

WHAT HAPPENED IN GUJARAT? THE FACTS

The following narrative draws from various sources: newspaper reports, fact-finding missions and other reports which came out after the Gujarat carnage. It pieces together the sequence of events that occurred in and around Godhra before, on and after 27th February 2002 (the incident that allegedly sparked off the ensuing communal violence in the State of Gujarat), and details of the extent and nature of the terrible violence against Muslims in Gujarat in the months that followed.

I. Setting The Context: Before 27 February 2002

History of Communal Tension in Godhra

The town of Godhra in Gujarat has a long history of inter-community tensions stemming from the fact that in 1947, when India achieved independence and was partitioned to create Pakistan, thousands of Hindus fleeing Pakistan settled in Godhra, and vented their anger at Godhra's Muslims, burning their homes and businesses with truckloads of gasoline. Since then, government officials have deemed the town one of the country's most "communally sensitive" places in India. In the 1980's and again in 1992, it was wracked by riots initiated by members of both communities. Today Godhra, a town of 15,000, is evenly split between Hindus and Muslims, most of whom live in segregated communities separated in places by train tracks. There is little interaction between them and both regard one another with suspicion.

The Temple at Ayodhya: A Cause for Tension

During the Kumbh Mela (an annual Hindu religious fair) in January 2001, the VHP (Vishva Hindu Parishad – World Hindu Council) 'Dharma Sansad' (Religious Council) decided that the construction of a Ram Temple on the site of the Babri Masjid (ancient mosque built on the site of a demolished temple, finally demolished by Hindu activists of the VHP and other right wing forces on 6 December 1992) would start on March 12 of 2002. The date was later shifted to March 15 as being astrologically more auspicious. The campaign also had clear political motives, as it conveniently coincided with the Uttar Pradesh (the State to which Ayodhya belongs) elections and was seen as a major factor that would help the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) ¹ gain electoral support.

A Chetavani Sant Yatra (literally: Warning that Holy men were on the move!) left Ayodhya on January 20 and reached Delhi on the 26th, where they met the Prime Minister and demanded 67 acres of so-called undisputed land on which to begin construction. In the months before and after this move, many areas in Gujarat and the whole country had been placed on red alert due to the aggressive mobilization by the VHP for cadres to join in rebuilding the Ayodhya Movement.

Being a communally sensitive area, tension had been brewing in Godhra too over the forthcoming *Shila Pujan* (inauguration and prayer/ placing the first stone for construction) in Ayodhya on March 15th. Groups of 'kar sevaks' (Religious Workers) now calling themselves 'Ram Sevaks' began going to Ayodhya to prepare for this eventuality. For three weeks in February trains carrying the *kar Sevaks* to and from Ayodhya had been stopping daily en route at the Godhra junction station.

This led to increased tension due to the alleged behaviour of these *kar sevaks*. Even before the events on 27th February there had been instances reported of provocative behaviour by the *kar Sevaks*. It is alleged that on February 14th former Gujarat Chief Minister (VHP), Keshubhai Patel's son was observed giving a speech on Platform No.1 of Ahmedabad Railway station. He was exhorting *kar Sevaks* "not to waste this opportunity and

¹ The BJP is currently the ruling party in the Centre and in the State of Gujarat. The BJP, the VHP, Bajrang Dal and the umbrella organization Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (National Volunteer Corps) or RSS are a motley of political parties and organizations/collectives, all of whom collectively form the right wing forces, the Sangh Parivar (or "family" of Hindu nationalist groups). All these groups promote the Hindutva ideology, and propagate that India should be a Hindu theocratic state.

to return successful from Ayodhya”, he was also seen provoking *kar sevaks* “to do their jobs well”. The Station Master is reported to have recorded a complaint with the Railway Police in this regard. On 25th February Jan Morcha, a Hindi daily published from Faizabad (near Ayodhya), detailed instances of provocative behaviour by *kar Sevaks*, who allegedly beat and threatened Muslim passengers, insisting that they chant ‘*Jai Shri Ram*’ (Hail Lord Ram). A family of four was made to get off the train in the middle of the night for refusing to join them (See Annexure 1 and 3). Provocative statements were also consistently made by the VHP in various places with regard to the building of the temple, aimed at the Muslim community, which added to the prevailing tension (See Annexure 2).

The Build-up of Arms and Information Against Muslims

Much ahead of the day of the incident, 27th February, reports show that a systematic attempt to identify Muslims in various areas, single them and their establishments out, and a widespread collection and distribution of arms had already been in place, indicating some sort of a plan to target the community.

- As far back as November 2001, the magazine Communalism Combat reported that 4,00,000 ‘*trishuls*’ (three-pronged spears associated with Hindu mythology) – Rampuri knives that can kill, craftily disguised as religious symbols were distributed by the Bajrang Dal countrywide. The *trishul*, like the *kirpan* (Dagger) for Sikhs is exempt from the provisions of the Indian Arms Act. Before the campaign for construction of the temple, the VHP, Bajrang Dal and the RSS had distributed thousands of *talwars* (swords) and *trishuls*. The BJP functionaries also participated in all *talwar-trishul* ceremonies, in which processions were organized in towns and rural areas. Training camps in firearms were also reportedly conducted in many places.

- It is claimed that for some two weeks before February 28th, LPG (Liquified Petroleum Gas) cylinders were in short supply in Ahmedabad city, so much so that middle class consumers had to book them far in advance and there was a long line of people in waiting to procure them. The rioters however were adequately armed with thousands of LPG cylinders, obviously collected in advance, with which they blew up Muslim commercial establishments.

- In Jahlod of Dahod District (Gujarat), it was reported that all Hindu houses were marked with saffron flags before the 27th of February itself. This was done the day before *Id* (Muslim Festival) that was on 22nd February. Further, in the evening there was a rally of around 100-150 VHP/ Bajrang Dal supporters, and meetings held at various places following this.

- In Limkheda district sub division of Dahod District, about six to eight weeks before 27th February, a list of all Muslim households and properties was prepared. A VHP leader who is a development officer in LIC (Life Insurance Corporation) Limkheda, had begun instigating people by saying things like, “These Muslims do not allow for the *mandir* (Temple). They should be killed.”

- In five districts of Gujarat, Muslims said that a few months ago, a household survey was conducted by women activists of the VHP to find out details of Muslim properties. The revision of the electoral rolls during the same period seems to have come in handy in distinguishing Muslims from others. Victims also pointed out that some TV cable operators had helped in identifying houses and other Muslim establishments. Furthermore, there are newspaper reports quoting VHP leaders as saying that they had a “list” ready.

- In Sanjeli village, District Dahod, three months prior to the attack, there were huge meetings in which VHP, and the Bajrang Dal had announced that “Sanjeli will burn” and burn it did. In Pandarwada village, District Panchmahals, in mid-February meetings were held where the BJP/VHP/Bajrang Dal leaders made provocative statements from loud speakers to frighten Muslims and to instigate Hindus to arm themselves to confront the Muslims.

- Reports also indicate that the mob had prior information on Muslim-owned establishments; in a secret circular to the police the Gujarat Government had asked them to furnish details of Muslim organizations in their area. This information was collected as far back as 1st February 1999.

- It is also claimed that some 8 months prior to the attack, the Gujarati Language newspaper, Sandesh had published an article in which it listed many Muslim owned establishments which were not widely known as these had non-Muslim names or had Muslim sleeping partners. It would appear therefore that the rioters had access to Government records from the Sales tax/Excise departments and the like which are not normally available.

The environment therefore was already highly charged and polarized, and a systematic hate campaign by right wing forces against the Muslim community was in progress.

II. The Burning of the Sabarmati Express: 27th February 2002

The *kar sevaks* had been going to Ayodhya since early February to participate in the construction of the controversial Ram temple at the site of the Babri Masjid. Various BJP MLAs (member of legislative assembly) had been arranging for tickets for the *kar sevaks* from the special quota allotted to them; many *kar sevaks* were also traveling ticketless. One of the trains on this route was the Sabarmati Express.

The Sabarmati Express departed from Muzaffarpur (in the state of Uttar Pradesh) on 25th February at 7:00 am, and was scheduled to reach Ahmedabad in Gujarat at 7:15 am on 27th February. In the early hours of 27th February, it was moving as per its original route, although running more than four hours late. On 25th afternoon it had passed the city of Faizabad (a station close to Ayodhya) at around 5:30 pm, from where an estimated 1,700 *kar sevaks* had boarded the train and occupied bogies number S-5 and S-6.

According to passengers, the *kar sevaks* were armed with trishuls and behaving like hooligans; many were drunk too. Most of them were traveling without tickets, and created a nuisance by making some of the passengers with reservations/ tickets of the S-6 bogie sleep on the floor. In fact the coach was so crowded that the ticket collector who tried to board the bogie later at Ratlam station was not able to enter. Eyewitness reports say that the *kar sevaks* moved about in the bogies dancing and shouting chants such as "wipe out every Muslim". They also beat up Muslim passengers and insisted that they chant *Jai Shri Ram*, and allegedly unveiled Muslim women on the train. News of this had spread such that Muslim women who caught the train to Ahmedabad that evening had been advised by relatives not to wear *burqas*. It is claimed that the train guard phoned his superiors from Meghnagar that *kar sevaks* were carrying explosive material in bogie S-6.

The train reached Dahod station (about one hour away from and 75 km up the tracks from Godhra) around 6 am on 27th morning, almost four hours after its scheduled time of arrival. A number of *kar sevaks* got out of bogie S-6 to have tea and snacks at a stall on the platform. Soon an argument broke out between them and the Muslim tea stall vendor – according to one account, they refused to pay unless he chanted *Jai Shri Ram*. The vendor refused and they started to smash up his stall, before climbing back into the bogie. The vendor filed a complaint with the railway police. News of these incidents traveled. (See Annexure 3)

Another Altercation at the Godhra station

The *kar sevaks* had been causing the delay of the train as the guard had been forced to make several emergency stops on their behalf. Therefore instead of arriving quietly in the middle of the night, the train arrived at Godhra junction at 7:42 am. The local people in the Muslim-dominated areas of Godhra town had been irritated by the 'abusive language' used by the *kar sevaks* while they were going to Ayodhya by the same train a few days earlier. They had reportedly raised slogans as the train approached Godhra on the return journey that morning.

The *kar sevaks* poured on to the platform, had more tea and snacks, and again refused to pay the vendor until he said *Jai Shri Ram*. Exactly what transpired between this Muslim vendor and the *kar sevaks* varies from one account to another. All witness accounts agree that there was a row. "They argued with the old man on purpose," one witness said. "They pulled his beard and beat him up... They kept repeating the slogan *"mandir ki nirmaan karo, Babar ki aulad ko bahar karo"*. ("Build the temple and throw out the Muslims...")

Suddenly the row took a dangerous turn: the *kar sevaks* allegedly grabbed hold of a Muslim woman. Her identity, and how she became involved, remains ambiguous, but four different accounts are available. One says it was the 16-year-old daughter of the abused vendor. She "came forward and tried to save her father". Another mentions a woman washing clothes by the railway line being hauled away. A third describes how a Muslim girl wearing a *burqa* and taking a shortcut to school through the station platform was pounced on and dragged into the bogie. The fourth mentions attempts on the daughter of a woman waiting to board a train to Vadodara to drag her inside the bogie. All agree that a Muslim woman was hauled into the bogie by the *kar sevaks*, who slammed the door shut and would not let her go. Refusing to be quoted by name, a local policeman seconded the story.

Word of what had happened began to spread. "The girl began screaming for help," said Ahmed, a wood dealer who was waiting for a train at the platform, "Muslims who were traveling on the train got off. People began pouring onto the platform to try to rescue her. I ran home – I could see trouble was brewing..."

The Fire Begins

Meanwhile the train began to pull out of the station after a 25-minute halt (as against the scheduled 5 minutes) at the Godhra station. The emergency chain was pulled from inside the train (from one of the three front general bogies of the 16-bogie train) and it halted briefly. It is said that the chain was pulled to give time to the remaining *kar sevaks* at the platform engaged in the altercation to board the train. The train restarted and within a few minutes it had reached Signal Falia², a Muslim neighborhood along the railway tracks, a kilometre from the Godhra station. It was again stopped by the emergency chain, this time reportedly in bogies S-5 or S-6.

An argument ensued, presumably in continuation over the earlier altercation, drawing hundreds of residents. "People in the vicinity ... started to gather near the train", says one eyewitness. "The mob ... requested that the *kar sevaks* return the girl. But instead of returning the girl, they started closing their windows. This infuriated the mob..." By this time the *kar sevaks* had piled in with swords and sticks and an almost 2000 strong crowd streamed in from the slum bringing petrol, gas, rags - anything that would burn. They attacked the train with stones and firebombs. They had procured diesel from the garages near the tracks. Diesel was thrown using cloth balls dipped in the fuel. The *kar sevaks* of almost equal strength also resorted to stone throwing which they had already collected near their carriages before the train left the Godhra station from the railway tracks. (See Annexure 4)

Police and railway officials say that they did not know who began throwing stones first. But the officials say that they believe that after about 10 minutes, one or more from the mob poured a flammable substance on a mattress and ignited it between the S-5 and S-6 bogies. Within moments, flames engulfed the bogie. The main target of the mob appears to have been coach S-6, which was badly burnt. By 8:30 am S-6 had gone up in flames. It was in this coach that 58 passengers were killed, including 26 women, 12 children and 20 men. One person died at the hospital, taking the toll to 59. They were all trapped inside as they had closed the doors and shutters of the carriage to escape from the missiles. In comparison, the adjoining coach, S-5 was not badly damaged, with only a few windows broken. The attack is estimated to have taken place between 8:05 and 8:15 am. The great heat of the fire inside had eaten away wide swirls of paint around the windows and scorched the steel sheeting such that it was brown. Inside, everything had been vaporised: flooring, ceiling, upholstery. Only the bones of the car remained, the charred framework of seats and beds. Here and there were a few melted flip-flops, blackened brass drinking mugs, and a burst sack of rice.

Following the burning of the bogie, other enraged *kar sevaks* then tried to attack a nearby mosque at Signal Falia. The police fired 30 tear gas shells and 14 rounds of live bullets to disperse them. The damaged coaches S-5 and S-6 were detached, and the train departed with the rest of the passengers at 12:40 pm. On the way to Ahmedabad, some *kar sevaks* reportedly stabbed 2-3 people at the Vadodara railway station. Meanwhile, the inquest and post-mortem of all the recovered bodies was undertaken by 4:30 pm.

Who was behind the massacre? : The Theories That Followed

The massacre soon became a political football.

The Chief Minister of Gujarat, Narendra Modi, initially said that the killings were an "organized terrorist attack", the work of *mujahedin* terrorists. Federal government sources speculated that they were "pre-meditated" or the work of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). At one point it was also seen to be a pre-planned

² The inhabitants of Signal Falia belong to the *Ghanchi* community of Muslims, mostly poor and with low literacy levels, reportedly conservative and prone to reacting. They allegedly indulge in petty crimes along the tracks, like looting, pick-pocketing and stealing of goods of passengers and railway property. They are also employed as vendors at the railway platforms, auto-repair workers, rickshaw pullers, auto-rickshaw drivers and small time wagon-breakers.

conspiracy by the local Muslim community (*See Annexure 5*). Yet another view was that the attack was entirely unprovoked and was the result of a rumour of an attack on a religious place at Dahod.

None of these theories mesh with the evidence. (*See Annexure 6*)

Senior police officials in Gujarat then concluded that the killings were not a "pre-planned" conspiracy by the local Muslim community but rather the result of "a sudden, provocative incident". In addition, a report from the Railway Protection Force (RPF) concluded that the killings resulted from a spontaneous altercation between the *kar sevaks* and vendors on the railway platform that escalated out of control. Eyewitness reports and those recorded from passengers traveling on the train have lent credence to this viewpoint.

The detailed RPF report blows to pieces some of the outrageous claims made by the Hindu right wing. They had alleged that Muslim passengers had been pre-warned and were asked to disembark from the train at the previous station of Dahod (and hence only Hindus were to be targeted for burning on the train). They also alleged that not a single Muslim student or teacher was present in schools in Godhra that day and only Muslim officials were on duty at the station (and hence facilitated the burning), all apparently being evidence of it being pre-planned. The RPF report refuted these charges. In response to claims that it was an attack planned by the ISI, investigators traced all long-distance calls made to Godhra from the evening of February 25, and discovered just two - both were made to Hindu homes.

Where were the police and fire brigade?

On the fateful day, there were only 3 SRP (Special Railway Police) men on duty; of the 111 GRP (Government Railway Police) officers stationed at Godhra, only 2 or 3 were on duty (*See Annexure 7*). Though the Fire Brigade station is only 5 minutes away from the railway station, it took a while for the fire brigade to reach the torched coach. Two GRP personnel reached the spot within minutes but they did not fire shots to disperse the mob. The arrival of fire fighters was delayed allegedly by a local leader named Bilal, according to one version; a second version says he was helping the victims.

There was some forewarning of violence from within the police itself, which had been ignored. Additional Director General of Police G. C. Raigar, had pointed out ahead of the incident that VHP volunteers were moving in and out of Gujarat and could instigate communal violence. He was removed from his post after presenting evidence to the media that law and order in the state could be compromised by VHP volunteers coming to and from Ayodha. He had also questioned the government's ability to provide security to the Hindu activists or take other measures. (*See Annexure 7*)

Status of investigations into the Godhra incidents

Initially, 62 persons had been arrested in connection with the Godhra train attack including seven minor boys in combing operations launched in Signal Falia. They were initially charged with crimes under the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance, now the Prevention of Terrorism Act. The charges under POTO were eventually dropped after considerable pressure because of its biased usage, but Chief Minister Modi reserved the state government's right to pursue charges against the Godhra arrestees under POTO at a later time "if thought fit." On 23rd May charge sheets were filed against the accused.

On 6th March, a one member Justice K.G. Shah Commission of Inquiry was set up to probe into the incident. The commission did not have a single sitting till mid May and on 21st May, the commission was expanded to include another person, Justice Nanavati. The investigations on the site are being conducted by the state CID and the Anti Terrorist Squad. Till 8th April, 19 bodies had still not been identified. Evidence had been sent for DNA and other forensic testing. Curiously, people were allowed to walk about freely inside the burnt S-6 bogie suggesting an alarming lack of seriousness on the part of the investigating agencies. Instead, the bogie in question rapidly became a pilgrimage site. Two pictures of Hindu Gods with burnt edges were placed side by side on a seat along with a slightly burnt Hanuman *chalisa* (hymns in praise of Hanuman, the dutiful companion of Ram).

Seven months after the S-6 compartment of Sabarmati Express was set afire at Godhra, the Railways is yet to make public the list of reserved passengers traveling in the bogie. The reserved passenger list for S-6 appears to have been treated as something of a state secret. Though the Gujarat government released the names of 39 of those who died - it is known that 19 victims have yet to be identified - the Western Railway list reveals a hitherto unknown fact: that one of the four passengers who suffered grievous injuries was a Muslim. All along, the government has been maintaining that most of the 58 persons killed when the S-6 coach of Sabarmati Express was set ablaze in Godhra were *kar sevaks*. But according to highly-placed railway sources, the reservation for the entire coach was from Lucknow and not Faizabad, which is about 120 km before Lucknow.

In early June five persons, all Muslims were made to undergo narco-analysis by administering to them truth serum to throw more light on the mystery behind the Godhra episode. Police got some important details about the gory episode of February 27 and names of 20 people responsible for the carnage that claimed 59 lives. This analysis led to the arrest of many Godhra accused. But investigators play down the 'revelations', saying that in fact, the truth serum couldn't extract important information.

In early July, a forensic report has brought to light that the mob could not have thrown inflammable materials from outside the train (*See Annexure 8*). The Ahmedabad-based Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) has now shown that almost 60 litres of inflammable material was poured from inside the bogie before it was set on fire. The Forensic Science Laboratory report is clear that the petrol was doused from inside. It is suspected that rather than a strong mob, a team of just 20 carried out the attack. In the light of the controversy surrounding the Gujarat Forensic Science Laboratory report which says that the inflammable liquid which destroyed S-6 was poured from inside the coach, the testimony of reserved passengers assumes vital significance.

III. The Violence That Followed: The Gujarat Carnage

VHP activists had called for a *bandh* (widespread closure of markets, offices, activities etc.) the next two days after the burning of the train at Godhra. It was reported that Narendra Modi had called for a meeting with police officials at his residence in Ahmedabad the evening of 27th February. The purpose of the two-hour meeting was to direct the officials not to take action against the VHP activists should anything happen. Modi apparently made it clear that there would be justice for Godhra during the *bandh* and ordered that the police should not come in the way of "the Hindu backlash". The Director General of Police, K Chakravarti, is said to have protested against such instructions, but he was asked to shut up by Modi. All this was revealed by a minister in the state cabinet who voluntarily spoke before the Concerned Citizen's Tribunal, a non-official tribunal investigating into the massacres. It clearly indicates that the head of a state government had by his directives promoted lawlessness from February 28th by directing the police chiefs to keep their forces under leash. It suggested a formal sanction given by the state to the subsequent killings (*See Annexure 9*). Various other factors also contributed to creating an atmosphere for violence.

