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THE BABRI MASJID CONFLICT: CONSTRUCTION OF RAM MANDIR AT AYODHYA

History of Ram Mandir

India has been a diverse place since a very long time, numerous religions and cultures are followed. The term 'secular' has been there in the preamble which was introduced in 42nd amendment; secularism is reflected in article 25 to 26 and 29 to 30 which means our Indian constitution acknowledges secularism. However, the term secularism is not expressly found in our Indian constitution. On a broader aspect, India is recognised as a secular state, however it strictly does not follow the separation between religion and state, deciding to obtrude in the realm of religion by treating all religions equally. The best example of the same is Ayodhya dispute which started almost 134 years ago. The primary dispute was for the land in which the Muslims demanded for the construction of Babri masjid while the Hindus demanded for the construction of Ram Mandir which dates back to 1853. The Ayodhya dispute is one of the longest cases which created an unforgettable history. The Ayodhya dispute created turbulence all around the country, and it continued for 134 years, which took several decades to get resolved. ¹Finally, when the judgment came, it became the longest and one of the landmark cases in Indian history.

Ram Janmabhoomi; Babri Masjid Conflict

According to the information deciphered from Ramayana and other Hindu texts, Rama is the seventh avatar of Vishnu and the location of Rama's birthplace is on the banks of the Sarayu River in a city called "Ayodhya", modern day Uttar Pradesh. The issue began with the argument that Ayodhya is the birth place of lord Rama and there should be no construction of masjid and the land belonged to only Hindus. On the basis of this argument posed by Hindu's, the Hindu Kar Sevak's demolished the Babri masjid on December 6, 1992, in Ayodhya. Due to the dispute of land, and the demolition of Babri masjid, many other riots took place between the people of two different religions; Hindu's and Muslim's.

Litigation, since the year 1524

¹ Saransh Sahu, Debjani Mukherjee, HINDSIGHT OF JUSTICE: AN ANALYSIS ON AYODHYA DISPUTE AND EQUITY ON CIVIL LIBERTIES, Jul 7 2020, <https://ijcrt.org/papers/IJCRT2007436.pdf>

- The year 1524 marked the initial event which led to the conflict. In this year, Babur invaded India and became the first Mughal emperor of India and gave birth to Mughal dynasty.
- According to numerous sources the construction of Babri masjid is not defined and it is estimated from the inscriptions made in the premises of Babri masjid which states that the Mughal Commander Mir Baqi built the mosque.
- During 1800s this issue led to many instances of communal violence. In 1885, the first petition was filed by Mahant Raghbir Das, asking for a temple to be built on the land adjoining the mosque. The Faizabad District Magistrate refused to grant permission for the same.
- In the year 1949, Ram idol appeared in the Masjid, which led to major controversies. Both the communities filed a civil suit against each other.
- Throughout the years many petitions have been filed, and various committees had been set up regarding the issue. The Nirmohi Akhara asked for the possession of Lord Rama temple. Whereas in 1962 the Sunni Waqf Board asked for the possession of the Mosque. In the year, 1986, the district court opened the gates of the temple for 'darshan'. As a result, protests by the Muslims took place in order to form Babri masjid action committee. Due to this, the gates were again closed and no was allowed in the premises.
- In 1989, a senior advocate Deoki N Agarwal filed a suit on behalf of Lord Ram in the Allahabad High Court. All prior suits were moved to the High Court. Later, in the year 1990 some of the activist of Vishwa Hindu Parishad tried to partially damage the mosque.
- In the year 1992, the Babri masjid demolition took place.
- In 2002, The Archaeological Survey of India was instructed by the Allahabad high court to find out whether, there are any traces of a Hindu temple beneath the mosque structure. The next year, The Archaeological Survey of India found evidence related to the temple's existence beneath the mosque.
- In the 2010 Allahabad high court judgment, the High Court delivered its judgment and inferred the division of land between three parties: one third for the Sunni Wakf Board, one third for the Nirmohi Akhara and one third to Ram Lalla Virajman.
- In the judgment delivered by supreme court through an unanimous verdict, the dispute was settled by granting the mosque's land for construction of temple and In addition to the land for the temple, the court allocated five acres at a prominent place in Ayodhya for the construction of a mosque.²

Impact of New Ram Mandir construction on Indian Economy

The Pran Pratishtha, marked a significant milestone, bringing an end to a 500-year quest for a Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. The Prime Minister of India, marked this event as the end of a long wait. He highlighted that the construction of the temple dedicated to Lord Ram, symbolizing justice, was carried out in a fair and impartial manner. The Ram Mandir has been constructed in the traditional Nagara style, the Ram Janmabhoomi Mandir has a length of 380 feet, a width

² TIO, Why Supreme Court ruled in favour of Ram Mandir construction, Jan 15, 2024,

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/106871900.cms?from=mdr&utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

of 250 feet, and a height of 161 feet, supported by a total of 392 pillars and 44 doors, the Mandir is three-storied, with each floor being 20 feet tall.³

Ayodhya is expected to attract around more than five crore devotees annually, making it a major tourism destination not only within the state of Uttar Pradesh but also in India. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath initiated the working 50 electric buses and 25 green autos from the Ayodhya bus stand, the E-rickshaw facility would also be implemented soon. The state government is also transforming the Ayodhya Dham railway station and more modern facilities have been implemented. Ayodhya is being developed into a solar city to reduce its dependency on electricity. The hotel industry in Ayodhya is expected to grow significantly following the opening of the temple to visitors. The Ram temple city; Ayodhya, has witnessed enhanced connectivity through railways and roadways during the temple inauguration. All these various aspects would enhance the economy of India. The creation of a new religious tourist centre as Ayodhya, with improved connectivity and infrastructure can create a meaningfully large economic impact.

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³ Shobit Gupta, Ayodhya Ram temple can withstand earthquake of...': What scientists revealed, Jan 29, 2024, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/ayodhya-ram-temple-can-withstand-earthquake-of-what-scientists-revealed-101706514504869.html/>