutinize Muslim claim on evacuee properties and Muslim zones. It became more complicated with the occupation of these properties by the displaced Hindu and Sikh population.

A number of ‘empty’ houses left by Muslims had already been occupied by the Hindu and Sikh refugees. In this sense, the rehabilitation of Hindu and Sikh refugees, or ‘hamare log’ (our people) as it was popularly as well as officially understood in the complex scenario of the time, was contingent upon the departure of Muslim refugees to Pakistan.\(^{52}\) Sardar Patel highlighted the complexity of ‘refugee resettlement’ in an Emergency Committee meeting quite bluntly. He commented that, ‘there was bound to be trouble if as a result of these Muslims not moving out, it proved impossible to accommodate non-Muslim refugees’.\(^{53}\) Patel argued that ‘Government could not take responsibility for telling people to stay and guaranteeing them protection if they did’.\(^{54}\) However, for Nehru the mass migration of Muslims was a bigger question. He pointed out that ‘if mass migration of Muslims continued [the] whole organization would collapse’.\(^{55}\) In this highly volatile context, Gandhi began a fast in January 1948. He made a powerful plea that there should be no-violence in the city and Muslims refugees should be rehabilitated in their own houses. The fast, according to Azad, had an ‘electric effect’ not only in Delhi but throughout north India.\(^{56}\)

On the other hand, the situation of Muslim refugees in Pakistan was quite complicated.\(^{57}\) Apart from the government officials and influential property classes who had already declared

\(^{51}\) Zamindar, *The Long Partition*, 161-65. Special permits were issued by the Pakistan government for Muslim refugees from Punjab to board the special trains from Delhi.
\(^{55}\) Carter, *Partition Observed*, 238-39. By this organization Nehru meant the migration of the artisan class that was the backbone of household industries in India and remains so even today.
\(^{57}\) The migrating Muslims of north India faced a very delicate situation in Pakistan. It was termed as ‘refugee problem’ in the official discourse. No arrangements were made to accommodate Muslim refugees. Eventually, they started looting and targeting Hindu and Sikh houses. According to the official records 27,000 refugees had reached Sind by mid-September; the number doubled within a week. See: Zamindar, *The Long Partition*, 45-78. Also see, Rao, *The Story of Rehabilitation*, 16-25.
their intention to serve in Pakistan after the release of the 3rd June plan, the residents of ‘minority provinces’ were not welcome in Pakistan. The Pakistan government made continuous appeals to the Indian government to control and discourage their movement from provinces which were not part of the agreed areas. The Pakistan Emergency Committee suggested to the Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan that he should ‘advise them (refugees in Delhi) to...understand that they were now nationals of India and should look to the Indian government for protection’ (emphasis added).\(^58\)

The Muslims who had taken shelter in various camps were highly undecided and unsure of their status - as to which homeland they would belong to. The sudden breakup of the very relationship of the Delhi Muslims with the ‘space’ they inherited naturally and historically led to the breakdown of trust, which was needed to allow them to see themselves as citizens of the Indian state.\(^59\) They found themselves in a crisis situation, which forced them to leave their ‘own’ space and enter into a contingent and contested space called ‘refugee camp’. The camp was based on the assumption that ‘protection’ of Muslims could only be ensured if they were put together at one place. In this sense, the numerical strength of the community in crisis turned out to be an important administrative tool.

The Muslims of Delhi, at the same time, found a sense of protection in these camps since the state had failed to provide security in their own surroundings. The Muslim refugee camp actually became a space that absorbed all kinds of fears, insecurities and anxieties, providing a momentary settlement to the unsettled. In this sense, the camp as a space was linked to a moment of time which was going to redefine the complex yet intrinsic relationship of Muslims as a religious community with the newly emerging state(s)/nation(s) and their homelands. In other words, it was a moment when Muslims of North India and specifically of Delhi were forced to make a ‘choice’ between their religious identity, claimed to be transforming into a nation called Pakistan, and their association with a nation called India, which was in a state of crisis and yet to be firmly established as a democratic and secular entity. Therefore, the Muslim camp in Delhi was not a space they had arrived at to acquire a ‘permanent’ national identity, as was the case

\(^{58}\) Quoted in Zamindar, *The Long Partition*, 41; also see Carter, *Partition Observed*, 258.

with Hindu and Sikh refugees; instead it was a point of departure from where started the long crisis of their ‘north Indian Muslim’ identity.

The Muslim Zones

The protection of properties evacuated by Muslims turned out to be the other critical issue related to the evolving communal demography of Delhi. The Muslim population was forced to leave areas like Paharganj, Karol Bagh, Sabzi Mandi and the surrounding localities where they were in a minority, as mentioned earlier. Muslims living in the mixed areas of Old Delhi, even including areas not directly affected by communal violence, also decided to leave their houses and take shelter either in refugee camps or with their relatives living in Muslim-dominated pockets. These spontaneous (sometimes forced) but always less organized forms of internal movement of Muslim populations to areas perceived to be ‘safe’ paved the way for the creation of an administratively unclear and politically provocative category called the ‘Muslim zones’. Furthermore, there was also a grave risk that Muslim residents could be ‘pushed out’ of their own areas as the ‘evacuated’ Muslim properties were to be allocated to Hindu and Sikh refugees. There were a number of incidents in which RSS workers and other Hindu political right-wing elements started threatening Muslim neighbours once an evacuee house was ‘occupied’ by Hindu and Sikh refugees even in Muslim-dominated areas. In one such incident seven Muslim families living in these areas moved to refugee camps out of fear. Nehru termed this a deliberate ‘pushing out’ of the Muslim population. The Peace Committee requested the government to stop rehabilitation of Hindu and Sikh refugees in Muslim-dominated areas. The Emergency Committee also raised this concern. It was decided that the Muslims would be rehabilitated in

60 Azad, India Wins Freedom, 228-30. For debates on the sealing of Muslim properties, see: CAD (Legislative), Vol. II, No.1, 24 February 1949, 1023-25. Nehru wrote to Chief Ministers highlighting the changing nature of majority communalism. He explained that before it was dangerous only for the life of Muslims, now commercial and residential properties of Muslims were also under threat, which had become a trend after the Partition. See: Kumar and Prasad (eds.), SWJLN, Vol. 26, 1954, 207-08; Kumar and Prasad (eds.), SWJLN, Vol. 26, 1954, 98-99.
61 Al Jamiat, 26 July 1954.
predominantly Muslim areas with government intervention. The city space in Delhi was thus finally reconfigured on the basis of communal identity. Nehru strongly supported this as a temporary arrangement to ensure the safety and protection of Muslims. It was also done to secure the rights of Muslims who were now called ‘evacuees’ after moving from their own houses to refugee camps.

The term ‘evacuee’ came into being as an important official category for the properties of those Muslims who had gone to Pakistan. For efficient management and administration of Evacuee Properties, the Government of India promulgated the Administration of Evacuee Property Act, 1950. The objects and reasons of the Act were to provide for administration of Evacuee Properties and for compensating the refugees who had lost their properties in Pakistan. The Evacuee Property law, which was initially formulated for the East and West Punjab provinces, was extended to Delhi for this purpose. These properties became a part of an ‘evacuee pool’. Under this law a custodian was appointed to manage this evacuee pool. He was responsible for the verification of any property as ‘evacuee’ and its allotment to Hindu and Sikh refugees until a suitable alternative accommodation was arranged for them. Muslims who settled in Pakistan were compensated by the Pakistan government following the passing of an Ordinance on similar lines. But this category of ‘Muslim evacuee’ became a problem for those Muslims who had not gone to Pakistan but had left their properties and moved to Muslim refugee camps and/or Muslim dominated areas. This problem deepened as Muslim refugees started returning from the camps once the violence and chaos created by the Partition abated. In order to save the property rights of these Muslims, properties situated in Muslim zones were excluded from the jurisdiction of the custodian and the custodian’s pool. The ‘empty’, ‘evacuee’ or ‘abandoned’ properties in Muslim mohallas, or Muslim basties (as Nehru called them) like Phatak Habsh Khan, Pahari Imlì, Pul Bangash and Sadar Bazar were kept secured by police to accommodate only the Muslims coming from mixed areas or to rehabilitate the returning Muslim

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64 No official document could be found issuing such orders from Nehru government; however, there are references in letters written by Nehru to Home Ministry or the Chief Ministers regarding the worsening communal situation and the possible solutions to secure the lives and properties of Delhi Muslims (discussed later in this chapter). This is a reason why there was an ambiguity in this regard in the official circles. See: Kumar and Prasad (ed.), SWJLN, Vol. 26, 1954, 98, 207-08; and Nehru’s statement in Parliament, CAD, 11 February 1948, question No. 239.

65 Refugee & Rehabilitation (R&R) section, Chief Commissioner’s Office (CCO), Delhi, 1948, File No.: 2(13) 1948. DSA. For detailed discussion on evacuee properties see: CAD (Legislative) from 1947 onwards under the title: ‘Refugee Rehabilitation’.
‘refugees’ in the later stage. In the given violent circumstances, it was decided that only Muslims or the local old Hindu population (not refugees) should remain in these zones.

Special arrangements were made at a later stage for the transfer of Muslims from mixed and Hindu-dominated areas to these ‘Muslim zones’. The few Muslim households in mixed areas, Zamindar explains, were forcibly evacuated by the authorities. They were told to vacate their houses and move to designated areas. After the deliberations of the Emergency Committee, Chief Commissioners and Military Officers were directed to devise schemes for additional protection and more intensive patrolling of these selected Muslim areas in order to restore confidence among the Muslims in the city. The notion of ‘Muslim zones’ in this way came into being as a result of the ‘risk management’ tactics of the Nehruvian state. Quite involuntarily, in this sense, the areas, for the first time, came to be clearly re-arranged on the lines of established categorization - ‘Hindu-dominated’, ‘Muslim-dominated’ and ‘mixed’ areas – in popular as well as official discourse.

The Muslim zones had no ‘legal’ sanction. In fact, they came into being by an order issued directly by the national government during the state of emergency. Nehru requested some kind of intervention from the Home Ministry to protect such properties from organized attacks and forced occupation. One of his letters to Sardar Patel, the then Home Minister, says: ‘I understand that no formal orders to this effect have been issued by the Home Ministry and the local authorities, therefore, have been functioning rather in the air. May I suggest that such orders might be sent to them to regulate their actions?’ The Home Ministry rejected the request arguing that the Relief and Rehabilitation Ministry was responsible for the execution of the Cabinet orders for the maintenance of vacant houses for Muslims. Therefore, the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation issued an office memorandum on 20 November 1947 to the custodian of evacuate properties explaining that a number of houses which had fallen vacant in ‘predominantly Muslim mohallas in Delhi city (not Karol Bagh, Sabzi Mandi and Paharganj)
should…(be) given only to Muslims so that certain mohallas would form compact Muslim blocks in the city’ (Emphasis added). It was the responsibility of local administration, police and the custodian to ensure proper implementation of this order and secure these properties. However, two days later another order was issued by the Ministry directing the custodian to ‘hold the instructions contained in the order in abeyance’ (emphasis added). Consequently, no instructions were issued to local administration or the police for the enforcement of this policy till late in 1948. The concerned authorities and officials, therefore, doubted the ‘legality’ of such orders and refused to maintain Muslim zones for a long time. The local government bodies which had a number of clerks and babus (government servants) sympathizing with National Guards and RSS well before the Partition took place, as we discussed in the previous chapter, expressed their communal bias quite aggressively. In the wake of Partition and related violence, they clearly distinguished between hamare log (our people) and Pakistani Musalmans (Pakistani Muslims) when it came to prioritizing between Hindu and Sikh refugee rehabilitation and Muslim resettlement. The local administrative officers, Azad explains, ‘were divided in two groups. The larger group looked up to Sardar Patel and acted in a way which they thought would please him. A smaller group looked up to Jawaharlal and me and tried to carry out Jawaharlal’s orders’. These zones were protected by the local administration and police only after prolonged deliberation. It largely remained a responsibility of the Peace Committees which had local and refugee volunteers who continued to guard evacuee properties during the riots.

‘Muslim zone’ was an administratively unclear and politically provocative spatial category. The formation of such zones can be seen at two levels: First, the forced internal migrations of Muslims from Hindu-dominated and mixed areas to Muslim concentrated pockets and second, the official marking of these pockets as exclusively Muslim spaces, which later triggered violence. The socialist leader Mir Mushtaq Ahmed took a very critical view of this

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73‘Resettlement of Muslim Evacuees in Delhi Province’, R&R, CCO, Delhi, File No. 2 (1) 1948. DSA.
74‘Resettlement of Muslim Evacuees in Delhi Province’, R&R, CCO, Delhi, File No. 2 (1) 1948. DSA.
75Qidwai, Azadi Ki Chhaon Mein, 191.
76Das (ed.), SPC, Vol. V, 266. Qidwai also made this observation in Qidwai, Azadi Ki Chhaon Mein, 181.
77For details on how Bantwara (partition) was popularly seen, see: Khosla, Memory’s Gay Chariot, 170-75 and Qidwai, Azadi Ki Chhaon Main, 249.
79In fact, local Socialist activists and their nominees were housed in these properties which were still vacant for protection; Das (ed.), SPC, 1945-1950, Vol. V, 267 and Qidwai, Azadi Ki Chhaon Mein, 191-93.
zoning of Muslim areas in official terms and the consequent controversies that led to organized and violent attacks by Hindu nationalist forces. Challenging the official status of Muslim zones, he argued that the concentration of Muslim population in certain traditionally Muslim-dominated areas was an outcome of the violent creation of Hindu and Sikh zones in Paharganj, Sabzi Mandi and Karol Bagh. Hindu and Sikh communal groups cleared those areas of Muslims and occupied their residential and commercial properties. The only thing that the government did was to ensure that no Hindu and Sikh refugees were to be re-settled in Muslim-dominated areas, as a way of ensuring that violence against Muslims did not spread to these pockets. Ahmed explained that now that such localities were categorized as Muslim zones, Hindu and Sikh communal groups had made the rehabilitation of refugees an excuse to attack these areas with the help of police.

Scrutinizing this official demarcation of space on communal lines, Ahmed further argued that ‘there is a large old Hindu and Christian population living traditionally in these so-called Muslim zones.’ This statement confirms the process by which a peculiar demographic formation called Muslim space formed in Delhi in the immediate aftermath of Partition. In this sense, the emergence of Muslim areas as Muslim zones was a reflection of the risk management tactic of the Nehruvian government to protect the lives and properties of the Muslims of Delhi. But, at the same time, it was an organized confinement of Muslim populations, which was later manipulated by both the Congress and Hindu nationalist forces in the era of competitive electoral politics after the 1950s.

II

Muslim Zones: A ‘threat’ to the national security

The Hindu political organizations, communalized sections of bureaucracy and the local police described the Muslim-dominated areas as threats to ‘internal’ and ‘external’ security. These zones became targets of organized communal violence, as they were systematically circled and
attacked with the help of local police. The unavailability of houses as well as a feeling of betrayal against Muslims forced the Hindu and Sikh refugees to use violence and other measures to enter these zones (Map 5: Locations of violence). Maulana Habibur Rehman of the Central Muslim Relief Committee wrote to the Deputy Inspector General of Police:

In Sadar Bazar Muslims have been constantly made to make room for the refugees by all sorts of tactics...endeavours (sic) were being made to evict them from Qasabpura and clear the locality of Muslims...last night it is alleged that an offensive was organized and led by some special police officers...he was out to hunt out Muslims from their dwellings, cause women and children to be out in the open, harass and terrorize them...and make them to leave the place at the earliest. The display of police force and his high-handedness had certainly the effect of demoralizing Muslims and make them to leave the place at the earliest.

This situation continued even after much of the violence had stopped. Randhawa, the Deputy Commissioner of Police, tried to justify such attacks by describing Muslim zones as hurdles in the rehabilitation of Hindu and Sikh refugees. He stated in his various reports that the main cause of trouble in Delhi was ‘a scramble of (sic) Muslim houses.’ The ‘miserable plight’ and ‘great hardship’ of these refugees, he reported, had forced them to ‘invade empty Muslim houses’. He explained that since the refugees had already lost everything, they had ‘no fears in going to jail’, and this actually made the task of policing the Muslim zones very difficult. Randhawa further argued that ‘these empty houses’ in Muslim zones were such ‘a bone of contention’ that only if ‘these houses are occupied people’s attention will be diverted towards the construction of new houses’.

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80 *Al Jamiat*, 26 July 1952. Also *Al Jamiat* newspaper continued to publish lists of Muslim evacuee properties, advertisements for the sale and purchase of properties and most importantly about the atrocities done by the custodian against Muslims. See: ‘Custodian Ki Sitam Zarafiyan’ *Al Jamiat*, 1 December 1951; ‘Custodian General Shamarthiyon Ke Mafad Par Musalman Nakasiyon Ke Mafad Ko Qurban Nahin Kar Saka’, *Al Jamiat*, 5 October 1951. For a long list of evacuee properties see: *Al Jamiat*, 24 October 1950 and 2 January 1951.
82 ‘Letter to Deputy IG Police from Maulana Habibur Rehman’, 14 January 1948, Home-Police, CCO, Delhi, File No.: PXII(50)/general(genl.), DSA.
83 ‘Letter from Randhawa to Khurshid’, 14 June 1948, Home-Police, CCO, Delhi, File No.: 68/47-C. DSA.
84 ‘Letter from Randhawa to Khurshid’, 14 June 1948, Home-Police, CCO, Delhi, File No.: 68/47-C. DSA.
Map 5: Muslim Camps, Muslim Zones and the Locations of Organized Communal Violence, 1948

Source: Author.
The law and order aspect was further expanded to define Muslim zones as serious threats to ‘internal’ and ‘external’ security, as Delhi Muslims from refugee camps and Pakistan started returning in 1948. These zones were called ‘mini Pakistan’ in police reports to highlight the potential security risks. Randhawa’s comment is worth mentioning here. He noted: ‘The refugees were living in the hope that they will be able to get these houses, but with the return of Muslims these hopes are vanishing. Consequently they want to create panic among Muslims by spreading rumours that some trouble will take place. Creation of the so-called Muslim zones which are nothing but miniature Pakistan is also resented (by Hindu and Sikh refugees). Common criticism is that if we are building a secular state then why this compartmentalization and zoning of citizens’ (Emphasis added). His reports also established an important Pakistan connection by describing these spaces as a ‘serious menace to law and order’. The reports claimed that: ‘the influx of a large number of Muslims to this place is due to a deep conspiracy aimed at the establishment of a Muslim rule at this place’. The statement shows how the discourse of homeland had permeated deeply through the administrative structures that any collective Muslim spatial presence would at once raise the fear of mini-Pakistan in India. As a result, the areas occupied by Muslims were characterized as ‘communally sensitive areas’ that were in need of strict surveillance. If for Nehru these localities were sensitive because they needed protection from organized attacks and violence, for others they posed potential threats to the security of Indian nation. In this sense, the Muslim-dominated areas called Muslim zones became a contested category of Delhi’s urban geography.

The Muslim zones also came under attack in the Constituent Assembly. It was argued that the rehabilitation of Hindu and Sikh refugees should be the priority of the Indian government because they ‘are natives of this country, born of the soil…they have a right to live in these portions of the country’ and, ‘they must be made proper citizens of India’. It was claimed, as Sardar Patel had also elaborated before the Partition took place, that ‘whatever, the…

86 ‘Letter from Randhawa to Khurshid’, 1 June 1948, Home-Police, CCO, Delhi, File No.: 60/47-C, DSA.
87 ‘Letter from Randhawa to Khurshid’, 29 March, 1948, Home-Police, CCO, Delhi, File No.: 60/47-C.DSA, 86.
89 Kumar and Prasad (ed.) SWJLN, 198.
90 For example, a memorandum submitted to State Reorganization Commission in 1952 on behalf of the Delhi government, while describing the demographic composition of the city of Delhi, identified Muslims as a separate category along with the urban, rural and total displaced population. See Brahm Prakash, Case for Greater Delhi: Memorandum, submitted to the State Reorganization Commission on behalf of the Delhi State Government (Delhi: DSG Publications, 1954), 7.
91 CAD (Legislative), 11 February, 1948, Question No. 239.
92 CAD (Legislative), Vol. II, 29 November 1947, 867,872 and 920.
definition (of Indian citizenship) may (be)…Hindus and Sikhs of Pakistan cannot be considered as alien in India’. So they were naturally and automatically Indian citizens while the Muslims had an option of choosing Pakistan. The Hindu Mahasabha Chairperson Ram Singh, argued in public meetings, articles and press conferences that Muslim evacuee properties should be made available to refugees. He claimed that 40,000 refugees could be settled in these properties and then there would be no need to develop new colonies for them. Nehru reacted strongly to such arguments saying that, ‘Muslims who are living in these houses are sent there by the Government after full consideration. They are Muslims of Delhi who were driven out of their own houses or, sometimes, Muslims of parts of UP near Delhi who were also driven out of their houses during the troubled period of 1947-48’. Commenting on the objections to these houses being offered to Muslims as a favour he argued that, ‘their houses were included in the evacuee pool. They are thus given these houses in exchange of their own’. The displacement and horrific conditions of Hindu and Sikh population and the ‘attitude’ of Pakistan authorities towards its minorities aggravated these criticisms. The Mahasabha continued to attack the plan of creating ‘Muslim zones’ and called these efforts ‘appeasement’ of Muslims by the Indian government. Moreover, ministers and officials directly related to the Ministry of Rehabilitation (formed in 1950) claimed that the Muslim zones, which were constantly described as ‘Mini Pakistan(s)’ in Constituent Assembly Debates, ‘were to be opened up for settling down the refugees’. Thus the inevitable clash between the urgent need of Hindu and Sikh refugee rehabilitation and forced Muslim displacement resulted in a conflict between the Evacuee Property Laws and the construction of the Muslim ilaqe.

94 For Nehru’s response to Professor Ram Singh’s comments see: Kumar and Prasad (eds.), SWJLN, Vol. 26, 1954, 98.
97 CAD (Legislative), 21 February 1949, 884-87; CAD (Legislative), 24 February 1949, 1003-05. CAD (Legislative), 4 March 1949, 1243-45. CAD (Legislative), 19 March 1949, 1953.
98 CAD (Legislative), Vol. II, No. 1, 21 February 1949, 884. Also see debates on 26 March 1949, 1925-35.
A long debate took place in the Lok Sabha on 11 August 1952 in relation to the all-encompassing ‘intending evacuee’ clause of the Evacuee Property Law, which had become a tool for communal forces used to discriminate against Muslim citizens and occupy their properties in Delhi. The Evacuee Property law categorized Muslim refugees as ‘evacuees’ or ‘intending evacuees’ according to their location and most importantly, their ‘intention’, although that could hardly ever be certain. The custodian had complete authority to declare any property as ‘evacuee’ and Muslim residents as ‘evacuees’ or ‘intended’ evacuees. For instance, by way of clarifying the status of ‘intending evacuees’, sub-section ‘e’ of Section 2G128 declares that it ‘includes any person against whom an “intention” to settle in Pakistan is established from his conduct or from documentary evidence’. This clause became a tool for the communalization of the rehabilitation process. It was used to declare more properties as evacuee Muslim properties, thereby expanding the number of properties potentially available to Hindus and Sikhs. The efforts of A. P. Jain, the Minister of Rehabilitation, to present the case of Indian Muslims by calling them ‘our people’, who deserved fair treatment, were severely criticized. Sardar Hukum Singh brought the Muslim zones of Delhi in discussion although they were outside the jurisdiction of the custodian of evacuee property. The ‘liberal attitude’ towards Muslims encouraged by the ‘lofty ideals’ of the nation, Singh argued, would lead to delay in the process of the rehabilitation of Hindu and Sikh refugees. He further stated:

The custodian is not allowed to go there… Possession has not been taken. The Jamiat is keeping possession of them and distributing as it likes. It is not permitted that any Hindu or Sikh might go inside that. There are Muslim zones for past five years and this is being continued up to date. What right have (sic) they? Is this loyalty to India that they can keep those doors closed? Those zones are closed to everybody. Even the custodian cannot go and take possession…people are lying on the streets, but these houses should be kept intact…!

He further argued that there were two sets of Muslims: ‘honest Muslims’ and ‘others’. An honest Muslim, according to him, ‘would (not) be threatened and be obliged to leave this country’

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101 CAD (Legislative), 11 August 1952, 133.
because of the custodian of Evacuee Property. But there were others, ‘who have no intention of living here’, but stayed here only with the intentions of strengthening Pakistan financially by keeping their properties and businesses intact on both sides. They were to be brought under this law.\(^\text{102}\)

These ‘secured’ pockets or Muslim zones were also seen as a serious challenge to the implementation of improvement schemes in Delhi in later years. For instance, there were 43 Muslim families who were to be shifted to Andha Mughal area in Karol Bagh as part of the Ajmeri Gate Slum Clearance scheme in 1951. The families refused to move unless alternative accommodation was given to them in a Muslim locality. S M Sapru stated in a letter, dated 4 April 1952, to the Commissioner of Delhi regarding the Delhi Ajmeri Gate scheme,

A difficulty which confronts us is that of the 179 families 43 are Muslims who have… refused to move out of the city…for security reasons. We have used the method of persuasion but it has failed. The only alternative is to use force, but I do not think it would be advisable. A possible solution will be to move the Muslim families to the houses of evacuees which had been sealed.\(^\text{103}\)

In response to a letter regarding the same application, Sushila Nayar, a concerned officer in the Ministry of Rehabilitation, replied that ‘I have already passed order on the same file…that the 43 Muslim families should be housed in the vacant houses in the so called Muslim zones.’ (Emphasis added).\(^\text{104}\) This example not only demonstrates that the controversies around Muslim zones continued long after the Partition, but it also shows how the religious demography of Delhi, especially the insecurities of Muslim community and their demand for safe habitational space conflicted with the development agenda of independent India.

Nehru’s later correspondence shows that he became aware that what had been instituted as a temporary measure for protecting Muslim property and lives was actually intensifying communal tensions and that the evacuee property laws needed to be revisited, and repealed if needed. He wrote to A. P. Jain, Union Minister for Rehabilitation, on 27 November 1953 that these laws ‘come in the way of our economic life … especially of the economic life of Muslims

\(^{102}\) CAD (Legislative), 11 August 1952, 133.

\(^{103}\) R&R, CCO, Delhi, 1952, File No.: 2(24)1952. DSA.

\(^{104}\) R&R, CCO, Delhi, 1952, File No.: 2(24)1952. DSA.
in India… Psychologically it is bad…(and) we must…put an end to the further application of these evacuee property laws.\textsuperscript{105} It was eventually announced that after 7 May 1954 no person would be called an evacuee in India. Finally, on 25 September 1954 the Lok Sabha passed the Administration of Evacuee Property (Amendment) Bill, which abrogated the evacuee property law in respect of future cases. It stipulated that the ‘object of the law is that nobody should be declared an evacuee for anything… (and) he [the Muslim] becomes a normal citizen like any other citizen’.\textsuperscript{106}

This move was also forced by the changing nature of communal relations in post-Partition India. Reflecting on the organized attacks on Muslim zones and political controversies around their existence, Nehru pointed out in his communication with the Rehabilitation Ministry that in the past communal violence was primarily directed against the lives of Muslims, but post-Partition communal violence was also targeting their residential and commercial property.\textsuperscript{107} On the other hand, Muslims had become unhappy with the custodian system. In such circumstances, the Administration of Evacuee Property (Amendment) Bill was the only way seen to solve these problems. In this way, the Muslim zones and the controversies surrounding them came to an end. The zones were officially \textit{opened} or the resettlement of Hindu and Sikh refugees and around 3,000 houses were allotted to them.\textsuperscript{108} As for Muslims, it was an end of harassment by the custodian and the bureaucratic machinery. As explained earlier, evacuee property law was the biggest hurdle in the official recognition of their citizenship status. Now there was no risk of having any property declared ‘evacuee’. These areas became ‘mixed’ localities, except for a few traditionally concentrated Muslim ilaqa. However, a tendency for Muslims to gather together in crisis situations established as a practice in the galies and the mohallas. In this sense, the Muslim ilaqa as an imagined demarcated space for Muslim collective presence was a continuing feature of Delhi. These were the sites where Indian secularism in terms of the protection of the lives and properties of Muslims, their minority status, culture and rights were to be tested and exhibited. In the end however in the wider popular imagination these areas became symbols of ‘segregation’, ‘betrayal’ and ‘difference’. We shall examine that in chapter IV.

\textsuperscript{105} Kumar and Prasad (eds.), \textit{SWJLN}, Vol. 24, 1954, 459.
\textsuperscript{107} For a detailed letter to K.N. Katju regarding an incident of communal violence, see Kumar and Prasad (eds.), \textit{SWJLN}, Vol. 26, 1954, 207-08.
\textsuperscript{108} Qidwai, \textit{Azadi Ki Chhaon Mein}, 252 and 192.
Conclusion

The Partition of India transformed the fuzzy religious identity of space into concrete social and political categories. The Muslim Zone and/or Muslim ilaqe, placed bizarrely in a wider secular Indian space, emerged as a powerful urban category in this period. The melting pot thesis of Nehru saw these homogenized units as temporary measure to protect the community and eventually integrate them into an India-specific secular-modern framework. But the sense of insecurity and fears of the community intensified. The description of Muslim zones as ‘mini Pakistan’ further established them as strong markers of Indian Muslim identity. The subsequent communal violence transformed these areas into ‘communally sensitive areas’ and more generally into ‘Muslim ghettos’. The parallel discourse of the ‘Hindu Rashtra’, which at least till the 1950s was expressed as the demand for Akhand Bharat, continued to refer to Pakistan in relation to Indian Muslim identity, marking Muslim residential areas as usurped territories within the sacred Hindu space. In the later years, this allegation gradually started characterizing Muslim-dominated spaces as symbols of ghettoization, associating them with the alleged Muslim tendency of separatism. The proponents of both ideas – secular India and the Hindu Rashtra, expected the Muslim community to leave aside their religious identity and join the nation’s mainstream. The question of Indian-ness of Muslim identity, in this sense, was never dissociated from the idea of Pakistan. For the Hindu nationalists it was a tool to keep the discourse of Akhand Hindu Rashtra alive. On the other hand, protection of Muslim minority, even after the making of Pakistan, became a political imperative for Indian secularism.

In post-Partition Delhi, communal violence destroyed the traditional mohalla associations. After the gradual dismantling of Muslim zones in 1954, most of the mohallas became mixed in caste, religion and even class terms. But the fears and the sense of insecurity of Muslims of the erstwhile Muslim zones continued even after 1954. Gradually, these mixed areas emerged as units of communal adjustments and harmony, due to the shared trauma of violence, everyday experiences and economic interdependence. But within the structures of these mixed mohallas there were also concentrated pockets of Hindus and Muslims. For instance, the mixed neighborhood of Sadar Bazar, where Hindus and Muslims co-existed peacefully next to each other, could easily become communally divided, with each community mobilizing itself in a
situation of riot with massive display of collective strength. However, in mixed Hindu-Muslim mohallas, the two communities somehow established a consensual territorial boundary, which they normally did not cross. On the other hand, mohallas and streets with concentration of Muslims even in the inner part of the city appeared to be more segregated, and were re-established as ‘communally sensitive’ areas, like Jama Masjid, Lal Kuan, Ballimaran, Turkman Gate etc. However, the term was not used to underline the marginal or sensitive status of these areas which needed protection but to tag them as problem zones that could indulge in violent activities and become a threat in the absence of close surveillance. Consequently, a practice of unwarranted house searches, appointment of police pickets around mosques and Muslim dominated galies and mohallas, especially on the days of congregational prayers like Fridays, Eid-ul-Fitra prayer during Ramadan, Eid and Bakra-Eid, emerged after 1950s and established as an intrinsic feature of Muslim dominated space.