The propaganda of the bodies of the Godhra victims

'Martyrdom' was accorded to the victims of the train carnage at Godhra. The charred remains of the bodies were brought to Ahmedabad in the early morning (2:30 am) of the 28th February. As the victim's remains entered the Sola Civil Hospital compound in a convoy of five trucks, the crowd of nearly 500 people including BJP ministers started shouting slogans like *Kar sevak, amar raho* (long live *kar sevaks*) and *Hindu ekta zindaba* (hail Hindu unity). Vows for vengeance and shouts of *Jai Shri Ram* resounded throughout the hospital. The government's decision to swiftly bring the charred remains of the victims of the train carnage to Ahmedabad and to allow public funerals was incendiary.

The Police Commissioner, P C Pandey, openly told the press that he opposed this and had advised the government to halt bringing the bodies to Ahmedabad. According to news reports, the VHP had wanted to carry the ashes of the dead around the country in an *asthi yatra* (carrying ashes in urns with ceremony) in order to whip up passions, but following protest by allies in the ruling government, they instead produced and distributed glossy pamphlets carrying photographs of half burnt naked bodies.

The irresponsible Gujarati vernacular press

The two widely circulated vernacular dailies, Sandesh and Gujarat Samachar are known to be communally biased. After the Godhra carnage, these newspapers came out with highly provocative write-ups, gory photographs and inflammatory headlines. In their reports and stories the provocation that preceded the Godhra carnage was ignored while the burning of the train and loss of lives was capitalised upon to build up mass anger against Muslims. The Godhra incident was described as “unforgettable” and the reaction to it justified. Sandesh reported on 28th February that the attacking Muslims at the Godhra station had abducted Hindu women from the train. A day later they carried a headline about women having been raped and their mutilated bodies found in Kalol in Panchmahal district near Godhra (*See Annexure 10*). The VHP and its supporters circulated these newspaper accounts around the state in order to incite people to retaliate. These stories were in part responsible for instigating the attacks leading to over 200 killings and large number of rapes and gang rapes of Muslims in this district alone. According to Kalol camp residents, the correspondent who filed the story also led mobs in Kalol on the 28th February. The Police Superintendent of Panchmahals verified to one fact finding team that the rumours of Hindu women being dragged off the train and raped were completely false.

Later, a letter dated March 18 was sent to the owner and chief executive of Sandesh by Narendra Modi personally expressing his high appreciation for the newspaper’s “restrained coverage” of the events in the best traditions of journalism. A similar letter was also sent out to the Gujarat Samachar.

The *bandhs* which broke all rules

It took a day for organized “retaliation” to begin. As demanded by the VHP, 28th February and 1st March were declared ‘Gujarat Bandh’ and ‘Bharat Bandh’ respectively. It completely paralyzed all commercial activity in the state. Traffic on the roads was thin and VHP and Bajrang Dal mobs had full control over the streets. Swords and liquor had already been distributed to them on the 27th. Therefore a *bandh* which under normal circumstances is called in a tense situation to prevent any untoward incident following tensions was used by the apparently organized mobs with full state complicity to kill innocent citizens. (*See Annexures 11,12 and 13*)

Delayed deployment of the army

Although 10 columns of the army i.e. 1000 personnel had been airlifted to reach Ahmedabad on the 28th of February, two columns had been dispatched to Vadodara and several to Rajkot and Godhra, sources in the army say that they got orders for deployment only on 1st March. Even then the government had limited their positioning to just flag marches. The local civil administration did not cooperate with them and were reluctant to provide guides and city maps. The army was also not provided logistical support to reach the interiors or villages that had become flash points for violence by the second week of March. (*See Annexure 14*)

Mapping the violence

Reports indicate that the violence was statewide, affecting at least twenty-one cities and sixty-eight provinces. Information from these areas also suggest a consistent pattern in the methods used, undermining government assertions that these were ‘spontaneous’ ‘communal riots.’ As one activist noted, “no riot lasts for three days without the active connivance of the state.”

Attacks on Muslims took place in 19 districts of Gujarat, and were particularly intense in 10 districts along the north-east and south west axis. The attacks took place in distinct phases. These districts were engulfed in the most organized armed mob attacks between February 28th and March 1st, 2nd and 3rd when most of the attacks were concentrated. This was the first phase of violence and the most intensive, bestial and horrifying, marked by large scale hacking, looting, raping and burning men, women and children to death. Mobs continued to be on the rampage until mid-March. Nowhere were the mobs less than 2-3,000, more often they were over 5-10,000 in number. The sequence of events shown in **Table 1 and 2** are reflective of the kind of violence perpetrated.

The second phase of violence (Table 2) began on the 15th of March the day of the ‘*Shiladaan*’ in Ayodhya. It was less intensive and destructive than the first few days of violence but was like a steady war of attrition. By this time the violence had spread to almost all parts of Gujarat, including some places which had never in history experienced communal tension. Areas seriously affected in the first few days of violence were not seriously

affected in this phase as the destruction there was complete and all the Muslims had fled to relief camps. This time Muslims every where were targeted, by destroying their means of livelihood, and their properties leaving them helpless without any means of survival. There was continued violence with incidents of stray stabbing, stone pelting and street level confrontations between both communities. A number of Muslims returning home in affected areas to retrieve their things were killed; in one incident a van full of Muslims being escorted by the police to a relief camp was set upon by a mob and burnt. A number of people of both communities were killed in police firing. Most places remained under curfew as incidents of looting and arson of abandoned properties took place.

Police Combing operations were initiated anticipating a retaliatory attack by Muslims because of the carnage in Gujarat. The Combing operations were carried out to arrest persons suspected of terrorism. However these combing operations were used to terrorize the already traumatized Muslim population. These were directed exclusively at Muslims and not the marauding mobs of RSS/VHP/Bajrang Dal activists. The Police would descend on localities and pick up any man and charge him under a variety of crimes, including the attempt to murder. Though many innocent Muslims have been arrested under the controversial and draconian POTO(Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance, now prevention of Terrorism Act) none of the activists named in the carnage have been arrested so far. In fear of arrests most men fled their homes with the result that women were subject to extreme forms of harassment. The police often acted with great brutality, beating people (resulting in serious injuries) destroying property, issuing threats and making arbitrary arrests under a range of charges, including Section 307 of the Indian penal code(attempt to murder). The police beat up women, including pregnant women, this was accompanied by statements such as “let it die before it is born”. Sexual and highly communal threats were also used in addition to extremely abusive language, in fact derogatory language and abuse against their religion was a frequent feature of these police combing operations. They also beat up infants and young children, elderly and ill people in their homes. **Table 3** details these violations.

Police atrocities against residents of affected localities during combing operations have been so wide spread and extensive that people have lost all faith in the police after their traumatic experiences in so-called combing operations and the cynical and persistent denial of justice. E.g. in Bahar colony of Ajwa road, women went out to request the police to set up a police point as tension had been increasing in the wake of the violence. The police not only refused to listen to the women, but beat them with police batons to force them into their homes. The sheer brutality of the loss of life and indignity with which the killings have been orchestrated, cloud a major motive behind the genocidal attacks on the Muslim Community: Economic Decimation. The Muslim community in Gujarat is one of the most prosperous in the country and its contribution to the economy of the state is pivotal. The fact that the economy of this section of the population has been made a direct target suggests a deeper and long-term motive behind the destruction.

Details of Losses suffered:

- 38,000 Million Rupees estimated losses suffered by Muslim community.
- 30,000 Million Rupees estimated to have been lost due to closing down of Shops, industries and commerce, the Gujarat chamber of commerce puts the figure as 20,000 Million Rupees.
- 1150 Hotels burnt in Ahmedabad alone.
- 6000 Million Rupees loss to the Hotel Industry
- 5000 Million Rupees worth of property lost due to hotels and restaurants being burnt down in Bhavnagar, Ahmedabad etc.
- 20,000 workers from the hotel industry rendered jobless.
- Over 1,000 trucks estimated to have been burnt.
- Transport companies lost business amounting to 700 million rupees.
- 10,000 Million rupees lost in damage to textile mills in Surat alone.
- 55 Mosques and Dargahs destroyed in Ahmedabad City and District alone. 180-200 Mosques and Dargahs destroyed in other places.
- 20,000 two- wheelers and 4,000 cars were burnt. Insurance claims worth 80,000 Million lodged by owners of two and four wheelers.
- 90% of commercial establishments have been wiped out on national Highway no 8.

Table 1 : Intensive Phase of the Violence Feb 28th to 3rd March

	Areas Intensively Affected	Attacks on People	Attacks on Women (see Annexure 17)	Instruments used	Profile of Mob	Property Destroyed	Main People Accused
1.	Ahmedabad District (Naroda Patiya, Vatwa, Paldi, Gomtipur. In Ahmedabad City)	More than 200 men, women and children hacked and burnt to death and thrown into a well. 7-8 people killed in Vatwa, several others missing. 29 people killed in Gomtipur.	10-12 women stripped and gang raped before being hacked and burnt. Pregnant women had their bellies slashed open and the foetuses thrown into the fire.	400-500LPG Cylinders spears, swords, acid, solvents & petrol /Diesel bombs. Tear gas used to flush out victims hiding inside mosques. Chemicals used to burn buildings to the ground.	Armed mob of 15000 people wearing khaki half-pants, Saffron T-shirts and black hair bands. Identified as Bajrang Dal/VHP activists.	All houses and business belonging to Muslims looted & destroyed by mobs, which were at it for 4 days. All shops in Naroda Gaon belonging to Muslims gutted. Estimated 875 houses completely destroyed, 65 Bungalows destroyed in Saifee/ Burhani Society.	Pravin Togadia(VHP)Dr. Jaideep Patil(VHP leader), Padyuman Mistry Balbhai Patel(BD), Vijay dada, Bharatbai Rabati, Harish & Manoj Lakshman Bhai Koshti(Shiv Sena Leaders). Babubhai Patel, Mahesh Patel,(Bajrang Dal) Girish Pandya & Amita Patel(BJP corporator) led the mob. Several Police personnel have also been indicted.
2.	Chamnura (locality in Ahmedabad City).	70 people were cornered by a raving mob for 7 hours Tortured, butchered and almost all burnt to death, including former member of parliament Ehsan Jaffri.(See Annexure 15)	10-12 women were stripped, gang raped publicly, chopped to pieces and then burnt.	Swords, sticks, stones acid bulbs, bottles, petrol bombs, burning cloth balls, 10-12 gas cylinders used to blow up buildings.	An armed mob of 20,000-22000 shouting 'jai Shree Ram!' mainly consisting of people known to the survivors, they came from the neighbourhood.	The entire Gulberg housing society looted and burnt.	Deepak alias Pradeep(BJP worker),Kapil (Bajrang Dal supplied Trishuls and petrol.Chunnilal Pratapji (Ex Municipal corporator BJP).25 other RSS/BJP/VHP/ Bajrang Dal supporters named.
3.	Sabarkantha, District	94 Villages affected, 60-67 people burnt alive in the vehicle in which they were trying to flee the attackers, 2 nationals from UK also murdered in a separate incident.		Swords, <i>trishuls</i> . Large knives used. Mob with guns riding motorcycles chased, intercepted and attacked fleeing Muslims. Roving mob in vehicles	1000 –2000 strong mob roamed around villages leaving behind a trail of destruction. Mostly VHP/RSS/Bajrang Dal activists.	550 Houses destroyed, 15 Mosques and Dargahs destroyed, Muslim population wiped out where ever they were small in number.	KaluBhai Malwad(BJP)

				stayed on highways for days to prevent survivors from reaching relief camps.			
4.	Panch mahal, District	400 villages affected, mob chased Muslims to a nearby canal, cornered them, before hacking and killing them. 38 people known to be dead, several others missing. 60-70 people estimated to have been killed in Pandharwada village alone. 32 people killed in kalol. 35 people killed in other villages.	8 Women including a 3 ½ year old baby and a woman who was 9 months pregnant were taken aside brutally raped before being killed and burnt(See Anexture). In another incident several women including a 13 year old girl were brutally raped.	Swords, bamboo sticks, daggers, agricultural instruments. petrol & dies el – kerosene tins. Acid & other chemical solvents used. tear gas was used to disperse the crowd of fleeing Muslims. The tribal people used Bows and arrows, which had their tips, dipped in kerosene and were set on fire.	15,000 BJP/VHP & Bajrang Dal activists and leaders, mainly known people but reports of outsiders being led by Village leaders are also there. Tribal population from nearby hills had also been mobilised against the Muslims.	250 Houses destroyed in Kawant village alone, 190 houses destroyed 71 houses, 14 grocery shops, 200 livestock stolen. Property worth more than 10 million Rupees destroyed in the entire district	Vinod Ambal al Bhoi(Bajrang Dal president)Jaswant Manilal Patel (BJP) District Sub Division Panchayat head. Anil Mood (Sarpanch - Panchayat leader), Mahendra Vakil , Chamunda Sanjay VHP District president Godhra.
5.	Mehsana district	48 known dead, most people hacked and burnt to death. In some cases acid was thrown on victims after being slashed by swords. 29 people were cornered and electrocuted to death in one of the villages.		Swords, <i>darias</i> (large knife), sticks, acid, petrol, lighters and country made bombs. Electric apparatus for electrocution of people cornered in a house.	RSS/VHP activists from surrounding villages. Many people were known faces.	65 homes burnt down in Sardarpur village alone, 20-25 homes in Matopur village destroyed.	People involved arrested and subsequently released on bail.
6.	Vadodra City (Best bakery , Chhota Udaipu	18 people who had stayed back were cornered in a building hacked and burnt. And properties of all the Muslims were looted and burnt.		Petrol bombs, Swords used.	500-700 attackers from neighbouring areas as well as Tribals from neighbouring villages interested mostly in arson and	65 properties, 40 houses, 25 shops, estimated losses of 15 Million rupees in Chhota Udaipur. 36 houses destroyed in Tarsali, estimated losses of 8 Million rupees in Tarsali.	Subhashbhai of Bajrang Dal, Niraj Jain(President of Vadodra Chapter of Bajrang Dal),

	r)				looting.		
7.	Anand District	28 people locked in a house and set on fire.		Petrol/ kerosene bottles, Stones, petrol bombs, LPG cylinders.	Armed mob of 3000 RSS/VHP activists arrived in vehicles, and chased fleeing Muslims.	All 200 houses, 2 mosques, 5 Dargahs all razed to the ground and Bulldozed to the ground in Odh village alone.	RSS/VHP/BJP activists named. 23 activists were arrested, BJP ex minister Dillipbhai Mani are helping the activists out with their cases.
8.	Kheda District	40 people killed in Ode village, 28 people killed in Sardarpur village, 30 others from neighbouring villages killed. Muslim population wiped clean in areas where they were small in number.	One of the survivors of gang rape had the Hindu symbol of OM cut out on her head. Mutilation of women's breasts was another common feature. Women and men had Om cut out on other part of their bodies also according to hospital reports.	Trishuls, Swords, Guptis(Butchers knife), revolvers and inflammable material used to burn Muslim owned establishments.	3-4 leaders with mobile phones, led 7-8000 strong mobs wearing saffron headbands using abusive language surrounded the village from three sides and then attacked leaving the victims no where to run.	659 Houses,90 Shops, 19 Mosques/Shrines, 8 businesses including Hotels, Mills, theatres etc. Property worth 7 million rupees destroyed.	RSS, VHP and Bajrang Dal activists, Pankajbhai Patel & Vinod Bhai Patel (BJP).

***Solvents and Chemicals powders were used like – Lak Jel, Spice Filing Compound, SEA GEL Spice Filing, CACT TAC NO 1063 DT 1702-99. In each place these three chemicals from the same manufacturer seem to have been used to ensure a degree of heat that is so high as to guarantee complete destruction.*

*Source – Violence in Vadodra: A report by People's Union for Civil Liberties, and Vadodra Shanti Abhiyan- may 2002
Genocide Gujarat 2002 – Communalism Combat.*

Table 2: Second Phase of violence. (see Annexure 18)

Dates of Incidents	Areas Affected	Type of attacks carried out	Profile of the mob	Role of the police.	Instruments used	Economic losses	Main People Accused.
10 th -15 th March.	Vadodra city- localities affected (Macchipe eth/ Fatehgunj/ Kawant taluk/ Audhoot	Stone throwing from both sides and incidents of arson and looting. Areas like Fatehgunj were experiencing rioting for the first time, incidentally there were no problems even after the Godhra carnage. Tension mounted due to the 'ram dhun' processions and rumours. Some of the leaders of the procession were also seen	500 strong rally of RSS/VHP/Bajrang Dal activists, part of the 'Ram Dhun' procession, who turned unruly and looted and burnt Muslim properties on the way, some even took off their pants and danced on the streets. They all wore	Police fired at the Muslim population and lobbed tear gas shells at them instead of the mob, in some other areas they were silent bystanders.	Trishuls and Swords, stones and bottles, firecrackers,	All Muslim houses destroyed , and economic losses of around 70 Million Rupees are estimated due to destruction of textile mills , industrial units and shops.	Jagdish(Shiv Sena), Ajay Dave(BJP), Milind Ambegaonkar and Police officials.

17 – 31 st March	nagar, Makkarpu r). Ahmedabad city, Sabarkantha District, Vadodra city,	asking police to direct fire at the Muslim people Incidents of rioting arson and looting, . Attacks on residents of relief camps at Kalol. People of both communities killed in Police firing, 11-12 Stray incidents of Stabbing in different areas . Minor incidents of stone throwing on both sides.	saffron bands and carried saffron flags. Some resorted to attacking Muslim neighbourhoods and threw firecrackers at them. LPG Cylinders used to blast Mosques and burn Shops. 1000 strong rampaging mob setting fire to manufacturing units and shops and vehicles. Mob of 200 attacked residents at Kalol relief camp. Mobs were from the same area and were more interested in arson and looting, casualties are few compared to the 1 st phase of violence. A mob of 25000 activists collected in Vatwa junction and tried to attack neighboring areas.	Police resorted to firing to disperse mobs killing people of both communities, tear gas shells were used to disperse large mobs. However the police did not prevent or attempt to stop arson and looting giving excuses that the fire was too strong.	Stones, Bottles, Daggers, and petrol bombs Inflammable materials.	Textile dye units and wholesale cloth markets completely gutted, causing losses of Rupees 150 Million in Ahmedabad alone. Tension prevailed in all areas and shops remained closed in many areas.	Police Personnel involved in firing and injuring Muslims. Unidentified arsonists.
1 st to 15 th April.	Behrampur and Mehsana District, Ahmedabad, Vadodra , and other towns and villages in central and north Gujarat.	Incidents of large-scale arson of properties belonging to Muslims waiting in relief camps. A number of people killed in stray incidents of stabbing and police firings. A family of five Muslims also burnt to death.	Mobs attacking in Vejalpur and Johapura were 10-15000 strong of people from neighboring areas. And in some place an unruly mob of 15 – 20 people set about setting people and properties on fire. Mob of 70-100 people attacked children going to exam centers to take exams. Mostly VHP/RSS supporters as well as the police in some places.	29 innocent people were killed by the police in trying to control the mob, 1 person had his head blown off when he stepped out to take photographic evidence of police misdemeanors. In some areas police took part in stone pelting, Police were ineffective as houses 50 yards from the police outpost were gutted. In one case police dragged a resident out and beat him up. In another one person was hacked to death next to the police post. Though the police were present, they were ineffective.	Sharp instruments, stones , bottles, daggers and inflammable materials.	A number of deaths due to indiscriminate police firing, large -scale arson of shops and houses. Places of worship were also completely destroyed. 50 houses in Ahmedabad and 60 houses in Behrampur alone were destroyed.	Mr. Parmar, Ahmedabad collectorate & PI SD Sharma. led an attack on a relief camp. Several Police personnel named.

Source – Violence in Vadodra: A report by People’s Union for Civil Liberties, and Vadodra Shanti Abhiyan- May 2002
Genocide Gujarat 2002 – Communalism Combat.

