

*A Timely book on Sachar Committee*

# **Sachar Committee – Conspiracy to Divide the Nation?**

Review by Saurav Basu

Sachar Committee – Conspiracy to Divide the Nation  
by Rakesh Sinha, others: Bharatiya Vichar Manch, Karnavati

This timely book explores the controversial high level Sachar Committee report, part of the array of unwarranted sops to Muslim votebanks by Sonia Gandhi and Manmohan Singh's UPA government. In 2005, the Government of India constituted a committee to report on the social, economic and educational status of the Muslim community in India. It was a seven member committee headed by Justice Rajindar Sachar. Popularly the committee is known as Sachar committee. It presented its report to the government in twenty months. The fantastic nature of the SCR is that it is totally committed to a communal agenda, while seeking sanction in a secular democratic republic. This irreconcilable position has been justified on vague claims of imaginary discriminations faced by the Muslim community and a series of statistical sophistry. It was high time the communal agenda of the committee was exposed, and this book is a step in that direction. The book is bilingual, with 7 essays in English and 5 in Hindi. Dr Rakesh Sinha in his masterly introductory essay, probes the philosophical background of the Sachar committee. According to Sachar, religion divides the nation into communal segments with separate personal laws, separate social philosophies and separate economics. This profoundly communal outlook not only misinterprets secularism but renders it a slave to minority fundamentalism! As Sinha explains, "no definition of secularism is possible without geo-cultural context and reference to historical tradition....Islam's strict adherence to fundamentals and defined human behavior from religious beliefs to sex to financial dealings, gender relationships, and system of justice discouraged any discourse to interpret it in the context of modernity, scientific

temperament and values generated in other socio-religious communities. The general will of the Islamic society reflect a totalitarian attitude" In contrast Hinduism adheres to the pluralistic quest for truth. Multiculturalism or respect for diversities is rooted in its historical and genealogical evolution. Hinduism has treated all other religion and philosophies as complimentary in the spiritual journey of mankind. Sinha laments that the Western discourse on secularism was uncritically implanted in the Indian discourse. The foundation of the Sachar Committee makes the Indian state susceptible to the long

standing charge of the Hindu right, that the Indian state has for the past six decades been pursuing policies which promote segmentisation of society. Gender justice has been consistently denied to Muslim women in order to maintain and mobilize Muslim votebanks. Unfortunately, apart from very few exceptions, most of the Muslim intellectuals are keen to promote a communal agenda for their community. Sinha considers Mushirul Hasan and Zoya Hasan to represent the progressive line but adds they eventually fall in line with advocates of the Muslim right. Sinha points out that the constitution of India does not define the term minority in the religious context, and thereby the appointment of the Sachar committee itself was against the spirit of the constitution. The composition of the committee itself speaks volumes of its character – it was completed dominated by Muslims. Sinha's careful scrutiny of the Sachar papers revealed that one member of the committee Dr Rakesh Basant actually aired his misgivings to Rajinder Sachar; "If you look at the allocation of work, it is completely lopsided. Several of us are assigned that are a very small part of the Terms Of Reference [e.g. mine], some of us have tasks that have not been mentioned in the TOR (e.g. Saiyed Hamid)"

Dr Sinha further makes the disturbing revelation that during his study of the Sachar papers he found that Saiyed Hamid, Abusaleh Shariff and some others worked on subjects which had no direct or indirect relationship with the terms and references of the committee, all with the explicit permission of the chairman Rajinder Sachar. The hidden agenda of the committee is aimed at dereserving SC/ST communities where there is a considerable Muslim population. Saiyid Hamid in an email to Justice Sachar writes "A large number of parliamentary and assembly constituencies with substantial Muslim population have been reserved under the category of SC and ST. Consequently the representation of the Muslims in the legislatures has been adversely affected. The reserved status of all these constituencies which has proved detrimental to minority interest Mahmood resonates similarly with a strong communal bias. Are these members retributive reincarnations of the Muslim league raised to realize a second Indian partition, incidentally the very danger Sardar Patel had warned against in his address in the constituent assembly? Ironically, most Muslim members of the constituent assembly like Tajamul Hussain, B H Zaidi, Begum Aisan Rasad had overcome the pernicious philosophy of the Muslim League and in one voice denounced the idea of communal reservation in independent, secular India. Naturally, repeated parallels have been drawn between the Hunter committee report and the SCR. The Hunter committee report had established the foundation for a separate Muslim homeland which the Muslim League itself emulated through the 1938 Pirpur committee report. Incredibly, a supposedly secular Congress party which was at the receiving end of the Muslim league's communal machinations seems to have itself succumbed to the seduction of the Muslim vote! To chart a case for Muslim backwardness, the SCR is keen to discover institutional discrimination but having failed to discover any evidence for the same, resorts to appealing to the authority of bazaar myths like "every bearded man is considered an ISI agent!" Strangely, Justice Sachar ignored the counter parallels against the majority community which are routinely reiterated in the fatwas of the Mullahs. The Fatawa – Rizvia