109 Muslim or Hindu girls, in particular, were fearful of going to areas dominated by the ‘other’ community. A participant informed that in 1984 he was harassed by some RSS workers when he tried offering namaz (prayer) in a mosque situated in the Hindu-dominated area of Darya Ganj. The mosque was kept in the area with an appointed caretaker, but regular prayer was disallowed. Group discussion with local residents Delhi, 14 December 2014.
Chapter IV

Caste, Class and Religion of Meat: Contest and Conflicts in Muslim Localities, 1955-1970

While the Muslim zones and refugee camps were demarcating the Muslim areas within the city of Delhi in the post-Partition days, meat practices—its production, sale and consumption—also become visible and contested political markers of such pockets. With the revival of the politics of cow in the late 1950s in north India, a new set of binaries emerged that juxtaposed the Hindu culture of *ahimsa* (non-violence), cow protection and vegetarianism with an Islamic culture of brutality, cow killing and meat eating. In the backdrop of these debates, *bade ka gosht* (meat of big animals)/beef and Kasai (butcher) were established as intrinsic symbols of Muslim cultural-religious identity and space in the public discourse of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s.¹

The discussions on vegetarianism and non-vegetarianism were more about the politicization and communalization of the so-called cultural ‘differences’ between Hindu and Muslim religious communities than a matter of simple dietary preferences. Although the claims of vegetarianism have serious caste, regional and ethnic variations, it was broadly projected as a key feature to establish larger argument of a majoritarian nation-state—vegetarian Hindu and non-vegetarian Muslim. These broadly defined dining preferences not only contributed to the discourse of homeland (Pakistan and Hindu Rashtra) and the demarcation of Hindu and Muslim-dominated areas (as discussed in previous chapter), but have also been used symbolically by Hindu political forces to propagate upper-caste north Indian sensibilities as dominant practices of Indian Hindus. Meat practice in Delhi and the controversies surrounding non-vegetarianism are a reflection of this identity construction.

The Meat practices symbolize an interesting social trajectory that involved religious, class and caste dynamics at every stage. Although, these practices had always been debated in the name of the cow, the water buffalo called carabeef was a second most important category of animal that faced this contestation. Religious and class specific consumption of carabeef and the associated administrative regulations intensified the demarcation of Muslim localities in

¹ Meat acquired from water buffaloes is called *Bade ka gosht* in popular parlance.
postcolonial Delhi, since these localities became the only sites where carabeef could be bought. While the Kasai community asserted that meat practice was a matter of cultural-religious custom and the right to an occupation, the dominant essentialist caste conceptions of selective vegetarianism placed meat practice in a vigorous opposition to Hindu religious sensibilities. Thus, slaughterhouses, meat shops and above all, Muslim localities became important sites where the politics of meat was played out.

This chapter examines the ways in which slaughter of animals and consumption of meat were politically problematized, legally regulated, socially objectified, and economically confined in postcolonial legal and political discourse in Delhi. The chapter explores the socio-political and economic dimensions of a process that transformed a commercial activity and cultural practice into an essentially ‘Muslim’ custom practiced in opposition to the dominant caste Hindu, urban, hygienic and vegetarian sensibilities during the period from the 1950s to the 1970s. The chapter looks at the national level legal-constitutional debates, regulatory mechanisms employed by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi and the local manifestations of cow and/or beef controversy. It also looks at the caste associations, religiously prescribed practices of slaughtering (jhatka/halal etc.) and economic inter-dependence of different actors woven in and around the biggest municipal abattoir of Delhi – the Idgah slaughterhouse. The chapter argues that the politics of meat practices played out aggressively by Jan Sangh and RSS not only communalized the slaughterhouses, meat shops and the Kasai community that was directly involved in this trade, but also stigmatized the Muslim households as polluted spaces in Delhi.

In the name of the Cow: Legal-constitutional discourse and the contest over Bade ka Gosht

The legislative debates in the aftermath of Partition – in the Constituent Assembly and in the first Lok Sabha - on the issue of animal protection demonstrate an interesting paradox. On the one hand, a reconstitution of the agricultural economy and the animal husbandry on modern and scientific line for the improvement of cattle wealth was discussed and debated as a requirement of planned economic growth and development, while at the same time animal protection was pursued as a symbol of national (read ‘Hindu’) sentiments in Indian society. The principles of vegetarianism and the traditional/ancient roots of an agrarian economy were argued. The ‘Hindu’ view saw milk prioritised over the consumption of meat for the better health of the nation; cow dung and urine were suggested to be more important in comparison to meat, fat, blood and other parts used for medical and scientific purposes. It was a clear battle between two very different perspectives: a secular versus sectarian views, modern and scientific zeal versus religious sensibilities, and above all, non-vegetarianism versus vegetarianism. The Nehruvian imagination that came to be recognised as ‘liberal’ and ‘secular’ in the 1960s and the ‘essentialist’ Hindu India were the two positions that shaped these debates around the cow. A clear line was drawn between ‘liberal’ and ‘Hindu political’ sentiment within the Congress. The demand that Hindu religious sentiments should be politically recognized in the wake of Partition violence and the making of Pakistan intensified these contradictions. Hence, the body of cow was seen as an important symbol that was supposed to determine the nature of postcolonial Indian state.

In the Constituent Assembly cow protection was central to the debates related to the issue of the protection of milch animals. Efforts were made by a few members to not only to protect...
the cow but also to widen the category of protected animals irrespective of their age and utility in agricultural production. In fact, an Advisory Committee of the government was formed to look at the issue of the prohibition of slaughter of animals in a comprehensive manner.\textsuperscript{5} Moreover, it was demanded that a uniform law should be adopted in this regard. The proposal made by the Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights of the Constituent Assembly did not initially include any provision for a complete ban on the slaughter of cows and other animals.\textsuperscript{6} Practical considerations associated with the larger objective of planned development (such as the estimated economic burden of the preservation of ‘useless’ cattle in terms of the availability of fodder) and the secular spirit of the Constitution were given priority in this regard.\textsuperscript{7} In fact, the provision of a ban on cow slaughter was introduced as an amendment to the proposal after a long debate. Although, the proposal was unanimously supported by the Congress, serious contradictions emerged within the party between Congress traditionalists and secularists on the complete or partial ban on cow slaughter in particular and other bovine animals (water buffaloes and its heifer, goat and sheep) in general. These differences not only created factions within the party at all levels but also became a reason for communal polarization in postcolonial Delhi. These differences, which were visible even during the colonial period, sharpened with the Partition of India and the Hindu and Sikh exodus from Pakistan.\textsuperscript{8} Traditionalists like P. Tondon, Seth Govind Das and Pundit Thakurdas Bhargava represented the Hindu vegetarian sentiments and vigorously contested the ‘utility’ arguments presented by the Congress ‘secularists’. They criticized Nehruvian policies on the issue of cow protection and interpreted Nehru’s proposal for the partial ban on cow slaughter as appeasement of Muslims. They demanded complete preservation of cow and its heifer, arguing that the prohibition on slaughter should extend to bulls, bullocks and other bovine cattle irrespective of their usefulness.\textsuperscript{9} These Congress traditionalists were supported by the RSS and Hindu Mahasabha. At a later stage it provided a

\textsuperscript{5} For a resolution on Advisory Committee: CAD, Vol. II, 1947, 936-38.
\textsuperscript{8} See: Christophe Jeffrelot, \textit{The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics: 1925 to the 1990s: Strategies of Identity-Building, Implantation and Mobilization (with Special Reference to Central India)} (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1999), 98-100.
\textsuperscript{9} CAD, Vol. 7, 14 November 1949, 278 and Vol. VI, 24 November 1948, 470-72. The Cattle Preservation and Development Committee, set up by the Government of India in 1948, had recommended a scheme for the establishment of cattle concentration camps called Gosadans for the preservation of useless cattle. The Supreme Court pointed out that establishment and maintenance of such Gosadans would not only add a burden to economy but would also require money which is needed for other development projects.
ground for Hindu nationalists to polarize communal sentiment at all levels in Delhi, in the Municipal and Metropolitan Council elections. Interestingly, Muslim members of the Assembly also supported the demand for cow protection and recommended its preservation as a Fundamental Right of ‘Hindu’ community. For instance, the Muslim representative of the United Provinces, Z. H. Lari suggested that, ‘it is better to come forward and incorporate a clause in Fundamental Rights that cow slaughter is henceforth prohibited, rather than it being left vague in the Directive Principles, leaving it open to Provincial Governments to adopt it one way or the other, and even without adopting definite legislation to resort to emergency powers under the Criminal Procedure.’\textsuperscript{10} An amendment was moved to expand the proposal of the Advisory Committee. The proposal which initially included a provision for ‘preserving and improving the breeds of cattle and prohibit the slaughter of cows and other useful cattle, especially milch and drought cattle and their young stock’ was reframed to widen the category of prohibition. It said:

\begin{quote}
The state shall endeavour to organize agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines and shall, in particular, take steps \textit{for preserving and improving the breeds and prohibiting the slaughter of cows and calves and other milch and drought cattle} (Emphasis added).\textsuperscript{11}
\end{quote}

However, with this amendment, provisions related to the preservation of cow were added to the Directive Principles of State Policy, which did not have any legal sanction. Rather than imposing a uniform law, state governments were made responsible for regulating prohibition according to the regional cultural traditions. But, this arrangement left open multiple possibilities of contradictions and debates, since it was not possible to bring a common law without a constitutional amendment that required the support of the two-third majority of both houses of Parliament. Any legislation on this matter was expected to be guided by the needs of modern and scientific approach towards agriculture and animal husbandry, as well as dietary and

\textsuperscript{10} For a discussion on Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of state policy in this regard see: CAD, Vol. VII, 24 November 1948, 473. The Muslim representatives were more in a defensive mode on this issue due to the communalization of cow and criminalization of the community.

\textsuperscript{11} Directive Principles of State Policy, Article 48, Part IV of the Constitution of India.
occupational requirements of the local population. The Ministry for Food and Agriculture issued a circular in December, 1950 to take reasonable steps in this regard.\textsuperscript{12}

Against the backdrop of these legislative developments, an anti-cow slaughter campaign was launched on 26 October 1952 in several provincial capitals by Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) to demand a common law in this regard. Cows were taken out for procession, and public meetings were held calling upon the Union Government to pass a law banning slaughter of cows throughout the country. Simultaneously, a signature campaign was launched to send a petition to the President urging a total ban.\textsuperscript{13} It became a burning issue again in the 1950s. Reacting to this campaign, Nehru declared his stand in a speech in Bhisla, Madhya Pradesh, on 29 November 1952. He said:

\begin{quote}
I will never allow a Central legislation to ban cow slaughter in the country. It will be against all principles and past traditions to impose restrictions of this nature throughout the country without taking into consideration the local sentiments and feelings of the people. The states are at liberty to ban the slaughter of cows in their respective areas but it will be quite uncalled for to have one policy for the whole of the country in this matter…the communal organizations…are busy attempting to divert…people from the fundamental economic problems by inciting communal hatred.\textsuperscript{14}
\end{quote}

This unambiguous position of Nehru further fuelled the internal conflicts within the Congress. Seth Govind Das, a prominent Congress member, presented the Indian Cattle Prevention Bill in the Lok Sabha in 1955, which in effect sought to prohibit the slaughter of cows, calves and other milch and drought cattle completely. The Bill was severely criticised by Nehru. He stated, ‘my advice to the state government is not to bring forward any Bill for cow protection…I am even

prepared to resign the office of Prime Minister rather than yield in this matter. He argued that the matter of the preservation of cattle should be discussed purely on economic grounds and the approach should be constructive.

The Bill was rejected by the House simply because its subject matter was in the exclusive sphere of State Legislatures and it needed a constitutional amendment before such a common legislation could be passed. Given the controversial nature of the issue, the central Cabinet constituted an expert committee to look into the matter in a comprehensive manner. The committee recommended that total banning of cow slaughter would be injurious to the economy and would be prejudicial to the health of the limited stock of healthy cattle of the country. A year later in 1956 the Animal Husbandry wing of the Agriculture and the Animal Husbandry Department also arrived at the same conclusion. The two Five Year Plans also rejected the proposal for total ban. In fact, referring to the possible added burden on the economy, the Planning Commission came to the conclusion that state governments should take a realistic view of the fodder resources available in the country. They should voluntary organizations to bear the main responsibility for maintaining unserviceable and unproductive cattle and pursue general public for assistance and support. Nehru’s move on the issue and subsequent developments provoked the Hindu political forces to launch an aggressive anti-Nehru, anti-meat/anti-Muslim propaganda. Every effort of the Congress-led government for the improvement of animal husbandry, slaughterhouses or meat industry, was projected as Muslim appeasement even during local election campaigns in Delhi.

A number of states adopted legislation to prohibit the slaughter of cows and other animals within two decades after independence. However, the resentments of the Qureshi community were quite palpable in states like Bihar, U.P and Central Provinces where the ban did not correspond to local practices. These states had a relatively larger population of Muslim and

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16 S. Sathey, ‘Cow Slaughter: The Legal Aspects’, in A.B. Shah (ed.), Cow-Slaughter, 81-82. The two Congress members, Purushotam Das Tandan and Thakur Das Bhargava ignored the Congress whip and voted in support of total ban on animal slaughter.
17 Sathey, ‘Cow Slaughter: The Legal aspects’, 70.
18 Sathey, ‘Cow Slaughter: The Legal aspects’, 77-78. Both the First and the Second Five Year Plans nor rejected the idea of a total ban on the slaughter of cattle. The First Five Year Plan (FFYP) pointed out that about 10% cattle population of India was unserviceable or unproductive, which could adversely affect the economy. FFYP, Planning Commission, GOI, New Delhi, 279.
19 ‘Action Against Pamphlets...which are to the effect that Prime Minister Nehru is Responsible for Cow-Slaughter’, GOI, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Poll. (I), 1961. File no: 37(14)/61. National Archives of India (NAI).
20 ‘Overview of The Indian Buffalo: Meat Value Chain’ (New Delhi: Agriculture Division Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), 2013), Annexure 2, 56-75 and Annexure 3, 76-78.
consumers of meat of big animals. The Qureshi community was mainly involved in the butchers’
trade and its subsidiary undertakings such as the sale of hides, tannery, glue making, gut making,
bone trade, beef vending and blood dehydrating, sale and purchase of cattle and its distribution to
various areas in the state of Bihar and other states of India. They filed petitions claiming that the
laws infringed their religious and occupational right, as no exceptions were made in these Acts
permitting slaughter of cattle even for bona fide religious purposes. The Hanif Qureshi& Others
vs. The State of Bihar, 1958 case challenged the constitutional validity of these acts. The
petitioners -the Muslim Qureshi community - filed a number of petitions invoking Articles 14,
19 (1) (g) and 25 of the Indian constitution on the ground that these Acts unconstitutionally (i)
restricted their right to freedom of religion, (ii) violated their right to equal protection of the law,
and (iii) constituted unreasonable restrictions on their fundamental right to carry on their
occupation.

The judgment of the court became a landmark in the legal-constitutional discourse on this
issue. It evaluated the constitutional validity of the Bihar, UP and Central Provinces Acts. The
court also accepted petitions from the representatives of Bharat Gow-Sevak Samaj, All India
Anti-cow Slaughter Movement Committee, Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha and Madhya
Pradesh Go Rakshan Sangh to be heard in the case proceedings as a third party. The
court concluded that cows, calves, heifers and young castrated bulls and buffaloes, which could supply
milk presently or in future or be of use for breeding or agricultural work, needed protection.
Thus, it held that (i) a total ban on slaughter of she-buffaloes or breeding bulls or working
bullocks (cattle as well as buffaloes) as long as they were milch or draught cattle was reasonable
and valid, but (ii) a total ban on the slaughter of she-buffaloes, bulls and bullocks (cattle or
buffalo) after they ceased to be capable of yielding milk or of breeding or working as drought
animals could not be supported as reasonable in the interest of the general public. The court,
however, made an exception in the case of cows. It held that a total ban on the slaughter of cows
of all ages irrespective of its utility was valid. It stated:

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23 In cases dealt by the Learned Council there is no provision for permitting a third party to intervene in the proceedings before
the Supreme Court. Third party intervention is permitted only for the Attorney- General of India or the Advocate General of the
States according to the Supreme Court Rules. But, the Supreme Court allowed such intervention due to the sensitive nature of the
There could be no gainsaying the fact that the Hindus in general hold the cow in great reverence and...this sentiment has in the past even led to communal riots…. we nevertheless think that it has to be taken into consideration, though only as one of many element, in arriving at a judicial verdict, as to the reasonableness of the restriction.\textsuperscript{24}

The court made this exception even though it considered the fact that the existence of useless cattle burdened the economy and therefore was unjustifiable. The Court, rather than maintaining a balance between contradictory beliefs of two religious communities by implementing democratic principle of the equality of cultural practices, preferred to uphold the Hindu-sentiment argument. The judgment thus contributed to the communalisation of dining preferences forever. It became a milestone in competitive electoral politics. A long legal-constitutional battle began between the liberal minded members of Congress party and the Hindu nationalists. An issue which needed a community initiative and mutual persuasion became a matter of ‘legal’ concern and a punishable offence.

\textit{Cow, meat and political imagination of the nation’s space}

The demand for national cow protection legislation entered an aggressive phase in the 1960s. Although a number of states had completely banned cow slaughter and regulated the slaughter of buffaloes, election campaigns were still being organized in the name of cow to demand a uniform law to ban slaughter of bovine cattle throughout the country. This was an interesting development since the cow protection movement was initiated and most vigorously debated in the states where it was already protected!\textsuperscript{25} For instance, Madhya Pradesh had already passed an


\textsuperscript{25} ‘Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 3967 by Shri Abdul Ghani Dar regarding the Number of Communal Riots Took Place in the Last Three Years up to 30.9.1967...’ GOI, MHA, Poll. - I (A), 1967, File No.: 24/449/67, NAI; ‘A Study of the Pattern of Communal Violence in India (January-September, 1967)’, GOI, MHA, Poll.-I (A), File No.: 19/41/67. NAI. ‘Measures for Checking Group Conflicts-Consideration of Suggestions from the I.B. – Shri Humayun Kabir and the Material which Come up Before the Committee on National Integration and Communalism’, GOI, MHA, Poll. I (A), 1964, File No.: 19/26/64. NAI. Also see: Delhi Metropolitan Council Debates (hereafter DMCD), Metropolitan Council Secretariat (MCS), on the Delhi Cow
Agricultural Cattle Preservation Act in 1959. The Act prohibited the slaughter of cows irrespective of the animal’s usefulness. The slaughter of other animals which included buffaloes could still be conducted, but it was made mandatory to obtain a certificate from a proper authority even for the purpose of religious sacrifices on the day of Bakra-Eid. Interestingly, in 1962 the election campaign attacked Nehru and the Congress Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Kailash Nath Katju. They were criticized as non-believers and enemies of cow. The Jan Sangh used slogans like ‘A vote for Jan Sangh is a vote for the protection of cow’ and circulated a pamphlet, the cover of which depicted Nehru killing a cow with a sword in his hand. This kind of propaganda played an important role in the victory of the Jan Sangh candidates in the state.

![Figure 4.1: Leaflet issued by Cow Slaughter Prevention Committee circulated in Delhi, 1961-](image)


26 For an Intelligence Bureau Report (hereafter IBR) and a copy of pamphlet see: ‘Action Against Pamphlets...which are to the effect that Prime Minister Nehru is Responsible for Cow-Slaughter’, GOI, MHA, Poll.-I, 1961, File no: 37(14)/61. NAI.

27 Jeffreloot, _The Hindu Nationalist Movement_, 206.

28 Action against Pamphlets... (regarding) Cow-Slaughter’, GOI,MHA, Poll.-I, 1961, File no: 37(14)/61. NAI.
Figure 4.2: Pamphlet ‘Bharat Mata Ki Durdasha Kyon’, 1961-III

29 ‘Action against Pamphlets... (regarding) Cow-Slaughter’, GOI, MHA, Poll.-(I), 1961, File no: 37(14)/61. NAI.
Figure 4.3: Leaflet re-issued by Cow Slaughter Prevention Committee in a pamphlet entitled, 'Bharat Mata Ki Durdasha Kyon', circulated in Delhi, 1961-II

30 ‘Action against Pamphlets... (regarding) Cow-Slaughter’, GOI, MHA, Poll.-(I), 1961, File no: 37(14)/61. NAI.
Cow slaughter was already banned in Delhi. No slaughter of cow had ever taken place in Delhi’s slaughterhouses since 1947 even before the By-Law of Delhi Municipal Committee was passed in 1951. But, Delhi became a battle ground for controversies around the protection of bovine cattle: it was exposed to the aggressive campaign for cow protection that used anti-Congress/anti-Muslim rhetoric and turned into a site where dynamics of meat politics were played out around urban upper-caste Hindu selective vegetarianism. For instance, provocative cow protection pamphlets were used in Delhi during the Municipal Corporation by-elections in 1961. A Delhi based Go Hatya Nirodh Samiti published a descriptive pamphlet entitled ‘Nehru Disregards the Views of Great Men’, illustrating on the cover the pictures of Swami Dayanand, Gandhi, Tilak and Malviya. There was another picture of Nehru looking at the carcass of a decapitated cow and the spectacle of a butcher leading herds of kine to the slaughterhouse. It depicted a picture of another butcher driving his knife into the neck of a cow. Below the illustration were the quotations of Gandhi, Dayanand, Tilak and Malviya urging to protect cows while, on the other side, it had Nehru’s statement that he issued in Parliament on 2 April 1955 against a law on the total ban on cow slaughter. Referring to protests against the cow slaughter in Mewat region in Punjab (now Haryana), the pamphlet further argued that ‘not only Hindus but also Muslim Meos (sic) were opposed to cow slaughter but Muslim Meos helped the butchers in cow slaughter (sic). Thus, both the Muslims and the government had practiced fraud on Hindus.’

31 Bye-laws of Delhi Municipal Committee, 1951 (Corrected up to 31st December, 1951) (Delhi: Delhi Municipal Committee, Town Hall, 1951). In fact, a number of states including Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra (the Vidharba region), Mysore and Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir and five Union Territories (Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Delhi, Dadra and Naar Haveli) had put a complete ban on the slaughter of cows. While the states of Andhra Pradesh in Telangana region, Assam, Madras (Chennai), Maharashtra in the former Bombay area and West Bengal implemented a partial ban by prohibiting the slaughter of young and useful cows. Kerala and Nagaland were the only states that had not introduced any legislation in this regard till 1966. Later Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Mizoram also enacted partial ban along with Kerala and Nagaland by 1979. See GOI, RSD, 1960s and 1970s for details. Also see: PM’s directive to states on the slaughter of healthy bovine cattle, GOI, RSD, 24 August 1984, written answer no. 444.


33 'Action against Pamphlets... (regarding) Cow-Slaughter’, GOI, MHA, Poll.-I, 1961, File no: 37(14)/61. NAI.
The Intelligence Bureau (IB) did not find any information to establish that this leaflet was directly used by the Jan Sangh during Municipal elections, and questioning the date of its publication (May 1961) it concluded that such publications had been in circulation in Delhi and other places since April 1961. The Sangh invoked such imageries to establish a strong anti-Congress and anti-Muslim front. But the cow could not acquire a communal colour in Delhi’s local politics since there was no strong Hindu rightist political leadership in Delhi and most of the Muslim population had Congress loyalties. A significant proportion of educated Muslims were also inclined towards socialist and leftist parties. Moreover, Urdu newspapers, owned by

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34 ‘Action against Pamphlets... (regarding) Cow-Slaughter’, GOI, MHA, Poll.-(I), 1961. File no: 37(14)/61. NAI.
35 ‘Action against Pamphlets... (regarding) Cow-Slaughter’, GOI, MHA, Poll.-(I), 1961. File no: 37(14)/61. NAI. The Information Bureau suggested that the Jan Sangh was trying to propagate its agenda without any direct involvement in order to save itself from facing election offence.
Muslims, continuously expressed their support to cow protection and criticised the communalisation of the issue by Hindu (*firqaparast*) (extremist) powers.  

The Bharatiya Jan Sangh managed to win only nine out of seventy seats it fought for in the Delhi Municipal election in 1962. But, its successful electoral campaigns in other parts of north India encouraged it to give a political voice to cow protection movement in the capital city. It facilitated a conference organized by Bharat Gosevak Samaj (BJS) in 1964 in Delhi, along with RSS, to demand a uniform law for complete legal protection of cows in India. The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) was also formed on the same day to pursue the cause. This kind of politics took an aggressive turn after the death of Nehru in 1964. The Jan Sangh MPs in Lok Sabha pressurized the Minister of Agriculture in the Parliament to force the state governments to

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38 ‘Action against Pamphlets... (regarding) Cow-Slaughter’, GOI, MHA, Poll.-(I), 1961, File no: 37(14)/61. NAI.
39 *Organizer*, 31 August 1964, 8.
completely ban such slaughter. Delegations, led by Seth Govind Das, a Congress traditionalist, sent a memorandum to the Home Minister, G. Nanda, to accept the demand for complete ban. In the Parliament Sangh representatives vigorously shouted aggressive slogans like ‘Glory to our mother, the cow!’ despite calls to maintain order.\(^{40}\)

The formation of a Committee called Sarvadaliya Gow Raksha Maha Abhiyan Samiti (Committee for the Great All Party Campaign for Protection of the Cow or SGRMAS) in September 1966 made it a nation-wide campaign. The committee had in it representatives of VHP, RSS, Bharat Sadhu Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Hindu Mahasabha, Ramrajya Parishad and the Shankaracharya of Puri.\(^{41}\) A number of Muslim leaders of Delhi, including many associates of the Congress like Dr. Ansari and others, also participated in this cow protection movement. The working committee of the Jan Sangh extended its support to the movement and helped organizing a large agitation in front of the Parliament, which eventually turned violent. The clash between the agitating group of sadhus and police resulted in the death of eight people including one policeman. The Shankaracharya of Puri started a fast along with other sadhus to register his protest against the death of sadhus. He was soon arrested. This act of the government aroused public anger following which the Shankaracharya was released, though he continued his fast.\(^{42}\) The Jan Sangh activists showed solidarity with Shankaracharya and supported the protests which spread throughout the country. It is important to mention here that Al-Jamiat, the news paper published by the pro-Congress Jamiat-ulema-e-Hind, showed sympathy with Shankaracharya, appealed for breaking his fast and demanded a complete ban on cow slaughter in Delhi.\(^{43}\)

This episode consolidated Jan Sangh’s position in Delhi especially in the Metropolitan Council election of 1967. Conflicts within the Congress between traditionalists and secularists at national and local level helped the Hindu nationalists, the Jan Sangh and RSS, to polarise educated middle class, Hindu and Sikh refugees as well as ‘local’ (the powerful upper-caste Hindu and Jain community of Delhi who have been long associated with Arya Samaj,

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\(^{41}\) See: Debate on Delhi Cow Protection Bill, 1967. DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 2 May, 1967, 54. The Delhi Cow Protection Bill was also supported by the Muslim members of the Corporation including Anwar Ali Dehlavi and Imdad Sabri, evoking the Islamic view on the protection of cow and a number of fatwae (religious sanctions) that were issued by the Mughal courts in this regard. See: DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 20 October 1967, 54-58. B. D. Vadhwa stated during the discussion that it represented the sentiments of the eighty percent of the Hindu population of India arguing that, ‘Lakhs of cows are being killed in India today even when we have our own government’, DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 20 October 1967, 60-61.

\(^{42}\) Jeffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement*, 207.

\(^{43}\) GOL, RSD, 7 November 1966, 133-46; *Al-Jamiat*, 10 January1967 and 2 February 1967. Also see: Al-Jamiat, 7 November and 30 November 1966. Also see: DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 2 May 1967, 52-59.
Mahasabha and RSS) Hindu and Jain community. It won 33 out of 56 seats of the Metropolitan Council and six out of seven parliamentary seats of Delhi.\(^{44}\) This victory gave a new motivation to the cow movement in Delhi. In 1967, the Delhi Cow Protection Bill was passed by the Delhi Metropolitan Council and was forwarded to the Parliament for approval. It proposed to prohibit the slaughter of cows, including bulls and bullocks of any age, even after they ceased to be capable of yielding milk or of breeding or working as draught animals in the Union Territory of Delhi.

Interestingly, there was practically no need to pursue such a ban as the Municipal by-laws of Delhi Corporation had already banned the slaughter of cow, calves and bullocks under the provision of Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957.\(^{45}\) The Delhi Cow Protection Bill, 1967 proposed to put a complete ban on the import, selling and serving of cow meat within Delhi territory by making it a punishable offence with ten years’ imprisonment and a fine of up to ten thousand rupees. Prem Chand Gupta, the Jan Sangh member of the Council, argued that the purpose of the bill was not only to protect cow but to increase the production of milk in the capital city and to establish cow shelters. He said, ‘Although…cow slaughter is prohibited..., cow beef is imported, cooked and served in big hotels in Delhi’.\(^{46}\) He further argued, ‘today India is surrounded by a serious threat from Pakistan and China. If our soldiers did not get enough milk and ghee…our nation will be in great danger…it is our responsibility to provide nutritious food to our soldiers fighting at the borders….but there is a lack of milk...(because) no breed of good cows is left…they are slaughtered…[I] insist that it is not a question of cow protection but of the protection of the nation’.\(^{47}\) The Bill was passed by the Council on 14 November 1967 and sent to the Parliament for further consideration.\(^{48}\) The Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation, however, invoking the Supreme Court’s


\(^{45}\) DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 2 June 1967, 43-47. Also see: DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 5 May 1967, 55-57; 20 October 1967, 40-43and 6 November 1967, 49-55 for debate on Delhi Cow Protection Bill 1967.

\(^{46}\) DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 2 June 1967, 44.

\(^{47}\) DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 14 November 1967, 36-43.
interpretation, observed that the central government had decided to await the report of the committee set up to examine the question of cow slaughter since the Bill amounted to an undue restriction which would be *ultra vires* of Art. 19 (1) (g) of the Constitution.\(^4^9\) Quite interestingly, amid these developments, while the local Congress wing in the Municipality showed resentment about the Delhi Cow Protection Bill in Metropolitan Council, the Indira Gandhi led Congress (Congress (I)) changed its election symbol from ‘a pair of bullocks’ to ‘cow and calf’ for the Lok Sabha election campaign of 1967.\(^5^0\)

![Figure 4.6: Poster by Congress for Lok Sabha Elections, 1967](image)

The committee being referred to was the Sarkar Committee on Cow Protection which was set up by the Central Government on 29 June 1967, under the Chairmanship of a retired Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India, Justice Amal Kumar Sarkar. It included representatives from the Central Government, the state governments, the SGRMAS and some official experts including some members of the Planning Commission. Although the committee was formed to examine the suggestions and proposals made by the SGRMAS on this subject, the government made it very

\(^{49}\) GOI, RSD, December, 1967; GOI, RSD, 22 August, 1969, 5224.

\(^{50}\) [https://www.reddit.com/r/india/comments/2q6vdw/vote_for_calf_and_cow_forget_all_others_now_vote/](https://www.reddit.com/r/india/comments/2q6vdw/vote_for_calf_and_cow_forget_all_others_now_vote/) (accessed on 18 June 2015).

\(^{51}\) [https://www.reddit.com/r/india/comments/2q6vdw/vote_for_calf_and_cow_forget_all_others_now_vote/](https://www.reddit.com/r/india/comments/2q6vdw/vote_for_calf_and_cow_forget_all_others_now_vote/) (accessed on 18 June 2015).
clear in the Terms of Reference of the committee that it would consider ‘appropriate practical
steps for the protection of cows, calves, bulls and bullocks’.\textsuperscript{52} It was to submit its report within
six months to the government. The committee held twelve meetings, but couldn’t reach any
conclusive decision.\textsuperscript{53} On 5 August 1968, the three representatives of SGRMAS walked out from
the proceedings of the committee due to serious differences over the interpretation of the Terms
of Reference.\textsuperscript{54} The members of SGRMAS put forward two demands: a constitutional
amendment to formulate a uniform law for a complete ban on cow slaughter; and, to bring other
bovine cattle within the jurisdiction of preservation laws irrespective of their usefulness. The
members of the SGRMAS did not show any interest in discussing the practical and
administrative aspects that included the ill-treatment of useless cows, non-availability of
adequate number of cow-shelters (cow-homes) and lack of fodder and other resources required
for the protection and improvement of cows and cattle wealth in general and above all the
anticipated economic burden.\textsuperscript{55} The Supreme Court’s interpretation of the Art. 44 in the Hanif
Qureshi case was the other reason for conflict. The Court had observed that total ban on the
slaughter of other useless bovine animals was not in the interest of general public and was
invalid.\textsuperscript{56} The SGRMAS, however, was not keen to consider the wider economic and social
implications of total ban and had been mocking the Hindu-sentiments argument.