Table 3: Police combing operations and effect on women in Vadodra

Date	Area	Details of Attacks on Women/ Children/Elderly (<i>see Annexure 18</i>)
March 1	Madar Mohalla	Women injured in Police firing,(Hazarabbi) sustained tear gas shell injuries on neck and hands, and Deewan Sameena injured on ear lobe by shell.
March 15	Rain Basera & Wadi tai Wada	Policemen used coarsest of abuses with explicit sexual &religious connotations. many women injured in police operations including pregnant women. One woman got kicked in the pubic region. 14 women injured in Wadi tai Wada, one woman had fractured her arm in 3 places. Police stepped on 6-month-old baby.
March 17	Bahar colony & Borsali Apts.	Police beat up women with police batons(lathi charge), Several women with serious injuries, including a pregnant women,
March 18	Roshanagar, Tulsiwadi	Attacks on houses, shops, several women injured by police, a pregnant women and a31/2 year old child, and 20 young boys taken away.
March 25	Bawamanpura, Kagda, chaal and Imran chambers	Drunk policemen, use verbal and physical abuses , old women and pregnant women beaten up so much that old surgical incisions start giving trouble.
April 26-29	Wadi tai Wada	Repeated visits by police, abusing women with filthy language, threatened with sexual violence, physical abuse of disabled and young women.
April 27	Raja Rani Talva & Haathi Khana	Women injured by police, At least two pregnant women injured in police abuse. In Hathi Khana, 25 policemen in plainclothes attacked homes, several women were roughed up, two were shot and had to be taken to hospital, a pregnant woman was kicked in the stomach.
April 28	Badri Mohalla	People in these localities were attacked with active connivance with the police, the police forcibly entered homes of the victims, assaulted women and indiscriminately arrested men.
May 2	Sabina park	Instead of curbing miscreants pelting stones the poli ce beat up old citizens and women, including a pregnant woman who was hit on her stomach and back. The police were drunk.

Source Violence in Vadodra: A report by People's Union for Civil Liberties, and Vadodra Shanti Abhiyan- may 2002

IV. The Role of the State and Various Institutions

The groups most directly responsible for violence against Muslims in Gujarat include the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, the Bajrang Dal, the ruling BJP, and the umbrella organization Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (National Volunteer Corps, RSS), all of whom collectively form the Sangh Parivar (or "family" of Hindu nationalist groups). These organizations, although different in many respects, have all promoted the argument that because Hindus constitute the majority of Indians, India should be a Hindu Theocratic state.

The BJP, RSS, VHP, Bajrang Dal and associated organizations had allegedly penetrated State institutions and organizations during the BJP rule in Gujarat. The Government machinery in Gujarat is watched closely by the RSS/VHP and Bajrang Dal aided by the ruling BJP in power. The Gujarat government functions not as a constitutionally bound, non-partisan and independent body, but one controlled by, and answerable to the Sangh Parivar. The role and functioning of the Gujarat government, therefore, is directly influenced by its penetration by the Sangh Parivar including its most extremist elements the VHP and Bajrang Dal. This fact underlies the conduct of the Gujarat government before, during and after the peak period of communal violence.

Instead of intervening and taking decisive action against the state government, the Central Government has also chosen to minimize the seriousness of what has happened, with senior Central government leaders early on alleging foreign involvement in the Godhra train massacre. Without this sustained and consistent support, the Modi government could not have continued in power or have been emboldened to continue with its anti-constitutional activities.

Role of the State Administration

- **Relief Camps and Provisions**

The Gujarat Government has not set up a single relief camp. This has been left to other Muslim/Hindu religious/political organizations. District Collectors interpret the lack of orders to organize relief camps as specific orders not to organize them. All the camps visited by fact-finding teams highlight the absence of any government provisions. District authorities lack a comprehensive list of camps located within a district, and only recognize some camps, and due to the recognition of camps based on stipulated conditions only, many camps receive no relief. Some camps initially recognized have subsequently been de-recognized since they did not meet the stipulated requirements.

The supply of rations to the camps was also irregular and far short of the slated amount. The State Government has failed to provide minimum standards of sanitation and clean drinking water, public health and education for the survivors of the Gujarat carnage. Government authorities are also reported to be absent from many Muslim camps. There is no record of the number of persons in relief camps, hence figures available with the government are serious underestimates. In effect, a system is in place aimed to deny relief: through non-registration of camps, through faulty recording of number of residents and through the lack of a system of redress.

After the relief camps were set up, at least for 15 days the police obstructed the relief efforts/ activities of voluntary/ non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Muslim organizations. Given the scale of displacement it is next to impossible for private organizations to provide relief without assistance from the State. The State neither wants to help victims nor enable others to do so.

When pressure started building against the State Government to restore 'normalcy', for the Modi government it was defined by 'the winding up of relief camps'. The government wanted to disband the camps as soon as possible for two other reasons as well: they wanted to stop the filing of cases against the main functionaries of Sangh Parivar and the police, which was being done from the camps with the help of some organizations. They also wanted to avoid having to dole out any compensation package.

- **Resettlement**

The government has taken no initiative resettling the displaced persons in their own localities. If at all some rehabilitation is intended, it is restricted to outlying areas away from the city and areas of low productive economic activity.

- **Education**

The Modi administration refused to postpone the School Leaving Certificate Course exams although thousands of Muslim students under psychological pressure created by the carnage were not in a position to appear. Most of them did not have houses; they had lost their family members, often burnt alive before their eyes. Many were staying in camps without any books and in no conditions to prepare for the examinations. Even where the houses had not been burnt and looted, there was hardly an atmosphere of amity. Most of the examination centers were also located in Hindu residential areas, and it was impossible for Muslim students to venture into these.

Schooling has practically come to a standstill, apart from religious classes in some of the camps. The government has made no provisions for this. There is a need to initiate some income generating schemes of the camp inmates. Many residents lack every sort of personal belonging considered necessary for day to day life.

- **Survey of Damage**

There is no survey of this destruction made by any administrative wing of the government, neither any proposal to conduct one so far. The government administration was finding it difficult to identify the people killed. Officers alleged that surviving kith and kin were giving false estimates of deceased people from each family, because if which the government did not want to announce any compensation package for the surviving family members.

The victims are being asked to produce certificates/proof of residence/death/injury /loss of property, etc. The local administration is not willing to give any such proof. Moreover, the Muslims are not in a position to go out to approach the Hindu-dominated and communal officers for such certificates. The state authorities are also not ready to provide security or protection to the inmates of the camps to go back to their residential localities.

- **Livelihoods**

Several people have been rendered homeless and without means of a meaningful livelihood, the Government has not made any provisions for an alternative sources for employment and has refused to provide basic security for them to reach their place of work as a result many have lost their jobs. Economic rehabilitation of the Survivors seems to be last on the Governments agenda in view of the fact that it has taken no steps to provide security and the very basic needs for living.

- **Investigations**

Various sources point out the double standards in dealing with the Godhra train carnage case and the post-Godhra riots. The police invoked POTA only against the Godhra accused, to drop it later under pressure. Then the government announced Rs 2 lakh compensation to Godhra victims and Rs 1 lakh to the riot victims, again restoring parity after some weeks of criticism. The Godhra case also has a special public prosecutor who gets Rs 7,000 for every hearing, while those pursuing riot cases get paid as per the measly government rates. In Ahmedabad, where some of the biggest massacres took place in Naroda-Patiya and Gulbarg Society, there is no attempt to use narco analysis as used with the accused in Godhra to find out whether the officials and leaders accused are telling the truth or not.

The state government has failed to provide adequate and timely humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons in Gujarat. Problems include serious delays in government assistance reaching relief camps, inadequate state provision of medical and food supplies and sanitation facilities, and lack of access and protection for non-governmental (NGO) relief workers seeking to assist victims of violence. Muslims have also been denied equal access to relief assistance. The state authorities are also not ready to provide security or protection to the persons in the camps to return to their residential localities.

Role of the Police

The infiltration of the police force by the Sangh Parivar is deep, insidious and at all levels – from the constable upwards. Reports reveal that over the last year, postings and transfers of police personnel have been activated directly by the local Sangh leadership. During the first phase of violence in Gujarat, in a visible expression of saffronisation of the police force, the State Government effected mass transfers of officers who took prompt

action to curb the communal violence. Similarly, officers serving the ruling party's' interests have been rewarded.

The role of the police during the violence has been described as ineffective and partisan (*See Annexures 19 and 20*). In almost every event investigated, the police failed to prevent attacks on Muslims, in most instances by not responding to calls for help. Whenever the police did arrive, they either came too late or were passive bystanders to the violence. In some cases they also reportedly took active part in the attacks. A fact-finding team found graffiti left behind on the charred walls of a burnt madrassa in Sundarnagar, Ahmedabad which boasted of police support: *Yeh andar ki bat hai, Police hamarey saath hai* (This is inside information, the police are with us). There were however some cases where the police did escort Muslims to safer places.

The majority of people killed in police firings were also Muslims. (*See Annexures 21 and 22*) A clear communal bias can also be seen in the pattern of police arrests. While Muslims were arrested under several and multiple sections, including attempt to murder, Hindus were largely arrested for violating curfew. In order to show that Hindus were also being arrested in large numbers, the police resorted to arresting innocent and poor Hindus. In Indranagar, Makarpura, on 17th march, migrant workers from Bihar were dragged out of their homes and arrested by the police, where as those Hindus who were part of the attacking mobs in the area are yet to be arrested. None of the people arrested were VHP/RSS/Bajrang Dal or BJP activists.

The police combing operations rather than being an exercise to preempt further violence, in effect served to further terrorize the victims of violence while doing little to curb the real culprits. In addition the police, which is also the investigating agency for crime, made the quest for justice and punishment for the guilty seem almost impossible. The police have also refused to file FIRs, filed false FIRs or has refused to give copies of FIRs to victims (*See Annexure 20*). Survivors consistently testify that FIRs have not been registered, names of accused are not included in these and mass FIRs have been registered against unidentified 'mobs' even though in several cases, the survivors named the accused. For women the scenario is grimmer. With the partisan police, threats from the accused to withdraw complaints and a medical system that doggedly shies away from recording medical evidence crucial in sexual assault trials, the regular criminal justice system holds little hope for the victims and their families. As an embarrassment to the state police, the Centre (after receiving constant criticism regarding the collapse of law and order in Gujarat) later sent 'SuperCop' K.P.S.Gill (a senior police official who is attributed to have cleaned up terrorism in the Punjab), to take control and bring back law and order in the state. (*See Annexure 23*)

Role of Health Professionals and Services during the riots

The government does not seem to have tried to protect health services and maintain peoples access to them. Public hospitals have been working under threat of violence against their Muslim patients, mobs have attacked hospitals, prevented the injured from entering, moved around in wards, terrorizing and attacking patients and relatives.

According to reports, doctors have acted professionally within a narrow definition of the word. While they have not actively discriminated against any community, they have not made attempts to safeguard the rights of their patients or their peers. However they have hindered the process of securing justice for the survivors by not documenting medical evidence. Post-mortems were not conducted and medico-legal cases were not recorded, these will have serious consequences in the attempts of the survivors in securing justice. (*See Annexure 24*)

Though there have been several reports of systematic sexual assault on women, and the fact that several women have come to hospitals in a condition in which doctors would certainly suspect sexual assault, none of the doctors have filed cases of sexual assault. As a consequence, there is no medical evidence of sexual assault, on the basis of which women could seek justice.

Role of the Media

The national press in India played an overall responsible role and highlighted the political-administrative connivance in the carnage (*See Annexure 25*), the local Gujarati press has however played a major inflammatory role in the virulent anti-Muslim campaign. From provocative headlines, legitimizing rumours and reinforcing stereotypes, the local media was an active participant in the violence- with the state media and local cable channels working in conjunction with the prejudiced and communal state government of Gujarat. The state government criticized the 'secular media' by alleging in its report to the National Human Rights Commission that "while the vernacular press has been very balanced in their reporting the English language press has gone over the board in criticizing the government". Print and TV journalists told of the harassment they faced from VHP and other activists, various members of the media was also violently attacked (*See Annexure 26*)

The local media was used by the Sangh Parivar during the Gujarat carnage to make provocative and inflammatory statements aimed at inciting the public to violence. While some local cable channels did carry some official peace messages, it is alleged that they were politically exploited and some of their coverage amounted to incitement, particularly the JTV and Deep channels. The Police Commissioner, Vadodara, felt that the cable networks had "played havoc" and warned them. The licenses of two operators were suspended on March 17 after they showed live footage of rioting in the sensitive Macchipith area on March 15, when the VHP celebrated news of the performance of *shilanyas* at Ayodhya. This same footage was repeated the following day. The licenses were restored after 48 hours.

Pamphlets and handbills, many of them anonymous, were also brought out and widely circulated. One of these, officially disseminated by the VHP, calls for the economic boycott of Muslims. A four-page pamphlet circulating in Ahmedabad also from VHP carries an appeal for funds to provide security for Hindus. It reads: Your life is in danger, you can be murdered any time... We are collecting funds for securing the interests of the Hindus.....there are thousands of more Godhra carnages being planned". The most damaging of these pamphlets is an alleged secret RSS circular listing ways of killing or debilitating minorities. Newspapers also report the police seizure of a pamphlet urging Hindus to create a "jagrut Hindu rashtra", allegedly circulated by the Bajrang Dal president, Hastimal, who is said to have been arrested. The theme: "Don't purchase anything from Muslim shops, don't travel in their vehicles or visit their garages; don't watch films, which feature Muslim stars. In this way we can break their financial backbone". The same news item says that the police seized a pamphlet in tribal-dominated Banswara, exhorting Hindus to hang a saffron flag outside their homes to help identification during Moharram.

Technology in general was extensively used during the attacks. Rioters and middle class looters were directed by mobile phone. SMS messages were reportedly used to spread rumours to some people warning them that milk supplies had been poisoned. Others received telephone calls about a threatened rocket attack, setting off alarm and panic. Chain messages were sent by email. Muslims received threatening calls and forced to flee, after which many of their homes were looted and burnt. Hindus sheltering or aiding their Muslim neighbours etc. in any way also received threatening calls.

V. Gujarat Today: Life Under "Normalcy"

"The killings may have ended, but for the victims, their ordeal is not yet over. The victims are near starvation. The government has shut down the relief camps. There are no homes, no food and no jobs." This is what one member of the recent 30 member non-partisan NRI Gujaratis delegation on a 'Sadhanva Mission' (mission for harmony) to the violence-torn areas of Gujarat had to say in the second week of September – six and a half months after the violence began.

Unofficial figures read thus: nearly 2500 people killed, 19 out of 24 districts affected, 1.5 lakh rendered homeless.

Right from early March, at the peak of the tremendous violence in Gujarat, the BJP government at both the state and center have, despite all other media reports, continuously attempted to paint a picture of normalcy in the state. They have been justifying the post Godhra carnage as a “Hindu backlash”, with the Chief Minister justifying it by saying that “every action has an equal and opposite reaction”. Claims were made that the army had been deployed promptly, that violence had been controlled within 72 hours. Reports which followed of the NHRC, independent groups, citizen’s initiatives, international organizations etc., however all indicate that the state government facilitated the VHP and the Bajrang Dal to unleash a bloody socioeconomic and cultural war against the Muslim minority and also placed the entire state machinery at their disposal to do this task.

While it is true that the violence has abated (once in a while sporadic killings take place, the most recent at the time of the Ganesh Chaturthi festival during mid September), conditions have been made such for the minority community that they no longer feel the sense of security as one would living in one’s home, own state and country. Normalcy, it must be said is not a condition without violence, it is understood as a sense of security experienced by every citizen of a country irrespective of caste, class, religion, community and sex. This security should be ideally emanating from the belief that the state would uphold the fundamental rights of the citizen as enshrined in our Constitution and protect the “secular, democratic” (as in the Preamble to the Constitution) nature of our polity.

Below are indications of the environment, as it exists today in Gujarat – “normal”.

Explosive statements in times of “normalcy” and contradictions

Ashok Singhal, the VHP working President is reported to have told a gathering in Amritsar in the state of Punjab on 3^d September that Gujarat was a “successful experiment”, one which would be repeated “all over the country”. He spoke of how whole villages had been “emptied of Islam”, and how whole communities of Muslims had been dispatched to refugee camps. This was a victory for Hindu society, he said.

Right from the beginning there have been contradictions in the Sangh Parivar voices, thereby confusing the citizens of this country and causing the minority community to live in fear. While the Prime Minister said in New York in a recent visit there (early September) that “Gujarat was not good for us” and “Gujarat was a shame for the country”, the VHP in response declared that what happened in Gujarat after the Godhra killings was a matter of pride. The Deputy Prime Minister L.K. Advani while on one hand has been constantly backing Narendra Modi and failed to condemn his offensive insinuations against the Muslims ever since March, stated during his trip to London in August that what happened in Gujarat was “outrageous and indefensible”, a “blot” on the BJP Government and that he was “sorry that this happened.”

However, the statements and actions of the Government do not reflect this. While such statements of regret are made outside the country, they are conspicuous by their absence within the country. In fact, in early March the Prime Minister made the following statement at a BJP meet in the second week of April at Goa, “Wherever there are Muslims, they do not want to live with others. Instead of living peacefully, they want to preach and propagate their religion by creating fear and terror in the minds of others”.

The electoral gains being sought from the communal atmosphere

To gauge the success of this “experiment”, the BJP government conducted *Panchayat* (local village level) elections even as the state was in flames. It is alleged that those who led the mobs that chopped humans into pieces and threw them into fires were elected with big majorities. Next they dissolved the Assembly in order to seek a fresh mandate to capitalize on the violence, hoping to regain power by consolidating the Hindu vote against minority Muslims. After months of increasing tension over the possibility of elections, and pressure by the ruling party, the office of the Election Commission (EC) was finally allowed to visit the Muslim refugee camps in mid August. The team from the EC spoke to the affected persons and various wings of the state administration, and overruled elections in this vitiated atmosphere. The office of the EC was criticized in the most unconstitutional manner by the ruling party at the state and the Election Commissioner J.M. Lyngdoh targeted as being a minority himself and therefore biased. The elections at this time would have had another implication: abstinence of almost 12% of the population comprising of the Muslims from taking part in the

electoral process. Ganibhai, a camp resident said “I don't feel like voting at all this time. So why should I feel elated about the election dates getting postponed?” Mansoor Bhai, a relief camp organiser from Dahod, said “How can you possibly hold elections when such a large number of people don't even have homes? Lyngdoh is right, no one in the government and administration is making sincere efforts to rehabilitate the affected.” Ganibhai and Mansoor Bahi were echoing the sentiments of hundreds of thousands of Muslims made homeless by the violence.

Besides touting Modi as "the best Chief Minister in the country", the BJP is also stoking Hindu insecurities at this point of time. Across Ahmedabad it has put up banners displaying a photograph of the Sabarmati Express burning, with the slogan: “Who is for us?” The 'Gujarat Gaurav Samiti' published advertisements that said: “Who is the Election Commission for? The minority. Who is the National Human Rights Commission for? The minority. Who is the Minorities Commission for? The minority. Who is for us?”

On the brighter side, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson referring to the report of the Election Commission, expressed concern that “the slow progress in relief and rehabilitation work on the one hand and non-arrest and non-punishment of the guilty and fear of communal backlash on the other have hampered the process of restoration of normalcy to the State.” But no other UN intervention is being allowed, Gujarat has been declared a taboo topic at the UN.

The gaurav rath yatra

Another gimmick was planned by the ruling party to consolidate its vote base before the elections, and possibly to re-ignite more communal violence in the state - the '*gaurav yatra*', meaning a march for pride to restore the *asmitya* (self-pride) and *swabhimaan* (self-respect) of Gujarat. At this event, Narendra Modi used vulgar and offensive language in reference to the minority community revealing his bigotry when he said that the relief camps were “baby producing factories” and proclaimed that the family planning policies of the Muslims was “hum panch, hamarae pacchis” (we five and our twenty-five) obviously giving wind to the prejudiced notions propagated by them that Muslims have large families and very soon their population will outnumber that of the Hindus – a “conspiracy” of the minority to divide the country. The VHP state unit went a step further and declared that the audiotape of the same would be played and distributed in every village of Gujarat to create public awareness on family planning. It has also been learnt though news reports that the state administration forcibly closed schools and made children line up along the route of the *gaurav rath yatra* and also made them wear saffron scarves, wave BJP flags and raise communal slogans.

As if this was not enough, the VHP in mid September announced its plans to organize a yatra of *sadhus* to propagate Hindutva and educate the society against sinister designs of “anti-Hindu fundamentalists, who were out to create disturbances all over the country”. The timing of the yatra would coincide with the campaigning for the assembly elections in Gujarat, so as to help the BJP to garner votes in the name of Hindutva.

The usage of festivals

The BJP has also been using a series of Hindu cultural festivals to further polarise the community on religious identities. It began with the Jagannath Rath Yatra in July, then the Shobha Yatra was taken out on Janmashtami day, August 31. The latter was organised mainly by Sangh Parivar members in Rajkot, Modi's constituency and had “Fight against Terrorism” as its theme. Several floats and exhibits had replicas of the Sabarmati Express burning. But there was no mention of those among the Sangh Parivar who orchestrated the killing of more than 1,000 persons after the Godhra incident. After that came the Ganesh festival which ended with violence and more tension.

No action on the cases of rape, killing and looting and the existing threats to life

Months after, many women who were raped are seeing their aggressors roam scot-free, with police unwilling to believe them! “In my view, it is not scientifically and psychologically possible to have a sexual urge when the public is rioting,” says B.K. Nanavati, a deputy superintendent of police. According to the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, people from their villages are not allowing the women to return back to their homes unless they withdraw their statements. Their lives have been threatened. In one case a 15-year-old woman,

Suphiya Bano who had named the men who had raped her and was recovering in hospital suddenly died mysteriously. Aslambhai, a camp operator at Quresh Hall says, "We persuaded some people from Naroda Patiya to start living in the newly constructed houses. But they returned saying that they felt unsafe after they saw some rioters." In the light of the impending elections he adds, "How can one participate in an electoral process, if they see people who were responsible for the riots still moving about on the streets?" On the other hand, honest police officers have been shifted or transferred for speaking the truth to the nation being replaced by communal men.