resting on the authority of the Quran considers the Hindus to be the most debased creatures of all creation. (See, World of Fatwas, Arun Shourie, 1995, ASA) The SCR similarly abounds in statistical data which has been meticulously manipulated, quoted out of context and rhetorically interplayed to arrive at a scenario which apparently reduces Muslims to the status of the most deprived sections of SC/STs and other MBCs; all in the great cause of rendering Muslims fraudulently eligible for benefits of affirmative action and reservation. R K Ohri in his essay "Convoluting findings of the Sachar committee" understands "The Committee took recourse to a peculiar methodology of selectively picking and choosing for consideration only those representations which suited its politico-communal agenda." Such suspicions were further accentuated by the complaint of Dr Rakesh Vasant, a member of the SCR that "A large number of data analysis that is being done is of data that many members have never analyzed before and do not have any idea what is and what is not possible" Substantiating his claims, Ohri relies on the research of Prof Sanjay Kumar which concluded that "there is hardly any difference among the level of educational attainment among Hindus and Muslims" Secondly, contrary to the common belief that Muslims are poorer compared to Hindus, the NES Survey (National Election Study Survey) indicates hardly a need to be withdrawn before next LS elections so that justice is restored to the Muslim across the country" The tale of another member Zafar is any different in the level of economic prosperity among people from the two communities. Finally, "at the national level, the proportion of those who would fall in very poor class, is more among Hindus compared to the Muslims"

The NFHS-2 survey reveals some more uncomfortable facts. The Infant Mortality Rate and Child Mortality Rate for Hindus is 77 and 107 respectively, while for Muslims it is as low as 59 and 83! According to the Census of 2001, the Muslim woman gives birth to at least 1 more child than a Hindu. In the past decades, Muslim population growth in India has been 174% compared to national average of 114%. While, Hindu Total Fertility Rate has fallen below the replacement level in several states including Kerala, Muslim growth rate remains steadfast! The bogus viewpoint that poverty is responsible for the increased Muslim growth rate is belied by the fact that Muslims outshine SC/ST economic indicators and unlike the latter have far more healthy infants and children. Moreover, Muslim women are least likely to choose contraception for birth control because of their religious sensitivities and not availability as claimed by Justice Sachar.

The fundamentalist agenda of Sachar is made most obvious by this alarming anti-national statement "Since the growth of the Muslim population has been above average, and is likely to remain so for some more time, the question often asked is whether, and if so, when will the Muslim population become the largest group? The counter position is that – how does it matter which population is the largest". In other words, the Indian Muslim will not be satisfied until it transforms itself into the majority community and converts India into Dar ul Islam! Sachar may have been well advised to point a single country in the world except Turkey which remains secular despite a dominant Muslim population!

The SCR also attempts to efface the real reasons for lower per capita income amongst Muslims which is obviously their large family size and pathetic Muslim women workforce even in rural India.