The Jan Sangh decided to further intensify its agitation in Delhi. On 19 May 1969, all its
members of the Parliament, members of the Council, Corporation and New Delhi Municipal
Committee participated in a 24-hour hunger strike in front of the residence of the Prime Minister
to push the Delhi Cow-Protection Bill. A memorandum was submitted to the Prime Minister
demanding a complete ban on cow-slaughter in Delhi. The Delhi Pradesh Jan Sangh also made
the subject an issue for public demonstration. It welcomed the Delhi Metropolitan Council’s
decision to ban the sale of beef in the capital city.\textsuperscript{57}

Responding to this aggressive cow politics, the government appealed to the SGRMAS to
participate in the Sarkar Committee. Its tenure was extended to 31 March 1971.\textsuperscript{58}

\textsuperscript{52} DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 2 April 1970, 21.
\textsuperscript{53} GOI, RSD, 2 April 1970, 19-49.
\textsuperscript{54} GOI, RSD, 2 April 1970, 19-49.
\textsuperscript{55} GOI, RSD, 2 April 1970, 19-49; GOI, RSD, 4 December 1970, 34-35.
\textsuperscript{56} GOI, RSD, 2 April 1970, 48-49; GOI, RSD, 4 December 1970, 34-35; Also see: GOI, RSD, 28 August 1970, 50-51.
\textsuperscript{57} Puri, \textit{Bharatiya Jana Sangh}, 216-17.
\textsuperscript{58} GOI, RSD, 2 April 1970, 35.
Committee, however, could not make any progress between August 1968 and April 1972 due to the non-cooperation of SGRMAS. It was re-organized twice in 1972 and 1973 by inviting other representatives working on the issue to find a feasible solution. The Committee was requested to submit its report soon, but it was not prepared till 1976. The Central government finally introduced the Constitution (50th Amendment) Bill in 1979. The bill aimed at securing legislative competence for Parliament to legislate on the subject of prohibition. It was proposed that cow protection should be taken out of the State List and inserted into the Concurrent List. But the Bill lapsed with the dissolution of the 6th Lok Sabha.

The description above reveals how the cow was being used as a political symbol to establish the dominant Hindu notions of vegetarianism. The debate in this sense expanded the scope of Hindu nationalist argument. It not merely raised the issue of total ban on cow slaughter but also aggressively campaigned for the inclusion of all bovine animals. The Jan Sangh quite successfully transformed cow protection into a Hindu-Muslim issue. Thus, the meat of big animals – its production, sale and consumption – turned out to be a hotly debated issue in Delhi. And soon it began to influence the politics of space in relation to the location of abattoirs.

II

Site, smell and view: Production of meat and Muslim localities in Delhi

Delhi had three municipal abattoirs situated at Idgah near the Old city of Delhi, at Shahdara and at Mehrauli. The Idgah slaughterhouse was constructed outside the city walls away from the

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60 GOI, RSD, 6 December 1978, 121-22.
62 The All-India Meat and Livestock Exporters Association lists 42 abattoir-cum-meat processing plants in the country and 32 meat processing plants are registered with the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA). These are over and above the municipal slaughterhouses which according to a rough estimate stand at 3,600. See: http://www.ummid.com/news/2015/March/11.03.2015/animal-slaughter-in-india-key-facts.html#sthash.C5aC6hIk.dpuf (accessed on 18 June 2015).
densely populated areas of the city in the Western Extension area in 1915. It was constructed for the slaughtering capacity of about 400 sheep and goats and around 50 buffaloes each day to meet the requirements of the then relatively small population of Delhi. The location of Idgah slaughterhouse was a contested site ever since it came into existence in 1915. The colonial administration had shifted the old abattoir, once situated at Turkman Gate near the wall of the city, to this site. It was built near Idgah to facilitate sacrificial slaughter which was carried out at Bakra-Eid. There were resentments from the Hindu/Jain community of Delhi on its construction not only due to its presence near Jhandewalan temple, but also because of the demarcated route of cows that were taken for slaughter on Baqr-Id day from the city to slaughterhouse. It resulted in a massive riot in 1923 as discussed in Chapter I. After the disappearance of the cow from the scene, selling, unloading of buffaloes, loading of meat, skin, carcass collection turned out to be the major points of conflicts in postcolonial Delhi.

Figure 4.7: Idgah Ward of Sadar Bazar Parliamentary Constituency, 2014

63 It is called Idgah slaughterhouse because it is situated near Idgah (Idgah is a place with a mosque and a large courtyard set apart for congregational prayers on two chief Muslim feasts).
64 Source: Author, October 2014.
Figure 4.8: Jhandewala Mata Mandir situated at approximately five hundred meters away from the Idgah Slaughterhouse, 2014⁶⁵

Figure 4.9: Idgah Situated at a distance of hundred meters approximately. A number of auxiliary industries still run opposite to Idgah, 2014⁶⁶

The Idgah slaughterhouse, which was later shifted to Ghazipur on the outskirts of the city, was the biggest and main slaughterhouse of Delhi because it alone had the privilege of slaughtering buffaloes. It was locally known as Kamela or Mandi (livestock market). It covered seven acres of land which included livestock market, slaughterhouse and Municipal offices. There were three

⁶⁵ Source: Author, October 2014.
⁶⁶ Source: Author, October 2014.
main sections of slaughterhouse: halal, jhatka and buffalo sections. Goats and sheep were slaughtered in the halal section to serve specifically the needs of Muslim and other consumers depending on their preference. The jhatka section had provision for the slaughter of pigs along with goats and sheep. The buffalo section was designed for slaughtering buffaloes and other big animals. Each section of the abattoir was further divided into ante mortem and slaughtering sites. There were other auxiliary industries called karkhanas established around the slaughterhouse for the processing of carcass required for different purposes like hide for leather goods, tallow for soap industry, bones for crockery and pet food, blood for pharmaceutical companies and entrails for making surgical thread and decorative silver foil.

It is important to discuss the difference between Halal and Jhatka slaughtering here since this division had its own significance in the meat industry. Halal is a way of slaughtering animals in conformity with Islamic norms and is also referred to as zabah or zabiha. Apart from the religious significance of halal in reducing the guilt of people involved in the act of slaughtering an animal (butchers in this case), Muslims, specifically the Qureshi community, proudly claim that it is the most hygienic and peaceful way of killing an animal. One of my participants Kareemuddin (name changed), owner of a private slaughterhouse, skin processing units and meat supplier, explained that it was considered so because all the blood is drained from the body of dead animal once the jugular veins are slit from three sides. It decreases the possibilities of the contamination of blood in animal body, which allows its flesh to be stored for longer hours. The meat exported from India to Gulf countries has to be strictly halal. This specific skill of halal slaughtering for domestic and foreign markets, made Qasabs (Muslim butcher) a key factor in the meat business. Jhatka, on the other hand, which literally means ‘blow’ in Hindustani, is the process of slaughtering an animal in one stroke. According to Sikh practices of animal slaughter, jhatka is a religious ritual in which the animal is killed quickly without suffering. It is considered to be a less painful way of slaughtering, and preferred by a few Hindu communities in north

67 For the official meanings of Zabiha and Jhatka see: Delhi Municipal Corporation By-laws, 1957, 4-5. For debates on traditional and modern ways of slaughtering in Delhi see: GOI, RSD, 9 September 1957, 4030-31; GOI, RSD, 19 September 1958, 905-06; GOI, RSD, 9 September 1957, 28 and 28 February 1966, 1594-95.

68 The information is based on an extensive two rounds of interviews with Chowdhary Kareemuddin (name changed), Delhi, 17 December 2014. Guided and independent field observations also reveal that a number of auxiliary industries like hide processing, bone processing and tallow making units still run in the same area opposite to Idgah. A street Chamre Wali Gali is known for skin processing units; ‘Overview of The Indian Buffalo: Meat Value Chain’ and Zarin Ahmed’s work also provided useful insights to fulfill the gaps in understanding the trajectory of meat. See: Zarin Ahmed, ‘Taaleem, Tanzeem aur Tijarat (Education, Association and Business): The Changing Role of the All India Jamiat ul Quresh’, in Vinod, K. Jairath ed. Frontiers of Embedded Muslim Communities in India (New Delhi: Routledge, 2011), 153-67.
India as well. Halal slaughtering also became a point of contention in Parliamentary debates as it was criticised as the most inhuman, brutal, barbaric and ‘*hinsak*’ (violent) way of slaughtering in comparison to jhatka. It was argued that slaughtering should be conducted in modern ways through machines with less human intervention. The debates on vegetarianism, thus, seemed to consolidate the image of Muslim butchers as barbaric and *hinsak* (violent).

In this sense, a slaughterhouse that was projected as a site for meat production only, and that too only for Muslims, was actually the hub for a number of lucrative small and large industries (about 168) associated with meat production. In addition, meat was also an exportable commodity, which was supplied to retail meat shops, restaurants, hotels, hostels and most importantly to foreign markets with extraordinary profit. Although these industries developed only after the 1970s, a number of units were associated traditionally with businesses like hide processing, tanneries, soap manufacturing and so on.

*Source: Author, October 2014. Taking pictures in this area can be a risky affair due to the controversies surrounding meat business and the abattoir. The owners/supervisors of the skin processing unit and other auxiliary industries did not allow taking pictures. The Khatik owner of the skin processing unit had a number of pictures of gods and goddesses placed in a small wooden temple like structure in his karkhana, but he did not allow his karkhana to be captured in the camera.*

*Kareemuddin took at least half an hour to explain that meat business is not only about slaughtering, it’s about a number of businesses that are parts of our everyday life, including food, business, employment and other products. He argued in defence of the Qureshi community who are seen as brutal, trouble maker and performing dirty menial jobs. Interview with Kareemuddin (name changed), Delhi 17 December 2014. Also see: ‘Overview of The Indian Buffalo’, 14-34.*
The Delhi Municipal Committee (DMC), which was reconstituted as Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) in 1957, was made responsible for the maintenance of all public slaughterhouses for Zabiha/halal, Jhatka and pigs under the By-laws of 1951. The Corporation collected fees from meat traders and retail meat stall owners for providing the facilities for slaughter and

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74 The Municipal Corporation adopted the by-laws for the regulation of slaughterhouses and the licensing of premises for the sale of meat, which were issued by the Municipal Committee of Delhi under the Punjab Municipal Act, 1913.
dressing of animals, sanitation and cleaning at the slaughterhouses. It charged a small fee per animal according to its size: 25 paisa per small animal including goat, sheep and pig and Rs.1 per big animal in 1953. The DMC was also responsible for the provision and maintenance of services required for smooth running of the slaughterhouse. It also took care of sanitary arrangement in relation to the management of carcass in and around the slaughterhouse.75

For these purposes DMC employed a number of officials, such as a Meat Inspector (medical officer or veterinary surgeon) with power to inspect and examine meat intended for human consumption, and a Slaughterhouse Superintendent (a qualified Veterinarian) for the same purpose. The veterinary doctor used to be present at the slaughterhouse at all times to conduct health checks on animals before they were sent for slaughtering with a mark ‘passed’ or ‘cancelled’ on animals’ spine or thigh. He classified meat further into different categories established by the DMC. According to DMC by-laws of 1957, ‘No meat shall be sanctioned or sold without the mark…(that) shall specify the grade…and class of the animal slaughtered.’76 Thus, the meat was marked as ‘G’ for goat, ‘M’ for mutton, ‘H’ for horse flesh, ‘P’ for pork, ‘B’ for beef from cows, bulls, oxen, heifers, calves and steers, while ‘F’ was for buffalo beef. The category ‘B’ and ‘F’ have been the most contested, as this was one of the aspects of meat practice where inspections were used as a tool to harass butchers involved in the supply or selling of meat, to check whether it was cow or buffalo meat.77 Besides facilities, the corporation also provided for ante-mortem and post-mortem inspection by veterinary officers.

The working hours of the abattoir were usually from 5.00 am to 12.00 noon or as decided by the MCD in different seasons. It was open every day except Tuesdays which was auspicious for Hindus and observed as meatless day by most. The buffalo section was also closed on Fridays. Apart from regular government holidays, the abattoir remains closed for three days during the bi-annual Hindu Navaratra festival since 1994.78 In other words, the working hours and days of the slaughterhouse were largely regulated by Hindu religious calendar.

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76 By-laws of Delhi Municipal Committee, 1951, 46-47.
77 By-laws of Delhi Municipal Committee, 1951, 47.
78 These details are based on my fieldwork in Qasabpura and Idgah slaughterhouse areas.
The Muslim Qureshi biradari, which is directly associated with the meat industry, is concentrated mainly in Qasabpura and Rakabganj in Delhi. Rakabganj is near Turkman Gate area between Delhi Gate and Turkman Gate where the old Turkman Gate slaughterhouse was situated. Qasabpura, which is now referred to as Qasabganj, has the largest concentration of Qureshi community. It is situated near Idgah slaughterhouse. Most of the members of the community originally were from Delhi, but there has been a gradual inner-migration from U.P., M.P., Bihar and other parts after Partition. Similarly, a number of established people of the community moved to Pakistan in 1947 mainly due to the fear of communal violence.79

The Qureshi biradari of butchers is a close knit group among the Muslims who have traditionally slaughtered animals and sold meat through hawking or shops. They are also known as Qasab and Kasai. The two words are used interchangeably in common vocabulary, but there is a difference between the meanings of Qasab and Kasai. Qasab means the one who slaughters and sells meat, while Kasai means those who do it in heartless and cruel ways. The members of the community involved in meat business prefer to be called Qasab by profession and Qureshi by social identity; but due to the moral and sociological values associated with the slaughtering of animals, they are commonly referred to as Kasai even among the Muslims.80 The communal characterization of meat practice has intensified the political meaning of this word further since Kasai amongst the butchers is the one who is involved specifically in the killing of big animals, including cows. Thus, pictures of Muslim Kasai killing a cow worshiped by Hindus gave a boost to cow protection movement in colonial and postcolonial times as well as to anti-Muslim propaganda of Hindu organizations during and after colonial period.81

The Qureshi community is professionally divided into two groups. The Qasab or Kasai is the one who slaughters bada janwar (big animals) and are also referred to as Bhainswale (one who slaughters buffaloes), while others who slaughter goats and sheep are called Chikwa or Chik. They are also known as Bakrewale (one who slaughters goat and sheep). The Kasai are

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79 Interview with Kareemuddin (name changed), Delhi, 17 December 2014.
80 Ahmed ‘Taaleem, Tanzeem aur, Tijarat’, 159-60.
also referred to as *Gaye Qasab* or *Goru Qasab* (one who slaughters cow) in popular parlance, though no one is called Gaye Qasab now in Delhi.\(^82\) The two groups were specifically involved in their professional domains for slaughtering different animals until the buffalo meat business expanded beyond domestic markets and became highly profitable specifically after the 1980s.

**Economic interdependence and shared space**

Although slaughtering of big animals has mainly remained a Muslim occupation, other communities have their due share at different stages of slaughtering and associated trades. Specifically, the *Khatik* and *Chamar* or *Charmakar* (one who deals with the processing of leather acquired from animal skin) communities have traditionally worked closely with the Muslims. In fact, there are theories that suggest that the Qureshi community belongs to Khatik Hindus who converted to Islam before or even during colonial period. The traditional living pattern which represents close proximity of lower caste-class communities living side by side near the city wall also suggests their close connection and economic interdependence. However, the Qureshi biradari refuses to acknowledge these claims and associates their lineage with the Quresh tribe of Arabs who had specific skills required for halal slaughter. Irrespective of its demography, the area that emerged around Idgah slaughterhouse, built outside the walls of the city, is a reflection of this traditionally constituted economic interdependence.

The area Basti Julahan, adjacent to Qasabpura, is populated by Scheduled Caste communities. These communities, specifically, Khatiks have been involved in the jhatka slaughter of animals for centuries. Khatiks are a *jati* (caste) of vegetable sellers, pig breeders and pork butchers. Their name is derived from the Sanskrit word ‘*khatika*’, meaning butcher and hunter. Apart from Khatiks, the other Scheduled Caste communities in the area are Chamar (leather workers now called Jatavs), Jaulaha (weavers), Balmikies (sweepers), Dhanuk and Dhobi (washermen). The Qureshi and other Muslim communities mainly belong to artisan biradaries and workers who live in the areas around Idgah slaughterhouse. Traditionally, the Qureshi, Khatik, Chamar and Balmiki communities have been involved in meat business, but this

\(^82\) ‘Overview of The Indian Buffalo’, Annexure 5, 80. Also see: Ahmed, ‘Taaleem, Tanzeem aur Tijarat’, 160.
distinction changed with the demographic, social and economic developments at different stages.\textsuperscript{83} Table 1 explains the involvement of different religious and caste communities traditionally engaged in the slaughtering of animals.

**Table 1: Traditional Communities Involved in Slaughter of Animal and Sale of Meat in Delhi\textsuperscript{84}**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Animal slaughter</th>
<th>Method of Slaughter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qasab/Kasai/Bade kasai/</td>
<td>Arabs of the Qureshi Tribe and Khatik Hindu converts.</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Cows and Buffaloes</td>
<td>Halal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chik/Chikwa/Bakar Qasab</td>
<td>Arabs of the Qureshi Tribe and Khatik Hindu converts</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Goats, sheep etc.</td>
<td>Halal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khatik</td>
<td>Kshtriya</td>
<td>Hindu/Sikh</td>
<td>Swine, Goats, Sheep and chicken. Sacrificial slaughter of big animals.</td>
<td>Jhatka</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chain of meat production (Appendix 3) shows that the trade involves a variety of social groups like Scheduled Caste Hindus, Sikhs along with Qureshi Muslims. There are also people indirectly involved in the work. Women from Khatik *Samaj* (community) come to the abattoir to buy heads, hooves and entrails to sell them in areas where there are pockets of Dalit and other lower caste communities. It gives them high protein diet at cheap rates.\textsuperscript{85}

Apart from the trajectory of animals from slaughterhouse to the meat shops and restaurants, there were also other areas like the lucrative export market in West Asia. The by-

\textsuperscript{84} Based on field observations, interviews, ‘Overview of The Indian Buffalo’, Annexure 5, 80.
\textsuperscript{85} Interview with Kareemuddin (name changed), Delhi, 17 December 2014.
products, like horns, skin, offal, bones, intestine, blood, and fat are sold and supplied at different stages to neighbouring areas where they are processed initially and then sold to factories. There is a whole line of production in each direction that involves people who directly and indirectly depend on the meat industry. It includes the leather industry, soap industry, poultry feed, handicraft, fish feed, wool, gelatin and so on.\textsuperscript{86}

The lower class-lower caste Hindu/Sikh Khatik refugees also got involved in the jhatka meat business after 1947 along with the Khatiks of Delhi. In fact, they settled around Basti Julahan, situated in the close proximity of Idgah slaughterhouse. Some also settled in Qasabpura after 1954. They catered for the needs of a reasonable number of non-vegetarian Punjabi refugees. Although there was an increase in demand for pork required by a section of the Sikh community and mutton by both the Sikh and Hindu refugees, it remained confined to the domestic market for three reasons: Gulf countries were the biggest consumers of Indian meat but they required only halal meat. In addition, while halal way of slaughtering also opened more opportunities for meat exports to European countries, the Khatiks in Delhi did not have the skills required for halal slaughtering and it was also against the Hindu and Sikh ways of slaughtering animals.\textsuperscript{87} Secondly, beef and carabeef were the most preferred meat required for export due to its quality in terms of low price and high protein content in comparison to mutton. In fact, it fetched more profit than mutton in world market due to the quality of Indian cows and water buffaloes.\textsuperscript{88} Thirdly, the leather made of cow and buffalo skin had an immense economic potential in comparison to the leather made of goat or sheep skin in international market. In fact, calf leather was the most preferred amongst international suppliers and buyers.\textsuperscript{89} Since Khatiks and other non-Muslim communities were never involved in the slaughtering of big animals they had fewer opportunities in this growing internationalization of meat trade.

These developments initially helped the Qureshi community to flourish much more than the Hindu dealers after the increase in business after 1969, which was when the export market began to flourish. Idgah slaughterhouse became the biggest centre of meat export in North India because there was no restriction on the slaughter of ‘useless’ buffaloes in U.P. In fact, it even changed the internal configuration of the Qureshi biradari by raising the economic status of

\textsuperscript{86} Interview with Kareemuddin (name changed), Delhi, 17 December 2014.
\textsuperscript{87} Interview with Kareemuddin (name changed), Delhi, 17 December 2014.
\textsuperscript{88} ‘Overview of The Indian Buffalo: Meat Value Chain’, 14.
\textsuperscript{89} Calf leather is obtained from the skin of newly born calf.
Bhainswale Kasai (one who slaughters buffaloes) who were previously not considered elite in comparison to Bakrewale or Bakar Kasai (one who slaughters goat and sheep) within the hierarchy of the biradari. So the Bakar Kasai also got involved in the business of bade ka gosht which was not an established norm amongst the biradari before the 1980s.90

However, the skin processing karkhanas (small scale industries) near the Idgah slaughterhouse were run by both Muslims and Khatiks. These communities have worked together at different stages of the processing of hides that included carcass collection and curing of raw hides and skin (raw material base), tanning and finishing of leather, manufacturing of leather footwear and goods. In fact, the goat and sheep skin processing karkhanas have always had a big number of Khatik owners in Delhi till date. The units for processing the skin of big animals, which were situated mainly in Kanpur, were also run equally by both communities. In fact, Khatik, Qureshi and other lower caste groups work and live around leather manufacturing units in Kanpur forming similar demographic configurations as Delhi.91

Most of the leather industries in Delhi were owned and run by an equal number of Hindu and Muslim traders. The Indian tanneries and leather industry, which suffered a lot with Partition, recovered and flourished after the 1970s. The supply of raw cattle hides, buffalo hides and calf hides to foreign countries, which had been banned by the Indian government, grew and flourished after the 1970s. With these developments, India gradually acquired a position of a big supplier of finished leather and leather goods to domestic and international markets from a mere raw material supplier.92 The same was the case with meat business. A number of private slaughterhouses and packaging units, owned and run by Hindu traders emerged after the 1990s.93 Thus, the meat business did not merely remain a Muslim activity after these developments in Delhi and became in every sense a shared space. However, the Muslim Kasai, due to their

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90 Interview with Kareemuddin (name changed), Delhi, 17 December 2014. Also see: Ahmed, ‘Taaleem, Tanzeem aur Tijarat’, 160.
93 Interview with Kareemuddin (name changed), Delhi, 17 December 2014. Except for Allana Sons, a 1969 company which has a major share in frozen meat export from India, and few other smaller Muslim players, majority of meat exporters and owners of modern abattoirs, and those associated with other related industries are mainly non-Muslims, a fact acknowledged by Hindutva groups and also pointed out by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the run up to the 2014 Lok Sabha polls. A recent study conducted by the Ummid foundation confirms this aspect. See: http://www.ummid.com/news/2015/March/11.03.2015/animal-slaughter-in-india-key-facts.html (accessed on 16 March 2016).
specific skills of halal slaughter, remained at the centre and became the most visible symbol of meat business.

III

From slaughterhouse to meat shops: Regulation of meat and the demarcated Muslim localities

As discussed, the Delhi Municipality officially banned cow slaughter in Delhi in 1951. The Metropolitan Council by-laws under the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957, prohibited cow slaughter further and made it a punishable offence. The regulation of meat by the Municipal Authority in Delhi not only re-established the demarcation of space on religious lines, but also defined the sight and smell of only selected categories of non-vegetarian products as ‘acceptable’ and ‘legal’ for hawking across these zones. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi bye-law, 1957, which was an adaptation of Delhi Municipal Committee bye-law of 1913, employed such categories for regulating meat and its by-products. According to the provisions in sections 405-507 of the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957, the Corporation was responsible for regulating various stages of the production, processing and selling of meat. The Corporation ensured that no person without the general or special permission of the Commissioner was entitled to sell or expose for sale any animal or meat in any municipal market. The MCD by-laws Part III explains: ‘No person can slaughter or cause or permit to be slaughtered at any place other than a public slaughterhouse an animal the flesh of which may be used as human food… provided that this rule shall not apply to an animal intended for sacrificial slaughter on the occasion of any festival or ceremony’. It further specifies that ‘the slaughter of such animal shall not be carried on within the sight of the public except in case of Zabiha in localities.

94 Bye-Laws of Delhi Municipal Committee and ‘Zibah Gaye Band’ (editorial), Al Jamiat, 1 September 1951. It says: ‘If the government of India decides and billions of Hindus feel that cow slaughter should be banned, a relevant law should be enforced.’
exclusively inhabited by Muslims’.\textsuperscript{96} The Corporation started regulating the selling and hawking of meat as well. Clause 15 of the Part VII of the by-laws directs that:

No person other than the owner or licensed occupier of a shop shall sell or expose for sale…meat by hawking in any street or other public place before 2 p.m. provided that the municipal Committee may forbid or permit at its discretion in specified streets or areas except under a special license issued for the purpose... such hawking shall be confined to localities mainly inhabited by Muslims.\textsuperscript{97}

![Figure 4.14: Meat supply in Old Delhi through hawking\textsuperscript{96}](image)

The sale and consumption of meat thus came to be associated with Muslim localities. Interestingly, the corporation categorically stated that these by-laws ‘\textit{shall not apply to the sale of fish}’ (Emphasis added).\textsuperscript{99} The exception created for fish selling and hawking thus established certain non-vegetarian food items as legal and acceptable for public view. It, in this sense, established a non-controversial domain around consumption of selected categories of non-vegetarian food. Interestingly, chicken, goat and sheep also acquired this status in ‘public’

\textsuperscript{96} Bye-Laws of Delhi Municipal Committee, 1951, 43-45.
\textsuperscript{97} Bye-Laws of Delhi Municipal Committee, 1951, 43-45.
sensibilities with time. The important reason behind the acceptance was that a large number of Hindu and Sikh refugees were non-vegetarians too, and they were more inclined towards consuming mutton, chicken and fish. In fact, a number of chicken corners emerged in the 1970s in Delhi to cater for the needs of such people who enjoyed chicken and fish. Thus, these categories of non-vegetarian diet acquired an elite, urban, liberal, democratic and neutral character. On the other hand, bade ka gosht remained a matter of contestation due to its consumption being associated with the Muslims and other lower caste communities. These meat shops eventually became the most visible symbols for polarizing the Muslims, Hindu and the Sikh refugees at local level.

**Politics of meat and communal conflicts**

An inter-religious civil marriage of an educated Muslim Qureshi boy belonging to Congress, named Sikandar Bakht, with a Hindu Brahmin girl named Raj Sharma, in May 1952, became a justification for Hindu nationalist forces to target Qureshi community. The perception of danger arising from Muslim youths marrying Hindu or Sikh girls sharpened the mental and physical boundaries between Hindu and Muslim localities and mohallas. It also strengthened the anti-Congress, anti-Muslim Kasai rhetoric constructed by Hindu organizations. A series of communal conflicts began in the aftermath of this marriage which resulted in targeted attacks on areas dominated by Muslims and specifically by the Qureshi community. Mohalla Raqab Ganj, situated near Turkman Gate, Qasabpura, and other Muslim areas, were attacked constantly with the tacit as well as active support of police in 1952-1953.

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100 Interview with John Dayal (activist and the co-author with Ajoy Bose),*For Reasons of State: Delhi Under Emergency*(Delhi: Ess Ess Publications, 1977), Delhi, 8 December 2015.

101 Shahid Siddiqi’s novel *The Golden Pigeon*, describes how Muslim-dominated Ballimaran and Hindu-dominated Katra Neel mohallas turned into an India-Pakistan border in the wake of communal violence that followed this much debated wedding. See: Shahid Siddiqi,*The Golden, Pigeon*, 205-06

102 *Al Jamiat*, 29 July 1952. Police in civil uniform entered the house of Haji Abdul Hamid, the Chairperson of Jama-at Quresh in Qasabpura without any permission and abused his wife and son. Also see: *Al Jamiat*, 5 June, 22 July, and 16 August 1952.

The meat shops became specific targets of communal violence. Most importantly, complaints against location of meat shops acquired an overt religious tone in the 1950s. There were incidents when meat shops were vandalized by police and local Jan Sangh and RSS cadres by claiming that their sight, smell and view were unacceptable to public and their religious sensibilities. Various meat shops situated in the Muslim-dominated pockets of mixed areas were targeted by the Jan Sangh and RSS to claim that they were illegally placed in those areas. For instance, a complaint was registered with the Police in December 1954 by the members of the local wing of RSS and Jan Sangh regarding a particular meat shop selling bade ka gosht situated in the Rod Garan area of Old Delhi. It was argued that the bones and carcass of animals were left on the roads which not only attracted vultures and eagles in the area but it also hurt the religious sensibilities of non-Muslims. It was also contended that the shop was visible to passers-by, thus its location, smell and view were objectionable to public and needed to be shut down at the earliest.  

The local Additional Magistrate inspected the location of this particular shop in December 1954. Contrary to the claims made in the complaint, he submitted a satisfactory report stating that the shop was situated under the balcony of a Masjid that was pretty much away from the public view. He also found that the area had around sixty percent Muslim population and there were no non-Muslim residents or shopkeepers around the shop. Even the carcass or bones were never noticed. The local Hindu and Muslim residents had no problem with the presence of the shop since any vultures or eagles were reported to be attracted by its presence. Although the magistrate submitted satisfactory inspection reports in other cases as well, meat shops were continuously targeted and vandalized on many occasions. They were forced to be closed during the festive occasions like Navaratra and auspicious days like Tuesdays which were considered as non-meat eating days amongst Hindus. 

The tools used by butchers also emerged as symbols of Muslim aggression in these riots. The sharp knives of different kinds were constantly projected as weapons for organized communal violence and were confiscated during police raids. Kareemuddin Qureshi pointed out that ‘these tools contributed to the Sangh’s agenda of defaming the Muslim community in the eyes of fellow Hindu neighbours and workers.’ He further explained that: ‘There were many
incidents when our tools were confiscated by the police on charges of keeping weapons. They were only returned after constant appeals which sometimes took months.\textsuperscript{106} In fact, various incidents of bomb blasts took place in and around Jama Masjid to terrorize the Muslim residents of Old Delhi areas in 1955-1956 in the aftermath of this wedding.\textsuperscript{107}

\textit{Idgah slaughterhouse and Qasabpura as a ‘mini Pakistan’}

The Idgah slaughterhouse remained closed for a month in 1947 after the Partition. The All India Jamiatul Quresh (AIJQ), a philanthropic organization which played an important role in representing the economic interests of the Qureshi community, made a written request to Nehru for the re-opening of the slaughterhouse. It was re-opened in October 1947.\textsuperscript{108} The location of the slaughterhouse once constructed outside the city walls became a part of Old Delhi with its expansion both in terms of increasing residential quarters and commercial activity. As we have noted above, the area around the slaughterhouse eventually became a mixed locality. However, the Idgah slaughterhouse and the Muslim hamlets around it remained a focus of conflict until the slaughterhouse was finally shifted to Ghazipur in 2008.