Effect on habitat

The result of the violence in Gujarat is that Muslims have become refugees in their own state/country; they have been reduced to the status of second-class citizens by taking away their lives, livelihood and shelter. Statements made by the right wing consistently indicate their intention of getting rid of all the Muslims. First, the Sangh Parivar said that the Muslims should go into the Arabian Sea. Later, they said that they should go to Pakistan. Now after March they have literally forced the minority community, who had lost everything they ever had, to go to graveyards by organising relief camps there. The survivors actually lived there for months together in the most appalling conditions. The question is will the survivors be able to return to the villages, towns, colonies and suburbs where they originally lived and do they have the means to sustain themselves economically?

The relief announced by the Prime Minister is an eyewash. To add insult to injury the victims had been asked to produce incontrovertible certificates/proof of residence/death/injury /loss of property, etc. which entailed having to deal with a bureaucratic and highly communalised system. After closing several relief camps and forcing people to leave, the government has doled out pathetic sums as compensation to rebuild homes. Some people are still rebuilding their houses with the help of charitable agencies. It would be impossible for any family to rebuild their homes with the paltry sums that are being doled out. Their crisis is aggravated because, in a decisive and cruel departure from the past, soft loans for housing or livelihoods are not being extended to the survivors. Apart from some niggardly grants, they have had no support from public institutions to reconstruct their homes.

Many people still have not been able to return to their homes or their jobs. People are now scattered in rented houses around the *taluka* headquarters where the camps once were, or living in camp-like situations. They visit their homes in the daytime and are too scared to stay there at night. A few have returned to their villages but live ostracized and constantly fearful.

Social boycott

To a large extent the Hindu society in Gujarat has become communalized and polarised brought about by vested interest groups. Muslims are not served in restaurants. Muslim parents live in dread that their infants might forget what they have been told and give themselves away by saying "Ammi!" (mother in urdu) or 'Abba!' (father in urdu) in public and invite sudden and violent death. Says Mohammad Illias who recently got rehabilitated far from his original house, "My house was located in an area dominated by the majority community. When we were targeted on February 28, our neighbours shut us out. We were not ready to go back there." In fact, the NRI delegation mentioned above, had to beat a hasty retreat after it was surrounded by an angry crowd of 300 villagers in Kalol *taluka* of Panchmahals district when the delegation tried to persuade the villagers to allow the 400-odd Muslims to return home. Their cars were stoned and the leader of the team, Srikumar Poddar, was threatened with death in case he returned to the village. During his trip to the affected areas, the Election Commissioner asked Farida Bano, a Naroda Patiya resident, if she didn't want to go back home, she told him that she tried to go back once but was chased away by hostile neighbours. The camp organizers say that they were threatened while trying to repair damaged houses in the nearby area and even construction material was stolen.

Economic blockade of the Muslim community

The intention was definitely to permanently exclude the community from economic life. By such economic exclusion, the Sangh Parivar wanted to entice the majority community with promised benefits of a restricted labor market, a communal monopoly over local business, and the imaginary prosperity expected out of globalization. The shopkeepers have lost their shops and business, and there is no possibility of re-establishing

their shops because they are economically not well off enough. The cloth trade which was comprised of 99% Muslim workforce is virtually closed today. Automobile garages and construction business, too, are badly hit wherein 90% of those who repair cars and construct buildings were Muslims and many have left the city. Even the well-to-do sections among the Muslims are not able to recover soon because of the economic boycott call given by the VHP-Bajrang Dal combine. "Sometime back, I tried looking for work I was refused a living because most employers felt that they would invite trouble if they employ anyone from the minority community," said Zubeidabibi. Writes Malini Ghose, member of the women's fact finding team who was recently there after the camps had been dismantled, "I talked to Imtiaz who remembers the days before 'normalcy' — six months ago Imtiaz ran a cold drinks stall. 'We had a fridge, colour TV, sofa. Now we don't have soap to bathe.'"

Suffering education of Muslim children

Some relief camps are operating makeshift schools with volunteer assistance; however education of Muslim children has been completely disrupted. In the existing atmosphere, Muslim children are not welcome in regular schools. Families who have been rehabilitated far away from the cities do not have a single Government or a municipal school for miles surrounding the area. "There are only a couple of private schools around and without enough money to feed ourselves, how will we afford to educate our kids?" asks Ajmeri Sasmuddin, a father of five and former resident of Talod, Sabarkantha.

Depression and suicides by the survivors

An award-winning research-survey on 'PTSD in Riot Affected Women in Ahmedabad' by the psychiatry department of the government-run Civil Hospital has revealed that 37.6 % of the violence affected women surveyed suffered from PTSD, a serious anxiety disorder associated with traumatic events and can plague the victims for months and even years. For these women, the horror of the barbarism continues to manifest itself.

On an average, two or three families of survivors of the massacres are committing suicide, daily. The reason is they have no money, their savings have been used up, loans have to be repaid and business has come to a halt. They are choosing to end their lives rather than face humiliation.

It would appear that violence in Gujarat was the result of a well-planned conspiracy by the Sangh Parivar. Even in today's proclaimed state of "normalcy" Muslims in Gujarat live in a continuing state of fear, with none of their basic rights as citizens or humans met and no recourse to justice.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE – 1

Source: Communalism Combat: Genocide Gujarat 2002, March-April 2002, Year 8, No.77-78

Type: News report, page 12

Bajrang Dal activists on Sabarmathi Express beat up Muslims, force them to shout, ‘Jai Shree Ram!’

(*Jan Morcha*, edited by Sheetla Prasad, is a Hindi Daily published from Ayodhya. The paper carried the following story on 25th February. This is an English translation of the text).

Bhelsar (Faizabad), 24 February: *Trishuldhari* bajrang Dal workers, travelling to Ayodhya on board the Sabarmathi Express this morning, let loose a reign of terror upon dozens of helpless Muslim passengers, *burqa* (Muslim head scarves) clad women and innocent children. They also targeted the people waiting at platforms, forcing them to shout the slogan, ‘Jai Shree Ram!’ A few even declared themselves to be Hindus in order to escape their wrath.

According to eyewitnesses, close to 2000 *trishul* carrying Bajrang Dal workers on board the Sabarmathi Express coming from the direction of Lucknow, began indulging in these activities from the Daryabad station. Anyone identified as a Muslim on the train was mercilessly attacked with *trishuls* and beaten with iron rods and dragged, people waiting at the platforms were also similarly targeted.

This continued between Daryabad and Rudauli Stations. According to an eyewitness, a youth who protested against this barbarism was thrown off the train between the Patranga and Rojagaon stations. Several women, badly wounded and covered in blood, jumped off the train as it pulled into Rudauli station around 8:00 a.m. The Bajrang Dal activists also got off the train and started attacking those whom they identified as Muslims from among those present on the platform.

Ata Mohammad, from Takia Khairanpur, waiting to catch a train to Allahabad, was badly beaten, some others were forced to shout, ‘Jai Shree Ram!’ some escaped by declaring that they were Hindus. 50-year-old Mohammad Absar who lives near the station was grabbed as he stepped out of his house. His long beard was rudely pulled before he was repeatedly stabbed with *trishuls*. Another man from Rudauli police station area who happened to be at the station was badly beaten with iron rods. Local residents rang up the police.

By the time the Police *Chowki* (Police Station)-in –charge, Bhelsar, arrived at the station, the train had left and the injured were being rushed to the hospital. No report was registered at the police station since the officer-in-charge was unavailable. The injured have no idea why they were attacked. Rumours are rife. The people are petrified; respected Hindus and Muslims of the area have condemned the shameful attack, Muslim religious leaders have appealed for peace and requested that there be no retaliation.

ANNEXURE – 2

Source: Communalism Combat: Genocide Gujarat 2002, March-April 2002, Year 8, No.77-78

Type: Collection of quotes, page 7-8

February 7: “The speedy construction of the Ram temple is the only befitting reply to Islamic Terrorism which has shaken the pillars of even the Indian parliament,” he said. Togadia said it was high time the government banned the *madrassas* (centres of Islamic education) in the country as they have been converted into factories manufacturing Islamic militants.”

Pravin Togadia, VHP International general Secretary, in The Times of India.

Feburary 7: “I told you, we have had an overdose of these pseudos whom you so fondly call secularists can no longer fool the Hindus who are aware of the elaborate plan to damage our religion and religious beliefs. Take it from me that our level of tolerance can be stretched no more. And those who come in our way will be pulverised.”

Acharya Giriraj Kishore, VHP senior vice-president, in an interview to rediff.com.

Feburary 7: “We wouldn’t want to sacrifice the present BJP-led centre that is sympathetic to our cause. But if it has to go at some stage in the cause of the Ram temple construction, we can’t help it.”

Ashok Singhal, VHP international president, The Indian Express.

Feburary 7: “It will either have to be Pakistan or the mandir. The Mosque constructed by Babar at Ayodhya 450 years ago by destroying the Ram temple and the September 11 Attacks on the World trade centres are symbols of Islamic Jihad. It is necessary for India, Jews and the Western world to come together and fight Islamic militants.”

Pravin Togadia, VHP, at a press conference in Mumbai, The Asian Age.

Feburary 7: “ If our government is ready to finish Pakistan, we are ready to wait. However, our two demands are, take over Pakistan and allow the temple construction. If one is not happening, the other will. Therefore, we have given time to the government till March 12.”

Pravin Togadia, VHP, at a press conference in Mumbai, Times of India.

Feburary 11: “Solution to the Kashmir politics lies through Ayodhya...the Jehadi mindset has to be defeated at all costs.”

Pravin Togadia, VHP, at a news conference in Bhubaneswar, PTI.

Feburary 11: “Besides contesting the legal action, VHP can go to the people and say that matters of the faith cannot be decided by court. They can cite a precedent. The Muslims did not accept the Supreme Court verdict in the Shah Bano case and at that time, Congress had brought in a legislation to change that verdict.”

Jana Krishnamurthy, BJP president, in an interview in RSS mouthpiece *Panchajanya*, quoted in the Times of India.

Feburary 14: “We cannot wait for the judiciary to decide the faith of a particular community.”

Pravin Togadia, VHP, at a press conference in Vijaywada, Newstime.

February 14: “Today a situation has come when no railway station or bus station is safe from the threat of attacks from Islamic terrorists. The only option left before the country is to declare a full-fledged war against Islamic Militants and defeat it, roundly and squarely.”

Pravin Togadia, VHP, at a press conference in Vijaywada, Deccan Herald.

February 19 : “ The Jehadi mentality that led Babar (Mughal Emperor) to destroy the Ram Temple at Ayodhya more than 400 years ago was the same mentality that led to partition of the country in 1947, attack on the World Trade Center at New York on September 11 last year and attack on Parliament on December 13, 2001.”

Pravin Togadia, at a press conference in Bhopal, PTI.

February 21: New Delhi: The Vishwa Hindu Parishad today warned of a “ Hindu Backlash” against those daring to oppose the construction of a Ram Temple in Ayodhya on March 15, even as it made it clear that nothing would now delay the project even for a day. Several VHP leaders spoke simultaneously from different parts of the country- Ashok Singhal and Acharya Girija Kishore here, Parvin Tondia from Jaipur and Sadanand Kakade from Kochi- as if to hammer home the point that they are determined to start gathering the crowds of Kar Sevaks (Voluntary Workers) at Ayodhya from this weekend to get a 10 Lakh strong crowd by March 15 when construction would begin at the Pravesha Dwar (entrance of the Temple), where Shilanyas was performed in the late Eighties.

Ashok Singhal, VHP in The Hindu.

February 21: “When we say clearly there was a temple it is the birth place of Ram, the Muslims refuse to discuss the matter.”

Ashok Singhal, VHP responding to the suggestion of a negotiated settlement over Ayodhya, The Times of India.

February 22: The Sant who has been the spearhead of the Ram janmabhoomi movement and a major Hindutva protagonist has given a call for arming all Hindus “if India was to be saved from disintegration.” Ramachandra paramahans, who heads the powerful Digamabar Akhara in Ayodhya, feels it was high time India discarded the ‘Soft State’ tag.

Paramhans argued that the Ram janmabhoomi movement was also aimed at elimination of terror and in these disquiet times, all Hindus should be given arms. He asserts, “Even we are ready to suspend the temple movement and engage ourselves in the protection of our borders.”

Ramachandra Paramhans, Chairman, Digamabar Akhara in Ayodhya, The Pioneer.

February 22: “BJP does not need Muslims to form government in UP.”

Atal Behari Vajpayee, PM, at an election rally in Varanasi, The Asian Age.

February 23: (Bajrang Dal National convenor) SK Jain said 20 lakh Dal activists carrying the “trishul” would march to Ayodhya adding, “they are ready to face any situation.” The dal leader said: “If any Muslim organisation makes an attempt to rebuild the Babri masjid at Ayodhya, the Bajrang Dal would chant Hanuman Chalisa at Delhi’s Jama Masjid.”

The Dal had drawn up a list of 3,000 mosques across the country that was built after demolishing temples, Jain said. If Muslims did not respect the sentiments of millions of Hindus, the Dal would not be able to stop a “massive upsurge” against these Mosques, he said at the VHP office.

SK Jain, Bajrang Dal national convenor, The Telegraph.

February 23: Vadodara: An altercation between people and VHP supporters in Tankaria village, Bharuch, over an alleged incident of Cow slaughter turned violent when a man died in police firing. Trouble started when some VHP men, led by Vadodara-based advocate Jatin Vyas, went to Tankaria around 12 noon to record on camera what he said was large cow slaughter. “Last year, too, our men with the help of police seized some cow-laden trucks near the village. Along with some VHP men, I went to the village to film the slaughter,” Vyas said. He sought police intervention to stop the alleged slaughter.

Jatin Vyas, VHP leader.

February 26: NEW DELHI: A defiant VHP on Tuesday night said it was determined to go ahead with the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya from March 15: at all costs... “we will go ahead with the process of construction from March 15 as announced earlier. We are ready to face bullets or go to jail.”

Acharya Giriraj Kishore, VHP, PTL.

ANNEXURE – 3

Source: *Communalism Combat: Genocide Gujarat 2002, March-April 2002, Year 8, No.77-78*

Type: *Interview in a news report, page 13*

‘Sir, we are in great trouble’ (Interviewed by Gujarat Today correspondent, Yunus Gandhi, in Godhra on March 7)

‘Sir, we are in great trouble. We started from Faizabad and from there to here we had a lot of problems. We have come in fear and we are afraid here also. Please get us to Ahmedabad, we want to go to Ahmedabad,’ pleads Akbarbaig Sirajuddin Shah.

A witness to the harassment and bullying *kar sevaks* from Faizabad to Godhra, 18-year-old Shah was travelling on the Sabarmati Express train on the night of February 26 with his father-in-law, Fateh Mohammed and his wife. They are originally from Kadhra village in Basti *zilla* of Uttar Pradesh. All three of them live in Gulamnabi Sheth's Chawl, which is in Shah Alam, Ahmedabad. They earn their living by making and selling brooms.

Akbarbaig related the story of his trip to Gandhi, a correspondent of *Gujarat Today*. He related the bullying ways of the *kar sevaks*, saying that from the time these people got in the train, they were brazenly bullying and shouting slogans against Muslims.

"They were hitting them, not paying for tea and snacks and hurling filthy abuses and raising obscene slogans. Every time the *kar sevaks* saw any Muslim on the train or on any station, they would force him to put a red *tilak* on his forehead and shout, 'Jai Shree Ram!'

The injustice shown to a Muslim family has been narrated by this 18-year-old married lad, Akbarbaig. He stated that at night, while the train was moving, the *kar sevaks* tried to force a Muslim woman to say 'Jai Shree Ram!' The woman fearlessly refused and her husband also joined her in protesting against the acts of the *kar sevaks*. On this they mercilessly beat up the couple. Not only that, in the middle of the night they pulled the chain and pushed the family, including children, out of the train.

"In the darkness we could not find out which station or town it was and we did not even try to find out. The *kar sevaks* were wreaking such terror that we could only see our deaths before us." But one TT was kind enough to put the Muslim family in the last coach. This is only one incident — there were innumerable such incidents. While this family (mentioned above) was pushed out after stopping the train, one or two Muslims were pushed out of the moving train.

"Even at night, at every station, the *kar sevaks* would chant hymns to Ram and start dancing on the platform. But they behaved like Ravana, which would not only shame a true Hindu and hurt his feelings but also shame Lord Ram."

ANNEXURE – 4

Source: Communalism Combat: Genocide Gujarat 2002, March-April 2002, Year 8, No.77-78

Type: Collection of quotes, page 11

"After pelting stones they started pouring kerosene in our compartments and set them afire. Only a few of us managed to come out of the broken windows. The adults and the old people were stuck inside. The old women were pleading, 'don't kill us' but they just didn't listen," says Gayatri Panchal (16), who says 3-4 people ran after her as soon as she jumped off the train.
(*The Indian Express*, 28 February 2002)

Sixty-five-year-old Devika Luhana was trembling with anger as she alighted from the ill-fated train. "It was vandalism at its worst. They did not even spare old people like me and pelted stones indiscriminately. They will all go to hell for this act of malice," said Devika, who could not even retrieve her bag as she ran for her life.

"They stormed inside the women's bogey, and before we could react they set the entire bogie on fire. Some of us managed to escape, but a number of our sisters got trapped... it was horrifying," said Hetal Patel, a member of Durga Vahini.

Terror still haunts 13-year-old Gyanprakash as he bursts into tears from time to time. "I cannot forget the sight of people burning in front of me," he says while recuperating at the Ahmedabad city hospital.

Gyanprakash was on the S2 coach of the Sabarmati Express when it was set ablaze in Godhra on Wednesday. His family was returning to Ahmedabad after attending a relative's funeral. They had boarded the train at Kanpur.

Gyanprakash recalls the horror: "The train had just left Godhra but stopped a little way away from the station. Suddenly, stones were being thrown at the train. The pelting continued for almost an hour. Then something was hurled into our coach and there was smoke everywhere.

"It was so suffocating I could hardly breathe. I heard my father telling me to get off the train. I went to the door but saw that people trying to get off were being stabbed. I went to the other side and jumped off."

(*Mid-day*, 6 March, 2002)

Bhattacharya, probably one of the few survivors of coach S6, recalls how he had to virtually choose the "manner of his impending death," which he thought had become certain then — whether to stay back in the compartment and get burnt alive or crawl out of the coach through a broken window and face the stone-pelting, weapon-wielding mob. Bhattacharya, a retired employee of a private sector firm in Lucknow, knew the journey wasn't going to be a comfortable one, what with a large number of Ram sevaks boarding the train at the Lucknow station.

"In Rudiyali, close to Lucknow, we had our first brush with stone-pelting," says Bhattacharya. Luck ran out for the Sabarmati Express at Godhra station. "Like at every other station, the Ram *sevaks* had got down on the platform on Wednesday morning, shouting Jai Shri Ram slogans, even breaking into an impromptu dance." But, Bhattacharya realised that all was not well at Godhra when we saw the Ram sevaks scurrying in and barking at fellow passengers to pull the shutters down as the train pulled out of the station.

"I saw a broken window. Its bars had also been twisted apart." He had not missed the irony. "The attack itself had actually opened up a way for me," Bhattacharya said. "At that moment, it was a choice between the devil and the deep sea. The flames were leaping up close to me. I would have been engulfed in them or asphyxiated if I stayed back. The other choice was to climb out of the window and face the rampaging mob. I chose the latter," he said.

(*The Times of India*, 28 February 2002)

"I am extremely disturbed over what is happening in our area. I had pleaded with folded hands to all who came to my son's cremation to please restrain themselves and maintain peace," Govind Makwana told *Times News Network* on the day of *besna* of his only son Umakant, 22, who was burnt alive on board the Sabarmati Express. "Killing other people is not the solution. Losing a son is shattering, and I want no father or mother to suffer from this feeling," pleaded Govindbhai.

Rajendra Singh Thakur and his father were among the few who managed to escape death at Godhra railway station. They had miraculously crawled out alive from the blazing S6 compartment of the ill-fated Sabarmati Express, and would like to put the gory incident behind them. Vengeance is not on their agenda and with good reason too.

(*The Times of India*, 3 March 2002)

RATLAM (MP): Many lives could have been saved yesterday when the Sabarmati Express was set ablaze by arsonists at Godhra, if the Railway Protection Force (RPF) jawans had not left the spot following the stone pelting by the miscreants, according to an eyewitness.