As Sinha reasons “The committee had completely ignored the social resistance within the community which does not allow Muslims to integrate into the mainstream. The committee’s non seriousness about the Muslim’s social question could be understood by the fact that it blamed the state and Hindus for the backwardness of the Muslim women, when there are many studies by Muslims scholars which revealed the (obvious) fact that Muslim women are victims of the rigid Islamic laws applied by the Muslim families. For instance, Sameena Khan reported that “Many middle class families do not allow Muslim girls access to higher education and work outside their mohalla. It is considered inappropriate to the community’s ‘izzat’ Even the Muslim women of the slum feels entrapped by the community’s strictures. Eventually, they are compelled to pursue ‘home based but low paying work like tailoring, or working at piece rate basis’” But Sachar does not dare venture into the politically incorrect solutions for liberating the Muslim woman from both ‘burqah’ and ‘baccha.’ The preference of the Muslim for the madarsa and matlabs has been sidelined. Instead, the SCR has recommended downgrading the minimum qualification requirements for ITIs and similar institutions. It has also demanded that madarsa schoolchildren bred on 10th century syllabi (including geocentric theories of the universe) be given direct admission to secondary school, and Madarsa certificates be considered equivalent of matriculation. 6 Justice Sachar sheds copious tears on the under-representation of Muslims in the UPSC but by his own yardstick, how does it matter which community dominates the services. The implicit insinuation is that a Hindu is bound to discriminate against a Muslim! J K Bajaj in his essay proves that Muslims in India are a resurgent community, possessing a greater survival advantage [lower morality, higher fertility] Their educational status has considerably improved ever since independence and contrary to SCR’s allegation, they have almost equal access to bank credit. Through a series of facts and figures Bajaj debunks Sachar’s notion that there is religious discrimination while selection of candidates for the UPSC. Of course, Sachar had deliberately ignored those Muslims like R Kidwai(1973-79) and J.M Quraishi(1998-2001) who became chairmen of the UPSC while there have been as many as ten who became members of the commission. They have uniformly rejected the theory of discrimination in promotion directed only against Muslims...The Muslim members of the UPSC largely supported the theory of Muslim education lag. 7 The prejudice and institutional discrimination against Hindus is the final fallout of the SCR. The UPA government has decided that 90 districts of the country having concentration of Muslims will be offered precedence over others. 1868 crore rupees worth of scholarships will be distributed to students from all Muslim families whose annual is < 2.50 Lakh while for a Hindu there will be no such scheme even if their annual income is < 1 lakh! One can sympathize with the view of one author that “the intention of the government is to promote ‘exclusive growth’ of the Muslim community in the garb of minority welfare” Vijay Patel argues forcibly that by implementing the 15 point programme and provisions made in 11th 5

year plan, the diversion of the Hindu tax payer's money exclusively for the Muslims in the continuing process of Islamic emphatically guarantees freedom from discrimination on basis of religion, caste, sex and region!

The modus operandi of the Sachar committee has been to treat the Muslims as another caste and fraudulently contrasting them against some relatively well off Hindu OBCs. Legitimization of reservation for Muslims is their ultimate goal in all sectors including the private sector and the army despite no Muslim being capable of passing the test of 'historical burden of circumstances' 8. Purujit Saiyed, in a very balanced article defends the decision of the Army not to disclose the religious composition of the institution. That the committee had the gall to say that the army made 'unnecessary fuss about this on grounds of regimental spirit and cohesion.' is unpardonable since regimental spirit and cohesion — are the very soul of any army. 9 In the politics of opportunism, Sachar has forgotten that a man, who cannot sacrifice his beard for the nation, is never going to sacrifice his life for the same!

Overall, this is an important work to make every Indian aware of the egregious perversions of the Sachar Committee Report and how it threatens the very unity and integrity of the Indian nation. The only think jarring in this excellent book are the numerous typographical errors and the lack of an index .

## References

[1] In the Lok Nayak Hospital, New Delhi the obstetrics department caters more Muslim patients and consequently handles more pregnancies from the community yet the attached family planning department has > 90% Hindu-Sikh clients. There are virtually no Muslim men who opt for vasectomy. Of the Muslim females who rarely opt for contraception, most are G4-5, i.e. they have experienced at least 4 to 5 pregnancies. Moreover, almost none of them opt for tubectomy! They consider the practice as un Islamic!

[2] SCR, p.45

[3] The absolutely secular Turkish army has until now, kept the Muslim fundamentalists at bay. However, the Turkish electorate comprising of > 99% Muslims have consistently voted right wing Muslim parties to powers, and constantly cite their predicament of being deprived of the Shariah as case of human rights violation. It is ironic that Muslim women who should be opposed to the rule of Shariah often are amongst its most vociferous votaries while reveling in their misguided zeal of Pan Islamic jingoism!

[4] Committee has noted that in rural areas 70% of Hindu women participate in work while only 29% of the Muslim women are similarly engaged

[5] Exclusion, identity and Muslim women in Mumbai, New Age Weekly, Jan , 2008

[6] JNU has taken the lead in accepting Madarsa groomed graduates

[7] Khalidi Omar 2006 Muslims in Indian Economy, p.49-50, Three Essays Collective

[8] The 600-800 yrs period of Islamic colonization saw majority Hindus being reduced to second class citizens, the Dhimmis (Zimmis)

[9] Muslims in the army, a dangerous census <http://in.rediff.com/news/2006/feb/>

[14guest.htm](#)

Courtesy <http://saurav-basu.sulekha.com/blog/post/2008/10/sachar-committee-report-conspiracy-to-divide-the.htm>

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