The Nehru government was willing to bring meat production within the framework of planning so that animal husbandry and agricultural economy could efficiently be managed. Catering for the high demand for halal meat in West Asian countries in 1950s was another reason to pay attention to the production of meat. A Committee was set up for examining slaughterhouses. It submitted its report in December, 1957 and recommended improvement of the conditions in abattoirs in Delhi and other states.\textsuperscript{109} Other committees like the Committee for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Expert Ad-hoc and a Meat Inspection Practices and Pharmaceutical Enquiry Committees were set up in 1957 and 1958 respectively so that

\textsuperscript{106} Interview with Kareemuddin (name changed), Delhi, 17 December 2014.
\textsuperscript{108} Interview with Anees (name changed), Delhi, 19 December 2014; For more details visit: \url{http://aijamiatulquresh.org/}
\textsuperscript{109} GOI, RSD, 19 February 1958, 904-05.
production of meat and its associated businesses could be brought within the framework of planning. The committees made recommendation for state governments to consider the feasibility of modernizing their slaughterhouses in Bombay (now known as Mumbai), Calcutta (now known as Kolkata), Madras (now known as Chennai) and at Delhi for the purposes of improving the existing meat inspection practices, and exporting meat and meat products to foreign countries. These recommendations were also made in relation to the Indian tanneries so that the raw material can be exported to foreign countries to cater for the increasing demand for Indian leather due to its good quality.\footnote{GOI, RSD, 19 February 1958, 905; 4 March 1958, 2047-50 and for the recommendations of Ad-hoc Committee on slaughterhouses see: 7 May 1959, 2183-84 and 2195-96.}

In this context, the Town Planning Organization recommended that the Idgah slaughterhouse, along with the Shahdara abattoir and piggery on Mehrauli Road, should be relocated outside the city to Rohtak Road, eight miles from Delhi. It was suggested that the slaughterhouse should be built on modern lines with a capacity for 2,500 sheep and goats, 400 buffaloes and 300 pigs every day.\footnote{GOI, RSD, 4 March 1958, 2047-50.} The Idgah slaughterhouse had the capacity to slaughter only 1,275 sheep and goats, 30 pigs and 70 buffaloes. It also had proposals for the development of associated industries around the area like tanneries, woolen and manure manufacturing.\footnote{GOI, RSD, 7 May 1959, 2195-96; GOI, RSD, 15 December 1959, 2495-99.} The matter was discussed in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi since the recommended village named Sayadan near Rohtak Road and Najafgarh Road was a part of the refugee rehabilitation area.\footnote{DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 29 September 1970, 223-25.} The Rehabilitation Department refused to allot this land for the construction of slaughterhouse.\footnote{GOI, RSD, 4 March 1958, 2047-50.} The relocation project was rejected by the Municipal Corporation in 1960 since the recommended plan was also opposed by the residents of the nearby villages of Sayadan.\footnote{DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 29 September 1970, 223-25.} Subsequently, the Delhi Master Plan 1962 incorporated the issue of the relocation and proposed the construction of a new abattoir on scientific lines.\footnote{GOI, RSD, 28 February, 1966, 1594-96.}

However, what was important was the politicization of the issue. The Jan Sangh opposed these proposals on the ground that it was appeasement of Muslims, notwithstanding the fact that the meat industry supported a variety of groups both Hindu and Muslim.\footnote{The Sangh representatives consistently used aggressive terminology to name slaughterhouses and the slaughtering of animals. For instance, it employed the word kasaikhana for slaughterhouse when buchadhkana was the popular Hindustani word.} The pamphlet used
by Jan Sangh during local municipal election in Delhi in 1962 established a connection between the proposals for the construction of new slaughterhouse with the slaughtering of cows and the appeasement of Muslims by the Congress government. It explained that the reason why Congress government was against cow protection was: ‘the Muslims earn profits worth of billions of rupees annually by slaughtering cows, selling cow meat, cow skin, and cow blood. Thus, Congress would never take a step which could go against the Muslims no matter how harmful it would be for the nation and its Hindu population’.118 According to the pamphlet, ‘opening of new slaughterhouses in different states and planning to increase the export of meat, leather and associated products to foreign countries is a way to appease Muslims’.119

An organized anti-slaughterhouse campaign by Jan Sangh emerged during this period primarily to capitalize on the party’s electoral gains in Delhi. For instance, in 1962 Delhi Municipal Corporation election the party won nine seats out of eighty. But in Kucha Pati Ram, a traditional Hindu and Punjabi Hindu and Sikh refugee area, it managed to get 78% votes. In 1967 in the next MCD election the party improved its performance remarkably. It secured around 33% votes and won more than half of the MCD seats. The parties did well in the Delhi Metropolitan Council election as well and eventually form government in 1967. It also won six out of seven Parliamentary seats in Delhi in the Lok Sabha election that took place in the same year.120

The success of Jan Sangh was not just because of an anti-Muslim campaign. As Geeta Puri argues, it should also be seen as a reflection of anti-Congress sentiments. The weaknesses of Congress, especially after Nehru’s death, the internal conflicts within the Delhi Pradesh Congress and most importantly, the issue of cow which preceded the elections in 1967 helped Jan Sangh to intrude into the traditional stronghold of the Congress in the walled city – i.e.,

Interestingly, word ‘beef’ was used interchangeably for cow and buffalo meat. There were a number of occasions when the government had to clarify that beef was meant only for the cow meat which was banned in most of the states. This vocabulary was also used in popular parlance to correspond to the image of Muslim Kasai and the beef eater in North India. See: GOI, RSD, 19 February 1958, 905; GOI, RSD, 29 November 1966, 2011. Also see a recent article clarifying what beef means for Old Delhi people and how it has been a continuous practice for them to clarify what it means: http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/in-old-delhi-beef-means-buffalo-meat/article7820864.ece (accessed on 18 June 2015). In addition, reference to Pakistan was made in discussions in relation to the export of beef, transportation of cows from Indian borders by Pakistani infiltrators and so on. See: GOI, RSD, 15 December 1959, 2499-2500.


119 GOI, Home-Poll. - (I), 1961, File No. 37/14/61. NAI.

120 Puri, Bharatiya Jana Sangh, 162.
Chandni Chowk and the Sadar Bazar areas of Delhi. The election results also showed that the party drew support from all sections, apart from its traditional voters, the upper-caste Hindus and refugees. The Scheduled Castes and even a section of Muslims also voted for it. But, the Jan Sangh did not do well in Muslim-dominated constituencies; it was able to secure Muslim votes only in mixed areas. For example, in Chandni Chowk Metropolitan Council seat, which was a mixed locality, the party got around 59% of votes, while in Ballimaran area which was a Muslim-dominated seat, it got only 33%.

The Jan Sangh’s victory in the 1967 election should also be seen in relation to the changing urban politics of Delhi. It received now the overwhelming support of the educated middle class, mainly the Central Government employees living in several government colonies of New Delhi. This support base of the Jan Sangh underlined the changing attitude of the middle class which was crucial to understanding the dominant discourse of cleanliness, beautification, population control and most of all, selective yet, modern urban vegetarian sensibilities. The political discussions that took place in the late 1960s around the failures of planning and modernization paved the way for the production of an urban sentiment around selective meat practices, slum clearance and family planning in later years. Interestingly, these middle class sentiments also focused on spatial confinement of the meat industry rather than its improvement. Thus, relocation of slaughterhouse due to insanitary conditions turned out to be an important concern of local politics in Delhi.

The issue of the relocation of slaughterhouse acquired a more aggressive tone after 1967. The Jan Sangh not merely argued for the relocation of Idgah abattoir but also demanded that other municipal slaughterhouses like the one situated at Shahdara should also be shifted. Interestingly, its location was also problematized on grounds of religious sentiments. A Jan Sangh Member of Parliament, P. D. Thengari asserted, during a discussion in the Rajya Sabha in 1968, that the government should relocate the Shahdara slaughterhouse as it was situated near two temples and thereby caused inconvenience to the devotees performing puja (prayer), besides being a source of insanitary conditions in the area. The then Minister of Health, Planning and Urban Development refuted this claim and informed the House that no such complaints of

122 Puri, Bharatiya Jana Sangh, 165.
123 Puri, Bharatiya Jana Sangh, 162.
inconvenience had ever been received from the devotees or other residents of the locality. Thengari, however, strongly insisted that the objection that he was raising ‘should be taken as the religious sentiments and feelings of the devotees. And the government should consider shifting the slaughterhouse so that, people’s feelings are not injured and they do not go and start an agitation’.124

Thengari’s assertion was not entirely empty. To address such ‘Hindu feelings’ the Delhi Meat Control Bill, 1970 was introduced in the Delhi Metropolitan Council. The Bill aimed at prohibiting the slaughtering of goats, sheep, buffaloes or any other bovine animals in Delhi on the occasion of Hindu festivals along with the weekly Tuesday and Friday ban. It proposed to make slaughtering, importing, selling or supply of meat or food containing meat for human consumption on prohibited days as punishable offence. The Bill, quite deliberately, excluded mutton, poultry and fisheries from the category of animal and meat slaughtered or supplied on prohibited days. Tuesdays and Fridays were established as weekly prohibited days according to the Bill. It also proposed to include eight more days as prohibited days (Varsha-Pratishtha, Vayas Puja, Raksha Bandhan, Vijayadashmi, Diwali, Holi, Makar Sankranti, and Shivratri).

Roshan Lal, a Congress member of the Council, reacted quite sharply on the intent and content of the Bill. He said, ‘The Bill is drafted to harass the people of a particular community involved in (the)meat trade...the Bill on the one hand is discriminatory in nature and biased against a particular community, it does not benefit any vegetarian or non-vegetarian interests.’125 In defence of the bill, the Jan Sangh member, Tilak Raj Varma insisted that, ‘There are strong feelings in India against non-vegetarianism. It is considered a sick mentality here...the bill will put a restriction on meat and non-vegetarian practices’.126 He further argued that ‘jeev hatya’ (animal killing) was the problem that needed to be addressed.127 Although Congress members walked out of the Council in protest against the Bill, it was passed with some amendments after a long debate in the Metropolitan Council on 30 September 1970.128

It is important to note here that the clause no. 407 and 424 of the Delhi Corporation Act, 1957 had already authorized the Commissioner to declare any day as prohibited day and to stop

125 DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 29 September 1970, 222-23.
126 DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 29 September 1970, 228.
127 DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 29 September 1970, 228.
128 DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 30 September 1970, 105-11.
any ‘unauthorised’ act within the municipal boundary. The MCD also had a list of days on which there was supposed to be a complete ban on slaughterhouses. The list of declared prohibited days, which included every Friday along with other public holidays, was followed by the butchers. However, there were incidents of ‘illegal’ slaughtering taking place at some areas densely populated by Muslims or Qureshi community in order to meet the demands of local consumers. The Bill, rather than putting a restriction on ‘illegal’ slaughtering taking place at private places, imposed more regulations to restrict legitimate meat business.

The Idgah slaughterhouse was also part of the Slum Clearance and Improvement Scheme of Delhi administration (I discuss the scheme in detail in chapter V). However, since the scheme of relocation could not be finalized quickly because of political hurdles, the Metropolitan Council became hyper-active in limiting slaughtering activities. Since the passage of the Delhi Meat Control Bill in 1970, the corporation imposed 70 closing days in a year on the slaughterhouse. Additionally, the fee of slaughtering per animal was increased from Rs. 1 per animal to Rs 8 for buffaloes and from 25 paisa to Rs. 1 per small animal including goat, sheep and pigs. The local government’s anti-meat attitude made it easy for the police constables to harass the meat traders. The number of meat inspections increased mainly to ensure that the slaughtered meat was not cow beef. Several incidents took place when buffalo meat was spoiled by pouring anti-bacterial chemicals on it either during its transport or at the shops even after the verification of municipal stamps.

The Qureshi biradari started an organised protest against such restrictions and harassments. The Delhi Meat Merchant Association was formed in 1971. It was an organization of goat butchers. A Buffalo Association was also formed in the same year to speak on behalf of the Kasai community dealing specifically in bade ka gosht. The Delhi Meat Merchant association filed a writ petition against the imposition of closing days on slaughterhouse and meat shops. The high court, showing a sympathetic gesture towards the Kasai community, directed the Delhi administration to keep meat shops out of this provision while insisting that the slaughterhouses should remain closed on the recommended days.

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129 Interview with Anees Ahmed (name changed), Delhi, 19 December 2014, and John Dayal (name changed), Delhi, 8 December 2015.
131 Mohammad Sadruddin Dehalvi Qureshi, Hindustan Ki Qureshi Biradari (Delhi: All India Jamiat-ul-Quresh, 1999), 131.
The communal riots that took place around Idgah and Sadar Bazaar area in the early 1970s turned out to be an important issue in the debates on the meat-Muslim connection in the following years. Sadar Bazaar, as we have seen in the previous chapter, was essentially a Muslim-dominated locality, which witnessed the displacement of a number of Muslim families and re-settlement of Hindu Punjabi and Sikh refugees in the wake of Partition riots. The Punjabi Hindu refugees occupied a large number of the houses vacated by Muslim residents of the locality, who either moved to refugee camps, or Muslim zones or had migrated to Pakistan. Due to the discriminatory evacuee property laws and the partial role played by the Custodian department, the Muslims returning from refugee camps and, in some cases Muslim zones, could not occupy their properties and were forced to become tenants under the newly emerged class of Hindu Punjabi landlords. This new relation was reported to be generally tense due to a number of factors. One important factor was the meat practice. Normally a Hindu landlord would object to his Muslim tenant’s cooking meat, particularly if it was beef. He would also not allow the Muslim tenant to perform *Qurbani* (religious sacrifice) within the premises since it was against the religious feelings. Similarly, the Muslim landlord would not allow *puja* to be performed in his premises. Such conflicting cultural claims communalized the situation, in Sadar Bazar area in the early 1970s. The Jan Sangh which had been evoking the anti-Muslim/anti-meat rhetoric to mobilize the trading and professional middle class upper-caste Hindus in the area for electoral gains, emerged as a main political player in these riots.

Massive riots broke out in Bada Hindu Rao and Kishanganj areas in 1973 and 1974 respectively. The immediate reason behind these violent events was not meat or cow slaughter, but a small quarrel between some boys belonging to different communities and an incident of eve-teasing. Nonetheless the Qureshi community turned out to be the main victims. A number of meat shops were looted and destroyed along with other Muslim-run enterprises. Their tools were confiscated, shops were burnt and meat and meat products worth lakhs of rupees were destroyed. It was found that a ‘fear’ was generated in Sadar Bazar area among

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Hindus and this resulted in the psychological discontent and enmity. This imagined fear exacerbated an already volatile communal situation after the Jan Sangh lost control of the Metropolitan Council in 1971.

There were two main reasons behind this imagined fear. It was only in the late 1960s that a flourishing trade of leather goods and the increase in meat export in the early 1970s affected the economic status of a section of the local Qureshi community, the hide merchants and Kasai. A section of the community even started direct meat export primarily because so far Hindu merchants had kept themselves away from this trade.\textsuperscript{137} The emergence of the Qureshi community as an upwardly mobile economic class was seen as a challenge by local Hindu merchants and shopkeepers of Sadar Bazar. There was another and perhaps direct implication of this economic empowerment of Qureshi community. The elite section of the community started purchasing residential and commercial properties owned by local Hindus.\textsuperscript{138} These developments were manipulated by the local RSS and the Jan Sangh. According to the representations made to the one man Inquiry Commission (the Tandon Commission) set up by the Government with regards to these riots, the leaders of the local Jan Sangh claimed that there was a Muslim plot to inflict losses on Hindus, and according to one Hindu resident of the area, ‘the local Muslims were planning to create Bara (i.e., the Bara Hindu Rao locality) as a pure Muslim zone’.\textsuperscript{139} The Muslim League leader Mohammad Ahmed told the Commission that the Jan Sangh people wanted to impress upon the Muslims that the Jan Sangh regime provided them with best security. The Sangh representatives however claimed that Muslim mind was communalised ever since the Muslim League won Ballimaran Council seat in 1971 elections.\textsuperscript{140} The theory of the plot, Commission argued, did not have many supporters. It observed: ‘It may perhaps be nearer the truth to say that on account of a certain atmosphere of tension and uneasiness in the area, every little thing assumes far greater importance than one would expect in a normal situation. The seeds of discontent and disaffection are rather to be discerned in the psychological make-up of the two communities’.\textsuperscript{141}

\textsuperscript{137} Interview with Kareemuddin (name changed), Delhi, 17 December, 2014.
\textsuperscript{138} Mehta, \textit{The Eternal Web}, 43-44.
\textsuperscript{139} Krishna, ‘A Study of Communal Disturbance in Delhi’, 119.
\textsuperscript{140} The Muslim league had no political relevance in Delhi. Most of its members joined Congress after Partition or moved to the southern part of India. The office did remain in Old Delhi but with a completely different political stance. It focused on the internal reform of the community.
\textsuperscript{141} Quoted in Krishna, ‘A Study of Communal Disturbance in Delhi’, 119-20.
The Kishanganj riot in the month of May 1974 was the biggest recorded riot Delhi had faced since Partition. Meat shops and affluent Muslims and specifically the people belonging to Qureshi community were attacked because they became visible symbols of Muslim areas and Muslim communities. A number of houses, shops and vehicles were burnt. An independent inquiry conducted by Vijay Pal Singh, a Member of Parliament belonging to the Communist Party of India, concluded that the riot was pre-planned and specifically targeted against the Muslim community with the involvement of RSS, Jan Sangh and a section of police force. The testimonies and surveys conducted in the post-riot period revealed that a number of references were made to highlight Muslim association with Pakistan. The Muslim-dominated Kishanganj area was seen by local Hindus as ‘little-Pakistan’ and claims were made that these people should go to Pakistan. This Mini Pakistan rhetoric acquired a new political overtone during the Emergency (1975-77).

The area around the Idgah slaughterhouse became contested again in 1977. Sikandar Bakht, a popular Qureshi leader, won the Chandni Chowk Lok Sabha seat in Delhi in 1977 on Janata Party ticket. He eventually became the Union Minister of Works and Housing (need details of Emergency period and election). Bakht started talking about improvement of the conditions in and around the slaughterhouse. He encouraged the Qureshi community to get hold of the land around the slaughterhouse for better management. Interestingly, some land of the slaughterhouse was also allotted for the construction of a government aided school named Shri Sanatan Dharm Hari Mandir Ucchtmadhyamik Balika Vidyalaya (Shri Sanatam Dharm Hari Mandir Sr. Secondary Girls School, see current photo image) –which had a distinct Hindu religious name and orientation (need details). This land was previously used by the butchers to sale and purchase animals. Due to this loss of land, the Muslim butchers started gathering animals in the triangular park situated between the Idgah and the slaughterhouse. But around this

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143 ‘Haliya Firqaawarana Hungamaain Intezamiya Ki Saazish Ka Nateeja Tha’, Al Jamiat, 18 May 1974. The Al Jamiat published a list of properties owned by Muslims and specifically the Iqureshi community that were destroyed during the riots. ‘Masjid Dur Ka Nahate, Qureshi Biradarwai Rakita Rajan Ke Naksanat’ and ‘Qureshi Biradari Ke Nаксanat’, Al Jamiat, 18 May 1974. The inquiry committee report claimed that only those shops owned by the non-Muslims were burnt which were adjacent to Muslim shops. The police did not allow fire brigade to control until Muslim shops were burnt completely. It allowed curfew passes only to Hindu residents and the RSS, Jan Sangh members.
145 Sikandar Bakht emerged as an influential political personality among the Qureshi youth in the 1970s. In this way the political loyalty of the biradari was divided between Congress and Janata Party in the post emergency election of 1977.
time, a temple was built adjacent to the wall of the slaughterhouse with the support of the RSS.¹⁴⁶

Figure 4.15: Shri Sanatam Dharm Hari Mandir Sr. Secondary Girls School is situated at a distance of approximately twenty meters from the old slaughterhouse, 2014.¹⁴⁷

Figure 4.16: A Wall of Shri Sanatam Dharm Hari Mandir Sr. Secondary Girls School which also has a Sanatan Dharm Mandir in its premises, 2014¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Interview with Kareemuddin (name changed), 17 December 2014, Delhi; Quraeshi, Hindustan Ki Qureshi Biradari, 159. The Khatik owner of goat skin processing unit refused to comment on the construction of temple or the school building.
¹⁴⁷ Source: Author, October 2014.
¹⁴⁸ Source: Author, October 2014.
Figure 4.17: Sanatan Dharm Mandir built near Idgah slaughterhouse, which has now turned into a municipal parking. The wall of the Mandir was adjacent to the slaughterhouse, 2014\textsuperscript{149}

Figure 4.18: Front Gate of the Mandir adjacent to Idgah Slaughterhouse, 2014\textsuperscript{150}

\textsuperscript{149} Source: Author, October 2014.
\textsuperscript{150} Source: Author, October 2014.
In course of time, arguments were made by the local RSS wings that the location of the slaughterhouse was against Hindu sensibilities and the feelings of devotees who came to offer prayers in the temple. The Jan Sangh members of the Janata Party also raised this issue in the Parliament. It was pointed out that the vultures and eagles were gathering in the area due to the insanitary condition around the abattoir that also affected the moral sensitivities of children studying in the school. Discussions of this kind continued through the 1980s and a decade long legal battle ensued between the various stake-holders of meat business and the newly emerged environmentalists/animal rights activists.

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151 Source: Author, October 2014.
152 Interview with Kareemuddin (name changed), 17 December 2014, Delhi and GOI, RSD, 12 April 1972.
153 Maneka Gandhi vs. Union Territory of Delhi and Ors, 18 March 1984. Delhi High Court (DHC); Municipal Corporation of Delhi vs. Mohammad Yasin Etc., 28 April 1983; Supreme Court of India (SCI) and Buffalo Traders Welfare Association &... vs Maneka Gandhi &Ors., 30 November 1996, SCI are few examples of continuing legal battle. In 1993, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power in Delhi and passed the Agricultural Cattle Preservation Bill 1994. It sought to protect cows under government welfare schemes declaring that slaughtering cows or possessing their meat could result in up to five-year imprisonment and a ten thousand rupee fine. The Chief Minister Madan Lal Khurana argued that the ban served a dual purpose, ‘respecting Hindu religious sentiments and preserving these animals for milk, draft, breeding or agricultural purposes.’ (See: http://www.ucanews.com/story-archive/?post_name=/1994/06/24/delhi-butchers-strike-ends-but-muslim-alienation-from-hindus-deepens&post_id=45498) (accessed on 18 June 2015). In 1994, acting on a Public Interest Litigation filed by the known environmentalist, Maneka Gandhi, who appealed for the immediate closure of the slaughterhouse as it posed ‘serious environmental and health hazards’ to Delhi people, the Delhi High Court restricted the number of slaughtered animals (see: Buffalo Traders Welfare Assn. & ... vs Maneka Gandhi & Ors on 30 November 1996 SCI). The Delhi Meat Merchant Association called for a strike in protest, arguing that the restricted slaughtering will not only affect their economy but also deprive the Muslims and other communities of their necessary food item. The abattoir remained closed for 3 months and eventually the Kasai community had to call off the strike even though their demand was not realized because the workers of the
The story of the Idgah slaughterhouse poses a serious question: why did the conflict between the state and butchers eventually acquire a communal overtone? It is important to point out that the anti-slaughterhouse regulations were always opposed by the Muslim organizations formed by the halal section of the Idgah slaughterhouse, the non-halal or jhatka butchers never came forward to join any protest against the MCD. Kareemuddin explained some crucial aspects behind the reluctance of non-Muslim butchers. He pointed out that the municipal regulations affected mainly the halal section since the local demand and consumption of jhatka meat was very limited. Thus, it did not affect the non-Muslim butchers much. In addition, since only Muslim Kasai were involved in slaughtering big animals, the inspections and checks were imposed only on them for suspicion of there being cow meat. A number of Khatiks got involved in the meat business after a boom in the export of meat and associated products. But, since the high demand was only for halal meat in the Gulf market, they could not achieve much from the slaughtering of small animals. Thus, they got more involved in the processing of hides of goats and sheep. The inspections or impositions did not affect their business directly.154

Kareemuddin further mentioned that the Jan Sangh has always manipulated the lower caste communities against the Muslims during riots or any conflicting situations by bribing their youth with money and liquor. In fact, the Harijans and Khatiks were even allowed to slaughter pigs and goats at their homes as a usual practice. Due to this favouritism, they never joined any anti-government protest with Muslim butchers. He added that, unlike Qureshi community, there was an upward mobility for Khatiks and other caste communities primarily because of educational empowerment and reservation. It helped their young generation to move on to other professions. This aspect kept the Hindu lower caste butchers away from Muslim led protests even though they had been closely associated with meat and other trades for centuries.155 On the...
contrary, an affluent member of Khatik community who owned goat skin processing karkhana initially refused to make any comment or give any information in this regard. He proudly informed that his family has been involved in the hide business for three generations. On the question of any kind of joint protest against the government atrocities and policies against slaughterhouses or meat practice in general, he argued, ‘there is no need to form separate organization. We join hands whenever there is a crisis situation. Everybody works together. Please don’t bring Hindu-Muslim here. It’s a trade, don’t communalize it.’

These statements confirm two important aspects of the meat industry: the economic interdependence of different religious and caste groups which has been a feature of industry for generations and the politicization and communalization of an occupational activity which resulted in a peculiar kind of polarization of different religious groups. On the question of the improvement in and around the slaughterhouse in terms of better sanitation, hygiene and cleanliness, this aspect of polarization becomes clearer. The Congress and the Jan Sangh did not make any efforts in this regard. In fact, both governments either deliberately allowed or completely ignored the ‘illegal’ practice of slaughtering at private places to their respective constituents as a token of ‘gratitude’. Quite interestingly, it was received by the members of Qureshi and Khatik communities in the same way as an advantage. This is how local political configurations communalized the meat industry. And in the midst of this confrontational politics, a number of plans related to the improvement of sanitary conditions in and around the Idgah slaughterhouse, including a proposal for its conversion into a multi-story and high-facility one, remained matters of contention. In this sense, Qasabpura, the slaughterhouse area, the meat shops and most importantly the Muslim space remained objectified as symbols of brutal, dirty and unhygienic spaces.

**Conclusion**

The political discourse that the religious sensitivities of a community were always in conflict with the cultural/religious practices of the other, created a space for continuing contestation around meat in Delhi. This discourse was employed not merely by the Hindu political forces.

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156 Brief interaction with a member of Khatik community, Delhi, 16 December 2014.
such as the Jan Sangh and RSS, but also evoked strategically by the Congress. Jan Sangh’s politics of meat centered on its ideological agenda of ‘Indianizing’ Muslim food habits; while the Congress used the cow and meat question to get Muslim support. At the national level it virtually appeased the Hindu forces by recognizing the cow as a national issue. On the other hand, it continued to represent itself as a saviour of Muslims at local level in Delhi. This was the reason why the strong imaginary of cow was established at the national level, while the production, sale and consumption of buffalo meat emerged as the most controversial issue in Delhi. Idgah slaughterhouse and local meat shops became those contested zones where this confinement could be imposed. Precisely in this sense, bade ka gosht actually became a marker of space in post-Partition Delhi.

The cow-debate in postcolonial Delhi also underlines the fact that the body of the cow was used to expand the scope of communal politics. Despite the fact that the Muslims were not the only stakeholders in Delhi’s meat industry, the meat of big animals had always been problematized by evoking selective vegetarianism—a practice that was used to legitimize the slaughtering of fish, chicken and goat. The meat practices – production, sale and consumption of certain type of meat – in fact evolved as a legitimate political marker by which Muslim localities were identified as unhygienic, polluted sites: the slaughterhouse was contested because it was the place where act of slaughter (of buffalo in particular) was performed; the Muslim localities were contested because these were the Ilaeque where the meat of big animals could only be sold; and finally, the Muslim household became contested as these were the sites where anti-vegetarianism was ritualized.
Chapter V

Reorganization of Muslim Space: Clearance, Resettlement and Redevelopment, 1970-1977

The Muslim-dominated areas re-emerged as a deeply contested category in the political and social life of Delhi in the wake of the war with Pakistan in 1965. A growing official concern for ensuring internal security began to define Muslim localities as spaces that had to be controlled and organized through clearance, re-settlement and re-generation of population.¹ The developments that took place in the late 1960s and the 1970s, especially the forced clearance of Jama Masjid areas and demolition of an old Muslim locality near Turkman Gate during the period of National Emergency, brought these spatial zones into the wider discourse of nation, national identity and national integration.

This chapter examines how the community-space relationship was transformed in the 1970s and paved the way for a new kind of administrative politics. The Muslim localities, which were previously seen as polluted stagnant-unhygienic spaces that were to be administered and modernized through democratic institutions, were now envisaged as directly controllable spaces through strict bureaucratic action. This process of the objectification of Muslim space in Delhi is thus analyzed at three levels. First, the chapter looks into the overwhelming concerns of the Indian state for urban development and its zeal to offer modern living conditions to transform the city into a developed, inclusive and cohesive space through clearance, redevelopment, re-settlement and population control. Second, it examines the discourse around the ‘Indianization’ of religious minorities, city space and cultural symbols by re-claiming the ‘lost’ heritage, as pursued by the Hindu political organizations like RSS and Jan Sangh during the late 1960s and the 1970s. Third, the chapter explores the political context at both the national and the local level in the immediate aftermath of the two wars with Pakistan in 1965 and 1971, which led to the reinforcement of concerns for internal security, national identity and nationalism. These developments produced a discourse of national security. It is important to see how Muslim spaces in Delhi were defined in this discourse of nation and national security.

¹ The Twenty Points Programme of Indira Gandhi was called National Regeneration Programme.
Reorganization of Space: Dark and damp localities of Shahjahanabad and its inhabitants

In order to understand the process of reorganization of Old Delhi in the late 1960s, we have to begin with the famous Delhi-Ajmeri Gate Slum Clearance Scheme, popularly known as the Delhi-Ajmeri Gate Clearance and Improvement Scheme (DAG), started in 1926 and finalized in 1938. It was the first planned initiative that focused on the improvement of the civic conditions of Old Delhi. The area was referred to as ‘evil slum area’ by the New Delhi authorities since it was the nearest part of old city exposed to the newly built capital city. A number of Katras in Old Delhi were declared ‘unfit for human habitation.’ Redevelopment of Turkman Gate area (ward no. 8) was a part of this scheme since it was situated between the Delhi Gate and Ajmeri Gate areas.

The scheme was ambitious. It involved massive clearance and resettlement of around 3,422 families, including a process of acquisition of a number of properties and payment of compensation. The plan provoked multiple reactions from the residents. The area covered by the scheme was populated mainly by a number of biradaries of artisans—both Hindus and Muslims (as discussed earlier). The family ties, cultural association of these communities with each other and most importantly, close proximity to their work place and businesses were some of their major concerns. Many meetings were organized by the local Hindu and Muslim residents to register their resentment against the scheme. Asaf Ali, a Member of the Legislative Assembly, raised these points in the Central Legislative Assembly. He tried to bring the attention of the Delhi Improvement Trust (DIT constituted in 1937 to implement the task of improvement and redevelopment) towards these issues so that a Delhi specific policy framework could be evolved.

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2 Awadhendra Sharan, *In the City, Out of Place: Nuisance, Pollution and Dwelling in Delhi, 1850-2000* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), 137.
5 Asaf Ali was a freedom fighter and noted Indian lawyer. He was elected in 1935 as a member of the Central Legislative Assembly from Delhi representing Congress against Muslim League. The road from Delhi Gate to Ajmeri Gate was subsequently named after him.
In his presentation, Ali divided the local population into three segments: (a) old residents (b) landlord class and (c) shifting population. Categorizing biradaries and landlords as the oldest residents and the bearers of the rich heritage and culture of Old Delhi, he tried negotiating a good deal for their relocation to nearby places with a ‘proper and tempting re-housing scheme’. This argument – that residents of any locality should either be resettled at the same place after redevelopment or within the close proximity of redevelopment area – became the most contentious aspect of the resettlement policies in Delhi in general and in relation to Muslim-dominated areas in particular. It was repeatedly recommended in every official survey, plan and scheme carried out in postcolonial Delhi.

The colonial government carried out partial implementation of the scheme by clearing a portion of slum, developing or extending the acquired and nazul land (government land, which had not already been appropriated by the Government for any purpose) on Darya Ganj side and linking DAG with the Western Extension scheme in order to avoid confrontations. The part of the city wall was demolished and the ditch along the wall between the Delhi and Ajmeri Gates was filled up; in addition, a commercial complex was also built. But, the re-development of the area between Angurighatta and Turkman Gate –parts I and II of the scheme – were left for future consideration and improvement.