Travelling Ticket Examiner (TTE) Sajjanlal Raniwal, who was in charge of S-3 and S-4 three-tier coaches yesterday, told UNI here today that an armed RPF party had reached the spot soon after getting information. Despite being armed with rifles, they fled in panic as soon as miscreants started throwing stones on them.

After that, he said, the miscreants, equipped with sharp-edged weapons, virtually brought about a reign of terror for more than an hour and finally set ablaze S6 sleeper coach, which had nearly 125 passengers, he added.

(UNI, 1 March 2002)

ANNEXURE – 5

Source: Communalism Combat: Genocide Gujarat 2002, March-April 2002, Year 8, No.77-78

Type: Collection of quotes, page 16

AHMEDABAD: Terming the attack on Sabarmati Express at Godhra in Panchmahal district of Gujarat as a "pre-planned, violent act of terrorism", chief minister Narendra Modi said the state government was viewing the incident "very seriously".(PTI, 28 February 28, 1:02:51 a.m.)

‘As soon the train left the platform and moved a bit further, about half-a-kilometre or so, it was stoned. After the stoning, inflammable materials like diesel, petrol etc. were thrown in – looks like a pre-planned incident – and immediately the S6 coach was set on fire... This is not a riot. In a riot there is a confrontation, in a communal riot there is retaliation. This is just pre-planned, organised and as though all things have been prepared in advance. And for the situation to develop in a matter of minutes – it looks like an organised sort of crime...’(Gordhan Zadaphiya, minister of state for home, Gujarat (Aaj Tak, 27 February 2002.)

Union home minister L K Advani on Monday said the Godhra mayhem was a "pre-meditated attack" and described the arson that followed as "nothing but communal violence." Mr Advani told a crowded press conference here that while the Godhra incident was the result of a "pre-meditated" plan, the subsequent killing spree "was nothing but communal violence."(*Daily Pioneer*, 4 March 2002.)

‘This has never happened in the history of independent India. Hindu society will avenge the Godhra killings. Muslim should accept the fact that Hindus are not wearing bangles. We will respond vigorously to all such incidents.’(Pravin Togadia, international general secretary, VHP; in an interview to Hotline in Ayodhya).

LUCKNOW: Chairman of the Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas Ram Chandra Paramhans has warned of a possible Hindu backlash. "These unarmed *kar sevaks*, who were merely chanting Ram *naam*, were peacefully going back to their homes," Paramhans said, adding that a reaction to this attack by "Islamic *jihadis*" could not be ruled out.(*The Telegraph*, 28 February 2002.)

‘The violence during the bandh was a result of natural outpouring of anger and grief over the Godhra massacre.’(VHP vice-president, Acharya Giriraj Kishore, on the morning of 28 February 2002; in *The Times of India*.)

‘Whoever stays with us will benefit. You can see the results in UP. In this country whoever stays with the Hindu community and Hindutva, will benefit, or they will suffer.’(Jaideep Patel, joint secretary, VHP Gujarat and an accused in the Naroda Patisa massacre in Ahmedabad; *Newshour*, *Star News*, 27 February 2002.)

‘Incidents like this (Godhra) show the psyche of a community. What was the reason for the pilgrims who were attacked when they came from Amarnath? What was the reason? That is the psyche, I say...communal violence can be checked only (when we understand) why this incident happened, who did it, what is the psyche behind it? This should be studied.’(Acharya Giriraj Kishore; *Newshour*, *Star News*, 27 February 2002).

ANNEXURE – 6

Source: ‘Gujarat Carnage 2002: A Report To The Nation’ by An Independent Fact Finding Mission: Dr. Kamal Mitra Chenoy, S.P. Shukla, Dr. K.S. Subramanian, Achin Vanaik., April 2002

Type: Excerpts from the fact-finding report, page 7, 9 & 11

Since the spot is just a little more than a stone’s throw from the station and in clear sight the Government Railway Police [GRP] jawans reached the spot within minutes. But, for reasons unknown, they made no effort to fire warning shots to disperse the mob. Their role will be examined later in Section 3 below. The

arrival of the firefighters was allegedly delayed by a local leader, who led a mob that detained a fire engine briefly.

By the time the District Superintendent of Police [DSP] reached the site by 8.30 AM, the mob had dispersed. Since he heard no cries or any sounds from coach S6, he had no apprehensions of massive civilian casualties in that coach. This was discovered only later when the District Collector entered the coach. Reportedly, all the bodies were in a heap in the centre of the coach S6.

The enraged kar sewaks learning of the civilian deaths caused by the ghastly burning of coach S6 then tried to attack a nearby mosque in Singal Faliya. The police fired 30 tear gas shells and fourteen rounds of live bullets to disperse the mob of kar sewaks. The damaged coaches S5 and S6 were detached, and the train departed with the rest of the passengers at 12.40 PM. According to informants, some kar sewaks in the Sabarmati Express on the way back stabbed 2 or 3 people at the Vadodara railway station, giving a clear warning of things to come. The inquest and post-mortem of all the recovered bodies was undertaken by 4.30 PM. Under instructions from the administration in Ahmedabad, all the bodies, excluding 5 that were of passengers from the Godhra region or that side of Gujarat, were dispatched to the Civil Hospital, at Sola, Ahmedabad. The arrival of the dead bodies in Ahmedabad, and their consequent funeral, could have been expected to worsen an already inflamed situation. We will discuss this in Section 3 below.

Certain questions arise about the tragic burning in Godhra. Why did the residents of Singal Faliya attack the train? Was this attack preplanned? If it wasn't, how did a mob of up to 2,000 gather at such short notice? If the attack was preplanned, was it by a foreign agency, as claimed shortly thereafter by Chief Minister Narendra Modi, and later by Union Home Minister LK Advani? Why did the mob attack with deadly weapons like firebombs? Why did it specifically attack coach S6? Why did the coach burn so rapidly so that as many as 58 passengers could not escape? With 4 exits available: 2 coach doors on the side away from the attacking mob, and the 2 vestibule exits to the adjoining coaches, why did so many passengers get trapped? Why weren't concerted efforts made to rescue them by passengers of the adjoining coaches, and the hundreds of kar sewaks? Who pulled the emergency chains and why?

The authorities and all informed persons in Godhra were quite categorical that there was no significant evidence to prove any 'foreign hand' in the tragedy. Because trouble had started at the railway station itself, by the time the train reached Singal Faliya some fifteen minutes later, the mob had had sufficient time to gather from the nearby houses and jhuggies. There is a large slum in the Singal Faliya area where as many as 15 to 20 persons live in a single jhuggi, literally sleeping in shifts. District authorities were not at all surprised that such a large crowd gathered at the spot in such a short time. Several informants in Godhra confirmed that this was not improbable. Firebombs, iron rods, etc. are all available in ready supply in various localities because of the history and incidence of communal outbreaks in Godhra.

This was particularly so for Singal Faliya because of the presence of auto-repair workers, rickshaw pullers, auto-rickshaw drivers, small time wagon-breakers and criminal elements reportedly living in the slum. So the collection of a large mob at a short notice and the availability of improvised petrol bombs and other weapons and implements, by themselves, do not support the theory of any deep-rooted conspiracy, with or without support of the foreign agencies. One version is that some of the Singal Faliya residents such as tea vendors or rickshaw pullers/drivers who were present at the platform and were witness to the incidents/altercations that allegedly took place on arrival of the train, had rushed to the Singal Faliya basti with the news/rumour that a Muslim woman had been molested, even abducted, and that this led to excitement and uproar and the enraged mob that carried out the murderous attack.

The focussed attack on coach S6 also suggests that rumour had it that the perpetrators of the alleged crime were in that coach. But all this will remain conjecture, until more evidence is collected. It also appears that since the bulk of the casualties were women and children, and relatively few (only 20) able bodied men, that all kar sevaks on the train were not targeted but only those in coach S6. Otherwise, why weren't other coaches filled with kar sevaks, of which there were another 14 excluding the adjoining coach S5, also attacked with fire bombs and the like?

We examined coaches S5 and S6. While S5 was less badly damaged with some windows broken, coach S6 was completely burnt out inside the compartment. Some reports have it that passengers were carrying kerosene stoves to cook during the long journey from Faizabad to Ahmedabad, along with other inflammable items. While this is not unusual or implausible, this must remain speculation until the forensic evidence is in. It is estimated that there must have been around 150 people in the compartment, largely kar sewaks, and once the fire started, the able bodied kar sevaks must have fled first. Knowledgeable informants in Godhra surmised that the 38 women and children along with the 20 men might have been rendered unconscious by the smoke and carbon monoxide confined inside the coach, since most of the windows and both doors on one side were closed, and later asphyxiated by the smoke or burnt by the fire that swept the coach. But this can only be confirmed by forensic evidence, and accounts by other passengers from coach S6 who survived.

But despite incomplete evidence and differing versions, it is clear that this monstrous crime was not preplanned as claimed by high quarters immediately after the tragedy. At most, according to a number of informants, some passengers with access to a mobile phone may have called contacts in Godhra/Singal Faliya from a relatively nearby station like Ratlam, Dahod or Meghnagar, thus giving at most a few hours notice. But as we have stated above, given the prevailing circumstances and context, it was probable that a large armed mob collected *after* the fracas at the Godhra railway station platform. There was sufficient time for an armed mob to collect after the events at the railway station. As the train was scheduled to arrive at 2.55 AM, any premeditated assault should have led to the mob gathering at Singal Faliya about that time, instead of five hours later. On the other hand, before 8 AM in the morning, most adults and young males living in Singal Faliya would not have gone to work and were easily available on call, as it were, to gather near Cabin A where the train had stopped.

Though by all accounts there was some provocation by the kar sewaks starting well before Godhra, this cannot serve to exonerate this inhuman and horrendous crime. As for the emergency chain pulling, it is plausible that the first chain pulling as the train was moving out from the station was by the kar sewaks to enable those left behind, perhaps involved in the commotion on the platform, to catch the train. The second instance, and that too from coaches S5 or S6, is more perplexing.

The outrage occasioned by this tragedy and subsequent police action has led most eyewitnesses to disappear, abscond or feign ignorance. We interviewed vendors from platform number 2 at Godhra station. They all claimed to have noticed nothing as they were on an adjacent platform. But since they, on their own admission, would have been aware of the commotion, if any, on platform 1, and would have had an unimpeded view of the area near Cabin A where the train was attacked, they obviously decided to remain silent. The vendors on platform 1 present on February 27th were absent and had been so since the incident. Some of the eyewitnesses and participants are obviously in custody. Others are missing. Still others are silent, or claim to know nothing.

This notwithstanding, major conclusions can be arrived at:

- 1] The attack does not appear to be pre-planned in the sense in which it was claimed publicly by high authorities in the immediate aftermath of the incident of 27th Feb. Neither available information nor the circumstances then prevailing provide support to the theory of any deep-rooted conspiracy, with or without involvement of foreign agencies.
- 2] It was an instance of a ghastly communal riot, in a place that has a long history of communal riots.
- 3] The tragedy could have been averted or at least, minimised if strong preventive measures had been taken in the wake of the communal incidents/irritants that were taking place on the train route and which could have been anticipated once the kar sewaks started leaving/returning by train in large numbers for/from Ayodhya.

Source: 1) Communalism Combat: Genocide Gujarat 2002, March-April 2002, Year 8, No.77-78
2) 'We Have No Orders To Save You': Human Rights Watch report, May 2002
3) "'Maaro! Kaapa! Baalo!'" State, Society, And Communalism In Gujarat': People's Union for Democratic Rights, Delhi, May 2002
Type: Edited excerpts

Evidence of Forewarning regarding violence & the State's Inaction

1) Godhra has had a long history of communal tensions. But over the past 60 years or so, the conflicts have been quickly contained because of sensible and responsible governance. Retd. Major General Eustace D'Souza of the Indian Army, has thrice in his career quelled riots in Gujarat. While speaking to Communalism Combat he says, "That the government had concocted "a fiendish plan at the beginning of 2002, knowing that all troops had been pulled to the border (Indo-Pak Border). The government did not keep even a few columns on alert that could have done the job effectively. It functioned on the assumption that even after violence was unleashed, it would take the columns of the army stationed at the border at least 72 hours before they could arrive. Even then they were not given full powers."

2) There was some forewarning of violence from within the police itself. Additional director general of police G.C. Raigar, had provided intelligence ahead of the Godhra incident that VHP volunteers were moving in and out of Gujarat and could instigate communal violence. He was removed from his post after presenting evidence to news media that law and order in the state could be compromised by VHP volunteers coming to and from Ayodhya. He had also questioned the government's ability to provide security to the Hindu activists or take other measures, despite repeated warnings. Ahmedabad's former Commissioner of police, MM Singh says in support that "Godhra has a history of communal riots. It was known that *Kar Sevaks* were coming by that route. This fact necessitated preventive deployment. This was apparently not done."

3) According to the Godhra Station master, there had been special police arrangements when *kar sevaks* had boarded the train to go to Ayodhya in early February, especially the Godhra Station, seen by all authorities as a communally sensitive area. On the 27th, however extra Police force was not provided and at the time of the attack there were only three police men on the platform as it was time for changing duty. The Station master also remarked that the Bajrang Dal/VHP should have remembered that Godhra was a sensitive area before indulging in provocative acts.

ANNEXURE – 8

Source: Times News Network [Wednesday, July 03, 2002 12:05:58 am]
Type: News report

Godhra bogie was burnt from inside: Report

AHMEDABAD: The mystery over the burning of the S-6 compartment of Sabarmati Express at Godhra on February 27, which killed 59 passengers and set off an unprecedented spate of communal frenzy all over Gujarat, has turned deeper with the forensic report on the incident discounting the possibility of the mob throwing inflammable liquid from outside and then setting the bogie on fire.

Investigations made by the Ahmedabad-based Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) have now shown that almost 60 litres of inflammable material was poured from inside the compartment before it was set on fire.

A report by the FSL's Assistant Director Dr M S Dahiya, which is part of the charge-sheet filed in the Godhra case about a month back, is based on a study of the pattern of the burns in the compartment and a simulated exercise conducted on May 3 to recreate the incident. The report contradicts the view held so

far that the mob which attacked the train threw inflammable liquid at the train using buckets and cans from a distance, even while the passengers had shut all the windows and doors of the compartment.

To recreate how the crime must have been committed, a train bogie was placed at the same spot. Using a variety of different containers, it was doused with liquid for experimental observation.

The report said the height of the window of the bogie was found to be seven feet. In these circumstances, it was not possible to throw inflammable liquids into the bogie from the outside with the help of a bucket or a jerry-can because by this method most of the liquid fell outside the bogie.

At the spot of the incident, at about a distance of 14 feet, there was a mound of grave-stones about 3 feet high. It was spread parallel to the bogie for a long distance. The FSL officials, standing on the mound, threw water on the windows of the bogie, of which only about 10 to 15 per cent entered the bogie. The rest fell on the outside. Since, a major portion of the inflammable liquid fell on the tracks and around it, it would have caused damage on the outside of the bogie and under it.

The report says, "after inspecting the bogie and the tracks, it was found that there is no effect of fire below the windows. Taking this fact into account and the burning pattern on the outside of the bogie, the conclusion is that no inflammable liquid was thrown into the bogie from the outside". It further says, "it also does not look possible that inflammable liquid was thrown in from the doors of the bogie".

As a next step, using a bucket, about 60 litres of water was thrown into the passage of the compartment from one side and then a large part of the bogie was covered. Water thrown like this went only in one direction, no part of it flowed outside from the open doors or in the direction of the latrine.

"On the basis of this experimental observation, the conclusion is that standing in the passage of the compartment near seat number 72, using a container with a wide opening, about 60 litres of inflammable liquid has been poured and then immediately a fire has been started in the bogie," the report says.

The FSL report further says that "it appears that three of the four doors of the compartment were open when it was burning while all the windows were shut. The pattern of burning (allegatoring pattern) shows that the intensity of the heat was four times more towards the eastern side (towards seat no.72 of the bogies".

ANNEXURE – 9

Source: *Outlook Magazine (New Delhi), [Jun 03, 2002], <http://www.outlookindia.com>*

Type: *News feature*

A Plot From The Devil's Lair

Manu Joseph

A late-evening meeting convened by Modi on February 27 ensured mobs a free hand the next day.

What exactly happened on the night of February 27 in chief minister Narendra Modi's bungalow in Gandhinagar? All along there have been rumours of a late-evening meeting called by Modi on the day of the Godhra carnage in which he instructed senior police officials to allow "people to vent their frustration" over the torching of two coaches of the Sabarmati Express during the VHP bandh the following day.

These rumours have now been confirmed. Information with Outlook shows that a senior minister from his own cabinet has blown the whistle on Modi. Last week, the minister deposed before the Concerned Citizens Tribunal headed by former Supreme Court judge Justice Krishna Iyer.

Though the minister was not legally bound to appear before the tribunal, he chose to.

The nine-member tribunal comprising former judges and other eminent citizens was in Gujarat to record evidence on who or what may have caused the Gujarat carnage. Former Bombay High Court judge Justice Hosbet Suresh, who is on the Concerned Citizens panel and who also heard the deposition, confirms that the minister did depose before him. He told Outlook: “Yes, a senior minister appeared before us for 35 to 40 minutes and talked to us about a few things that led to the Gujarat carnage. Among other things, the minister spoke about the meeting Modi called on the night of February 27.” The minister spoke to the tribunal on the condition that it would not name him in its final report. Another member of the panel has also confirmed the minister’s deposition.

The minister told Outlook that in his deposition, he revealed that on the night of February 27, Modi summoned DGP K. Chakravarthy, commissioner of police, Ahmedabad, P.C. Pande, chief secretary G. Subarao, home secretary Ashok Narayan, secretary to the home department K. Nityanand (a serving police officer of IG rank on deputation) and DGP (IB) G.S. Raigar. Also present were officers from the CM’s office: P.K. Mishra, Anil Mukhim and A.K. Sharma. The minister also told Outlook that the meeting was held at the CM’s bungalow.

The minister told the tribunal that in the two-hour meeting, Modi made it clear there would be justice for Godhra the next day, during the VHP-called bandh. He ordered that the police should not come in the way of “the Hindu backlash”. At one point in this briefing, according to the minister’s statement to the tribunal, DGP Chakravarthy vehemently protested. But he was harshly told by Modi to shut up and obey. Commissioner Pande, says the minister, would later show remorse in private but at that meeting didn’t have the guts to object.

According to the deposition, it was a typical Modi meeting: more orders than discussion. By the end of it, the CM ensured that his top officials-especially the police-would stay out of the way of Sangh parivar men. The word was passed on to the mobs. (According to a top IB official, on the morning of February 28, VHP and Bajrang Dal activists first visited some parts of Ahmedabad and created minor trouble just to check if the police did in fact look the other way. Once Modi’s word was confirmed, the carnage began.)

The minister further told the tribunal that two cabinet ministers were present in the police control room on February 28. They took over the control room and personally supervised the proceedings. (The names of the ministers, Ashok Bhatt and I.K. Jadeja, have very often been taken by police sources but till date there is no FIR registered against them, nor has any police official who was present in the control room then ever confirmed this allegation).

The minister went on to tell the tribunal that Modi was convinced that since he started the riots, he would be able to control the violence within a day or two. But the scale of the violence and the media backlash caught him by surprise. The more shocking aspect of the minister’s testimony, says a tribunal member, was: “Scores could have been settled in Godhra itself. Perhaps 100 people may have died there on the whole and that may have been the end of it. But Modi brought the riots to Ahmedabad. He took the riots to rest of the state.”

The riots were not born out of any ideology, according to the minister. It had a simple political background. The minister told Outlook, “Modi was never a politician. He was a pracharak, a pracharak whose days were numbered because unlike others of his status, he was a man who liked the good life. He lived like a king. Not many liked him. Then one day, we were shocked by the BJP’s defeat in the panchayat elections. And when the BJP lost the Sabarmati assembly seat and Sabarkanta parliamentary seat, we knew we would lose the general elections.”

That’s when Modi stepped in. According to the minister, Modi told the BJP high command that after all,

he was more presentable than Keshubai Patel and he swore that in the next elections he would bring the BJP back to power. The minister added that when five and a half months into the job Modi realised his charm wasn't working, he decided religious polarisation was the only way to survive. As triggers go, Godhra was a strong one. But anything could have served as a trigger. There was talk of making an issue of a cow slaughter video the party had got but that plan was shelved.

Politics was also why the minister decided to squeal. As he himself told Outlook, it was the victimisation of party workers by Modi that upset him the most. Said the minister: "After taking all the credit for Hindu awareness in the state, when pressure mounted on him to cool down, he started balancing the sheet by arresting party workers."

A 70-year-old BJP leader in Kalol taluka has been arrested on rape charges. As many as 3,369 people have been arrested so far, many of them grassroots party workers who are asking their bosses why they are being picked up. In all, 893 FIRs have been filed. One (crime number 195/2002) names VHP leader Jaideep Patel. BJP MLA Dr Maya Kodanani has been named along with other lower-level party workers in FIR 197/2002. Police inspector Rawat, who had terrorised inmates of the Dhariyakhan Gummat refugee camp and was the right hand man of civil supplies minister Bharat Barot, has been suspended, an event nobody would have believed in the pre-K.P.S. Gill era.