This scheme, like other colonial era initiatives, was refined in the 1950s from the perspective of planning and development, since urbanization emerged as one of the important objectives of the post-Partition Indian state. Nehru strongly asserted that modern living conditions would encourage communities to give up religious and caste considerations and would become a part of ‘national mainstream’. For instance, praising Chandigarh, the city which was designed completely on modern principles in the mid-1950s, Nehru said, ‘A city or building is a symbol of society and the life of a community…you can tell from the city the habits of the people who live there and their social and economic organizations… People must be able to gauge the type of society we are trying to build…(in) all provinces of India’.

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7 Sharan, *In the City, Out of Place*, 138-39.
In a similar way, Nehru looked at Old Delhi as a symbol of India’s glorified past and the aristocratic culture of the *Dilliwalas*. He found Old Delhi as a ‘city not merely of buildings, but of ideas, of historicity with an inner spirit’ and a reflection of Indian mainstream that needed to be preserved and returned to its old glory and aristocratic values through ‘conservation’.\(^9\) This statement reflected Nehru’s assertion that old Indian cities and buildings should also echo the spirit of modern, planned and developed India. At the same time, it also shows the assumption that reorganization of space in a certain way would have inevitable impact on people’s behavior. Thus, a careful planning was required for the redevelopment of the old city. In fact, it had to be reorganized in a way that it could be integrated into the contours of New Delhi and would reflect the secular and modern spirit of the Capital Region. This aspect remained the focus of planning for Old Delhi in postcolonial period, especially in the immediate aftermath of the Partition when Hindu and Sikh refugee influx transformed the spatial demography of Delhi.

The population of Old Delhi increased from 5,22,000 in 1941 to 9,15,000 in 1951 and 9,51,000 in 1956 with the re-settlement of Hindu and Punjabi refugees.\(^11\) This phenomenal increase in population led to the ‘unplanned’ growth of structures used for cheap accommodation, business and small workshops, concentrated in Old City and its extension, consisting of Sabzi Mandi, Motia Khan, Sadar Bazar, and Paharganj areas. Living conditions and civic amenities deteriorated in all these localities.\(^12\) The deteriorating old *katras* (small premises inhabiting a number of families in closely built *kachcha* (temporary) or pucca structures with shared toilets and bathrooms) and *basties* (a slum or similar kind of locality inhabiting people belonging to lower-class lower-caste communities) of Shahjahanabad and the sprawling refugee residential colonies without ‘proper’ lay-outs were actually identified as two main challenges for planning of the city. To address these concerns, a process of planned acquisition and control of ‘public’ land in and around the city began soon after independence.

The Planning Commission established a direct link between economic development and planned urbanization. It replaced the Delhi Improvement Trust of 1937 with a statutory body called the Delhi Development Authority (DDA). The Commission aimed at transforming Delhi into a ‘proper’ capital city through an Act of the Parliament. The Delhi Development Authority

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Act, 1957 empowered the DDA ‘to acquire, hold, manage and dispose of land and other property, to carry out building, engineering, mining and other operations’. Moreover, it made a provision for compulsory acquisition of land. Furthermore, the DDA was given power to declare even any non-development area, which did not come under other local authorities, as a Development Area (Section 22A). By implication, every land or property except the ones with private ownership rights or the ones that came under the hold of other local representative bodies like the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) or New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC), legally became the property of Central Government. Any construction, without permission, on such lands was declared ‘illegal’ and ‘unauthorized’ and the inhabitants ‘encroachers.’

In April 1957, the Prime Minister’s office convened a Cabinet meeting to develop a ‘legal’ framework for the task of clearance of slums and unauthorized constructions in Delhi. The Cabinet meeting made three provisions. Firstly, the Ministry of Home should set up a mobile agency. Headed by a police officer of the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police, the function of this agency would be to discover unauthorized structures and take steps for their removal. The city was divided into three zones for the ‘mobile surveillance’ (a term used in the Cabinet meeting) of government land indifferent areas of Delhi. Secondly, a Central Demolition Squad was set up on 23 May 1957. It was under the Local Self-Government Department of Delhi Administration. The local police and the demolition squad formed a team to patrol different zones of Delhi and carry out the task of slum clearance. The enthusiasm of this squad was quite evident as it ‘legally’ demolished 2290 ‘illegal’ structures that very year. Thirdly, the Cabinet meeting commissioned a number of surveys and organized various mobilization drives conducted through Bharat Sewak Samaj at local level.

These moves by the Prime Minister’s Office demonstrated that the priority of ‘planning’ was to clear squatting. The resettlement of population, which should have been the very first step of any planned redevelopment scheme, was relegated to margin. For Nehru, these were the
problems associated with people’s lack of modern aspirations, which was responsible for making slum conditions a ‘vicious cycle’ of their lifestyle. In his foreword in the report of Bharat Sewak Samaj, he explained:

Those very people, whom we seek to benefit raise difficulties and are reluctant to move…problem of the slum...(is) far bigger than the mere building of new houses…it has to face ingrained habits and a lack of desires as well as a lack of training to use better accommodation…unless there is that training and co-operation, the better accommodation tends to revert to a slum condition.\(^{21}\)

Planning and training in every sector of government and society turned out to be the prime concern of the Nehru regime, which required command and control over physical resources, especially land and population.\(^{22}\) This is how a legal and administrative framework was constituted in the first decade of independence. An efficient vocabulary of development – ‘legal/illegal’, ‘encroachment’, ‘authorized/unauthorized’ constructions – was established during this period. The actual implementation of those policies with disastrous human consequences could be seen in the subsequent years.

*Master Plan and the Delhi-Ajmeri Gate scheme*

The purpose of the formation of DDA was to prepare a comprehensive plan with the help of the Town Planning Organization (TPO), constituted in 1955 by the Ministry of Health, Government of India, to deal with the increased congestion in Delhi. A Ford Foundation team was also consulted to develop the plan. On 24 December 1958, the Ministry of Health submitted a note declaring the following wards as slum areas under the Slum Area Clearance and Redevelopment Act, 1956:

(a) Ward No. I to VI

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(b) Ward VII to X excluding near GB Road
(a) Delhi Ajmeri gate scheme between Asaf Ali Road and Zrea Fasil Road
(a) Ward XI excluding the area Darya Ganj South
(a) Ward XII

Ward number VII to X included Ajmeri Gate, Turkman Gate, Matia Mahal, Faiz Bazar and ward number XI included Jama Masjid area. These areas were populated mainly by lower caste-lower-class Muslims, as explained in previous chapters. The Master Plan (MPD -1, 1962-1981) that was created for the clearance of these slum areas incorporated some parts of the previous DAG scheme. In 1961, the rest of the slum clearance work, which could not be incorporated in the MPD-1, was transferred to the Delhi Municipal Corporation (DMC) by the central government for implementation. The DMC prepared general plans and sent them to the Ad hoc (Slum Clearance and Improvement) Committee in 1963 for further planning and regulations. It was decided that 500 quarters would be constructed as transit camps at Minto Road, within the close proximity of the Turkman Gate clearance area, for temporary relocation of people so that they could be easily resettled in the newly built or improved quarters at a later stage. It was to ensure a phase wise implementation of the scheme as it was planned originally in the DAG scheme. But nothing much happened. In June 1973, the then Lt. Governor, Baleshwar Prasad, submitted a report to the central government highlighting the unsatisfactory handling of the slum clearance work by the DMC and the long delay in implementing the old improvement schemes including DAG. Consequently, in February 1974 the central government transferred the slum clearance work from DMC to DDA.

The Master Plan, in order to deal with congestion and improvement had divided Delhi into nine planning divisions, which were further sub-divided into a number of planning zones. Each zone was identified as a redevelopment, rehabilitation and/or conservation area. The Plan highlighted the fact that Shahjahanabad was the most problematic area within Old Delhi and its improvement ‘through a large scale clearance and redevelopment was not possible’. Hence, the

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23 ‘Slum Clearance Work in Delhi’, GOI, MHA, File No.: 33/1/59- Delhi. NAI.
25 Jagmohan, Island of Truth, 124.
26 Mehra, The Politics of Urban Development, 63. Also see: ‘Master Plan – Role of Delhi Municipal Corporation and DDA’, GOI, MHA, File No.: 16/20/58-Delhi. NAI. Old Delhi included the western extension areas covering Karol Bagh, Sadar Bazar, Sabzi Mandi, Paharganj and others while Shahjahanabad meant the Old Mughal city/walled city as discussed in previous chapters.
process required an interconnected redevelopment approach for making balanced and appropriate provisions for proper rehabilitation, commerce, industries and other activities in the areas marked for demolition. Different areas of Shahjahanabad were sub-divided into 28 development zones, of which A-13 to A-26 and C-1 formed part of the Walled City. The Turkman Gate area was a part of zone number A-13. It was identified as a rehabilitation area along with some other areas such as Mori Gate, Phatak Habsh Khan, Kashmiri Gate, Chandni Chowk, Naya Bans and Farashkhana (See Map 6). These areas were described as slums that had to be cleared for the purpose of redevelopment. A number of these areas were inhabited traditionally by the Hindu and Muslim population.

Map 6: Zonal Division of Walled City, 1962

The process of identifying an area as a slum was not communal. Most importantly, the MPD strongly argued that the zoning should not in any way be used for any kind of human segregation.

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such as the exclusion of certain communities or income groups from particular areas. It also recommended that the status quo should be maintained until sub-zonal plans were prepared. But in practice, plans for some of the zones were not even prepared and in cases where plans for some of the zones were drafted, they could not be implemented for a very long time, in the absence of their subsequent approval by the DDA. It could not be done due to official apathy, severe inconsistencies in the policy framework and most importantly, due to the political interests involved in the administrative structures.\(^30\) It does not however mean that no redevelopment work took place in old city. Different political regimes implemented these policies and plans in Delhi for electoral gains. It is interesting to see how DDA, a statuary body became a tool for national and local governments to acquire, clear or redevelop land in Delhi.

**DDA, MCD, DMC: Politics of clearance and rehabilitation**

The process of the reorganization of space in Delhi should be seen in the light of two interconnected programmes: clearance and resettlement. The DDA was the main executive body for carrying out the clearance tasks at the request of other municipal and executive bodies, because apart from having extraordinary legal powers, it had an approved Demolition Squad. Thus, broadly, clearance of unauthorized structures turned out to be its main function. It is important to understand here that public land in Delhi belonged to different bodies (Appendix 4).\(^31\) This complicated land ownership had obvious political implications. There had always been a provision within this DDA-centric legal framework that could turn the DDA into an authoritarian body for implementing the changing concerns of the Central and local governments in relation to the reorganization of urban space.

On the other hand, the MCD and the DMC were elected representative bodies that defined the reorganization of land or city space more in political terms.\(^32\) The purpose of the

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\(^31\) ‘Delhi Development Authority’, GOI, PMS, File No.: 7/419/74-PMS. NAI; Also see: ‘Declaration of Certain Areas as Development Areas in Delhi Under…DDA’, GOI, MHA, File No.:16/26/58-Delhi. NAI.

\(^32\) Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) was formed in 1957 -1958 following the provisions of Delhi Development Authority Act 1957(DDA) and Municipal Corporation of Delhi Act 1957. MCD and DDA were formed to look at the issues of urbanization and governance in the capital region. It was further followed by Delhi Administration Act 1966 when Delhi Metropolitan Council (DMC) was formed. The first elections of the DMC held in 1967 for 56 elected and 5 Nominated Members called Councilors. DMC became the main representative body of Delhi to deal with the developmental work.
MCD, apart from the clearance of *jhuggies* (a slum dwelling typically made of mud and corrugated iron) with the help of DDA, was to carry out comprehensive infrastructural development programmes along with other agencies to provide water, electricity, sanitation, health and education to people inhabiting every authorized or ‘unauthorized’ area including the jhuggi clusters. Being an elected body, the MCD represented various local political interests. The local councilors were usually not willing to pursue the clearance operations since they often resulted in disaffection and political protests which could affect their future electoral prospects. Thus, redevelopment and resettlement, rather than clearance, remained the main concern of the MCD as well as the DMC. Moreover, for DDA and MCD, management of land and population or the reorganization of city space and communities was not a mere ‘neutral’ development process, but a response to the relations of power between the central and local governments.  

Clearance, resettlement, determination of the status of ‘unauthorized’ colonies and infrastructural development were broadly carried out or determined as ‘punishment’ or ‘reward’, depending upon the political association of the residents of these areas.

There were no clear guidelines in the beginning regarding the clearance areas and the mode of clearance operations. In 1968, in a meeting called by the Union Home Minister and presided over by the Minister of Works and Housing, a high powered committee recommended some guidelines. A few broad principles were framed for the implementation of clearance operations: (i) the Lt. Governor, in his capacity of Administrator, and not as Chairman of DDA, would decide on the priorities for clearance; (ii) the land owning authority, which wanted any land to be cleared, would furnish a certificate to the effect that the land in question was required for the development scheme. It was insisted by the Lt. Governor that as soon as the clearance operations were completed the land would be fenced immediately and suitable arrangements would be made to prevent fresh squatting; (iii) clearance could also be undertaken if the Lt. Governor was satisfied that encroachments constituted a traffic hazard or were prejudicial to public safety and most importantly (iv), non-official opinion (local MPs and the leaders of various parties and groups in MCD and NDMC) would be taken into account in selecting the sites for clearance operations through meetings in a general manner on the list of places where operations had to be carried out at the request of various land owning agencies. The actual

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33 For discussion over the multiplicity of authorities which has been a problem in the local administration see: Metropolitan Council Debates (MCD), Metropolitan Council Secretariat (MCS)/Delhi, DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 2 May 1973, 192-193.
programme of demolition or clearance was generally kept secret in order to avoid legal complications. Such vagueness of principles combined with unlimited power only provided a recipe for authoritarianism in city planning and development.

**Dynamics of local politics: Bharatiyakaran and Muslim-dominated areas**

Such an authoritarian regime had become a real possibility when the Jan Sangh came to power with a majority in the Municipal Corporation as well as in Metropolitan Council of Delhi in 1967 and continued for five years till 1972. It won 33 out of 56 seats. The party secured a majority in all constituencies dominated by Hindu and Sikh refugees, areas traditionally inhabited by the Hindu population, Hindu lower-caste localities and most importantly the colonies of central government and local government employees. It lost in all Muslim-dominated areas. Jan Sangh played an important role in defining and politicizing the community-space relation in postcolonial Delhi. It started emphasizing the assimilation of Muslim and Christian minority communities into the Akhand Bharat. It placed Muslim-dominated areas in opposition to the tolerant and all-encompassing texture of Hindu/Indian cultural, social and spiritual values. Bharatiyakaran (Indianization) of Indian society and minority communities was an important cultural campaign pursued by the Jan Sangh in the late 1960s in Delhi.

The Indianization campaign rested on two planks: the ‘de-westernization’ of city space in terms of the marking of street names and ‘de-Islamization’ and ‘de-Anglicization’ of minority religious communities. It proposed that Bharatiyakaran could be done by establishing Indian cultural values which referred back to the rich ancient traditions and by preventing and

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34 ‘DDA-Miscellaneous Correspondence’, GOI, PMS, File No.: 7/419/70-PMS. NAI.
36 Puri, *Bharatiya Jan Sangh*, 66. Also see: ‘Jan Sangh KaVeh Khawah…’, *Al Janiat*, 4 Jan, 1970 for a statement of Jeevan Singh, the CM and the General Secretary of Akali Dal, Punjab against Jan Sangh’s resolution on the Bhartiakaran (understood as conversion to Hinduism) of religious minorities in India.
destabilizing the impacts of foreign religions and traditions. Ban on cow slaughter, promotion of vegetarianism, establishment of Unified Civil code, promotion of moral education based on *Bharatiya Sanskriti* (Indian tradition) and *Maryada* (honour) and promotion of Hindi for official communication were some of the issues which Jan Sangh continued to assert. In terms of city space the programme involved removal of the names of foreign rulers from roads and streets. For instance, in 1955 a deputation of the Party met the Delhi Chief Commissioner and demanded ‘change of names of streets and removal of the statues of the foreign rulers that disfigure the city to give Delhi a “Bharatiya” look’. Similarly, Jan Sangh leader Balraj Madhok proclaimed in a speech at Lawrence Club on 9 March 1970 that, ‘I do not talk about the Bharatiyakaran of Muslims only, but, if Muslims stand against this idea and prioritize their religion over nation, then there is definitely a need to Indianize even their religion-Islam’.

The Party also offered a rather selective meaning of redevelopment and beautification. It initiated the regularization of ‘unauthorized’ colonies, which were mainly inhabited by the Hindu and Sikh refugees, launched new schemes for the ‘Harijan Housing’ in 1968-69, while forcefully ejecting the Muslim-dominated katras and jhuggi-jhopri clusters. In fact, the institutional tussle between the DDA and the DMC was also redefined as the Jan Sangh government started appropriating the clearance agenda of the DDA. It was asserted ‘the Delhi Development Authority which had gone to sleep under the Congress regime is now wide awake....’

The DMC constituted a Yamuna Bank Development Board, which developed a comprehensive scheme for the improvement of the banks of the river Yamuna. Interestingly, this move was also given an overtly religious orientation. For revitalizing the religious significance of Yamuna River, the area between Old Delhi and Ring Road was cleared and trees were planted. Jagmohan, the Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Land Management, who

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39 For a resolution for the regularization of ‘unauthorized’ colonies in Delhi see: DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 2 April 1971. For Jan Sangh’s and RSS’s involvement in promoting the construction of ‘unauthorized’ structures in Delhi in and around the refugee colonies see: DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 6 May 1975.
40 Special funds were issued by the Delhi Administration for the improvement of Harijan colonies and katras of Old Delhi and as many as 1,000 quarters were constructed for sweepers in 1969-1970. See: Puri, *Bharatiya Jan Sangh*, 221.
41 Quoted in Puri, *Bharatiya Jan Sangh*, 220
42 DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 29 March 1968, 59.
was approached directly by the Delhi administration for clearance of the site of Yamuna River and other places, glamorized this phase of Delhi’s development in the following way:

A vigorous clearance-cum-resettlement –cum-redevelopment drive was launched by the DDA in 1967-68. The first major operation was taken in the Yamuna Bazaar (locally known as Jamuna bazaar) area near Nigam Bodh Ghat, between the Yamuna and the city wall. *The Ghat is a sacred and historical site*...(it) was allowed to become a vast stinking slum with about 6,000 squatters...and 700 non-confronting industries...(a) foulest nauseating slum, incapable of being developed or serviced at reasonable cost (Emphasis added).43

The 30,000 slum dwellers, according to him, were later resettled in Seelampur and Seemapuri colonies. In the same vein the Organizer (the official mouthpiece of the RSS) on 24 October 1970 wrote, ‘A new Delhi is fast springing up, a Delhi with a proud “capital” look, because it is setting the pace for the country for bringing the best of the Nation’s characteristics to the fore’.44

But who were the slum dwellers that got evicted? It was alleged by Congress politicians during the Metropolitan Council debates that selective clearance of unauthorized structures was being conducted as a punishment against Muslim population of Delhi for not supporting the Jan Sangh during elections. The Congress representatives argued that, ‘Jhuggi-Jhonpdi dwellers were removed from Jamuna Bazar, Mirdard Road and other places without being provided[with] developed alternative sites...48 hours eviction notices were served the day before demolition on 86 Muslim families of Pahari Bhojla, whereas 30 days notice is required under the Delhi Slums Improvement and Clearance Act’.45 Similar kind of clearance drives were also conducted in other Muslim-dominated areas near Idgah, Gurudwara Moti Bagh, Kotla Firozshah, Tilak Bridge, Ghata Masjid, at Phool Walon Ki Ser and the site around Dargah Nizamuddin. Apart from the Muslim factor, a number of jhuggi dwellers evicted from these localities were immigrant daily wage laborers who had voted for Congress in local and national elections.46 By removing these sites from several municipal constituencies, Jan Sangh tried to convert them into safe electoral pockets. It is important to mention here that when in power in the Central

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Government and local bodies, Congress never tried any large scale clearance drives to consolidate its electoral gains even though these slum areas were in need of instant attention. Similarly, the process of the regularization of various ‘unauthorized’ colonies occupied by Hindu and Sikh refugees was not initiated by the Congress, as most of these colonies were politically inclined towards the Jana Sangh. In this sense, Congress played this ‘development’ card to protect the interests of its supporters, mainly Muslim and Dalit communities, in Delhi. On the other hand, Jan Sangh presented this Congress apathy as an evidence of ‘Muslim appeasement’ and an example of marginalization of refugees and Hindus at large. It sought to portray Congress as an anti-improvement, anti-Indianization party. In a Metropolitan Council debate, one Muslim member of the Jan Sangh, Anwar Ali Dehalvi, argued, ‘the Congress had kept the residents of Pahari Bhojla and Pahari Imli, Matia Mahal, Balli Mara, Lal Kuan etc. as captives within four walls just to gain electoral benefits. Now that they have been brought out in the open air, Congress members are criticizing Jan Sangh and trying to act as the saviour of Muslims’.

The Jan Sangh used DDA to perform the task of slum clearance as soon as it came to power in 1967. Apart from regularization of unauthorized colonies, the DDA and Delhi Administration became interested in the reorganization of space to ensure electoral gains by shifting colonies of Congress supporters from municipal constituencies.

Interestingly, while Congress criticized the demolition drives in Old Delhi and surrounding areas, Jan Sangh received appreciation from its educated middle-class support base for the improvements it made to the National Capital Region by immediately fencing cleared areas, widening the roads and developing parks and green areas on the demolition sites. At the same time, Jan Sangh passed various resolutions for the regularization of all unauthorized colonies and constructions in Delhi by making required amendments to the Master Plan. Jagmohan, the then DDA Vice Chairman, remained a central figure in these ‘clearance-cum-improvement-cum development drives’ in Delhi.

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48 There was a competition between Jan Sangh and the Congress to take credit for clearance drives in Delhi since DDA was a statutory body working under the Central government. But, because the poor Muslims were the prime victim of these drives and the local Congress wings actively criticized these clearance drives, Congress had to give it away for wider electoral benefits see: ‘DDA-Miscellaneous Correspondence’, GOI, PMS, File No.: 7/419/70-PMS. NAI.
49 For a discussion on the Resolution Regarding the Unauthorized Colonies presented by the Sangh representative see: DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 2 April, 1971, 68-86; For a debate on the involvement of Jan Sangh members in ‘illegal’ acquisition of land and ‘unauthorized’ encroachments and constructions see: DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 6 May 1975,10-13.
50 Jagmohan, Island of Truth, 31. In his recent book, he argues for a reformed, reawakened and enlightened Hinduism – a Hinduism which is in perfect harmony with the fundamental forces of modern science and modern humanism and would lead to
Bangladesh war and Muslim areas

After the Bangladesh war in 1971, national elections brought Congress back to power. ‘Ghareebi Hatao’ (eradicate poverty) of the Twenty Point Programme was one of the slogans that initiated a populist electoral politics at national level by the Congress.\(^{51}\) It also won the Metropolitan Council elections in Delhi in 1972 with 44 out of a total of 56 seats. Although Jan Sangh was defeated in DMC election, it secured a significant victory in the third and lowest tier of Delhi administration - the MCD. It won 53 out of 100 seats in the municipal elections that took place in 1971.\(^{52}\)

These electoral results had obvious political implications. Wider concerns like national security, development and defence were overwhelmingly popularized during this period in order to expand the legal framework in favour of centralization of power. The declaration of the National Emergency on 25 June 1975 was the culmination of this growing centralization. In a very dramatic way, the Indira Gandhi government invoked Art 352 of the Constitution (Proclamation of Emergency under the part XVIII of the Constitution) to deal with ‘internal disturbance’! The crisis of leadership in Congress, which had started disintegrating immediately after Nehru’s death, was generalized and converted into a crisis of the Indian state by the Indira Gandhi government with the imposition of the National Emergency.\(^{53}\) The growing left radical

\(^{51}\) The slogan was turned around and called a policy of ‘Ghareebon Ko Hatao’ (eliminate poor) in post-Emergency period due to the way these programmes were implemented.

\(^{52}\) For detailed analysis see: Puri, Bharatiya Jan Sangh, 185 and 193.

politics especially after Naxalbari uprising, the well-known railway strike of 1974 and finally, Jay Prakash Narayan’s movement aiming at ‘total revolution’ were some of the immediate developments identified as serious threats to national security.54 However, it was the war with Pakistan and creation of Bangladesh that provided the government with its most important justification for introducing a coercive, yet, ‘legal’ framework of rule. A number of acts were passed and amended to give more powers to the center. Examples were the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act of 1967, the Prevention of Insult to National Honor Act, 1971 and the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) 1971. MISA continued to be in operation even after the Bangladesh liberation, to deal with unspecified ‘internal disturbances and threats’. After the declaration of Emergency, MISA was amended multiple times (for example, the Maintenance of Internal Security (Amendment) Act 1976). State governments and bureaucrats were given extraordinary powers, while the individual rights of the citizens (detainees) were curtailed. It was finally repealed in 1977, when the Janata Party came to power.55

Indira Gandhi changed Congress into a highly centralized party organization and developed a close circle of ‘yes men’ around her who were made to perform development tasks according to the priorities of the regime.56 These officers were commanded and given targets for the implementation of the ‘Twenty Points Programme’ of Indira Gandhi and ‘Five Point Programme’ of her powerful son Sanjay Gandhi57 by completely surpassing the local representative bodies and institutions.58 Sanjay Gandhi was Indira Gandhi’s son and President of the Youth Congress. Ideologically, he was close to RSS. He had no authority to execute such

56 ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition in the Walled City of Delhi during the Emergency in Jama Masjid (hereafter JM) and Turkman Gate (hereafter TG) Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78-Court-SCI. NAI.
58 See: ‘20 Point Programme-Enlargement of Employment and Training through Apprentices Scheme’ GOI, PMS, File No.:37(633)/20/75-PMS, NAI; ‘20 Point Programme Review of Implementation’, GOI, PMS, File No.:37(633)/75-PMS, NAI; ‘20 Point Programme Padyatra Undertaken by Leaders, PMs etc.’, GOI, PMS, File No.:37(632)/misc./76-PMS, NAI; ‘20 Point Programme Parliamentary Questions’, GOI, PMS, File No.:37(633)/Parliament (Parl.) Qn./76-PMS, NAI and ‘Correspondence Regarding Statements... by the PM in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha’, GOI, Parl., File No.:56/29/76-parl., PMS, NAI. Also see: DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 18 March 1975; DMCD, MCS /Delhi, 20 March 1975; DMCD, MCS /Delhi, 2 May 1975; DMCD, MCS /Delhi, 6 May, 1975; DMCD, MCS /Delhi, 27 January, 1976; DMCD, MCS /Delhi, 27 January 1976; DMCD, MCS /Delhi, 4 May 1976; DMCD, MCS /Delhi, 5 May 1976; DMCD, MCS /Delhi, 7 May 1976; DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 12 May 1976.
programmes or take decisions on behalf of national or local government. The beautification of the city and family planning were the two important aspects of his Five Point Programme, which became a prominent part of the agenda of Indira Gandhi’s government during the National Emergency. These plans were actually the extension of Jan Sangh policies implemented in Delhi during its administration. The sterilization campaign was linked to urban resettlement in an unprecedented way. In this way, the local representative bodies were either paralyzed or used favorably by this enthusiastic team of committed workers of her regime. Delhi being the capital city was directly exposed to this centralized power structure.

Figure 5.1: A circular celebrating one year of the Emergency, Hindustan Times, 26 June 1976

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59 Image caption and Source: Tarlo, Unsettling Memories, 120.
The terms like ‘our citizens’ and ‘legitimate political activities’ became parts of official vocabulary, which often used to classify various kinds of collective action during the Emergency. In this framework, any anti-establishment act was termed ‘illegitimate’ and/or ‘anti-national’ simply by invoking the broad concept of ‘internal disturbance’. This terminology was highly exclusionary not only in terms of its literal implications but also in terms of the threat perceptions created by the government to secure more authority. In fact, these categories were employed quite tactically with secular/national/developmentalist rhetoric to cover up forced demolition drives in Muslim-dominated Turkman Gate and Jama Masjid areas in the mid-1970s.  

The clearance of Delhi’s Muslim localities in the post-Bangladesh war era was inextricably linked to the strong threat perception about the Indian Muslim community and Muslim-dominated areas, especially after the first war with Pakistan in 1965. The competitive politics strengthened the ‘nationalist’, yet, anti-Muslim/anti-Pakistan rhetoric of the 1950s. Congress, even under the Nehruvian regime played the secularism/majoritarian card according to its own convenience. Such acts of ‘mainstreaming’ the majoritarian political view not only gave confidence to Jan Sangh to win the middle-class upper-caste support, it brought Muslim areas under strict surveillance and policing in Delhi. These localities were called the hub of Pakistani agents and fifth columnists that had the potential to create ‘internal disturbance’ to support Pakistan in the war. There was also a view that Muslims should be removed from the border areas and most importantly from all influential posts. These areas remained under strict surveillance even after the war. Imdad Sabri, who represented the Jan Sangh in the Metropolitan Council, observed in 1967 that ‘the Muslim area of Jama Masjid has been under strict police surveillance for last 10-12 years. There used to be police postings in every gali of the mohalla

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and search operations carried out on the roofs of the houses at night time during the initial years. A new practice is in place now for last few days. On every Friday and Sunday, the police take control of the ilaqa and heavy police pickets are posted at the corner of every street and road by dawn. Sabri criticized the Congress government for harassing the Muslims of the area. This kind of treatment of Muslim areas continued, and in fact, they came under intense police observation again in 1971 during the Bangladesh war. Referring to the refugees who crossed over to India during the war, P. N. Dhar, the Principal Secretary to Indira Gandhi during Emergency, observed: ‘Pakistan had planted agent provocateurs among the refugees...(and) to add to our woes, Urdu-speaking Muslims, known as Biharies in East Bengal, also came in with the Bengali refugees’. It is important to understand this political mindset of Congress functionaries that created a ground for communal politics at local level while keeping a secular face and an image of a saviour of minorities at the national level.

While criticizing Congress policies as appeasement of Muslim community, Jan Sangh continued to evoke a majoritarian argument. For instance, in support of the Resolution for the Recognition of Bangladesh moved by the party in Metropolitan Council, the Jan Sangh representative argued that the liberation of Bangladesh was an example of the failure of two-nation theory. He said, ‘today is the day when we can achieve the unity of India—the Akhand Bharat, only if we recognize Bangladesh as an independent nation’. In fact, Atal Bihari Vajpai, the Jan Sangh representative in Parliament, praised Indira Gandhi calling her an avatar of lord Durga (the Goddess of power) for her government’s decision to participate in war against Pakistan and recognize Bangladesh in the later period. The Jan Sangh used the occasion to marginalize Muslims in public sphere. The discussion in the contemporary Urdu press is relevant here. Sidq-i-Jadid, an influential Urdu weekly from Lucknow, wrote: ‘For a majority of Indian Muslims, the pervasive mood in the days immediately after the war was a mixture of

65 DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 11 April 1967. Thanks giving motion on the Lt. Governor’s address to the council.
66 Imdad Sabri raised questions in relation to the requirement of a citizenship certificate to be presented by Muslims for selling properties in Delhi. This aspect became critical once again in post 1970 period. See: DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 23 April, 1973, 19-23; and DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 2 May 1973, 159-165. It is important to mention here that the ‘Public Order’, and Police in Delhi, the National Capital Territory, are under Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Government of India and not under the Government of Delhi in accordance with the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1948. See: https://indiankanoon.org/search/?formInput=delhi%20police%20act (accessed on 16 June 015).
67 P. N. Dhar, Indira Gandhi, 156.
despair, confusion and anger…(because) the event of the independence of Bangladesh and her severance of all ties with Pakistan was generally celebrated in India as if the “victory” had been gained against the Muslims themselves. Insulting and provocative slogans were raised against them in public meetings’. 71 The Jan Sangh, immediately after the war, brought Muslim Personal Law under scrutiny. 72 Thus the Bangladesh war, the discourse on refugees and internal security brought the Muslim community under suspicion and distrust. And this, at a later period, helped define Muslim areas as breeding grounds of seditious activities.