Discontent is mounting within Modi's cabinet. Revenue minister Haren Pandya had this to say to Outlook: "No party is just one man. History points that out. We had a meeting recently of top BJP leaders. Modi was not invited but there was a huge crowd. There was not a mention of Modi by the speakers but it was still a very successful BJP meet."

In fact, no one expected the minister to turn up before the tribunal. It is not a constitutional body and it is not binding on anybody it summons to appear before it. But the minister walked into a building called Prashant in Ahmedabad, which houses a human rights organisation. Justices Suresh and P.B. Sawant, senior advocate K.G. Kannabiran and retired police officer K.S. Subramanian were present.

When the tribunal releases its findings in mid-August, there will be many things to make a man who is today called Chhota Sardar feel very small. But as Justice Suresh says, "Our report will only give the public the right to information. They'll know what really happened. But that doesn't mean the guilty will be punished." History agrees.

ANNEXURE – 10

Source: 'Gujarat Carnage 2002: A Report To The Nation' by An Independent Fact Finding Mission: Dr. Kamal Mitra Chenoy, S.P. Shukla, Dr. K.S. Subramanian, Achin Vanaik., April 2002
Type: Translated news report from Sandesh, page 8-9

[March 1, 2002]

FROM AMONG THOSE ABDUCTED FROM SABARMATI EXPRESS TWO DEAD BODIES OF HINDU GIRLS FOUND NEAR KALOL IN MUTILATED STATE

Vadodara, Thursday: The details of the information about the dead bodies of two girls abducted from the bogies, during the attack on the Sabarmati express, yesterday, found in a mutilated and terribly disfigured form, near a pond in Kalol, has added fuel to the already volatile situation of tension, not only in Panchmahal, but in the whole State.

As part of a cruel inhuman act that would make even a devil weep, the breasts of both the dead bodies had been cut. Seeing the dead bodies one knows that the girls had been raped again and again, perhaps many times. There is a speculation that during this act itself the girls might have died.

The police, however, have kept quiet and have not spoken about this sensitive event. On account of that, various speculations during an already tense situation are like adding ghee to the fire.

According to the talk heard during the night one more dead body of a girl, also in a terribly mutilated form, had been found. After having raped and mutilated, the body of the woman was set on fire with petrol. Is there no limit to the lust?

ANNEXURE – II

Source: Times News Network [Thursday, February 28, 2002 11:31:23 am], Times of India

Type: News report

VHP bandh turns violent, 8 stabbed to death

Bharat Desai

AHMEDABAD/VADODARA: The death toll in the post-Godhra violence in Gujarat has now gone up to eight. At least five persons have been killed in overnight violence preceding the Gujarat bandh on Thursday to protest against the ghastly attack on Sabarmati Express.

While the toll in the attack on the train has gone up to 58, at least three persons were stabbed to death in Ahmedabad and two in Vadodara last night. Indefinite curfew was imposed in old city areas of Vadodara after the violence. A truck driver was pulled out and stabbed in the Sama area while another person was killed in the Wadi area.

Shops were burnt and looted in the Mangalbazar and Kareli Baug areas of Vadodara during the VHP-backed bandh on Thursday. Mobs were on the rampage right through the morning in many areas which were still not under curfew.

In Ahmedabad, at least three persons who were stabbed in the Paldi, Meghaninagar and Kalupur areas in stray incidents on Wednesday night succumbed to their injuries.

Police commissioner P C Pandey said incidents of violence, arson and stone throwing were reported in many parts of Ahmedabad during the bandh. "Mobs are throwing stones at cars and burning down some hotels," he said.

At least three restaurants belonging to a particular community were set on fire in the posh western areas of Ahmedabad. These attacks took place in the Drive-In, Judges Bungalow and Sattelite areas of west Ahmedabad.

A senior Ahmedabad Fire Brigade officer said, "the Millenium restaurant blaze is very serious, there are 12 LPG cylinders inside but the mob is not allowing us to go inside, if the cylinders burst the whole three storeyed building will go down", he said at 11.15 am.

In Surat, two youths were stabbed and stones pelted on the Ahmedabad-bound Okha-Puri express on Wednesday night. One youth was stabbed in the sensitive Gopipura area of the city. Earlier, a 19-year-old youth was stabbed by two persons on the outskirts of Puna Kumbharia, police commissioner Vineet Gupta said. He said, "the situation is tense but quite under control."

Unidentified miscreants had pelted stones on Ahmedabad-bound Okha-Puri Express late on Wednesday night in Udhna-Surat section of Western Railway, police said. However, the train proceeded on its onward journey following police intervention.

The bandh has completely paralysed all commercial activity in Gujarat on a day when everybody is awaiting the Union Budget. Traffic on the roads is thin and stray incidents of attacks on passing vehicles

have been reported from Ahmedabad and other towns. VHP and Bajrang Dal volunteers went around in the cities and towns shouting 'Jai Jai Shri Ram' and warning shop-keepers of reprisals if they did not down the shutters.

Chief Minister Narendra Modi, who had promised a high-level inquiry into the Godhra train attack, told the state Assembly in Gandhinagar that a senior judge would head the inquiry. The Gujarat Assembly adjourned for the day after paying tributes to the victims of the Sabarmati Express attack.

ANNEXURE – 12

Source: The Indian Express, 28 February 2002

Type: News report

Firemen battle mobs to fight flames in city

Meghdoot Sharon

AHMEDABAD: The magnitude of arson and looting was so great on Thursday that the Ahmedabad Fire Brigade found itself incapable of handling fires that raged across the city. Until late evening, it had attended over 120 calls, but 50 more were pending. What made matters worse was that VHP men prevented them from reaching the spots. They even attacked some firemen and damaged vehicles. All this happened in front of police and security personnel.

The mobs moved from place to place setting shops on fire. At almost all sites, the fire spread to at least half a dozen surrounding shops as the fire brigade was not allowed to reach them. Fire Brigade officials said the Police Commissioner should have imposed a curfew from midnight on Wednesday. "By the time curfew was imposed, the city was in flames," an official said.

The fire brigade received over 150 calls within 24 hours. The first call over a burning bus came at 3 pm yesterday and till today, about 170 calls had come in. "There are still a large number of unattended calls as the brigade is being prevented from reaching the spot in almost all cases," Chief Fire Officer Bipinkumar Jadeja said.

Nowhere was this more apparent than on C.G. Road. At least a dozen buildings were on fire there, but firemen could reach just one or two sites. "They (the mob) slept in front of the vehicles or formed a human chain to prevent us," said fireman Jignesh Makwana. "After much delay and convincing, we were allowed to go ahead, but after we chanted 'Jai Shri Ram'."

At Gulmarg Society in Omnagar, Chamanpura, the mob surrounded houses and set them ablaze. The brigade could not reach the spot till 10.15 pm. Top police officials at the spot asked Mayor Himmatsingh Patel to send a few fire brigades as around 50 people were trapped inside burning houses. Many of them burned to death, including a former MP.

ANNEXURE – 13

Source: Times News Network [Thursday, February 28, 2002 9:47:36 am], Times of India

Type: News report

Indefinite curfew in Ahmedabad, Vadodara

The District collector of Ahmedabad has requested for more forces to be brought in as violence and arson threatens to spread into rural Ahmedabad. Fires have been reported in more than 80 places in Ahmedabad. According to government sources, the situation in rural Ahmedabad could turn grim as enough forces are not available to impose curfew.

Police commissioner P C Pandey said at 12.30 pm that he was imposing curfew in the police station areas of Shahpur, Dariapur, Karanj, Kalupur, Bapunagar, Gomtipur and Rakhial and the police chowki areas of Saraspur and Isanpur.

Police burst tear gas shells on C G Road to control mobs which were setting on fire shops belonging to a particular community.

Curfew has also been imposed in the towns of Bharuch and Ankaleshwar following acts of arson on Thursday morning.

Curfew was imposed earlier in areas of Vadodara city following deaths of two persons in stabbings.

Curfew in Vadodara

Indefinite curfew has been imposed in the city from 8 am on Thursday morning following two cases of stabbing reported from Salatwada and another from the highway after midnight Wednesday night, a senior police official said.

Curfew had been imposed in the six police station areas of the walled city and RAF and CISF companies have been deployed in sensitive areas, city police Commissioner Deen Dayal Tuteja said.

Indefinite curfew has also been imposed in Lunawada town of Panchmahal district after 2 am on Wednesday night following incidents of arson and looting, he said.

ANNEXURE – 14

Source: The Kashmir Times [Saturday, March 09, 2002 12:42:40 am], Times of India

Type: News report

Political observers smell a rat behind delay in army deployment

NEW DELHI: Political observers here smell a rat behind the delay in the deployment of the Army in the riot-hit state of Gujarat. Despite becoming apparent that the state police was not acting to put an end to the disturbances as early as on February 27, the state government and the centre made little effort to deploy Central forces.

The beleaguered state government headed by Narendra Modi is still vacillating on providing logistical support to the Army to prevent the forces to reach to interiors or villages, who have become the latest flash points. Observers here also aghast at the behaviour of Union Home Minister L. K. Advani, whose political base is in twin cities of Ahmedabad-Ghandinagar. He has not even issued a formal appeal to his party cadres to prevent further deterioration of situation.

More so, he has not still bothered to visit his Lok Sabha constituency unlike last year when he had camped there for over a week following a devastating earthquake that had shattered the city.

Sources in the government here said that Defence Minister George Fernandes went to Gujarat at his own initiative to protect his secular image and that of the allied parties. At the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) meeting held on Thursday night, he had suggested that both he and Home Minister shall visit the riot torn state. But, ultimately, it was left to him to fly to Ahmedabad on Friday. Officials here agree that it was his presence that compelled the Gujarat police to initiate action against the mobs since Friday evening.

Though, government here claimed that it had positioned 10 columns of the Army in Ahmedabad as early

as on Thursday night, sources in the Army said, they got orders for deployment only on Friday evening. They said the state government has limited their positioning to just flag marches. A senior Army officer also complained that local civil administration was not cooperating with them and has been reluctant to provide guides and handover city maps to the Army.

Further, apart from the delay in requisitioning the Army, the state government did not provide “sufficient logistical support” in time. “Our first priority was to airlift our men in IL-76 heavy-lift aircraft. We had to depend upon on civil administration for transport and other logistical arrangements,” said the Army officer.

He admitted that state government was reluctant enough to provide support. “The moment we got transport, we swung into action,” he said. Though the Army’s 7th corps is headquartered in Ahmedabad, a major chunk of this corps is part of forward deployment along the Indo-Pak border. Therefore, troops from reserve formations in the Southern Command were airlifted to reach Ahmedabad.

Maulana Mohammad Shafi Madni, state chief of Jamat-e-Islami Hind told KTNS on telephone that situation was so bad on Friday that despite Army’s flag marches rival mobs were on the streets in an eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation.

Quoting eyewitnesses accounts from Ahmedabad Madni said, there was a total collapse of the law and order machinery. Police was nowhere in sight and the streets were still under the control of charged mobs.

Maulana Madni talking from an Ahmedabad suburb said that in his nearby Saify society in Narode locality, 58 were burnt to death in full view of police and public. “They killed including eight of a family by setting them on fire in a Sumo vehicle on the Ahmedabad-Udaipur highway,” he said. Narrating this horrifying incident, he said, the family had tried to flee the city, but was stopped just 100-metres away from their home by a mob brandishing trishuls. “They were made to chat ‘jai shri Ram’, which they did but the mob laughed at them and doused petrol on their vehicle. I could only hear screams which died down in the leaping flames,” said the witness.

Saify Society was under siege till late Friday night when the first column of the Army arrived on the scene, said Maulana Madni. He said the residents had been pleading with the local authorities to provide them police escort to come out the cordon, but the pleas turned to deaf ears.

Fernandes, in his bid tried to put the law and order back to rails. He told the officials there that the Central government was viewing the events in Gujarat very seriously.

An official who attended the meeting told on the condition of anonymity that a furious Fernandes gave a tongue lashing to those present and said though he was sending the Army, the primary duty to maintain law and order was that of the state government.

Almost all the analysts here have described Gujarat events a macabre replay of the November 1984 anti-Sikh riots that hit the country particularly the national capital immediately after the assassination of late prime minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi. “Then, as now, the delay in the response appears deliberate: To allow hoodlums to punish the minority community,” says Manoj Joshi, strategic editor of The Times of India.

Meanwhile, Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi Saturday told a 50-member Congress delegation led by former chief minister Amarsinh Chaudhary that it was difficult to deploy more Army in Ahmedabad and other carnage-affected areas. He also rejected the Congress demand to hand over Ahmedabad to the Army, saying “there is no such precedence”.

Modi said, “I want your co-operation in fighting the tragic situation in Ahmedabad. Much of the Army has been deployed on the border areas. It is not possible to pull it out for deployment here. However, we are doing all we can to control the situation.”

Congress leaders held the view that flag march was just not enough, and unless the Army was given a free hand, the situation in Ahmedabad could not be controlled. Congress president Sonia Gandhi also expressed this to Prime Minister A B Vajpayee. "The local police and administration is simply not co-operating with the Army", the President was told. The President was quoted as saying that he would 'take up the matter with the PM'.

ANNEXURE – 15

Source: 'We Have No Orders To Save You': Human Rights Watch report, May 2002

Type: Edited excerpts from fact-finding report, page 8-11

I - Accounts of Violence

A) The Ahmedabad Massacres: Naroda Patia and Gulberg Society

Naroda Patia and Gulberg Society was the site of two of the deadliest massacres in Ahmedabad. Some of their testimonies by eyewitnesses are included below.

Naroda Patia

Located just across the road from the State Reserve Police (SRP) quarters, Naroda Patia was the site of some of the most brutal attacks in Ahmedabad. On February 28 at least sixty-five people were killed by a 5,000-strong mob that torched the entire locality within minutes. Countless others sustained severe burns and other injuries. Women and girls were gang-raped in public view before being hacked and burned to death. Homes were looted and burned while the community mosque, the Noorani *Masjid* (Mosque), was destroyed using exploding gas cylinders. Extensive use and access to Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) cylinders has also been cited as evidence of official collusion.

Naroda Patia used to be a mixed community of Hindus and Muslims. The nearly one thousand Muslims were in a minority and lived in a slum facing the state transport workshop. Most surviving Muslim residents are now scattered in relief camps.

In the days that followed February 28, hundreds of youths brandishing swords, daggers, axes, and iron rods were seen shouting "*Jai Shri Ram*" and roaming roads lined with gutted shops and littered with burned trucks, rickshaws, and other vehicles.

Human Rights Watch visited Naroda Patia three weeks after the attacks. The Muslim homes were completely burned while the Hindu homes stood unscathed. The area's mosque, the Noorani *Masjid*, just across the road from the SRP post, had also been destroyed. According to one human rights activist who visited the site of the burned mosque soon after the attacks, at least sixteen gas cylinders, used as explosive devices, remained inside the mosque.

A thirteen-year-old boy described the role of the police during the attack:

The police was with them. The police killed seventeen and eighteen-year-olds. The mob also burned down our home. At 10 a.m. they went after our mosque. Thirty to forty tear gas shells were released by the police as we, about fifty boys, were trying to save the mosque.... They killed one seventeen-year-old and eight to ten other boys were injured.... We kept calling the police but no one came.... The police would pick up the phone and hang up when they heard it was from Naroda Patia.

Another eyewitness interviewed by Human Rights Watch added: "When we tried to run, the police started firing. It was morning time. Many were hiding in Masjid Chali [lane]. We came here [to the camp] early on the morning of March 2."

Fifty-five-year-old Salima Banu, a resident of Naroda Patia was a witness as her son was shot and killed by the police:

My son was running to save his life and the police shot him. Our home was behind Noorani Masjid. They were coming to set the mosque on fire. Then we started running. A bullet hit my son's arm and then his stomach. No one was answering the police phone. The police took their side and not ours. My son's name was Shafiq. He was eighteen years old... No one came to help. He was suffering so much. His arm fell off. I have received nothing from the government.... So many people are also missing. Some have lost their mother, their son, their father.

Samuda Bhen, a mother of two, lost all her valuables in the looting and burning on February 28 and the days that followed and identified members of the Bajrang Dal, Shiv Sena (another Political party with a Hindutva ideology ruling the neighbouring State of Maharashtra among those implicated in the riots in Mumbai), and the police as the main culprits:

'They took my daughter's dowry. This is my daughter. She is seventeen. Her name is Mumtaz. She was supposed to get married. Now the groom won't come. They also burned my son's rickshaw. They burned everything after we left. During the attack they were screaming, "Kill them. Cut them." We left on March 1. We stayed at home until then. The police sided with them. They were Bajrang Dal people. They were wearing saffron bandannas. There were also *Shiv Sena* people. First the police came, they searched the mosque, they were checking for weapons to see if it was safe for the others to come. Then the others came. The police station is right near us. The police was with them for three full days. We kept telling them to help us.'

Forty-year-old Naseem Banu stated that: "Wherever we hid, the police showed them where we were. The police remained standing when our homes were burned down."

Gulberg Society

In the neighborhood of Gulberg Society, Chamanpura, Ahmedabad, over 250 people took refuge on the morning of February 28 in the home of Muslim Ehsan Jaffrey, a former member of parliament. An ordeal that began at 10:30 a.m. ended seven hours later and left at least sixty-five dead, including Jaffrey himself, who was hacked and burned to death. The closest police station was less than a kilometer away. The two Ahmedabad Home Guards already stationed at Jaffrey's home only had sticks as weapons and according to eyewitnesses they provided no protection; one said the guards "were watching and laughing as the attacks took place."

In a petition submitted to the NHRC (National Human Rights Commission), the Citizens' Initiative stated that the mob, estimated at 5,000, had grown since morning in Gulberg Society. Jaffrey made countless phone calls to the police, the chief minister, and the central home minister among others asking for protection but to no avail. The telephone lines were cut after the neighborhood's homes were set on fire. Armed with swords, pipes, acid bottles, kerosene, petrol, hockey sticks, stones, and *trishuls*, the mob was unrestrained for six hours. Among the perpetrators identified were workers and local officials of the VHP and Bajrang Dal.

Thirty-eight-year-old Mehboob Mansoori lost eighteen family members in the attack at Gulberg Society. He described the day's sequence of events to Human Rights Watch:

They burnt my whole family. At 10:30 a.m. the stone throwing started. First there were 200 people then 500 from all over, then more. We were 200-250 people. We threw stones in self-defense. They had swords, pipes, soda-lemon bottles, sharp weapons, petrol, kerosene, and gas cylinders. They began shouting, '*Maro, kato,*' [Kill them, cut them] and '*Mian ko maro.*' (Kill the Muslims). I hid on the third floor.

Early in the day at 10:30 the police commissioner came over and said don't worry. He spoke to Jaffrey and said something would work out then left. The name of the commissioner of police that visited in the morning is P.C. Pandey, commissioner of police Ahmedabad....

At 3:30 p.m. they started cutting people up, and by 4:30 p.m. it was game over. Ehsan Jaffrey was also killed. He was holding the door closed. Then the door broke down. They pulled him out and hit him with a sword across the forehead, then across the stomach, then on his legs.... They then took him on the road, poured kerosene on him and burned him. There was no police at all. If they were there then this wouldn't have happened.

Eighteen people from my family died. All the women died. My brother, my three sons, one girl, my wife's mother, they all died. My boys were aged ten, eight, and six. My girl was twelve years old. The bodies were piled up. I recognized them from parts of their clothes used for identification. They first cut them and then burned them. Other girls were raped, cut, and burned. First they took their jewelry, I was watching from upstairs. I saw it with my own eyes. If I had come outside, I would also have been killed. Four or five girls were treated this way. Two married women also were raped and cut. Some on the hand, some on the neck.

Fifty-three-year-old Mansoori Abdulbhai, also a resident of Gulberg Society, Chamanpura lost nineteen family members in the attack. He testified saying:

Nineteen members of my family were killed. My wife, my mother, my son, my daughters-in-law, my brother's daughter-in-law, and others. We found fourteen of the bodies, five are still missing. Those fourteen are buried here [at a mass grave site next to the Dariyakhan Ghummat camp in Shahibaug]. Sixty-two people were killed there, twenty-nine bodies have not been found. First they cut people so they couldn't run and then they set them on fire. One or two women were taken aside and gang-raped. After five hours the police came and brought us here. It was so well planned. We buried fourteen members of my family here on March 7.

As with Naroda Patia, even pregnant women were not spared. The husband of an eighteen-year-old woman and resident of Gulberg Society, Chamanpura told the Citizens' Initiative: "She was pregnant and it was the 9th month of the pregnancy. Her house was attacked by a large mob. Her womb was cut open with a sharp weapon and the unborn baby was taken out and both mother and the child were burnt dead."

Sixty-year-old Rosam Bibi, who used to live in Vijay Mill, Naroda side, also fled to Ehsan Jaffrey's home for refuge: "We went to Ehsan Jaffrey's home on the 28th. I was on the ground floor. The mob came in and threw petrol and started a fire. There was heavy smoke. They told us to give them our jewelry. They took everything. Then they hit everyone and I got burned. Then they pulled people outside and cut them and burned them."

Bibi's eighteen-year-old son, Ilias Bhai, added: "At 10:30 a.m. the stone throwing began, we got surrounded. They were shouting 'Ram, Ram, Jai Ram' [Ram, Ram, Praise Ram].... My brother and sister-in-law were both killed."

Twenty-three-year-old Rasida Bhen, Ilias's wife, still bore visible head injuries at the time of the interview with Human Rights Watch. She spoke to Human Rights Watch about the murder of her husband's brother and his wife, twenty-three-year-old Aslam Usman Bhai, and twenty-one-year-old Naseem Bano: they pulled them out and cut them up. When we came out then we saw that he was cut in the stomach, the chest and the head. They came with *trishuls*. My sister-in-law was burnt. First they took her jewelry. Then took her into the kitchen and exploded the gas cylinder. They wanted to get rid of all the evidence. They had been married for fifteen months and she was five months pregnant.

Referring to attacks on other women, Rasida added:

First they took everyone's jewelry. Then they raped the women, then they cut them up, and then they burned them. They should get as strict a punishment as possible.... I was hit with a pipe. We ran outside when the gas cylinder exploded and then later the police came and we left.

A forty-five-year-old man named Yousuf Bhai told Human Rights Watch that the police commissioner "betrayed" the victims:

They wanted to leave by the railroad behind Jaffrey's house, but the police commissioner said, "No, don't you trust me? You must stay here." Jaffrey even said, "Kill me and leave them alone." After the police brought people here [the camp] then all night they set bodies on fire, so there could be no cases against them, so there could be no evidence. Without police support, none of this could have happened.

ANNEXURE – 16

Source: 'Gujarat, Laboratory Of Hindu Rashtra': Insaf report, April 2002

Type: Excerpts from fact-finding report, page 22-23

Best Bakery, Dabhoi Road

(March 1, 2002)

Background:

Hanuman Tekri is located on Dabhoi Road on the outskirts of Baroda. It is a lower middle class and poor neighbourhood. Most of the residents are Hindus with very few Muslim families. This locality consists of small houses and very narrow lanes. The houses mostly have tin roofs and very few were more than 1 storied. The Best Bakery was one of the few structures, which had more than one story.

Habibulla Abdul Rauf, the owner of the Bakery died of natural causes 10 days before the incident. He had started his bakery a few years ago, but the family was not staying in the same locality. They shifted to this area only 6 months before this incident. All other Muslims staying in the area had already left their houses before this incident. Only this family was staying because they were assured of safety by Jayantibhai Chaiwala, who is an influential person of the area. The Bakery was looted and burnt over March 1 & 2; 14 of the 24 members of the extended household were hacked/burnt to death while others escaped with serious injuries.

Testimony of Zahira Sheikh (daughter of Habibulla Abdul Rauf): In the morning of 1st March, Jayantibhai Chaiwala, who runs a chai shop, and is also a sanitation contractor, came over when all the tension began, and assured us that nothing would happen to us. He said, "*Fikr mat karna, hum log hai*" [The plot on which the bakery stands was bought from Jayanti's brother. It was an illegal transaction, since it was not registered land. The family migrated from Bombay about 20 years ago, and Zahira's father first used to work in Iqbalbhai's bakery, after which he branched out on his own. They used to stay at Navapura, and moved into the bakery only about 6 months ago.]

Nothing untoward happened during the day, but my uncle, fearing something, had told us all not to go out of the house. Around 8.30 at night, the mob came from Ganeshnagar side. They were shouting loudly - making sounds like *adivasis* (tribal people). They had swords (*talwar*), bottles, stones, tins of petrol and kerosene, and were beating metal plates. There were about 200-300 men and boys. The two well-built persons were leading the mob. One of them was wearing yellow striped jersey and other was wearing *khakhi* shirt. They were looking very fierce. I don't know their names but can recognise them if presented before me. The mob was talking to us in Hindi, not Gujarati.

When we saw all this, my uncle ran inside and locked the doors. We ran upstairs. Soon, Lal Mohammed's timber shop in front was burnt down. We had heard some rumours earlier in the day that it was going to be burnt. So when it was actually burnt, we started getting really scared.

At first, they looted the bakery. The mob began pulling out all the things. Then they set fire to the room on the ground floor. The room was full of wood, which we had just got fresh stocks of. The room began to burn easily. We were all on the terrace, but my uncle (whose leg was hurt) went down to the first floor. My sister went with him to help him. But the mob came up, sprinkled petrol and set fire to the room. They got burnt in it. Firoze Pathan (a '*chacha*'- Uncle) and his wife and children, who used to live next door, were also in their house and all of them are burnt.

The whole night we were on the terrace, and the mob kept pelting stones at us, abusing us and trying to make us come down. They kept trying to put a ladder from behind the house to reach us, but the walls were too hot. The whole night, the mob surrounded the house and kept abusing us (*ma-behen ki gaali* – extremely abusive language). The Hindu who lived at the back of our house also began to throw stones. Champak Policewala, the Hindu neighbour who had promised to help us when my father died, did nothing to help us.

At 8.30 p.m itself, we rang up Pani Gate police station, when Lal Mohammed's godown (warehouse) was burning. They said they would send someone. We kept ringing 3-4 times, and each time they said someone would come. After about an hour, the police van came to the area, but the mob ran behind Lal Mohammed's godown and hid there. The police vehicle didn't come into the lane, but turned off from the main road itself. The phone wire was cut off sometime at night.

In the morning, we kept pleading (*"hum ne maafi maanga"* - we beg your forgiveness). We pleaded for our lives, but the mob, who had been joined by more people in the morning, just laughed. Jayantibhai told us to come down after throwing down our weapons. We told him we have no weapons, and swore on Allah's name. After a while, they put a ladder at the back and helped us come down. They snatched Rs. 2000 from my brother, his watch. They kept beating us and pushing us, and brought us to the house of a Hindu (the family had been sent away or locked up - we didn't see them). The mob kept yelling, "*Maaro saalon ko*" (beat those ****). They beat the boys more, and when the Hindu workers were trying to escape, they killed them with swords right there. They kept saying, "rape these women", and were trying to drag us (the women) into the jungle. By that time around 11 am on 2nd March the police arrived, and fire engines also arrived to put out the fire. Then the fire brigade brought my *naani* (grandmother) down from the terrace where she was still hiding on the terrace.

The police took down my statement right there. Then took me and my *naani* to Panigate police station. The injured were taken to hospital. When they saw I was injured too (gash on my head) they took me to the hospital. I had to give a statement there too. And once more in the police station. All 3 times, I was made to sign my statement, but the statement was not read out to me, nor did I read it. I stayed in the police station till noon on 3rd March. After which Iqbal Bhai (whom the police had contacted) came to pick us up.

Some of the people in the mob whom I could recognise were 1. Mr. Jayanti Chaiwala and his two sons Lala and one other son (name not known), 2. Mr. Mahesh (Jayanti's relative), 3. Mr. Munna, 4. Mr. Sanjay Thakkar, 5. Mr. Santosh Thakkar, 6. Mr. Jagadish Rattiwala, 7. Mr. Dinesh Bakeriwala, 8. Mr. Shanabhai, 9. A person known as Painter

ANNEXURE – 17

Source: 'The Survivors Speak - How Has The Gujarat Massacre Affected Minority Women?' by a women's panel sponsored by Citizen's Initiative, Ahmedabad, April 16, 2002

Type: Excerpts from fact-finding report, page 4-7 & 9

Testimonies of Sexual Violence

A) WITNESSING MASS RAPE (INCLUDING MINOR GIRLS)

NARODA PATIA, AHMEDABAD, FEBRUARY 28, 2002

"The mob started chasing us with burning tyres after we were forced to leave Gangotri society. It was then that they raped many girls. We saw about 8-10 rapes. We saw them strip 16-year-old Mehrunissa. They were stripping themselves and beckoning to the girls. Then they raped them right there on the road. We saw a girl's vagina being slit open. Then they were burnt. Now there is no evidence."

Source: Kulsum Bibi, Shah e Alam Camp, March 27, 2002

“I saw Farzana being raped by Guddu Chara. Farzana was about 13 years old. She was a resident of Hussain Nagar. They put a *saria* (rod) in Farzana’s stomach. She was later burnt. 12-year-old Noorjahan was also raped. The rapists were Guddu, Suresh and Naresh Chara and Haria. I also saw Bhawani Singh, who works in the State Transport Department kill 5 men and a boy.”

Source: Azharuddin, 13 years. He witnessed the rapes while hiding on the terrace of Gangotri Society. The Chara basti is located just behind Jawan Nagar.

The mob, which came from Chara Nagar and Kuber Nagar, started burning people at around 6 in the evening. The mob stripped all the girls of the locality, including my 22-year-old daughter, and raped them. My daughter was engaged to be married. 7 members of my family were burnt including my wife (aged 40), my sons (aged 18, 14 and 7) and my daughters (aged 2, 4 and 22). My eldest daughter, who later died in the civil hospital, told me that those who raped her were wearing shorts. They hit her on the head and then burnt her. She died of 80% burn injuries.

Source: Abdul Usman, Testimony recorded by Citizens Initiative

VILLAGE ERAL, KALOL TALUKA, PANCHMAHALS DISTRICT, FEBRUARY 28th, 2002 SULTANI, A RAPE Survivor, SPEAKS

On the afternoon of February 28th to escape the violent mob, about 40 of us got on to a tempo, wanting to escape to Kalol. My husband Feroze was driving the tempo. Just outside Kalol a Maruti car was blocking the road. A mob was lying in wait. Feroze had to swerve. The tempo overturned. As we got out they started attacking us. People started running in all directions. Some of us ran towards the river. I fell behind as I was carrying my son, Faizan. The men caught me from behind and threw me on the ground. Faizan fell from my arms and started crying. My clothes were stripped off by the men and I was left stark naked. One by one the men raped me. All the while I could hear my son crying. I lost count after 3. They then cut my foot with a sharp weapon and left me there in that state.

Source: Sultani, Kalol Camp, Panchmahals District, March 30, 2002

Additional facts about the case:

- Sultani has not undergone a medical examination. Her leg had been swollen for three weeks as a result of the injury inflicted by a sharp weapon, but it is healing now.
- No FIR has been filed though a written statement has been submitted to the DSP. In her statement she names some men from the mob (Jitu Shah, PDS Shop owner of Delol village; Ashok Patel alias Don Dadhi of Ramnath village)
- Both her and her sister-in-law said they were feeling numb and lost, as they did not know where to go from the Camp. She categorically stated that they could not go back to her village. She was terribly worried about the future especially her children’s. Sultani has still not been told that her husband had died in the attack. She believes he is missing.

A MOTHER’S ACCOUNT OF HER DAUGHTER’S RAPE

VILLAGE ERAL, KALOL TALUKA, PANCHMAHALS DISTRICT. MARCH 3, 2002[5][5]

My father-in-law, a retired schoolteacher, refused to leave the village with the other Muslim families who fled to Kalol on February 28th. He believed no one would harm us. From the 28th about 13 members of my family sought refuge in various people’s houses and the fields. On Sunday afternoon (March 3^d) the hut we were hiding in was attacked. We ran in different directions and hid in the field. But the mob found some of us and started attacking. I could hear various members of my family shouting for mercy as they were attacked. I recognized two people from my village – Gano Baria and Sunil – pulling away my daughter Shabana. She screamed, telling the men to get off her and leave her alone. The screams and cries of Ruqaiya, Suhana, Shabana, begging for their izzat could clearly be heard. My mind was seething with fear and fury. I could do nothing to help my daughter from being assaulted sexually and tortured to death. My daughter was like a flower, still to experience life. Why did they have to do this to her? What kind of men are these? The monsters tore my beloved daughter to pieces. After a while, the mob was saying “cut them to pieces, leave no evidence.” I saw fires being lit. After some time the mob started leaving. And it became quiet.

Source: Medina Mustafa Ismail Sheikh, Kalol camp, Panchmahals district, March 30, 2002

Additional facts about the case:

- Medina's testimony has been corroborated by the other two living witnesses – Mehboob and Khushboo. Khushboo in her testimony also recounted how her grandfather (Medina's father-in-law) and Huriben were killed. She also narrated how Ruqaiya's pajamas were taken off and then one by one the men started "poking her in the lower part with their body".
- We saw a copy of Medina's FIR, where the police has charged 5 persons with murder under section 302. Charges of rape have not been included. The FIR uses the colloquial phrase 'bura kaam' rather than the specific term 'rape'. We were also given the case report prepared by the camp leaders. The names of some of the accused are mentioned in the FIR.

GANG RAPE OF 25 YEAR OLD ZARINA: A HUSBAND'S ACCOUNT HUSSAIN NAGAR, NARODA PATIA, AHMEDABAD. FEBRUARY 28, 2002

It started at 9 am on February 28th. That's when the mobs arrived, shouting – Mian Bhai nikalo (Bring out the Muslims). Many of them were wearing kesari chaddis (saffron shorts or underwear) The mob included boys from the neighbouring buildings – Gopinath Society and Gangotri Society. I ran out of my house with the entire family – mother, father, sister, sister's daughter, my wife Zarina, my brother, my sister-in-law, and my niece...there were 11 of us. We all ran towards the Police chowki. The Police said, 'Go towards Gopinath and Gangotri'. In the melee, I was separated from my wife. What happened to her, she told me later. She tried to escape the mobs by leaping over a wall. But found herself in a cul-de-sac. They gang-raped her, and cut one arm. She was found naked. She was kept in the civil hospital for many days. Now she is recovering with her mother near the Khanpur darwaza.

Source: Naimuddin Ibrahim Sheikh, 30-year-old husband of Zarina. Shah-e-Alam Camp, March 27, 2002. His family migrated from Gulbarga in Karnataka in 1971. He was born in Naroda. Naimuddin's testimony was corroborated by Mumtaz, who was among the women who found Zarina naked in the maidan.

RAPE OF 13 YEAR OLD YASMIN VILLAGE DELOL, PANCHMAHALS DISTRICT. MARCH 1, 2002

The extended families of Mohammad Bhai and Bhuri Behn – about 20 people – were chased by the mob to the river. Javed and another boy who managed to escape and hide behind a bush saw the mob kill Mohammad Bhai and rape Yasmin. They were about to kill the mother of the other boy who was hiding with him. So he screamed and ran out from behind the bush and was caught. He was made to walk around the dead bodies that were burnt (as if around a pyre) and he was then pushed into the fire.

Source: Women from Delol at Halol Camp, Panchmahals district, March 30, 2002. Javed, Mohammad Bhai's nephew, had come to Delol to help his uncle. He had narrated this to several of the women from Delol. Javed has returned to his village, Desar.

BILKEES: ACCOUNT OF A RAPE Survivor RANDHIKPUR VILLAGE, DISTRICT DAHOD. MARCH 3, 2002

Twenty-one year old Bilkees was five months pregnant. When Muslim houses in her village were attacked on February 28th, by a mob comprising upper caste people from her own village and some outsiders, she and several of her family members fled. For two days they ran from village to village. At a mosque near Kuajher, her cousin Shamim, delivered a baby. But there was no respite for them. They had to leave immediately, including Shamim who could barely walk, carrying her newborn baby.

On March 3^d we had started moving towards Panivela village, which was in a remote and hilly area. Suddenly we heard the sound of a vehicle. A truck came with people from our own village and outsiders too. We realised that they had not come to help us. They stopped us and then the madness started. They pulled my baby from my arms and threw her away. The other women and I were taken aside and raped. I was raped by three men. I was screaming all the time. They beat me and then left me for dead. When I

regained consciousness I found I was alone. All around me were the dead bodies of my family, my baby girl, the newborn baby, their bodies were covered with the rocks and boulders used to kill them. I lay there the whole night and most of the next day. I do not know when I was conscious and when unconscious. Later I was found by a police squad from Limkheda police station .I was taken to the hospital and then brought to the Godhra Camp.

Testimony to AIDWA and Anandi

Additional facts about the case:

- Her FIR has been filed and a medical examination done on the insistence of the District collector, Jayanti Ravi, even though six-days had passed. Rape has been confirmed.
- She has named the people who killed her family members and those who raped her: Sailesh Bhatt, Mithesh Bhatt, Vijay Maurya, Pradeep Maurya, Lala Vakil, Lala Doctor, Naresh Maurya, Jaswant Nai and Govind Nai (the last three gang-raped her)
- Initially all her family members were missing. Her father and husband have been traced to another camp at Dahod and her brother, Saeed, is with her in Godhra.

ANNEXURE – 18

Source: ‘Gujarat, Laboratory Of Hindu Rashtra’: Insaf report, April 2002

Type: Excerpts from fact-finding report, page 23-25

BAHAR COLONY

(March 15-17, 2002)

Events:

Bahar Colony on Ajwa Road is a middle-class Muslim colony. There has been no previous history of communal disturbances, even in 1992. This time the tension started since the March 15, 2002 when a *Jhoppad patti* (hut in a slum) was put on fire.

On the morning of March 17 lots of people started gathering and tried to set fire to the *laaris* (vendors trolley) at the Sardar Estate Char Rasta.. And then two Muslim factories in Sardar Estate, both mainly employing Hindu employees, were set on fire. From 10 am onwards police was called. Police dismissed these calls as rumours. Finally the police arrived at 1 p.m. just as a group of men were returning after namaaz. On seeing the police mobile, the women approached the vehicle to try and talk to the policemen and express their insecurity of the last three days. The police fired into the gathering. Two young men were injured in the police firing, one died later.

Role/Experiences of Women:

The women of the minority community were most upset and angry at the police’s inability to manage the mob. They wanted to request the police to place a point in the ir colony. The police refused to listen to them and in fact did *laathi* (beat with police batons) charge on them to drive them into their homes. Among others an elderly woman Ameena Memon was badly hit in the *laathi* charge. A police complaint was filed subsequently. To-date there is no action.

WADI TAI WADA

(March 15, 2002)

Events:

According to the testimonies which follow, at 10.30 p.m., around 15-20 policemen, all in plain clothes and with helmets arrived in the Tai Wada area.

They were led by DCP Kanani. They came into the *basti* (residential area) after receiving a tip off that stone throwing was going on. But in fact nothing like that was happening. The stones were coming from Navapura and instead of going there, they came to Wadi Tai Wadi. According to Ibrahim, the Police Commissioner was at the Swaminarayan *Mandir* (Temple) because there were rumours that the temple would be destroyed that night by Muslims. Shamshuddin Nausanwala heard the Commissioner telling the

police force to round up Muslims. 15 vehicles were brought here for combing, instead of being deployed where the disturbance was actually going on at Rang Mahal where a *Masjid* (Mosque) was burnt and Muslim homes were burnt. 14 women were hit that night including old women. They broke down doors of homes. They took 25 men in the combing operations. First they beat them up, right there on the road and then took them away. The beating continued for 2 hours, no weapons were found. They were arrested under sections 307 and 436. The arrested people were also beaten heavily in the lock up and the jails and were released after 7 days.

Accounts & Testimonies:

i)Hamida Bano Ibrahim (40 years): Husband is unemployed, he has had a cataract operation, her son is SSLC failed and is 18 years old.

That night she went to the latrine (which is outside the house) and was returning when the policeman told her to get into the house. She said she was in fact going to her house when he gave her *gaalis*(verbal abuses) and hit her.

One man hit her with a *danda* (stick) so hard that the right hand was fractured in 3 places. The entire night she rubbed ice on it to reduce the swelling. The next day she was taken to the Jamnabai Hospital and later to SSG Hospital by the local corporator Javedbhai. She needed four operations, a steel splint was put in. The operation took one and a half hours. Her three fingers were fractured.

Hamida was satisfied with the treatment at the hospital. The police case has been registered in SSG Hospital but no action has been taken in the last two weeks, police has not come around to take any statement.

She wants to tell the Women's Commission that police have no right to lift a hand on women. They should not be allowed to get away with this. Whatever happened to her, happened. But other women should not suffer this ever. If anyone has erred, they should be punished but without any reason, police should not abuse them.

ii)Zarina (18-19 years): She had delivered hardly one month ago. The police smashed her foot with the butt of the gun and as they smashed the door open, it fell on her back. She has 3 small children. She pleaded with them 'do not take away my husband'. The police hit her on the back. 'The door that they broke down fell on my back. They took away my husband after beating him'

iii)Halima Bibi (lives opposite the Mandir): They hit my son-in-law a lot, upturned all the grain containers (*atta* (wheat flour)and rice) in the house, did a lot of *nuksaan* (damage). They stepped on a 6 month old baby, the baby was crying a lot – put a foot on her to shut her up and said 'Let them all die'.

iv)Testimony of Naseem Bano of Rafai Mohalla: She is a Social Worker. She arranges for widows' *sahai* and loans for poor people.