II

Reorganization of Space and Communities: The placing of Muslim-dominated areas in national and local perspective

In the 1970s the debates around development, mainstreaming of minorities and national security complemented each other. Redevelopment of Shahjahanabad and conservation of its historical heritage by removing its ‘filthiest’ and ‘stinking’ parts became the centre of official discussions. These parts of the city, populated traditionally by Muslim communities, had to be cleared and reorganized in such a way that historic beauty of this place could be reclaimed. Various redevelopment schemes were designed in this period highlighting the relevance and applicability of the Master Plan for a coordinated and intensive plan of action. 73 For instance, a high profile seminar on ‘Redevelopment of Shahjahanabad’ was organized by the Ministry of Works, Housing and Urban Planning on 31 January 1975 in Delhi. Speaking on this occasion, the then Chief Executive Councilor of Delhi, Radha Raman, said: ‘constructions within the city should be

71 For discussions on Bangladesh war see: DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 6 October, 1971, 80-101. For communal aspect – Muslim agent and Akhand Bharat, see: 90-94. For a critical analysis of Indian ‘Muslim’ opinion on the involvement of Indian government in the Bangladesh struggle for independence expressed in leading Urdu newspapers of North India see: http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00litlinks/naim/ambiguities/14muslimpress.html (accessed on 18 June 2015).
stopped whether it was for commercial and residential purpose. The then Vice Chairmen of DDA, Jagmohan also wrote a series of articles in the *Hindustan Times* (Sunday World) in October 1973 expressing his concerns for the deteriorating civic and moral atmosphere of Shahjahanabad. These articles were later compiled in a book entitled *Rebuilding Shahjahanabad: The Old city of Delhi*. The book, published in 1975, speaks of an interesting relationship between nation building and development of the city. It also elaborates Jagmohan’s concerns about the demarcated areas of Shahjahanabad. He says:

> A sick, shattered and dismembered city like Shahjehanabad (sic) can neither inspire nor be inspiring. It can only be a symbol of national shame and diffidence, a readymade material for our denigrators. If…we are able…to eliminate what is cruel and clumsy in existing Shahjehanabad (sic), preserve what is healthy and beautiful…it could become a symbol of national pride and resurgence… Rebuilding of cities is plainly not an act of isolated civic reform, it involves the vaster task of restructuring the fundamental forces which govern the life of people.

Jagmohan established an important link between the living space and people by claiming that reorganization of space could not merely be reduced to civic reform. It was, in fact the moral conditions and fundamental forces that governed the life of people. Thus, restructuring space and reforming people were the only ways to establish Shahjahanabad as a symbol of national pride. According to him, ‘rebuilding of Shahjehanabad (sic) involves rebuilding the society, rebuilding Indian state and the political structure’. For Jagmohan, the existing Shahjahanabad was not a symbol of Islamic high culture of the past, but a threat to national security. He notes:

> Certain parts of Shahjehanabad (sic) have become dead – intellectually and culturally. In Hauz Qazi, Lal Kuan and Turkman Gate, bums and bad characters are all that can be seen at nightfall…It is necessary to brighten up these areas; otherwise these will remain the breeding

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76 Jagmohan, *Rebuilding Shahjahanabad*, x.
grounds for criminals and rioters, engendering the cult of the dagger and the spear…material redevelopment of the city is not possible without its cultural rejuvenation. 

Jagmohan was appointed Vice Chairman of DDA. He became an executive force for the implementation of National Regeneration Programme, which incorporated twenty milestones for comprehensive economic development and five points for social and moral development of Indian society. Urbanization drive and family planning campaign were the two most visible agendas pursued by the state for the purpose of reorganization and redevelopment of demarcated areas. A massive programme of displacement and resettlement of populations was carried out during the eighteen months of Emergency throughout Delhi. People were displaced from Indira Vikas Puri, Shahdara, Jama Masjid, Turkman Gate and were to be resettled in 27 new colonies, including Mangolpuri, Trilokpuri, Khichripur, Jahangeerpuri, Welcome and other colonies. These colonies had no basic amenities or even structures/shelters. In the context of Shahjahanabad, two major ‘clearance-cum-improvement’ drives were relevant, which were carried out in 1975 and 1976: Jama Masjid Clearance Scheme and Turkman Gate Redevelopment Scheme. Interestingly, while Old Delhi residential areas were thus exposed to massive clearance operations, almost all the ‘unauthorized’ colonies in Delhi, inhabited primarily by Hindu and Sikh refugees, were regularized. This leaves little doubt that these operations were deeply linked to the anti-Muslim political climate of the 1970s.

78 Jagmohan, Rebuilding Shahjahanabad, 71-2.
80 For a list of demolished and resettlement colonies, see: DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 27 January 1976. Quite interestingly, Turkman Gate locality was not included in the list of cleared areas. For a discussion on the devastating conditions in rehabilitation colonies see: DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 12 May 1976, 16-21.
81 See: DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 12 May 1976, 16-21.
82 According to the figures presented during Q/A session of Delhi Metropolitan Council, out of 204 such residential colonies (identified in 1967), 179 were regularized by 1975 by the Delhi administration. The legalization of the rest of 33 colonies was under consideration due to the different land use status of these colonies. See: DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 18 March 1975, 24-25. For a discussion on the corruption and involvement of the Municipal members of Jan Sangh and RSS in the ‘unauthorized encroachment’ and construction on government land including the properties under custodian, which were transferred to the Municipal Corporation of Delhi in 1968. See: DMCD, MSC/Delhi, 6 May 1975, 9-13.
The Jama Masjid Improvement Committee was formed back in 1954. It had made necessary recommendations and suggested ways and means to remove the congestion and insanitation from the area around Jama Masjid so as to protect the historical relevance of the monument and its surrounding area.\(^{84}\) The scheme was transferred to the Metropolitan Council in 1961 along with the Delhi-Ajmeri Gate Clearance and Improvement Scheme (DAG) mentioned earlier. In fact, a separate plan was formulated in a meeting in September 1961 for a phase-wise clearance of shops and dwellings on and around the plinth of Jama Masjid and their resettlement on a different site. The plan was approved.\(^{85}\)

The then Chief Commissioner sanctioned the project for shifting the shops and construction of (i) 90 small two roomed multistoried tenements for slum dwellers, (ii) 62 residential flats for providing alternative accommodation to the persons belonging to middle income groups, and (iii) 375 shops for providing alternative accommodation to the occupants of the existing structures. In addition, the scheme also approved the construction of community buildings, schools, dispensaries and fire station in Jama Masjid area.\(^{86}\)

However, the project could not be taken up due to lack of any financial assistance from any local body. In addition, the Architecture and Planners disapproved of the construction of stalls around Jama Masjid. Thus, an alternative scheme was prepared and it was decided that a shopping centre would be constructed at the Paiwallan for shopkeepers. The Architect Planner of the DDA had also prepared a scheme for rehabilitating the shopkeepers, mainly the kabadies (junk merchants) at a new market at a distant place called Mayapuri. This scheme was also

\(^{84}\) It is difficult to provide religion based demographic data of different localities of Old Delhi for two reasons. It is an un-written policy of the Indian government to not use religious identity as an official category. Secondly, the Union Territory of Delhi was treated as one district till the2001 census. It was only in 2001 that Delhi was divided in nine zones for the purpose of census data collection. For reference see: Hemanshu Kumar and Rohini Somanathan, ‘Mapping Indian Districts Across Census Years, 1971-2001’, Centre for Development Economics, Department of Economics, Delhi School of Economics, Working Paper No. 176. (Web source: http://www.csedlse.org/pdf/Work176.pdf). Also see: http://delhi.gov.in/DoIT/DoIT_Planning/ES2012-13/EN/ES_Chapter%202.pdf (accessed on 13 December 2015).

\(^{85}\) ‘Jama Masjid Clearance Operation’, GOI, PMS, File No: 7(383)/74-PMS. NAI.

\(^{86}\) ‘Jama Masjid Clearance Operation’, GOI, PMS, File No: 7(383)/74-PMS. NAI.
approved by the DDA and the Delhi Wakf Board. But, no further action was taken, mainly because of the non-availability of funds. However, the situation changed after 1975.

The Task Force headed by the Chief Executive Councilor, Delhi, set up in March 1975 by the Ministry of Works and Housing took up the charge to take immediate short-term measures for the uplift of the deteriorating living conditions in these inner city areas of Shahjahanabad. Later, in February 1976, a High Level Ministerial Panel with the Secretary of Works and Housing as Chairman was also set up to examine the redevelopment of the walled city. The Ministry also insisted on controlling the economic activity in the area which they felt was causing nuisance. The local shopkeepers, mainly the kabadies, being involved in the most polluting jobs, became subjects of harassment.

To understand the actual and violent reception of the Jama Masjid Clearance (JMC) Scheme, one has to closely look at the local politics of Old Delhi in early 1975. A series of violent incidents took place between 2 and 14 February 1975. Abdulla Bukhari, the Imam of the Jama Masjid, who emerged as a national Muslim leader after these events, tried to manipulate the anger of local shopkeepers and kabadies. He tried mobilizing the kabadies as a force especially against the Delhi Wakf Board and the DDA to establish his control over the administration of the Jama Masjid. According to newspaper reports, at least 14 people died, around 200 people including policemen were injured and over 450 people were arrested in these violent incidents.

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87 Delhi Wakf Board is responsible for the management of the mosques and its finances. Collection of rent from shopkeepers around Jama Masjid was also the responsibility of the board since these shops were a part of Wakf property along with the mosque. The Wakf Board was consulted as a stakeholder in this case.
88 ‘Jama Masjid Clearance Operation’, GOI, PMS, File No.: 7(383)/74-PMS. NAI.
89 See: DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 18 March 1975.
90 ‘High Level Ministerial Panel to Examine the Redevelopment in Walled City’, GOI, MHA, Delhi, File No.: U-12011/2/75-D. NAI.
events. Abdulla Bukhari was arrested under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act. It was an interesting co-occurrence that a serious fire broke out during these riots, and a large number of shops were burned down including the shops of cloth merchants and kabadies. These incidents intensified the internal security threat perception of the government. In fact, Jama Masjid emerged as a powerful symbol of Muslim collective identity. Consequently, the Jama Masjid scheme, which had been neglected so far, received serious attention and became a part of an aggressive urbanization operation. Interestingly, the government refused to hold any official inquiry into these incidents and made the clearance drive coercive. Curfew was imposed in the Jama Masjid area; electricity and water supplies were stopped, and telephone lines were cut off for several days. The clearance of shops in this context took a distinctly anti-Muslim tone. A number of kabadies were forcefully shifted to Mayapuri. But there was a lot to come since the clearance drive was not completed yet.

The shopkeepers, mainly the cloth merchants who had lost their shops during fire, started constructing pucca (concrete) structures around Jama Masjid to replace the burnt shops for their everyday survival in the absence of any kind of support from the authorities. According to newspaper reports, they had lost properties worth eleven lakhs of rupees because of fire. The situation thus became more threatening. The Urban Art Commission, which was made responsible for the art and architectural part of the Jama Masjid Redevelopment Plan, raised beautification concerns about these pucca constructions. It completely ruled out the plans of the rehabilitation of cloth merchants in Paiwallan area for the purpose of conservation of structures of historic relevance and the ecology of the area. In short, the clearance and beautification of the city space was in every sense given priority over the rehabilitation of Muslim shopkeepers.

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96 ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition… in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 310244278-Court-SCI/ NAI.
97 ‘Jama Masjid Clearance Operation’, GOI, PMS, File No.: 7(383)/75-PMS. NAI.
The declaration of National Emergency on 26 June 1975 for maintaining ‘internal security’, gave unprecedented power to the authorities to interpret, reinterpret, misinterpret or completely reject the established laws, by-laws or even the administrative policies. This also was the case with the JMC scheme. The demolition drives, we must note, were neither a part of Master Plan of 1962, nor it was outlined in the subsequent Zonal Plans for Old Delhi. However, the imposition of the Emergency gave a new momentum to the clearance drive around Jama Masjid area. The junk shops on the eastern side of Jama Masjid area were removed; the kabadies and old motor-part dealers were shifted to the newly developed market in Mayapuri and the Muslim ‘squatters’ were removed from the Hare Bhare Mazar area in the month of August 1975.\footnote{Jama Masjid Clearance Operation’, GOI, PMS, File No.: 7(383)/74-PMS. NAI. Also see: DMCD, MCS/Delhi. 5 May, 1976, 39. Also see: ‘Jama Masjid Area Cleared’, The Indian Express, 21 August 1975. ‘Joblessness among Those Resettled in Seelampur’, The Indian Express, 7 September, 1975. ‘Chandni Chowk Sans Sunday Bazaar’, Hindustan Times (HT), 21 July, 1975; ‘Masjid Area Cleared of 500 Junk Shops’, HT, 24 August 1975.}

These administrative moves had a mixed reception at the local level. The local shopkeepers, as soon as they realized that their grievances were actually manipulated by Abdullah Bukhari for his personal conflict with the Delhi Wakf Board, sought to pursue their own case by expressing their collective support to the government. In September 1975, the Anjuman-e-Tajran, association of the shopkeepers of Jama Masjid area, formed in 1972, wrote a letter to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The association tried to bring the attention of the authorities to the ‘explosiveness of the situation which has developed around this area due to the official callousness and deliberate attempts (at) harass (ment).’ The letter explained that, ‘since most of us are Muslims the situation is unnecessarily taking a communal turn and it is not unlikely that it may explode into violence at any time’ (Emphasis added).\footnote{Jama Masjid Clearance Operation’, GOI, PMS, File No.: 7(383)/75-PMS. NAI.} The association tried to express their support with the authorities. The letter stated:

(i) The decision to remove us into Paiwallan…(was) accepted (by us). (ii) It had been provided in the Master Plan….again in October 1973,…decision was taken at a meeting presided over by Sh. Om Mehta, the then Minister of Works and Housing that…(it) should be constructed to enable us to move there. (iii) Whatever the reason for this delay in constructing the …market, we should not be penalized… because we have …been prepared to shift there. (iii) There is a baseless apprehension in certain quarters that if this market is not cleared during present emergency, it
may be difficult to do so later. (iii) We may state that the Emergency and the 20-point programme are meant to improve the socio-economic condition of the people like ourselves and not to be used as a pretext to harass us. In case if we are uprooted without an alternative market at Paiwallan, our livelihood will suffer. (v) An example has already been set in the case of Cycle market at Esplanade Road which has been shifted to another well-built market. The same principle should apply to us. (vi) We guarantee...to shift to the Paiwallan market as soon as it is ready. Till then we should be allowed to stay where we are....much against our wishes, our enthusiasm to actively participate in the implementation of 20-point programme becomes damp with this democle’s (sic) sword hanging over our heads. (vii) We will be perfectly happy if you were to appoint a person or persons who are impartial and interested enough to report to you personally in this matter and who can also strike a balance between our socio-economic requirements and aesthetic beauty of the place where we have lived and worked for generations.102

The Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind also sent a telegram to Indira Gandhi in this regard.103 These requests from local shopkeepers were completely ignored by the authorities. On 22-23 November 1975, around 300 shops, owned and run by Muslims, around Jama Masjid were cleared in a very dramatic way by DMC with the help of the demolition squad of DDA. Along with the newly emerged pucca structures, the demolition squad cleared the shops which had been there for around 30-40 years. These shops belonged to the Cotton Market Association and Commercial Market Association. The rest were shops made of wooden shacks and other improvised structures. All these Muslim shopkeepers were conducting business in motor-parts, cotton cloth, radio and watch repairing and spare parts etc. Quite astonishingly, no efforts were made by the authorities to take the local community leaders in confidence or to issue prior notices to the shopkeepers. They were given only about 45 minutes to 1 hour to clear their stuff and vacate the shops.104 The kabadies had previously agreed to move to Mayapuri after some initial tussle, but

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102 ‘Jama Masjid Clearance Operation’, GOI, PMS, File No.: 7(383)/75-PMS. NAI. It is important to mention here that the leading Urdu news paper also published editorials in favour of Emergency. ‘Emergency Kisi Farad Ya Party Ke Khilaf Nahi Balki Mulk Ke Mafad Main Hai’, Al Jamiat a., 24 July 1975; ‘Emergency Ke Sau Din’, Al Jamiat b., 10 October 1975.

103 ‘Jama Masjid Clearance Operation’, GOI, PMS, File No.: 7(383)/75-PMS. NAI.

the cloth merchants and others were in chaos since no arrangements were made for their rehabilitation. The DDA bulldozers also damaged a part of the foundation of the historic mosque and a water course.

Figure 5.2: Demolition of shops around Jama Masjid, 1975-I

Figure 5.3: Demolition of shops around Jama Masjid, 1975-II

105 Demolition of shops adjacent to the wall of Jama Masjid. Source: Ahmed, Muslim Political Discourse, 109
This invited some protest from the Imam. The police arranged a heavy contingent of force and they were asked to close the various exit routes in order to guard against ‘problems being created by elements outside’. A. K. Paitandey, the Sub-Divisional Magistrate of the area wrote in his statement to the Shah Commission of Enquiry:

The police and magistracy was not given any time (by the DDA) to make any assessment of the situation...(and) to talk to the local leaders... As a result of this sudden demolition drive, there were reactions from the local shopkeepers. While the DDA demolition squad was in action, some people started pelting stones. We intervened and resorted to the use of tear-gas to disperse the miscreants...for the heavy deployment of police force and the suddenness of the operation, it would have not been an easy task to clear the area. The Imam of Jama Masjid was hostile to this operation and some of the miscreants had thrown stones on the officials from the Jama Masjid. This incident also gets sorted primarily because of the heavy deployment of police (see photo).

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107 Source: [https://twitter.com/indiahistorypic/status/614109626347319297](https://twitter.com/indiahistorypic/status/614109626347319297) (accessed on 13 December 2015)

108 'Public Hearing Case of Demolition… in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78-Court-SCI. NAI.

109 ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition… in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78-Court-SCI. NAI.
Many people were arrested for protesting against this incident primarily under Defence of India Regulation Act called DIR, which was later withdrawn in order to keep the ‘legality’ of the arrests.\textsuperscript{110} The decision was taken at a high level; this is how Sanjay Gandhi was reported to have put it: ‘removal of the shopkeepers during the Emergency had eradicated \textit{a potential nest of Pakistani supporters} (emphasis mine)’ and historical beauty of the mosque was restored.\textsuperscript{111} Finally, after constant efforts made by some influential local Muslim leaders, especially by Mir Mushtaq Ahmed, a new market called Meena Bazaar was constructed between Jama Masjid and Red Fort area in Urdu Bazar and in Paiwallan. The DDA also built, following legal guidelines, a thick wall as a fence around Jama Masjid to protect the historical building from further encroachments by the local residents.\textsuperscript{112} Interestingly, the Clearance operation in the Jama Masjid area in August and November was undertaken without any reference to the Task Force or the High –Level Ministerial Panel.\textsuperscript{113}

\textit{Turkman Gate Clearance and the Family Planning Campaign}

The Turkman Gate is linked to Asaf Ali road, one of the outer roads of the city connecting Delhi Gate and Ajmeri Gate. The area consisted of two localities in the 1970s. There was an old Turkman Gate locality, which stretched from Phatak Telian to the city wall. The Transit camp was the second locality. This camp was created to accommodate over 120 families of Dujana House jhuggi cluster under the Dujana House Rehabilitation Project.\textsuperscript{114} The Dujana House which

\textsuperscript{110} Defence of India Regulations Act was an emergency criminal law enacted by the Governor-General of India in 1915 with the intention of curtailing the nationalist and revolutionary activities during and in the aftermath of the First World War. It was amended as the Defence of India Act and Defence of India Rules (DIADIR) in 1962. The act suspended the Fundamental Rights of any person held under the act, and specifically Rule 30 of the act allowed the government to hold any person in detention without explanation suspending the right under the article 22 of the Constitution of India, without the right to representation, and without the provisions of \textit{Habeas corpus}.

\textsuperscript{111} For Sanjay Gandhi’s response on the construction of Meena Bazaar see: \url{http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/sunday-times/deep-focus/Can-Congress-get-rid-of-Sanjay-Gandhis-baggage/articleshow/7202986.cms} (accessed on 13 December 2015); \textit{Times of India} (TOI), 26 December 1975, Delhi, 3.


\textsuperscript{113} ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition… in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78-Court-SCI. NAI.

\textsuperscript{114} Remodeling of Dujana House, the area situated between Jama Masjid and Turkman Gate area, was among the first rehabilitation projects undertaken after independence. It was declared a slum and cleared in the early 1960s. The residents were put in transit camps located at Turkman Gate adjacent to the old Turkman Gate locality. Over 80 families were resettled in newly built four multi-storied housing blocks in Dujana House after clearing \textit{jhuggies}. The remaining 40 families were to be shifted to
is less than a mile away from Turkman Gate has a significant place in the history of what happened on 19 April 1976.

As discussed earlier, Turkman Gate was a part of Delhi Gate-Ajmeri Gate Slum Clearance and Re-development Scheme known as DAG. The full implementation of the scheme was slowed down because the acquisition of many private properties could not be finalized. After surveys conducted by Municipal Corporation in 1963 and 1968 the scheme was changed to ensure that the private properties were left out of clearance.

The problem of rehabilitation of the persons displaced by clearance also posed a serious challenge. People wanted to be rehabilitated in the nearby areas due to their traditional and commercial association with the area as explained earlier. The Master Plan (MPD-I) also mentioned the importance of this factor: ‘...it becomes essential to earmark some of the areas...for the relocation of persons...one such area is the Mata Sundari area, which is between the congested old City and the important commercial area of Connaught Place and its proposed future extension’. Thus, Mata Sundari - Minto Road area was identified as the nearest suitable

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116 For a reference to DAG and Turkman Gate see: DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 5 May 1976, 38-39.
place for the rehabilitation of the evictees of the walled city in general. Jagmohan also envisaged the development of this area as ‘Second Shahjahanabad’ – a blue print of it finds a place in his book.\textsuperscript{118}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure5.6.png}
\caption{A sketch plan for building Second Shahjahanabad at Mata Sundari area, Minto Road –I\textsuperscript{119}}
\end{figure}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure5.7.png}
\caption{A sketch plan for connecting old Shahjahanabad with new-II\textsuperscript{120}}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{118} Jagmohan, Rebuilding Shahjahanabad, 82.
\textsuperscript{119} Jagmohan, Rebuilding Shahjahanabad, 83.
\textsuperscript{120} Jagmohan, Rebuilding Shahjahanabad, 83.
The MCD which was responsible for the slum clearance work till it was transferred to DDA in February 1974, had prepared a scheme for shifting people in seven phases to the nearby Mata

Sundari-Minto Road Complex where 384 tenements had been constructed. In fact, in December 1972, the DDA had shifted residents of a Dalit Basti Narnaul covered by the first phase of the DAG scheme in an absolutely voluntary and peaceful manner without employing any policemen or intervention of official machinery. Local people and the political leaders were all taken into confidence and convinced about the lasting benefits that could come to the people by launching this historic scheme. Subhadra Joshi, Congress Member of Parliament, also confirmed this aspect saying, ‘the residents of Basti Narnaul and Shish Mahal…were shifted with their consent to transit accommodation in the Minto Road complex’. It shows that people were usually in support of such improvement tasks. In fact, a number of nine storied buildings and quarters were constructed at the Mata Sundari area in five acres of land as per the decision of the Ministry of Works and Housing for the rehabilitation of people from Old Delhi. But these places were allotted to government officials just before the Emergency period.

The demolitions at Turkman Gate started on 13 April 1976, nearly four months after the forced clearance drive and demolition of shops in Jama Masjid area. The DDA undertook the demolition of Dujana House Transit Camp, which was in dilapidated condition and was due for demolition. It appears that, according to the report, notices were issued to the residents in advance to inform about it. Thus, it did not raise any objection or create any resentment. The transit camp was evacuated in the initial two days and the residents were moved to Ranajit Nagar without any serious difficulty. However, on 14 April the residents of the area became apprehensive when they came to know about the intention of DDA to clear some more areas.

The second stage of the demolition of the houses of Turkman Gate started on 15 April. Not only the residents, but even the concerned authorities and local political representatives were not informed of these extended demolition plans. The residents resisted it and tried to
approach influential people, including politicians, who could negotiate with the authorities on their behalf.\textsuperscript{129} According to Rajesh Sharma, member of the Metropolitan Council, ‘residents of this area were under fear of bulldozers...everyone was opposed because it was even against the declared policy of the government...For the next four days there was great panic in the area and...meetings of the groups of people voicing their resentment’.\textsuperscript{130} However, the inquiry reports suggest that the orders were issued from a high level and the matter was not in the hands of local representatives of the government.\textsuperscript{131}

The DDA Vice-Chairman Jagmohan claimed that on 7 April 1976 in a letter to the Deputy Inspector General (DIG), P.S. Bhinder, he had intimated the concerned authorities in advance. In this letter Jagmohan referred vaguely to ‘Clearance operation to be taken up by the DDA inside the walled city and adjoining areas.’ He also mentioned that, ‘Intimation about the sites, etc. will be supplied by the Delhi Development Authority staff to the officers concerned’.\textsuperscript{132} However, the only information in this regard that was given to the Superintendent of Police was that only the Dujana House Transit Camp along with Asaf Ali Road would be demolished. It vaguely added that the operation would cover further pockets. The Shah Commission found various suspicious aspects and irregularities in this and subsequent official correspondence, apart from the lack of proper verbal communication on the drive.\textsuperscript{133}

It appears that the DDA either did not want to disclose its full plans or deliberately gave misleading information. As a result, wild rumours spread throughout Old Delhi, resulting in an atmosphere of panic and fear. In this chaos, the state authorities tried to manipulate the fears and anxieties of the residents through bargain and negotiations. This is when Dujana House came into the picture.

A sterilization camp was inaugurated the same day, 15 April 1976, by Lt. Governor Krishna Chand at Dujana House, near Jama Masjid area.\textsuperscript{134} The camp, along with others in

\textsuperscript{129} Interview with Chowdhary Shamsuddin (name changed), Delhi, 17 April 2014. Also see: ‘Public Hearing ...Case of the TG Firing’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/45/78-Court-SCI. NAI; John Dayal, and Ajoy Bose, \textit{For Reasons of State: Delhi Under Emergency} (Delhi: Ess Ess Publications, 1977), 35.

\textsuperscript{130} ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition...in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78-Court-SCI, NAI and ‘Public Hearing ...Case of the TG Firing’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.:31024/45/78-Court-SCI. NAI.

\textsuperscript{131} ‘Public Hearing ...Case of the TG Firing’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.:31024/45/78-Court-SCI. NAI.

\textsuperscript{132} ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition... in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78-Court–SCI. NAI and Sehziyan, \textit{Shah Commission Report}, 77-78.

\textsuperscript{133} ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition... in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78-Court –SCI. NAI.

\textsuperscript{134} ‘Public Hearing ...Case of the TG Firing’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/45/78-Court –SCI. NAI; DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 4 May 1976, 21-4 for the forced sterilization campaign in Old Delhi.
various government hospitals and dispensaries throughout Delhi, was organized to perform vasectomy and tubectomy oppressions on men and women to control fertility. It was an intrinsic part of the family planning campaign of the National Regeneration Program for population control. Dujana House was the only camp organized in a residential area. Rukhsana Sultana, a locally-based close friend of Sanjay Gandhi and a glamorous socialite turned ‘social worker’, was taking care of this campaign in Delhi. Because of Sultana’s political influence, she was approached by the residents of Turkman Gate. She immediately agreed to pursue the DDA officials to stop demolitions on the condition that the local residents had to help her in setting up a family planning camp at Turkman Gate. Besides, they had to ensure 300 sterilization cases within that week.\footnote{‘Public Hearing ...Case of the TG Firing’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/45/78-Court –SCI. NAI.} One of the victims of Turkman Gate demolitions who now lives in the multistoried apartment built at the place of old Turkman Gate locality, informed that ‘it seemed, at that point, as if the whole government (poori sarkar) had gone against the Muslims of this area...we categorically rejected this offer (bilkul mana kar diya).’ Posing a question at me to get confirmation, he continued, ‘you tell me would any person whose houses are being demolished in front of their eyes without even giving any information or hope of resettlement go for *Nasbandi* (popular term for vasectomy operation which was at the centre of the family planning campaign). It was not feasible and not tolerable especially at a time of crises.\footnote{Interview with Chowdhary Shamsuddin, (name changed), Delhi, 17 April 2014. Also see: Dayal and Bose, *Delhi Under Emergency*, 35.} Thus, this local connection with Sultana did not work in stopping the forced demolition of the area.
On 16 April, while the demolition was on, the DDA officials started issuing allotment slips for plots in Nand Nagri and Trilokpuri resettlement colonies to people whose houses were still standing. At this point, a residents’ delegation headed by Chowdhary Shamsuddin has died recently. I had a chance to interview him when he was suffering from long term illness and paralyses. He spoke about the incidents of Turkman Gate area in his broken voice in a way as if everything was still distinctly inscribed in his memory. I have also referred to Dayal and Bose in order to fill out the possible gaps in the description.
head of *Teli* biradari, (name changed)), along with other local leaders, appealed to the DDA officials asking for some suitable alternative accommodation, preferably in the nearby transit camps situated at Mata Sundari Road or Minto Road as recommended and approved in various schemes. But the residents were denied any favor at that point.140

![Image](image.png)

**Figure 5.12: Men registering their names for sterilization at Dujana House Camp, 1976-III**

On 17 April, the DDA officials offered another deal. Residents were told that if they signed a statement to declare that their houses were demolished according to their own wishes, they would be relocated to better alternative places of their choice other than Trilokpuri or Nand Nagri. The residents refused to sign any statement as they suspected evil intentions. ‘We would have been nowhere after signing such statement. It could have ceased all their claims for compensations,’ explained Shamsuddin in his broken voice.142 The residents decided not to believe in a single word of what the officials told them. Finally, the then DDA Vice-Chairman, Jagmohan, was approached. A small delegation of the residents of Turkman Gate met him on 18 April and requested that the residents should be given plots in Welcome colony, the nearby

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140 Interview with Chowdhary Shamsuddin (name changed), Delhi, 17 April 2014. Also see: Dayal and Bose, *Delhi Under Emergency*, 35.


142 Interview with Chowdhary Shamsuddin (name changed), Delhi, 17 April 2014.
colony of New Seelampur in east Delhi or other suitable transit camps, if not in Mata Sundari Complex. The delegation requested:

If you have to remove us, remove us all to some large area where we can carry on our respective jobs and trades. Don’t scatter us all over the outskirts of Delhi.  

The delegation pleaded that they would like to live together as a community since they all belonged to a biradari and had close family ties (the residents belonged to Teli biradari who were traditionally engaged in the manufacturing and refinement of different kinds of oils, but many of them also became involved in other commercial activities with new opportunities). Jagmohan categorically rejected their demand bursting in sudden anger: *Do you think we are mad to destroy one Pakistan to create another Pakistan* (emphasis mine)?  

He further boasted to the delegation members that, ‘*this is one time you people will not get any special privileges*’ (emphasis mine). He also warned the residents that, ‘If you make the foolish mistake of resisting the demolition operations, the consequences will be serious’. 

Meeting Jagmohan was their last effort to have a peaceful resolution and ‘direct action’ was the only alternative they were left with. Rajesh Sinha, the Executive Councillor, said, ‘there was great resentment against the administration in the entire area between Ajmeri Gate and Delhi Gate; nobody felt safe and there was a great panic as the demolitions continued till the incident of 19 April’. Early in the morning of that day at around 11.00, nearly 500 women and 250 children squatted on the demolition site to stop the bulldozers from moving further. The police post was surrounded by two groups coming from two sides: one coming from Phatak

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143 Interview with Chowdhary Shamsuddin Delhi, 17 April 2014; Also see: Dayal and Bose, *Delhi under Emergency*, 45.
144 Interview with Chowdhary Shamsuddin (name changed), Delhi, 17 April 2014, and Dayal and Bose, *Delhi under Emergency*, 45. Also see: Javid Laiq ‘Turkman Gate: the Tale of Woe’ *Radiance*, XII: 51 (May 8, 1977), 6.
145 Interview with Chowdhary Shamsuddin (name changed), Delhi, 17 April 2014 and Dayal and Bose, *Delhi under Emergency*, 45.
146 Interview with Chowdhary Shamsuddin (name changed), Delhi 17 April 2014 and Dayal and Bose, *Delhi under Emergency*, 45.
147 Dayal and Bose, *Delhi Under Emergency*, 45.
Telian and the other from the side of Delight Cinema at around 1.30 pm.\textsuperscript{149} Realizing the intensity of the situation, the DDA officer called for help. The first contingent of police arrived by the afternoon. Seven trucks full of armed Central Reserved Police Force (CRPF) entered the Turkman Gate with riot shields, tear gas guns and rifles. Delhi Armed Force, Border Security Force and the local police also arrived to deal with these disturbances and gathered around Faiz-e-Elahi mosque adjacent to Ramlila Maidan. This show of power and stand-off continued till the time of \textit{Zohar} (afternoon) prayer. But what triggered the violence? According to Dayal and Bose, the chief of the Nehru Brigade\textsuperscript{150} and a few of his men threw a stone at the protestors, shouting: ‘they are going to throw stones, stop them!’\textsuperscript{151} It injured a woman in the crowd leading to chaos and anger. In response, the crowd also started throwing stones using the debris of their bulldozed houses. A fire broke out and a whole process of \textit{lathi} charging (police beating), teargas shooting, and finally firing started, covering Turkman Gate and Faiz-e-Elahi mosque areas after 2.00 pm.

Meanwhile, trouble was also brewing in the nearby Jama Masjid area. The forced sterilization of the poor Muslim population including rag pickers, rickshaw pullers and the homeless provoked the women of this area to come out on the streets in order to rescue men from getting forcibly sterilized. In the morning of 19 April they stopped a family planning van loaded with fresh victims in front of the Jama Masjid police station. The police dragged the women and arrested the residents who resented their action. The news of arrest and police brutality against women spread in the area. A call for \textit{hartal} (strike) was given by the shopkeepers, following which shops began to close from Darya Ganj, Suiwallan to Turkman Gate area by 11.30 am. The angry group of women gathered around the camp and raised anti-family planning and anti-establishment slogans. They rescued male victims from the camp and pressured Rukhsana Sultana to close the camp. Rukhsana Sultana replied that, ‘the camp will go on till we get enough sterilization cases…instead of creating a scene here why don’t you go and motivate some men in

\textsuperscript{149} ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition… in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.:31024/42/78-Court-SCI. NAI; and ‘Public Hearing ...Case of the TG Firing’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/45/78-Court-SCI. NAI. Also see Dayal and Bose, \textit{Delhi under Emergency}, 45 and Sehziyan, \textit{Shah Commission Report}, 79.

\textsuperscript{150} The Nehru Brigade (1944) or 4th Guerrilla Regiment was a unit of the Indian National Army (INA), along with Subhash Brigade being the 1st, Gandhi Brigade 2\textsuperscript{nd} and Azad Brigade 3\textsuperscript{rd} Regiment that formed a part of the First Indian National Army and later part of the 1st Division after the revival of INA under Subhash Chandra Bose. Nehru Brigade played an important role in World War II. This divisional classification of Indian army continued after the independence.

\textsuperscript{151} Dayal and Bose, \textit{Delhi Under Emergency}, 55.
your homes to...sterilize themselves?’ Hearing this, women tried attacking Rukhsana Sultana but she managed to escape. At the intervention of the district authorities the activities in the camp were suspended for the day and according to the public hearing report, 'an ugly situation which had the potential of developing into a serious law and order problem involving the Imam of Jama Masjid was averted.' One of my interviewees, who live in Pahari Bhojla, explained that the entire area was under the fear of atrocities perpetrated by the police. The male members, young and middle aged, were hid in basements and attics of their houses, as the news about forced sterilization spread. The Inquiry Committee also found that there were a number of allegations of forcible sterilizations and such cases were reported to have occurred even after the Turkman Gate incident. It said: ‘The sterilization of poor Muslim population in the area between Jama Masjid and Turkman Gate was likely to be treated as a planned strategy of the government to break the strength of a minority community’.

Alarmed by critical situation created by women, the size of the police contingent was increased at Jama Masjid. It was around this time that the message from Turkman gate about police atrocities reached the Jama Masjid. Forgetting the family planning camp, people ran towards Turkman Gate to save their relatives and friends. The two parallel dramas – forced sterilization and clearance- finally converged. Consequently, the number of armed forces increased at Turkman Gate also. Indiscriminate firing, after a round of lathi charging (police beating) and tear gassing, continued till 4.00 pm when the situation got ‘under control’ with the arrest of many residents including women and children. Masjid Faiz Elahi was desecrated by the police with a number of killings and beatings inside. The curfew was imposed at 5.30in the evening. A number of people died and several others were injured in this incident, including some constables and officials. This ‘controlled’ situation gave an opportunity to armed forces to harass people. It is reported that police constables looted the houses and sexually assaulted and

152 Dayal and Bose, *Delhi Under Emergency*, 52.
153 ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition... in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.:31024/42/78-Court-SCI. NAI; and ‘Public Hearing ...Case of the TG Firing’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/45/78-Court-SCI. NAI.
154 Interview with a female resident of Pahari Bhojla, Rukhsana (name changed), Delhi 22 April 2014.
155 ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition... in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.:31024/42/78-Court-SCI. NAI; and ‘Public Hearing ...Case of the TG Firing’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/45/78-Court-SCI. NAI.
156 It is called ‘second front’ by Dayal and Bose to highlight the targeted action of state against the Muslim community of Old Delhi. They argue that clearance and sterilization, which were shown as the two different incidents were actually a part of one design. Thus, the parallel agitations of people converged in Old Delhi and resulted in a collective protest. Dayal and Bose, *Delhi Under Emergency*, 48-50.
157 Dayal and Bose, *Delhi Under Emergency*, 48-50. For details on rounds of firing, looting and demolitions: ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition... in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No. 31024/42/78-Court-SCI. NAI; ‘Public Hearing ...Case of the TG Firing’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No. 31024/45/78-Court-SCI. NAI.
molested women. The number of bulldozers increased and continued to demolish houses at Turkman Gate till 22 April 1976. The demolition operation was carried out during the night with flood lights, especially fitted by the DDA, with the help of six more bulldozers and one motor-grader. The area was under curfew and a large number of people whose houses were demolished were taken into police custody. In total 764 family residential structures and 199 commercial and industrial establishments were demolished. Over 146 persons were injured, including some police officials, and eight residents died.

Figure 5.13: Demolition of houses at Turkman Gate area, 1976-I

158 ‘Public Hearing Case Summary of the Case of Allegations Regarding Deaths, Injuries, Beating, Molestation of Women etc. in TG Firing’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/43/78-Court-SCI. NAI. The Commission did not pursue the inquiry in such cases because of the lack of circumstantial evidence in the absence of any official inquiry. See: DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 4 May 1976, 54. Also see: Dayal and Bose, Delhi Under Emergency, 62-3; Sehziyan, Shah Commission Report, 252.

159 Sanjay Gandhi visited the Turkman Gate site on 20 April after the firing incident before he went to Irwin Hospital to see injured police personnel. He praised the policemen for their good work and expressed his desire for them to be rewarded. Statement by Shri R.K. Ohri, SP (Central) District: ‘Public Hearing… Case of Shri Sanjay Gandhi’s Role in…TG Firing’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/44/78-Court-SCI. NAI.


161 ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition… in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78-Court-SCI. NAI. Also see: Sehziyan, Shah Commission Report, 79. Dayal and Bose have recorded twelve deaths of residents. See: Dayal and Bose, Delhi under Emergency, 57-58. For details of the casualties see: ‘Public Hearing Case… of Allegations Regarding…Molestation of Women etc. in TG Firing’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/43/78-Court-SCI. NAI.

It was another shot heard ‘round the world

By PAUL CHUTKOW
Associated Press

NEW DELHI — The first sparks of the voter rebellion that drove Indira Gandhi’s government from power were struck on a hot, dusty afternoon last April at a spot called Turkman Gate in the walled city of Old Delhi.

There hundreds of slum dwellers, enraged over heavy-handed government programs for slum clearance and family planning, clashed with police in the first significant resistance to Mrs. Gandhi’s authoritarian experiment.

WHEN THE DUST had settled that afternoon and the tear gas had blown away, 12 Indians were dead, dozens bloody and India’s silent poor had been kindled into a peoples’ rebellion.

What happened at Turkman Gate was, in retrospect, only the first of several warnings that the silence of India’s

Figure 5.15: Newspaper clipping on the forced demolition and killings at Turkman Gate, 1976-III\textsuperscript{164}

\textsuperscript{163} Source: \url{http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/biggest-post-emergency-demolition-operation/1/434593.html} (accessed on 13 December 2015).

\textsuperscript{164} Source: The Turkman Gate incident was not reported in any Indian newspaper due to censorship. It was reported in a foreign newspaper. See:\url{http://guruprasad.net/posts/1975-77-emergency-excesses-sanjay-gandhis-role/} (accessed on 13 December 2015).
The entire area falling under Jama Masjid Police Station (including the Turkman Gate area), inhabited primarily by Muslims, was under curfew from 19 April to 13 May 1976. The authorities did not even relax curfew on two Fridays, falling on 23 and 30 April, for allowing normal prayers for the Muslim residents. It was insisted that people wishing to offer their Friday prayers in the mosque had to obtain curfew passes. However, only a few people took the passes. It was reported during the Shah Commission’s enquiry:

The situation had come under control on 19 April and the police were in favor of relaxing curfew after a few days. However, the curfew continued to facilitate the demolition operation and also to “penalize the residents” for their protests on 19 April. It seems that the decision to continue the curfew was taken at the higher level. This continuous demolition of houses and denial of opportunity to local residents to freely offer their prayers in Jama Masjid led to considerable resentment and misgivings among the people about the attitude of authorities towards their actual problems.165

After the clearance operation at Turkman Gate in April, the DDA prepared a commercial project involving construction of a multi-storied building at the same site. This proposal was placed before DDA on 30 July 1976. The DDA approved this proposal, but the Chief Town Planner in the Town and Country Planning Organization (TCPO) seriously objected to it on the ground that it would require a change of prescribed land-use plan mentioned in MPD-I. It was also felt that this proposal would have serious repercussions on the planning of Delhi, particularly of Shahjahanabad. However, the proposal was sent to Ministry of Works and Housing for further action. Kishan Chand, Lieutenant Governor, explained, ‘this proposal had approval of Sanjay Gandhi and Prime Minister’s House; therefore I had no option but to forward it. I do not know if any assurances had been given to the evictees of Turkman Gate... but the proposal to construct

165 ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition… in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78-Court-SCI. NAI and ‘Public Hearing ...Case of the TG Firing’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/45/78-Court-SCI. NAI. Similar kind of incidents of firing, clearance and sterilization took place in Muslim-dominated districts of Sultanpur and Muzaffarnagar, which is highly unexplored. Even the Shah Commission report did not enquire into these incidents. For a reference see: ‘Appointment of a Fact Finding Committee for...Slum Clearance,...Firing incident in TG in April, 1976’, GOI, MHA, File No.: U-11011/5/77-Delhi-MHA, NAI. The National Commission for Minorities (NCM) has recently asked the Uttar Pradesh government to submit a report regarding the killings of 25 people in a police shoot-out in Muzaffarnagar during Emergency. See: http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/emergency-era-police-firing-national-commission-for-minorities-seeks-report-from-uttar-pradesh-government/ (accessed on 10 March 2015).
...Commercial Complex at that time did violate the provisions of Master Plan.' Despite the expert objection, the proposal was approved by the Ministry. The Government, in order to follow the ‘legal’ procedure, published the plan for change of land use and invited public submission. In all, 788 objections and suggestions were received from all those officials, planners and political representatives who had shown their resentment against the demolition drive. Interestingly, while these submissions were still not looked at and a decision in this regard was yet to be taken, the DDA engaged a private architect firm, M/S. C. P. Kukreja and Associates to prepare designs for the project. This convinced local people like Chowdhary Shamsuddin that Sanjay Gandhi wanted to build a *Sanjay Minar* (building) on the cleared area.

The fact that it was the Muslim community which was primarily at the receiving end of the clearance drive and sterilization programme was admitted by a number of official observers. According to Om Mehta, the then Union Home Secretary, ‘the situation at Jama Masjid had grown extremely sensitive after the February 1975 incident...local population, particularly the Muslims, had been feeling alienated and sullen...’ Inspector General of Police, Bhawani Mal also confirmed this point: ‘*in both these areas the population was predominantly Muslim* (emphasis mine).”

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166 ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition… in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78-Court-SCI. NAI; For Sanjay Gandhi’s involvement in the manipulation of documents see: ‘Public Hearing…Case of Sanjay Gandhi’s Role in...TG Firing’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/44/78-Court-SCI. NAI.
167 ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition… in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78-Court-SCLNAI.
168 Interview with Chowdhary Shamsuddin (name changed), 17 April 2014, Delhi.
169 ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition… in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78-Court-SCLNAI.
170 ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition… in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78-Court-SCLNAI.
No magisterial or judicial enquiry, which was a requirement in cases of firing resulting in deaths, was commissioned after the Turkman Gate incident. The only committee appointed by the government was a fact finding team on 25 May 1977 consisting of an IAS (Indian Administrative Service) and an IPS (Indian Police Service) officer. Later, a general Emergency Excesses Commission of inquiry under the chairmanship of a retired Supreme Court Judge, Justice K.C. Shah, looked into the Turkman Gate incidents. Controversies surrounded its appointment. Most importantly, it was argued that official or judicial inquiries of the incidents at Turkman Gate and Jama Masjid areas would have a negative impact on the morale of the local police and military. The Commission opened its inquiry on 30 September 1977. It received as

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172 ‘Appointment of the Fact Finding Committee…for Slum Clearance…Firing in the TG Area in April, 1976’, GOI, MHA/Delhi, File No.:U-110111/5/77. NAI. This committee was not welcomed by the residents of Old Delhi and Muslim leaders in general. See: ‘Turkman Gate Par Mamuli Tehqiqati Committee Mukarrar Kar Ke Zakhmon Par Namak Chirka Hai’, Al Jamiat, 29 May 1977.
many as 48,000 allegations of abuse from throughout India which it mitted down to 2,000 cases for investigations.

The Public Hearing Report of the Shah Commission of Inquiry found that residents of the Turkman Gate area were subjected to various ‘illegality’ conducted by the state and most particularly by the DDA. Apart from the whole drive being illegal in the first place, the criteria adopted for allotment of alternative accommodation to the affected persons and the places to which they were shifted generated great resentment among the displaced people. Only those residents, who were regular tenants of the acquired properties, were given tenements in Ranajit Nagar and Shahdara. The rest of the people were allotted plots of 25 sq. yards in Juggi-Jhonpari Resettlement Colonies in Trilokpuri and Nand Nagri. This was completely in contravention to the resolution of the (Ad hoc) Slum Clearance and Improvement Committee of the DMC adopted in July 1973. The Committee had recommended that all unauthorized tenants of acquired properties were to be regularized on payment of prescribed damage. In fact, the residents of Basti Narnaul, all unauthorized tenants according to official definition, were made eligible for allotment of alternate tenements on payment of damages. But the way Turkman Gate residents were treated was completely different and ‘illegal’. Apart from this, in nearly all cases no allotment was made prior to or at the time of demolition; it was done much later. The DDA demolished 29 private properties which had not been acquired at all. In fact, the DAG scheme had been changed time to time to ensure that the private properties were left out of clearance and redevelopment plans. Residents of these properties were house-tax payers. They, in fact, presented their receipts and purchase deeds. But these were completely ignored by the DDA officials. The Delhi Metropolitan Council proceedings reveal that in many cases allotments were made contingent on the production of sterilization certificates. The DDA officially stated:

You have been allotted a slum tenement shop plot on provisional basis. It has been decided to confirm the allotment only on getting sterilized within four days.  

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174 ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition… in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31204/42/78-Court-SCI. NAI.
175 ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition… in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78-Court-SCI. NAI; Interview with Chowdhary Shamsuddin (name changed), 17 April 2014, Delhi; and Duyal and Bose, Delhi under Emergency, 50-55.
176 DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 4 May 1976, 53.
Another notice, which was issued even to the widows, reads:

It has been decided to confirm the allotment only on getting sterilized within four days failing to which the allotment will be cancelled. You are therefore advised to contact the Family Planning Wing of Irwin Hospital for sterilization. After necessary sterilization, you may contact Shri. B. Singh, Asstt. (sic) Estate Officer, Slums, DDA for confirmation of the allotment.  

As for commercial properties, evidence suggests that while in some cases alternate plots of a smaller size had been given, in other cases larger commercial plots were given in better situated areas on an ad hoc basis. Jagmohan presented his side of the story refuting these charges in his Island of Truth arguing, ‘Not in a single case, compulsory sterilization was made a pre-condition for allotment of land or plot to those who were affected by the clearance-cum-resettlement operations’. But the Shah Commission Report clearly shows that favorable residential and commercial allotment and even multiple allotments after demolition were used as incentive for sterilization at the Family Planning camps. On the other hand, it was also reported that some people who were shifted from Turkman Gate to Trilokpuri were not even provided with tenements and were forced to live in open lands.

III

Muslim collective identity: Backward and ghettoized?

The Shah Commission’s public hearing report suggests that a number of people had expressed suspicion that the demolitions in the Jama Masjid area had been undertaken with ulterior motives. According to Inder Mohan, a social worker of that area:

177 DMCD, MCS/Delhi, 4 May 1976, 53.
178 ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition… in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78, Court-SCI. NAI.
179 Jagmohan, Island of Truth, 82.
180 Jagmohan, Island of Truth, 121-169; Sehziyan, Shah Commission Report, 158-162. Also see Tarlo, Narratives of the Emergency in Delhi, Ch. 4 & 5.
181 GOI, Delhi Department (DD), File No.: U-11011/5/77-DD, NAI.
The ruling circles of the Congress Party began to think that such a concentration of Muslims in one particular pocket of Delhi should not be allowed to continue. Indications of this trend were available from certain reactions expressed from time to time. Under the garb of congestion, beautification and economic upliftment, manipulations began to be made for the dispersal of this community (emphasis mine).^{182}

Interestingly, the violent incidents that took place at Jama Masjid area in the month of February 1975 had a direct link to the way demolitions were carried out in these areas subsequently. The Muslim collective identity was seen as a serious internal threat against state power. These coercive measures were adopted to break the imagined Muslim solidarity as well as numerical strength. For instance, Inder Mohan further told the Commission:

Mohammad Yunus, who was officially designated as Special Envoy of the Prime Minister and also In-charge of the functioning of the Wakf Board all over the country, came out with utterances to me: “All these Muslims who are supporting the Imam should be dragged and thrown out of the city.” Jagmohan, Vice-Chairman, DDA told me personally more than once that this community must be dispersed in different parts of the city.^{183}

Siraj Piracha, another social worker of that area explained:

Shri Sanjay Gandhi and Shrimati Indira Gandhi were confirmed in their views that so long as the majority of a particular community in the Jama Masjid area was not finished, the area would continue to cause headache to them (emphasis added).^{184}

Shashi Bhushan, then a Congress Member of Parliament, confirming this visible hostility towards Muslims, also stated:

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^{182} ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition… in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78-Court-SCI. NAI.
^{183} ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition… in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78-Court-SCI. NAI.
^{184} ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition… in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78-Court-SCI. NAI.
The entire program (demolition) was being implemented in the most callous and ruthless manner…. on the advice of …Shri Sanjay Gandhi who nursed the feeling of hostility towards Muslims.\textsuperscript{185}

The local Muslim community also thought of the forced demolitions in the same way. They were apprehensive about these schemes and programmes. The Master Plan, which actually intended to ‘plan’ the city in a better way, was seen as a draconian policy of the government to ‘displace’ and break the strength of Muslim population.\textsuperscript{186} These fears were not completely false or baseless. The entire area between Jama Masjid and Turkman Gate, which was known as the ‘Muslim belt’ of Shahjahanabad, had already been declared a ‘slum area’ under different schemes.

Jagmohan, however, presented a different picture of these events when I interviewed him. He referred to Shamsuddin, the leader of the resident’s delegation, as a liar and selfish community leader who tried to manipulate people’s emotions against the DDA. He claimed that Shamsuddin had his own interests. His shops had been destroyed during the drive and he wanted to get multiple compensations against one of his several shops.\textsuperscript{187} This charge of Jagmohan seems to be unjustified, as Chowdhary Shamsuddin was living in a very poor and dilapidated condition at the time when I interviewed him. He and his wife were living in a small two room accommodation with a little courtyard with his son’s family – husband, wife and three children. This accommodation was an old construction which he possessed on pagri (an amount paid as a security against a residential or commercial property with a minimum monthly rent) as an old tenant. In fact, he was denied any compensation even after several enquiries that took place during the post-Emergency period from 1977.\textsuperscript{188}

The resistance of the local Muslim population was also represented as a serious threat hindering the development process of the country. Apart from declaring local residents as encroachers and miscreants in the press note, official statements of leaders like Indira Gandhi and officials like Jagmohan tried to underplay the ruthlessness of the clearance operation

\textsuperscript{185} ‘Public Hearing Case of Demolition… in JM and TG Area’, GOI, Court-SCI, File No.: 31024/42/78-Court-SCI. NAI.

\textsuperscript{186} The Master Plan was understood and referred to as Musalmanon ko Beqhar Karne ki Saziash (conspiracy to displace local Muslims): Interview with Chowdhary Shamsuddin (name changed), Delhi, 17 April 2014.

\textsuperscript{187} Interview with Jagmohan, Delhi 19 March 2014.

\textsuperscript{188} Interview with Chowdhary Shamsuddin (name changed), Delhi, 17 April 2014.
highlighting family planning campaign as the most important reason behind the use of force at Turkman Gate.\textsuperscript{189} It was, it seems, done to cover the illegalities and coercion that were used during demolitions. But there was a deep communal angle behind it. By overplaying the sterilization aspect, it was easy to put the blame on the Muslims of the area, who were projected as backward and ghettoized.

Jagmohan tried to justify the firing incident by bringing in the religious aspect of family planning. According to him, there was a general resentment among the local Muslim population who thought that the campaign was against Islamic principles. He mentioned a few reports in order to demonstrate that various ‘Muslim’ organizations like Indian Union Muslim League, Muslim Personal Law Board, a banned organization, Jamat-e-Islami, and the Imam of Jama Masjid had already prepared a situation for agitation by calling sterilization ‘un-Islamic’. Referring to an Additional District Magistrate’s Report prepared on 19 April 1976 evening, he claimed in his \textit{Island of Truth}:

\begin{quote}
There was a lot of resentment amongst the Muslims of the area against the alleged high-handedness in the family planning campaign. The Imam made a speech at 9.30 A.M. against family planning in Jama Masjid area from the P.A. system installed in the mosque. The atmosphere became tense...a number of women assembled...the Imam himself came to the family planning camp at 10.45 and tried to incite the crowd.\textsuperscript{190}
\end{quote}

Quite contrary to this statement, the residents were very disappointed at the indifferent attitude of the Imam. They informed that Imam did not make any efforts to stop the forced sterilization. In fact, he told women of Jama Masjid area to act according to their conscience and refused to help when he was approached on the same day.\textsuperscript{191} He issued a statement in favour of family planning drive much before the controversies arose, which was also taken as anti-Islamic by the community. It was disseminated by the government as a \textit{fatwa} (a statement based on Islamic

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\textsuperscript{189} ‘Turkman Gate: Situation under Control’, \textit{Times of India (TOI)}, New Delhi, 22 April 1976.  \\
\textsuperscript{190} Jagmohan, \textit{Island of Truth}, 148.  \\
\textsuperscript{191} Interview with Rukhsana (name changed), Delhi, 22 April 2014; Dayal and Bose, \textit{Delhi under Emergency}, 51. The Shah Commission of Inquiry found serious irregularities in the statements, official correspondence and the documents presented in this regard. It was also found that there were a number of reports and statements that were actually made-up to authenticate and justify the ‘official’ claims made by different participants of demolition drives.
\end{flushright}
principles and issued by a religious head). The Imam was also reluctant to take any anti-establishment position mainly because of the incidents that took place at Jama Masjid area in February 1975, resulting in his arrest as discussed earlier.

The Prime Minister’s statement in the Parliament about the firing incident at Turkman Gate also deliberately avoided any reference to clearance and mentioned the incident purely in terms of the ‘chaos’ created by the family planning campaign. She stated:

We do believe that programme of sterilization...for the control of population are important and most urgent...when a situation of confrontation is deliberately created, there are tragic consequences. Some deaths have taken place due to firing...organized groups have also killed policemen and other citizens, even those who were not on family planning mission. Where there is harassment, it should certainly be dealt with. But it will be easier if people are not incited and encouraged to take the law in their hands....’

Jagmohan, portraying himself as the only honest man surrounded by hypocrites and buffeted by concocted accusations, also argued that the riots were caused because of the threats of family planning at Dujana House. He argued that people who died during the incident did not belong to Turkman Gate and had nothing to do with the demolition drive. However, the findings of the Shah Commission contradicted these statements and summarized that:

Though the family planning programme may have contributed to the build-up of tension...in the area, the firing was a direct and immediate sequel to the decision of the authorities to proceed with demolitions regardless of the resistance of the people and consequences...the subsequent conduct of authorities, silence of significant several relevant and important records on material particular, indicate that this was a part of a design to justify the firing by the police.

As for the sterilization camp, Dujana House was the only camp that was placed in a residential colony in Delhi. Sterilization in other areas was conducted either in local dispensaries or

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192 See: Ahmed, Muslim Political Discourse, 98-140.
193 ‘Correspondence Regarding Statements...by the PM in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha’, GOI, Parl., File No.: 56/29/76 –Parl., PMS.NAI.
hospitals. According to John Dayal, the camp was deliberately placed in the Jama Masjid area with a sinister intention of cleaning the Muslim population by bulldozing their shelters on the one hand and by controlling their growth on the other. The RSS and Jan Sangh always posed Muslim population as a threat that would grow and overpower or marginalize the Hindus of India if not controlled. But it was Congress which always let such discourse evolve and flourish, despite its secular image. These perceived fears and communal design of the Indian government colluded with the national objectives of urbanization and family planning, which Dayal argues was specifically directed against the Muslim population of Delhi and UP. It was indeed a collaborative action, since the entire government machinery at state and local level, and the Jan Sangh, the biggest opposition party, were in agreement on these acts. Muslims of Delhi, in this sense, turned out to be the biggest victims of state atrocities during the Emergency. Reflecting on the economic interests behind the clearance drive, Dayal, being an active observer of the events, also informed that big Hindu and Punjabi contractors and an active section of the upper-class upper-caste elite of Delhi were involved in supplying bulldozers, trucks, incentives distributed for sterilization and most importantly, in the construction on the cleared land. The situation reflects a convergence of powerful interests behind the demolition drives. It was not surprising that the local residents, who happened to be Muslims, were perceived as a strong internal threat. The community was portrayed as anti-development and their resistance anti-establishment inward looking group. The collective grievances of a local community could thus be turned into a communal conspiracy against the state and its development agenda.


196 Interview with John Dayal, 8 December 2015, Delhi. Also see Veena Das, *Critical Events: an Anthropological Perspective on Contemporary India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995). For an enthusiastic statement of Delhi Administration on the achievement of family planning targets in Delhi, see: Annual Administration Report 1975-1976, Delhi Administration, 46-7 and 64-5.
Figure 5.17: A Scene from Film *Kissa Kursi Ka*, 1977. The placard reads: ‘Kill Rat Eradicate Poverty’\(^{197}\)

Figure 5.18: Distribution of ghee and clocks as rewards to sterilized men for undergoing vasectomy, Dujana House Camp, 6 Sept 1976\(^{198}\)

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\(^{197}\) Source: [http://guruprasad.net/posts/kissa-kursi-ka-a-humorous-take-on-indira-gandhi-the-emergency](http://guruprasad.net/posts/kissa-kursi-ka-a-humorous-take-on-indira-gandhi-the-emergency)(accessed on 13 December, 2014). The film was banned because of its strong satirical genre specifically in relation to the sterilization campaign and the slogan ‘Gharibi Hatao’. Sanjay Gandhi burned the reels of the film for which he was imprisoned for two years. The film was re-shot. *Kissa Kursi Ka*. (Directed by Amrit Nanda, a member of Parliament and produced by Badri Prasad Joshi, 1977).

\(^{198}\) Image caption and Source: Tarlo, *Unsettling Memories*, 126.
Officially, the period of Emergency ended on the 23 March 1977, though the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi called for fresh Lok Sabha elections on much before that on the 18 January. In a major turn of events, the Congress party was badly defeated in the Indian general election that took place on 16-20 March 1977. A Janata alliance of non-Congress parties, later called Janata Party, won 298 out of 545 Lok Sabha seats. Indira Gandhi and her son Sanjay Gandhi both lost their Lok Sabha seats. The Janata Party also came to power in the Delhi Metropolitan Council in 1977, winning 46 out of 56 seats and remaining in office until 1983. These developments had a significant impact on the Turkman Gate locality. In fact, the Turkman Gate event was used by the Janata alliance as a symbol of state atrocities and coercion conducted against the poor and the religious minorities during the Congress rule. The Janata Alliance candidate Sikandar Bakht won the Chandni Chowk Lok Sabha seat with overwhelming support and eventually became a Minister for Urban Housing and Development. Morarji Desai, the leader of the alliance, who became India's first non-Congress Prime Minister on 24 March, laid down the foundation stone of a new

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housing complex at the demolition site of Turkman Gate area. A number of families acquired allotment slips with or without the mandatory sterilization against the backdrop of new political developments; the rest were resettled in New Seelampur and Welcome colonies.\textsuperscript{200} Indira Gandhi was arrested on the 3 October and released the next day. She claimed that the Shah Commission was politically motivated and agreed to come to the court only after much pressure, but refused to stand in the witness box and be sworn in for testimony. This resulted in Justice Shah ordering a case to be filed against her, thereby delaying the proceedings of the commission.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image5.20.jpg}
\caption{Janata Party Prime Minister Morarji Desai lays the foundation-stone of the new housing complex to be built at Turkman Gate, 19 Jan 1978.\textsuperscript{201}}
\end{figure}

It is interesting to note here that even before the commission opened its inquiry in September 1977, the anti-Emergency narrative already started declining against a backdrop of rising prices and political chaos. John Dayal and Ajoy Bose commented, in their second book on Emergency, that with the alarmingly increased prices of all essential goods, ‘there had begun to circulate only among some a dangerous logic that perhaps Mrs. Gandhi was right in saying that the Emergency was a bitter pill needed by the country’.\textsuperscript{202} Meanwhile, Indira Gandhi continued to wield power

\textsuperscript{200} For details on the resettlement of the Turkman Gate residents in the Welcome colony and New Seelampur see Tarlo, \textit{Unsettling Memories}, 62-110.

\textsuperscript{201} Image Source: PD-PIB, New Delhi / Unsettling Memories: Narratives of the Emergency in Delhi By Emma Tarlo. Morarji Desai Became a Prime Minister in March 1977 and laid the foundation stone of Turkman gate housing complex in January 1978.

within the Congress and was beginning to reassert her importance by promising to devote herself
to the service of the nation. With her eyes on the next general elections, she reached out to the
victims of the Emergency, including those from the Turkman Gate episode. She called
Chowdhary Shamsuddin, the leader of the delegation of Turkman Gate residents to her residence
in the presence of Sanjay Gandhi sometime in December 1979. She told Shamsuddin that ‘I am
like your mother and if you consider so than Sanjay is like your younger brother’. She asked
Shamsuddin to forgive Sanjay Gandhi for what he did, forget everything and move on now that
the things have got settled. According to Shamsuddin, he ‘looked into Indira’s eyes and said you
are a jadoogarni (one who could cast a spell) and embraced Sanjay’. Shamsuddin supported
the Indira-led Congress (Congress (I)) in the next Lok Sabha elections that took place in January
1980. Indira Gandhi came to power with 353 seats, and won all three parliamentary
constituencies covering the walled city (Matia Mahal, Chandni Chowk and Ballimaran). Emma
Tarlo explains that the feeling that Emergency was a bitter pill was the beginning of the end of
the anti-Emergency narrative. The atrocities of the Emergency were gradually wiped out from
the public memory. Indira Gandhi and Sanjay emerged as heroine and hero, who had good
intentions but followed wrong means, a perception of the Emergency that was reinforced after
the sudden death of Sanjay Gandhi in June 1980 in a plane crash.

The Jama Masjid and Turkman Gate events contributed significantly in marking out
Muslim areas in the dominant narrative of secular and progressive India. Muslims as a
homogenous entity were declared as a segregated, backward and ghettoized social group who did
not wish to move out of their physical as well as traditional cultural environment. Thus, an
unwritten in situ principle (keeping it the way it is) had been applied in general to justify the
administrative apathy towards Muslim-dominated localities officially called ‘slums’. On the
other hand, the manner in which clearance and development drives were conducted in these areas
re-established the sense of insecurity among the Muslim inhabitants. These streets and alleys,
previously seen as dark and damp spaces by the community itself, now came to be looked at as
protected zones in order to counter the forced agenda of development. In this sense, the caste,
class, regional and cultural differences amongst different Muslim biradaries, were not only
evaporated but also overtaken by a new rhetoric of a ‘Muslim Ilaqa’ in the late 1970s. This re-

203 Interview with Chowdhary Shamsuddin (name changed), 17 April 2014, Delhi.
204 Interview with Jagmohan, Delhi, 19 March 2014.
enforcement of Muslim identity in response to the policy discourse and local perceptions that emerged during this period played an important role in normalizing the image of the Muslim localities as culturally segregated and politically separatist spaces. Justifying the forced clearance of the Turkman Gate locality, Jagmohan claimed during the interview that people who moved out of their localities during that period of Emergency had become millionaires and were living a healthy life, while Muslims were still there where they were due to their inward-looking attitude. According to him, ‘Clearance and family planning was a way to take them out of their backward thinking.’

The idea of ‘inclusive city’ in terms of the re-organization of space was defined in relation to different threat perceptions of the Indian state under different regimes. For Nehru, inclusive city had meant a gradual process of cultural integration. He envisaged a homogenous national identity, by acknowledging internal diversity marked by regional, religious, caste and linguistic differences. Thus, for Nehru, collective identity was a component of Indian nation that would eschew all forms of cultural essentialisms and be fused with the modern living patterns. So, ‘unplanned’, ‘undisciplined’ and ‘unauthorized’ construction was a threat, which could reduce the possibilities of integration. Thus, it had to be cleared and redeveloped.

But for Indira Gandhi, who had no such vision of her own, inclusive city meant dissolution of all collective identities except the ultimate national identity through re-organization of its physical space in order to achieve national unity. In this sense, while invoking the Nehruvian idea of a territorially united India, Indira Gandhi undermined the principle of ‘unity in diversity’ and/or the notion of ‘culturally evolved’ Indian space. Unity was defined in a crude sense of territoriality while completely ignoring the idea of cultural diversity embedded in the Nehruvian idea of India. Thus, for Indira Gandhi, diversity was perceived as a threat to national unity and integrity. Muslim-dominated spaces were considered as internal threats to this notion of territorial unity of India. Consequently, redevelopment did not remain mere surveillance of ‘unauthorized’ constructions and clearance for redevelopment. Instead, it turned out to be a measure to diffuse Muslim spatial concentration to rehabilitate the community as dispersed fragments.
Conclusion

The emerging literature on Muslim areas (or what is often called Muslim ‘Ghettos’) tries to examine the ‘internal’ make-up of these pockets to understand the factors of ‘segregation’, ‘exclusion’ and above all Muslim marginalization. But the demarcation of space on religious lines or the meanings of Muslim isolation and exclusion, which are very much embedded in the way the politics of Partition and its engagement with Muslim identity are understood in postcolonial/post-Partition India, are either completely ignored or taken as a pointer to conclude the Muslim search for security argument. In this sense, not only the concept of ‘Muslim locality’ but also the explanatory terms like segregation and exclusion are taken as given phenomena in these narratives. This thesis has made a modest attempt to revisit these complexities by investigating community-space relationship in colonial and post-colonial Delhi. It has raised two fundamental questions: How did community and space relation come to be defined on religious lines? And in what ways were ‘Muslim-dominated’ areas perceived as contested zones? Invoking the ideas of homeland as a useful vantage point to enter into the wider discourse around the conceptualization of space, the study suggests that the relation between Muslim communities and their living spaces called Muslim ilaqe has evolved out of a long process of politicization and communalization of space in Delhi. Thus, questioning the conceptualization of ‘Muslim ilaqe’ as ‘given’, ‘objective’, ‘homogenous’ and ‘permanent’ category, the study has endeavored to unfold the layers of this discursively constituted community-space relation by focusing on certain specific periods and themes.

The encounter between colonial administrative policies and Indian realities produced a complex configuration of identity and politics that redefined space-community relationship in Delhi in the nineteenth century. The caste, craft and class oriented mohallas of Shahjahanabad went through a decisive transformation during the period of British colonialism and came to be defined exclusively on religious basis. The British policy of compartmentalizing diverse social groups into homogeneous religious categories through enumeration and mapping of galies, mohallas, ilaqe and regions on these lines worked as a formula for the authorities to manage the communities and space efficiently. Although this process had started with the reorganization of
city after the events of 1857 when British officials selectively evacuated and resettled Muslim population as a punishment, it took a concrete form during 1857-1940. The formation of religio-political identities (codification of cow slaughter and the marking of space for producing, selling and even consuming meat, identification of routes of religious processions, and arrangement of residential wards as communal electoral constituencies etc.) led to the gradual demarcation of space into ‘Hindu-dominated’, ‘Muslim-dominated’ and ‘mixed’ areas. This demarcation gradually changed the way communities imagined their association with the shared space. Furthermore, the continuous use of official vocabulary by educated middle class elite to define community boundaries as well as to make collective political claims produced the concept of communal space in Delhi, especially in the early decades of the twentieth century. But these claims and counter claims did not remain localized after the 1940s. Instead, a much more nuanced configuration of identities and space was articulated and expressed through various imaginations of homeland.

Initially, it was the idea of Pakistan, introduced in Delhi in 1940, which evoked a communitarian notion of nation with an imagination of ‘pure and ideal’ Muslim homeland. But, as the political negotiations for India’s independence materialized, the geo-political entity called British India became a subject of multiple imaginations in the form of various ideas of homeland. These versions of ‘homeland’ constituted parallel but contested visions of nation(s). For Nehru and Congress it was a composite and integrated cultural unit, for Jinnah and Muslim League it was Muslim Pakistan and for Savarkar and Hindu Mahasabha, it was non-divisible Hindu Rashtra. One may argue that Hindu political organizations like Hindu Mahasabha initiated the philosophy of ‘two nations’ in terms of defining Hindus and Muslims as ethnically, religiously and culturally distinct communities at the beginning of twentieth century, much before the 1940s. These organizations pushed for a Hindu nation and quite vehemently denied the claims of religious minorities on Indian space. However, it was the idea of Pakistan that provided a vocabulary by which the collective actions/reactions of different ethnic, religious and/or caste groups were articulated and played out from a rather ‘totalist’ perspective. This thesis argues that these various assertions of homelands were eventually reduced to the theory of ‘two-nation’ or communal antagonism.

The protagonists of these conflicting notions of homelands made a clear distinction between ‘what is’ and ‘what should be’, for making a case for an ‘ideal’ and ‘pure’ nation(s).
They envisaged homeland as an unfinished project—something that had to be achieved. Although this distinction was very much linked to the transfer of power from colonial state, the discourse of homeland offered templates for the communities to imagine their collective identities and relate them to their living spaces. The idea of Pakistan, for instance, evoked the Muslim oneness as a community to clearly identify who actually belonged to the imagined pure ‘land’. But, it had virtually no answer for the fate of the Muslims of minority provinces. Similarly, the notion of Akhand Bharat that asserted an ancient indivisible association of Hindus with the Indian space, did not respond to the claims of non-Hindu religious minorities. As expected, the minorities, ‘minority provinces’ and/or ‘Muslim-dominated’ areas in Hindu majority regions of British India, turned out to be matters of practical concern. Their existence had to be defined schematically and through further negotiations. However, the rhetoric of homeland was very different from the popular meanings of Pakistan, especially in Delhi. For Delhi Muslims, homeland was nothing but an evocation of a right to live and perform their religious and cultural practices in the galies, mohallas and ilaqa where they were living in majority.

These conflicting notions of homeland led to organized and violent claims and counter-claims on public as well as residential spaces in Delhi by political groups as the Partition became a reality. The dominant meanings of Pakistan as a Muslim homeland prevailed over local meanings of space and eventually became a reference point for the debates on belongingness. In fact, the idea of Pakistan emerged as an ‘Other’ for making a case for a ‘nationalist’ united and integrated Indian sub-continent. This overtly anti-Pakistan rhetoric acquired an anti-Muslim overtone by 1946 in Delhi which was not a part of any scheme of Pakistan. It generated new binaries like ‘nationalist Muslims’ versus ‘separatist Muslims’, ‘Indian Muslims’ versus ‘Pakistani Muslims’, dividing Muslim identity into fragments unlike other religious communities. As a result, Muslim concentrated areas emerged as sites where these imagined identities were actually visualized. The extended areas of West Delhi, the educated middle class owned government quarters of New Delhi, and mixed mohallas of Old Delhi were the main sites where these fears of both Hindu and Muslim marginalization came to clash through organized violence. The thesis, thus, suggests that the conflicting claims and realities of Partition turned every Muslim household, gali, mohalla and ilaqa of Delhi into contested zones.

The Partition of South Asia between ‘Muslim-dominated Pakistan’ and ‘Hindu-dominated India’ did not put these contradictory yet parallel ideas of homeland to rest. In fact, it
reinforced religion as the prime marker of identity at every level of society, politics and administration evoking intense debates of citizenship, rights and belonging. The study argues that these notions were reconfigured specifically to achieve the projects of imagined ‘ideal’ nations – either a composite Nehruvian secular India or a majoritarian Hindu Rashtra—at least in the immediate aftermath of the Partition in Delhi. In this context, the idea of Pakistan (along with other political and economic processes) also emerged as an antagonistic and provocative force – the adversarial ‘Other’ - to define India in terms of cultural assimilation, territorial unity and above all as a secular ‘nation’. The ‘fear of disintegration’ and ‘communalism’ continued to be important political tropes for condemning supposed Muslim separatism by the Nehruvian government and propagated aggressively by the Hindu political voices. The Nehruvian state envisaged the de-politicization and de-communalization of religious identities as an important means to achieve a secular, united and integrated India. The state, following an unwritten policy, tried to decolonize the polity through non-recognition of religious identity as an official category. The terminology of ‘minority’ and ‘majority’ was considered to be more democratic and secular way of recognizing communities in postcolonial/post-Partition context. But while the meaning of ‘minority’ was overwhelmingly constitutionalised, it merely re-enforced the division between Hindu/majority and non-Hindu/minority. This distinction not only re-established cleavages and differences internal to the categories but also imposed, quite inevitably, majority culture as national mainstream.

The term ‘mainstream’ seems to underline the larger objective of Nehruvian state which offered a comprehensive ‘nationalist’ framework for the unity and integrity of India. He offered a blueprint for the making of Indian subjects into ideal citizens by focusing on ‘non-controversial’, ‘neutral’ and somehow ‘emancipating’ mission of urbanization and development. But, this definition of ‘Indian mainstream’, which was intrinsically exclusionist for a diverse society, had multiple implications and manifestations. The study has tried defining these manifestations through the issues of citizenship and belongingness in 1950, Bharatiyakaran (Indianization) in the 1960s and re-organization of living patterns of Muslim social groups in the 1970s.

This process of decolonization contradicted with local level developments since the realities of Partition re-established religion as the prime marker of identity in the popular imagination. This religion based contest of identity and space led to forced internal movement of Muslim population from ‘mixed’ areas of Old Delhi to Muslim-dominated areas for the first
time, which came to be defined as protected ‘Muslim zones’ and ‘Muslim refugee camps’ in official vocabulary in the aftermath of Partition. The Muslim zones were not created by the Indian government as Zamindar argues; instead it was a defence mechanism for the Muslims of Delhi. The Indian government intervened at a later stage to protect evacuee properties in Muslim-dominated areas for the rehabilitation of Muslim ‘refugees’. For Muslims staying in these ilaqe was not a matter of choice; nor was these enclaves celebrated zones of culture. Instead, living in these areas became a compulsion for Muslims for safety. In a span of a few years these pockets were marked as ‘communally sensitive area(s)’- a stigma that transformed these areas in later decades from protected sites into alleged zones of trouble. The study shows how colonial categories and the vocabulary of homelands converged to establish the right to collective presence: in pre-Partition period it meant a ‘right to be able to assert and observe religious/cultural practices’, while in the post -Partition Delhi, it came to be recognized as a means to ensure security for minority Muslim community.

Given the fact that Partition violence of September 1947 resulted in the migration of a significant section of Muslim population of Delhi, whether it was out of choice, fear or persuasion, the idea of Pakistan turned into a source of collective guilt for the Delhi Muslims who stayed back. Their association with Muslim League and Pakistan and/or with Congress and the nationalist idea of India became important idioms to draw multiple meanings of nationalism, loyalties, belonging and even right to citizenship. Quite interestingly, these meanings depended on ways in which their association was perceived by the administrative machinery and Hindu political groups. As for the Delhi Muslims, those who stayed and those who returned, Partition and the creation of Pakistan meant a betrayal both by the Pakistan and Indian governments, violent and organized exclusion of the community, and above all a tale of lost dignity. This sense of marginalisation somehow forced Muslim political organizations to adopt a defensive mode: a stated apolitical agenda for internal reforms. The Jamiat-ulema-e-Hind, for instance, passed a ‘nation-building’ resolution in the mid-1950s that committed it to giving up active politics and work for the socio-economic empowerment of the Muslim community.

Urbanization and development were also seen as modes of modernization or secularization to turn social groups into national subjects in the 1950s. It was anticipated, as Sunil Khilnani argued, that the communities, in the long run, would leave their religious, regional and linguistic associations behind and imagine themselves as Indian citizens. This
agenda of mainstreaming was appropriated by the Hindu political organizations like the RSS and the Jan Sangh. They offered a majoritarian meaning of the mainstream by evoking certain undefined, unclear and unwritten expectations. In their imagination, religious minorities, particularly Muslims would have to appear, behave, live, organize, vote or even eat in particular nationalist ways to prove their loyalties. It created a fertile ground for competitive electoral politics. For instance, although the communal demarcation of electoral constituencies disappeared from administrative frameworks in post-independence India, the association of Muslims with specific electoral constituencies continued to dominate political discussions even in the 1950s. The local electoral politics is a revealing example in this regard. A vote for Congress was not only a guarantee of security for the Muslims of Delhi; it could also be portrayed as an obvious expression of their patriotism. At least, this is what the Congress tried to underline. On the other hand, the Hindu political organizations saw it as appeasement of Muslims and Hindu marginalization under the Congress run government. In both ways, Muslim-dominated constituencies of Delhi were either ‘protected’ to retain a secured electoral support or forcefully cleared to make favorable equations of voters. The thesis argues that competitive electoral politics not only shaped the Muslim identity and space but also turned these pockets into sites which had to be kept contentious in order to be significant.

The meat practice in terms of its production (the space where animals are slaughtered), sale (the shops and streets where meat is displayed or hawked to be sold) and consumption (households where it is eaten) was another important aspect that re-established Muslim ilaqe as culturally contested sites. The competitive politics of space around Idgah slaughter-house, meat shops and the locality of Qasabpura (which comes under Sadar Bazar police station) reveals that the contest over meat practice forcefully linked an occupation and eating habit to national Indian culture and identity, and resulted in the communalization of meat. The body of cow, claimed to be a symbol of national pride by Hindu organizations, and the location of slaughterhouses became important political idioms by which majoritarian Hindu notions of mainstream were invoked. Since cow slaughter was already banned in Delhi, the Hindu religious and political organizations used cow killings as a plea to restrict the slaughtering of all big animals, especially buffalos. The study shows that the legal-constitutional and administrative processes (meant especially to legalize the sensibilities around cow and to regularize meat practice through bye laws, acts and bills in the late 1960s) not only constrained a potentially flourishing business, but
also sharpened the class, caste and religious distinctions. The selected non-vegetarian practices like the sale and consumption of chicken, mutton, fish and eggs acquired an acceptable and non-controversial place in the educated middle class upper-caste urban culture of Delhi. *Bade ka gosht* (meat of big animals), consumed mainly by the lower caste lower class communities and religious minorities (especially Muslims) was seen as non-acceptable food. The study suggests that the practice of meat consolidated the communal demarcation of space and re-established Muslim-dominated areas as unhygienic cultural zones in the 1960s and 1970s.

The thesis also examines the process of urbanization and debates on internal security that redefined the Muslim areas in a different way, especially in the 1970s. The overwhelming concerns of the state for cleanliness, population control and beautification gradually evolved into a set of policies. Although the stated objective was to reclaim urban land from ‘illegal’ encroachments, and to protect heritage from filthy occupants, the old city of Delhi became one of the prime targets of urban development. In this schema, the Muslim concentrated pockets were not only seen as failures of the expected secularization programme, but also perceived as closed and segregated pockets of underdevelopment. At the same time, these areas also became sources of concern for ‘internal security’. Two wars with Pakistan (1965 and 1971) and the complex configuration of local politics of the early 1970s transformed these areas into sites of ‘internal threat’. In the backdrop of Indira Gandhi’s famous National Regeneration Programme, which combined urban aspirations, internal security concerns and social regeneration plans, the Muslim localities were called ‘Mini Pakistans’ in India. This research shows how statutory, metropolitan and municipal authorities formed a collaborative team and zeroed in to end Muslim ‘segregation’ through forced clearance and sterilization in Jama Masjid and Turkman Gate areas during the National Emergency (1975-77). There were protests from the residents of Turkman Gate and Jama Masjid against the forced demolition of houses and sterilizations which resulted in *lathi* charging, tear gassing, firing, curfew, looting and sexual abuse by the police. The Muslim areas as a result were defined as troublesome and backward, held back by self-imposed religious sanctions against family planning. The study highlights how administrative policies in terms of clearance, resettlement, redevelopment and regularization of ‘illegal’ encroachments were implemented selectively in Delhi during the 1960s and the 1970s. The Muslim-dominated pockets came to be the victims of these policies rather than beneficiaries. This status of victim changed with the construction of a housing complex at the demolition site and allotment of
houses at suitable alternative places but the cost which was paid in the form of compulsory sterilization tells a complex narrative of the making of Muslim areas as contested zones.

The events of Jama Masjid and Turkman Gate were forgotten in political circles and disappeared from public memory with the end of anti-Emergency narrative, but the perceptions that those events reinforced about Muslim areas remained important determining factors in the policy framework. In the discourse of urban development, Muslim living spaces were regarded as contentious sites that should be left the way they were on the grounds that the community was inward-looking and against any inclusive living pattern and against progressive ideas like population control, health and hygiene. These pockets were thus deprived of necessary improvement in redevelopment, sanitation and hygiene, a fact underlined by the Sachar Commission Report. This neglect and constant deprivation resulted in a kind of segregation, as Hindu and Punjabi refugees started moving out of the Walled City to newly developing colonies after this area was declared a slum in the 1970s (though they continued to hold their commercial units like shops, karkhanas and other businesses). On the other hand, Muslim concentration in the Walled City of Delhi increased after the period of Emergency, as security became an important concern among the Muslims of Delhi and among those who migrated from other areas of UP. Interestingly, the new colonies that emerged after the 1980s were predominantly either Hindu or Muslim in their demographic composition. For instance, a number of private housing societies owned by educated middle classes emerged specifically on communal lines in the extended areas of Delhi. Some of them were the Taj Enclave, Azad Apartment and a few more inhabited only by Muslims, while there were others with distinctively Hindu concentration. More importantly, these societies deliberately found ways of denying access to members of other communities and became highly segregated educated middle-class and/or upper-middle-class owned Hindu or Muslim quarters.

These events and the entire period of Emergency had an enduring political significance. The course of politics in north India completely changed with the emergence of new political actors like the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) that arose in the wake of the disintegration of the anti-Congress platform in 1980. The Jan Sangh, which was a part of Janata Party, along with other political parties like Janata Dal and faction of Congress, formed the BJP in 1980. Religious polarization became an important feature of national and local level politics with the emergence of BJP. These developments in competitive electoral politics had a direct impact on the re-
establishment of the dominant conceptions of Muslim space that had evolved in the postcolonial/post-Partition context. It led to the politicization and communalization of religious identity and space, whether it was related to food habits, backwardness, threat perception or the communally sensitive character of these localities, which were prone to religious conflicts and disturbances. The politics of space, in this sense, found a concrete expression in the language of Hindu Rashtra with a new slogan of the ‘rise of Hindus’ as the BJP grew stronger especially in the second half of the 1980s at both local and national level.

The study, thus argues that the changing character of Muslim ilaqe in Delhi is a product of historical processes. The discourse of homeland and the realities of Partition established the notion of ‘Muslim-dominated areas’ as ‘exclusionary’ and ‘contested’ zones. These localities turned out to be those pockets where the dominant ideas of nation had to be engineered, materialized and practiced. Consequently, these localities were looked at differently over the period: in the 1940s, as ‘Muslim-dominated’ areas that were to be administered for the sake of communal peace; in the 1950s, as ‘Muslim zones’ that needed to be ’protected’; in the 1960s, as ‘isolated’ unhygienic cultural pockets that were to be cleaned and Indianized; and in the 1970s, as locations of ‘internal threat’ – the ‘Mini Pakistan(s)’ – that were to be dismantled and integrated. The study thus suggests that ‘Muslim localities’ are discursively constituted political entities, which may or may not correspond to the actual demographic configuration of any administrative urban unit. They continue to determine the various actual manifestations of the ideas of homeland. Hence, the term ‘Mini Pakistan’ should always be seen in relation to the equally persuasive claims of Hindu Rashtra and the demands posed by the state-centric discourse of secularism. These dominant notions have resulted in the objectification or better to say in the ‘museumization’ of the everyday space practices and culture of a living community. This is one of the reasons why these pockets came to be seen as ‘terrorist hide-outs’ in the altered political scenario of the late 1990s and why the issues that underpin such objectification persist in the 21st century.
Appendices

Appendix 1: Politicization of Space: Hindu/Muslim Gali, Mohalla, Ilaqa and the City

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mohalla System- social composition</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Castes/craft and class mohallas with religious concentration of population.</td>
<td>The elite/class mohallas declined but the caste/craft associations continued along with the religious concentration of population.</td>
<td>Mohalla as an administrative mechanism declined but caste/craft composition continued to dominate in the mohallas. The events of 1857 also affected the communal composition of different mohallas to some extent.</td>
<td>Composition of mohallas remained the same.</td>
<td>Composition of mohallas remained the same.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative mechanism</th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative mechanism</td>
<td>Mohallas were interwoven with the thana system – 12 mohallas under 12 thanedars controlled by a Kotwal/Kotwali.</td>
<td>Mohalla/thana system was strengthened with clear divisions of boundaries and gates (kuchabandi). The numbers of adjoining villages were also combined into a group called zails.</td>
<td>The term mohalla was replaced by the administrative category of ward. Delhi territory was divided into 12 intramural and 3 extramural wards. Kotwali/thana system was abolished. A nominated/non-official Indian member of Municipality replaced thanedars and became the head of each mohalla. Kuchabandi was completely abolished.</td>
<td>Wards became electoral units and came to be identified as Hindu/Muslim-dominated wards with the presence of a Hindu/Muslim minority. Language of Hindu vote and Muslim vote and/or majority/minority vote was established.</td>
<td>The wards acquired permanent character of a Hindu/Muslim-dominated ward. Joint electorate on communal basis defined every gali and mohalla on communal lines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delhi Territory was divided on communal lines.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 2: Understanding the Ideas of Homeland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes/Exponents</th>
<th>Composite idea of India</th>
<th>Exclusionary idea of India</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is India in terms of space?</td>
<td>(a) Evolving space - A politically and geographically evolved spatial entity called Hindustan. (b) Shared spatiality - The shared experiences of colonialism have given a spatial and political commonness to diversified communities.</td>
<td>Revered space - A geographic entity which has been celebrated as sacred and pious by various faiths propagated by different prophets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who has the right over this space?</td>
<td>(a) Nationalism as a stakeholder - since anti-colonial nationalism offers a collective expression of Indian political identity, nationalist self-determination should be taken as a principle for ensuring right over this space. (b) Collective contribution as right to space - All communities and groups who have contributed to the making of India belong to this space in every sense.</td>
<td>Collective possession - All who live, contribute, share different faith and cultures possess this space. Muslims as an inseparable part of Indian nation (qaum) have a greater claim than Hindus because they submerge completely in the soil of this land after death.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to deal with differences?</td>
<td>Collectivism based on modern democratic ideas -- integration of different communities at all levels in India’s historically evolved soul for the making of modern India.</td>
<td>Non-interference of state in the beliefs and customs practiced by different communities through an agreement on common minimum program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the Idea of future India?</td>
<td>A Secular republic - A modern democratic republic based on the principle of unity in diversity.</td>
<td>A secular united Indian state which guarantees the freedom of religion and culture and encourages better participation and development of Muslims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Territorially defined nation-states - Hindustan for Hindu India and Pakistan for Muslim India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hindu nation State - An Akhand Hindusthan Hindu Rashtra following Hindu culture, belief system and ideology.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demarcated sacred Hindu space - A politically, ethnically and religiously demarcated territorial space. The words ‘Hindu’, ‘Hindusthan’ and ‘Hind’ represents the soul of a Rashtra evolved with a belief system, culture and tradition which is non-divisible, non-sharable.
### Appendix 3: Trajectory of Meat: Religion, Caste, Class and the Cultural Dynamics of Meat Industry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages and the Prescribed Activity</th>
<th>The Act</th>
<th>Religion and Caste Communities Involved in meat business</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The farmer (Haryana, Rajastahan, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh for trade in Delhi).</td>
<td>Rearing of animals. They sell it off to the trader when it becomes ‘useless’. However, this distinction is applied only in case of she buffaloes. The male calves are usually also sold to butchers since they do not play a significant role in agricultural economy.</td>
<td>Mainly non-Muslims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trader</td>
<td>Supply animals</td>
<td>Mainly non-Muslims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transporter</td>
<td>Bring animals to Delhi</td>
<td>People from lower class belonging to various castes/religious communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helper</td>
<td>Takes care of animals while in transit</td>
<td>People from lower class belonging to various castes/religious communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission agent called Aarthi.</td>
<td>Facilitate animal transactions between sellers (farmers/traders) and buyers (butchers) and charge a commission on every sale. He sells animals at abattoir to kaantewala;</td>
<td>Muslim Qureshi in case of halal slaughtering (goat, sheep and buffaloes) and Khatiks. This could also be done interchangeably in case of goat and sheep but the sale of pigs is completely associated with the Khatiks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helper called gwala</td>
<td>Takes care of the animals in the Idgah slaughterhouse.</td>
<td>Hindu/ lower class Muslims, Khatik or Dalits from neighbouring areas or states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chowkidar at the abattoir</td>
<td>Safeguard the abattoir following DMC instructions.</td>
<td>Hindu/ lower class Muslims, Khatik or Dalits from neighbouring areas or states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinary Doctor</td>
<td>Marks animals after health checks, conducts ante mortem and post mortem of animals to inspect infections and marks meat classifying it with different stamps.</td>
<td>Usually Non-Muslim Middle class or Scheduled Caste Hindu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masasha-khor</td>
<td>Buy animals from the commission agent on cash, slaughters it and/or sells it to the shopkeepers. This is an optional category and sometimes the shopkeepers acquire animal directly from commission agent to slaughter in the abattoir.</td>
<td>Exclusively skilled Muslim qasab for halal and Khatik for Jhatka slaughter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kameldarr/kasai</td>
<td>Slaughters the animal in prescribed way. He cuts the animal into four pieces to deliver it to shops after removing the skin</td>
<td>Exclusively skilled Muslim qasab for halal and Khatik for jhatka slaughter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sallaakh</td>
<td>Removes skin</td>
<td>Exclusively skilled qasab Muslim for halal and Khatik for jhatka slaughter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanitary Staff</td>
<td>Cleans the premises</td>
<td>Hindu lower caste Balmiki Dalit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Responsibilities</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transporter and hand cart puller</td>
<td>Carry meat to the shop or suppliers. In case of carcass it is supplied to people involved in different by-products located at different destinations.</td>
<td>Muslims for halal and Khatik or other Hindu lower caste for jhatka. In case of goat flesh and mutton it is done only by Khatiks. In case of carcass people belonging to lower class – lower caste Hindu communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale meat dealer</td>
<td>Collect meat from municipal slaughterhouses and resell it to retailers in different prescribed localities or other customers like restaurants, hotels, hostels etc. However, in few instances retailers perform the function of slaughtering and whole selling also.</td>
<td>Muslims in case of halal and Khatik or other Hindu lower caste for jhatka. There is no prescribed locality for selling Jhatka meat. It depends on DMC’s discretion where and how to sell Jhatka meat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retailers</td>
<td>Buy and sell to consumers. Wholesale meat dealers and retailers have to obtain license from Municipal corporations for buying and selling on the premises of a slaughterhouse and shops</td>
<td>Exclusively skilled Muslim qasab for halal and Khatik for Jhatka slaughter. It requires skills since the large portions are cut into pieces for human consumption.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopkeeper and helper at the shop</td>
<td>Cut, clean and sell meat to consumers</td>
<td>Exclusively skilled Muslim qasab for halal and Khatik for Jhatka slaughter. It requires skills since the large portions are cut into pieces for human consumption.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 4: DDA, MCD and DMC: Clearance and Rehabilitation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Make-up</th>
<th>Area of operation</th>
<th>Contradictions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DDA</td>
<td>Statuary Body constituted by an act of Parliament – Delhi Development Authority Act, 1957.</td>
<td>Lt. Governor, Chairmen – the Administrator of the Union Territory of Delhi. Three bureaucrats – vice-Chairman, Finance and account officer, engineer to be appointed and three persons nominated by the central government. Two elected representatives of MCD and three of DMC as un-official members, Commissioner of the MCD as ex-officio.</td>
<td>Land acquisition for the purpose of development in the Capital and National Capital Region (NCR). Carry out clearance operations at the request of land owning authority with the help of Demolition Squad and Delhi police*. Building and engineering work.</td>
<td>Improvement work carried or denied for political interests: Regularization of unauthorized colonies by DMC. Provision of basic amenities – water, electricity, health, sanitation, education, parks etc by MCD and DMC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCD/DMC</td>
<td>Representative body constituted under Delhi Development Act 1957 (DDA) and Municipal Corporation of Delhi Act 1957 (MCD Act). Delhi Metropolitan Council (DMC) was formed under the provisions of Delhi Administration Act, 1966. Responsible for people.</td>
<td>Elected representatives</td>
<td>Rehabilitation and resettlement of population. Provision of electricity, water, sanitary arrangements and other facilities to every locality – ‘authorized’ or ‘unauthorized’.</td>
<td>Clearance and rehabilitation to suit local political interests.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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