"That day I tried to stop the police. I tried to tell them that there was no *toofan*(storm/hurricane) in this area and do not torture the women. If I had not done this, much more would have happened. Afterwards they hit me too and gave very bad *gaalis*. I told them I would register a case against them. We filed a report at Jamnabai hospital. But no inquiry has been held yet. Yesterday, I was at Bawamanpura.

And a kite landed at my feet. It had things written on it like 'we will burn you, we will burn your houses, your children. We will play Holi Dhuleti with your blood'. We showed this kite to the Commissioner. He responded with 'This will go on. We have to focus on you people or focus on these people?' I told him that he should do a full inquiry into this incident. 'You have to protect us'. If we take *kanoon*(Law) in our own hands we become *gunahgaar* (wrongdoers) , if we do not, we die (there is no protection)'. I told him 'you cannot be *ek tarfa* (one sided)'. You catch them and you catch us (do not be selective in whom you catch and arrest). We have to protect ourselves. If they come after us with *talwars*, we will use stones defend ourselves. You do not protect us'. Commissioner himself says '*Aap aamne saamne lar lo*'." (You all confront each other and fight).

v)Testimony of Shabir Khan, Businessman: On March 15, the police came thinking that firing was going on from our house. We were sleeping. The police broke open our door and took us out. The police said unspeakable *gaalis* (verbal abuses) and eyed our women with *buri nazar* (lecherous eyes) I

told the police personnel that we are businessmen, we do not participate in this sort of thing. Twelve policemen came in, 6 on one side and 6 on the other and said that if we lift our hands or cry out, they will hit us again. Obviously, I cried out when I felt the *danda* on my back. The policemen hit me again. The police took all 3 of us brothers and hit us. They also damaged the furniture in the house.

In the lock up the police said, we will burn you Muslims alive. No food or water was given to us in the lock up. In the lock up I heard them fabricating a case against us – a case of murder, when no murder had taken place. No weapons were found on us. A house hammer was taken away from my home as a weapon. A Police officer looked at my wife, up and down. God forbid, even if he had done something to her, I was in no position to do anything to defend/protect her. I requested him leave at least one of us brothers. He said ‘No, we will burn you all alive’.

In the Central Jail where I was for 7 days, for every 5 Hindus present, there were 25 Muslims. The Hindus in the jail with me were Bhois. One was caught with *astra* (blade), another with *gupti* (large knife) and another with *Khanjar* (large dagger). He admitted to me in the jail, ‘we will be released and we will also collect our *saadhan* (things) from the police station. *Hamaara yeh sab chalta hai*’ (these kind of things happen). These were his words.

I suspect that the people who came to attack my house, some were police men in plain clothes, others were not. They were from outside. I recognise the police men because I live opposite the DCP Office. There is one Muslim officer in the DCP’s office. I cannot name him. He told me that he was powerless and could not do anything to help the Muslims. I asked that one of us brothers be let out. He said I have nothing in my hands.

Most of all, the women in this area want *insaaf* (Justice). They do not want *ek tarfi karyavahi* (one sided investigations) by the police. (Hamida). They do not want Kanani’s staff in the area. They do not want Kanani in the area any more. They also wonder how Narendra Modi continues to be the CM: “removing him is our only chance for survival.”

ANNEXURE – 19

Source: Communalism Combat: Genocide Gujarat 2002, March-April 2002, Year 8, No.77-78

Type: Collection of testimonies, page 120-121

Testimonies of Police Involvement

The testimonies from the numerous survivors of the genocide in Gujarat, which form a major part of this report, provide abundant evidence of dereliction of duty and in many cases even complicity of sections of the police force in the ethnic cleansing of Muslims.

Numerous reports published in the national dailies since March 1, too, record several instances of brazen anti-Muslim bias, evident in the acts of commission and omission by policemen - from constables to top officials - SRP jawans and even Fire Brigade personnel. We reproduce below excerpts from some of them:

Minors shot by police

Vadodara: An 11-year-old girl in Dudhia village was hit on the head by bullet in police firing and is now recuperating at the SSG hospital, Vadodara. A 14-year-old was killed in police firing at Kisanwadi. The bullet went through his chest. In Halol, a bullet ricocheted from a wall on a veranda of a one-storied-house, injuring a two-and-a-half-year old. At a time when the state police are accused of "inaction" as mobs went around looting and killing during the recent riots, records at the SSG Hospital here, which is treating numerous riot victims, are pointing at another "folly" – police forgot the rule book during the riots and shot many above the waist while controlling the mobs.

(*The Times of India*, 1 March 2002)

Police chief vanishes as Rajkot burns

Rajkot: While Rajkot burned on Thursday, its police commissioner did a vanishing act. As mobs rampaged through the city and curfew had to be clamped after a gap of 17 years, Upendra Singh switched his mobile phone off and was nowhere to be found. And, with their chief not in sight, the inefficiency of the local police came to the fore as mobs attacked marked targets at will.

(The Times of India, 1 March 2002)

‘The Police watched as we were attacked’

Vadodara: "We were surrounded on all sides by police vans but had to contend with stones from the mob. The police did nothing to stop the attack. On the contrary, an ex-corporator instructed them on how they should ensure that we have no way to escape," said a resident of Memon colony. "The police looked on as mob attacked and destroyed homes of an ex-judge and retired army colonel," said Iqbal Memon, who also added to the complaints of police inaction.

(The Times of India, 2 March 2002).

RAF accused of atrocities in Surat

Surat: Rapid Action Force (RAF) jawans are alleged to have beaten up and misbehaved with Muslim women and an elderly *maulvi* in Surat. The jawans reportedly went on the rampage on March 3, a day after residents of the predominantly Muslim suburb of Rander faxed a message to President KR Narayanan and Congress chief Sonia Gandhi, seeking protection from Hindu mobs. They now plan to move court and complain to the human rights commission against the RAF and police.

(The Hindustan Times, 5 March 2000).

6 deaths after mob attack, police call it ‘asphyxiation’

Por (Gandhinagar dist.): ... Police say all mohalla residents were evacuated; the villagers say some had already been killed before the evacuation began. Irfan Ali Shaikh, a survivor who lost his wife, says women and children were soft targets for the mob. "They killed them pressing their fingers on their throats and police also forced us to bury the bodies in a hurry to kill any proof of murder."

(The Indian Express, 5 March 2002).

Police fails to provide security to activist

Ahmedabad: Well-known social activist and state vice-president of the People's Union for Civil Liberties J.S. Bandukwala, a personal friend of defence minister George Fernandes, has been forced to go into hiding following an attack on his residence at Sama, Baroda. The police has failed to provide adequate security to him despite several requests. This is not the first time that the Bandukwalas have been targeted during communal riots.

(The Asian Age, 6 March 2002).

Failing the people

Sabarkantha: 137 petitioners from the district have moved the Gujarat High Court to have their voices heard. They claimed that the police had not recorded their individual FIRs. The role of the police in Sabarkantha district, as a case in point, has only recently become the subject of debate, from the Lok Sabha to the Police Bhavan in Gandhinagar. The main allegation against the Sabarkantha police is that they did not do enough to protect the innocent and were now preventing the registration of FIRs against the individuals who led the mobs.

(The Indian Express, 13 March 2002).

‘We were just watching, why did they fire at us?’

Ahmedabad: "All the women had gathered for *majlis* - a ceremony before Muharram which is attended by women only. We were returning home when we saw smoke around Navapura area... the women came outside to check what was happening when suddenly, police personnel barged inside our homes and started firing directly at the women," alleges Mumtaz. (The 18-year-old Mumtaz Bano Darbar, a physically challenged girl, escaped death, though she was hurt by a police bullet)...

"They didn't even throw tear-gas shells or lathi charge first," claims Sherbano Abbas Bukhari, an 18-year-old girl who was shot in the chest. "The policewala was only five metres away when he fired directly at me," sobs Sherbano, who is in a very critical condition.

(The Indian Express, 22 March 2002).

FIR says Muslim MLA led riot mob

Ahmedabad: In a glaring example of what appears to be police connivance with the ruling BJP government in Gujarat, the Ahmedabad police put the name of a Muslim MLA in a FIR for instigating

mobs to burn Hindu establishments when he was actually in the Gujarat Assembly attending the session discussing the law and order situation in the state.

(*The Asian Age*, 23 March 2002).

ANNEXURE – 20

Source: ‘We Have No Orders To Save You’: Human Rights Watch report, May 2002

Type: Excerpts from fact-finding report

Role of the police during the communal violence

The NHRC, New Delhi, has commented on the functioning of the Police based on their findings:

The salient features of the report are as follows:

- “Failure to protect rights to life, liberty, equality and dignity” as laid down in the constitution.
- “Serious failure of intelligence and failure to take timely and adequate anticipatory steps to prevent the initial tragedy in Godhra and the subsequent violence.
- Failure to take appropriate action “to prevent the spread and continuation of violence.” “Immediate and stringent measures were not adequately taken” in the wake of the call for a “Gujarat Bandh” on February 28th. Knowing that bandhs always end with large-scale violence.
- “Failure to identify local factors and players” for the participation in the violence.
- Though a large number of persons have been arrested, break up and details of those arrested are not furnished. It is reported that 90% of the arrested persons in heinous offences were released on bail and some were given a warm welcome after release.
- Uneven handling of major cases in respect of Gulberg Society and Naroda Patia in Ahmedabad City, Best bakery in Baroda and Sardarpur Village in Mehsana District. These cases have not been diligently investigated.
- The police are also shown to be responsible for the distortion of FIRs, lack of transparency and integrity and succumbing to extraneous influences.
- Accused are shown as “unknown” and names of the offenders are not included in the FIR and copies of the FIR have not been given. Atrocities against women including rape are not recorded and investigated. Investigation and prosecution of crimes is nor free from “extraneous political and other influences”.

The police also failed to protect judges, Justice Kadri and Divecha, the evidence points to the fact that the response of the State lacked sensitivity and “the fact indicates that the response was often abysmal, or even non existent, pointing out to gross negligence in certain instances or worse still, to a complicity that was tacit if not explicit.”

ANNEXURE – 21

Source: Communalism Combat: Genocide Gujarat 2002, March-April 2002, Year 8, No.77-78

Type: Statistics, page 126

Statistics of People killed in Police Firing

CC has compiled this list of persons killed in police firing on Feb 28 and March 1, 2002

1. Akbarkhan Makrani
2. Zahiruddin Nasiruddin Ansari
3. Mohammed Idrio Mohd. Ismail
4. Tohkir Ahmed Munir Ahmed
5. Jamilmiya Kifayatumiya Mistri

6. Kadri Karnaludding Ahmed Ali
7. Noorbanu Mohd Hakim Ansari
8. Abdul Rehman Abdul Razak Sheikh
9. Hamidbhai s/o Gulam Rasul Abdulbhai
10. Ansari Mohiuddin Jamadar
11. Sultanbhai Azizbhai Malek
12. Ansari Iliyabhai Jumerati
13. Sabirhussain Fatehsad

14. Hanifbhai Ali Baks. Railwaywala
15. Mohd Hussain Allahrakha Sheikh
16. Abdul Karim Mehboobmiya Pathan
17. Zakirhussain Mehmoodhussain Arian
18. Ilias Ahmed Jumroti
19. Mohd. Ishak Abdul Aziz
20. Mohd. Mubin Ali
21. Samir Ahmed Iqbal Ahmed Arian
22. Jummadin M. Zakira
23. Mahmud Hanif Mahmud Sheikh
24. Gulam Rasool Gulamnabi
(Age 22; 408 Noor Nagar, Rakhial. Shot in the head.)
25. Trohadali Haiderali
26. Gabbarbhai (Wahid)
(Age 25; private security guard, living in Mandu, Masterni Chali in Bapunagar. Shot between the eyes on February 28.)
27. Istiyak Khan Nizamuddin Khan
(Age 24; Morarji Chowk, Bapunagar. Shot in the head.)
28. Parwezabhai Gulamdastagir
(Age 26; Residence on General Hospital Road, Bapunagar. Shot on the nose.)
29. Samir Iqbalbhai Mansuri
30. Kausharbhai Sobrati Ali
31. Nasirkhan Kayamkhan
32. Zakirbhai (Mahagujarat Bakery)
33. Samirbhai (Mahagujarat Bakery)

Preventive Arrests on February 27th after the Godhra Incident in Ahmedabad

Police Station Arrests

Naroda 0
Gomtipur 0
Shaherkotda 0
Vejalpur 0
Kalupur 0
Gaekwad Haveli 0
Ellis Bridge 0
Navrangpura 0
Naranpura 0
Ghatlodia 0
Astodia 2

(Official figures obtained by CC)

34. Azharuddin Sirajuddin
35. Ismailbhai Frywale
36. Anwar Hussain
37. Nasirbhai Rajput
38. Akhtarbhai
39. Mohammed Naim Nasrullah
40. Mohammed Azim
41. Nisarahmed A. Hamid
42. Aslambhai
43. Imtiazkhan Nizamuddin Pathan,
(Age 21; a resident of Morarji chowk. Shot in the head. "I could not recognise my own son, part of his head was blown off," his mother Ammiben said.)
(Source: *Al Ameen Garib Niwas Hospital*).
This is an additional list of persons shot dead by the police thereafter:
- 5.3.02 Gullubhai Karimbhai Sheikh (42); Jamalpur
- 26.3.02 Sarfroz Takubbhai Baggiwala (23); Jamalpur
- 15.3.02 Mohd. Irfan Abdul Jabbar Ansari (Dodheshwar Masjid; 2 bullets chest)
- 15.3.02 Sikandar Khan Pathan (22); Vatwa (Siddique bhai Shaikh-Peace Corps)
- 15.3.02 Syed Farzana Bukhari (30); Vatwa
- 3.4.02 Advocate Nizaam (shot dead)

(Information compiled by CC)

AL-AMIN GARIBNAWAZ HOSPITAL (POLICE FIRING)

Who fired at these minors?

- 1 Mohammed Hussain - Injured (Minor)
- 2 Irshad Mirza - Injured (Minor)
- 3 Aiyub Khan Yakub Khan - Injured (Minor)
- 4 Iqbal Mirza Mohd. Khan - Injured (Minor)
- 5 Hanif Mirza Rashid Mirza - Injured (Minor)
- 6 Akbar Khan Afsar Khan - Injured (Minor)
- 7 Saiyed Javed - Injured (Minor)
- 8 Mushir Ahmed - Injured (Minor)
- 9 Nizamuddin - Injured (Minor)
- 10 Firoz Faqir - Injured (Minor)

Statistics obtained by Communalism Combat

ANNEXURE – 22

Source: Hindustan Times, May 3, 2002

Type: News report

Cops Admit Killing More Muslims

Vinay Menon

Gujarat Police has finally admitted that it killed more Muslims than Hindus in its ostensible attempts to stop what was clearly targeted Hindu violence against Muslims. Of the 184 people who died in police firing since the violence began, 104 are Muslims, says a report drafted by Gujarat Police.

The statistic substantiates the allegation of riot victims from virtually every part of the state that not only did the local police not do anything to stop the Hindu mobs; they actually turned their guns on the helpless Muslim victims.

At some places in the state though, this trend - of more Muslims falling to police bullets than Hindus - was reversed. In both Bhavnagar and Banaskantha districts, five Hindus died in police firing on rioters. No Muslim was killed in Banaskantha, only one died in Bhavnagar. Superintendents of police of both districts were removed.

The numbers of Muslim and Hindu deaths in police firing, despite having been worked out by the Gujarat government, have so far not been released. Coming out with the truth would only inflame the situation, it is feared.

The government, however, has been keen to draw attention to the first 72 hours of violence during which it claims that more Hindus were killed in police firing. Said the state home minister Gordhan Zadaphia: "I have data with me that shows more Hindus were killed in police firing till March 3, but it cannot be disclosed."

Zadaphia was probably referring to data showing 69 Hindu deaths as compared to 55 Muslim deaths statewide till March 3. A closer look, however, reveals that in Ahmedabad, the numbers of deaths for both Hindus and Muslims stood head to head at 26. The RAF killed four of these 26 Hindus.

ANNEXURE – 23

Source: Hindustan Times, May 5, 2002, <http://www.hindustantimes.com/nonfram/050502/detfro02.asp>

Type: Edited news report

We Were Told To Go Slow, Gujarat Cops Tell Gill

Rathin Das

(Gandhinagar, May 4) Senior police officers with whom K.P.S. Gill held a series of meetings on Saturday, are learnt to have told the former Punjab Police chief that the law and order machinery had collapsed in the state because they were given clear instructions to go soft on Bajrang Dal and VHP activists. Sources said the IPS officers told Gill, who has been appointed security adviser to Chief Minister Narendra Modi that this directive was given to them at a meeting of top officials on the night of the Godhra incident on February 27. To the constable on the street, this instruction on "leniency" meant inaction, and it soon degenerated into complicity with the VHP-Bajrang Dal workers.

According to the sources, the IPS officers also told Gill that the transfer of those officers who had taken action against the Bajrang Dal and the VHP had demoralised the entire force. Some officials had even requisitioned an urgent meeting of the state IPS Officers' Association to discuss the issue, but the meeting had not yet materialised because of the continuing violence in the state.

The IPS officers have reportedly offered their total cooperation to any steps that Gill might take.

Meanwhile, breaking his silence on the controversy surrounding Gill's appointment, Modi on Saturday said the former Punjab Police chief would bring more professionalism to the police of the "hyper-sensitive" state. "The police need to understand what is required to deal with riots".

ANNEXURE – 24

Source: 'Gujarat Carnage And The Health Services: A Public Health Disaster': Report of an investigation by Medico Friends Circle, May 2002

Type: Excerpts from the fact-finding report

Health system's response

The state and municipal services are working together to provide health services in camps and various hospitals. Their effort is commendable given the inadequacy of public health services even in normal times, and the additional constraints of the crisis and the communal environment. However, these efforts does not go beyond what is provided in normal circumstances – and is therefore highly inadequate. Such services given in a perfunctory manner have further undermined the health services' credibility.

Health services have not made efforts to reach out to people unable to come to them for treatment.

At the same time, the continuing violence means that health professionals providing care at the camps feel vulnerable, further inhibit ing an empathetic response to their patients' needs.

The team did not see mobilisation of non-religious voluntary organisations of the scale evident after the 2001 earthquake in Gujarat. However, those involved in relief work have done extremely good work in the face of physical danger and intimidation by state and right-wing forces.

State public health services have not provided the necessary comprehensive treatment. They give immunisation, some maternal and child care, and limited out-patient services. They have made no active efforts to provide proper water and sanitation facilities. A comprehensive approach must treat severe injuries, chronic illnesses, and the psychological trauma resulting from experiencing or witnessing brutal violence.

There is no acknowledgement of the need to provide treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder, a known consequence of such situations, and a concern of the public health services. The only emotional support is provided by camp volunteers with no training or support for this work.

Existing services do not acknowledge women's health needs, and there is no effort to make them more accessible to women. Hundreds of women have given birth in the camps, assisted largely by local volunteers, and without any facilities. These women, as well as those in curfew-bound areas, are not in a position to seek health services.

The team's report corroborates other investigations' findings of large-scale and systematic sexual assault. There have also been many reports of women coming to hospitals in a condition which doctors would certainly suspect sexual assault. Yet doctors in hospitals visited by the team stated that no cases of sexual assault had been filed – in other words obvious signs of sexual assault have been disregarded. As a consequence, there is no medical evidence of sexual assault, on which basis women could seek justice.

Public hospitals have been working under threat of violence against their Muslim patients. Mobs have attacked hospitals, prevented the injured from entering, moved around in wards, terrorising and attacking patients and relatives. The government does not seem to have tried to protect health services and maintain people's access to them. Still, health professionals in the hospitals have functioned neutrally, providing treatment without discrimination on the basis of community. This is commendable.

Measures such as segregating patients on the basis of community, and giving sympathetic leave to Muslim staff, threaten the secular character of health institutions and will lead to further

polarisation within the profession. Administrations may have acted thus because the state has abdicated responsibility to ensure patients' and staff's safety.

Impact on health professionals

As members of the BJP and the VHP, some medical professionals have been responsible for propagating hatred and perpetrating injury to Muslims in Gujarat. They have played a role that contradicts their professional calling as providers of care.

Medical associations have been partisan, and have made no attempts to mobilise relief. The condemnation of attacks on doctors followed only after Dr Amit Mehta was attacked – by unidentified persons -- although many other (Muslim) doctors' property had been destroyed earlier and they had faced physical attacks. (For the first time, doctors have not been spared during the violence.) The attack on Dr Mehta has been misrepresented to suggest that Hindu doctors are under attack by the Muslim communities they serve. This distorts facts and also does injustice to Dr Mehta's sentiments.

The perceived significance of medical professionals' religious identity is dangerous. The profession must be neutral and humanitarian -- and must be seen as such.

On the whole, doctors have acted professionally within a narrow definition of the word. While they have not actively discriminated against any community, they have not made attempts to safeguard the rights of their patients or their peers. By not documenting medical evidence, they have hindered the process of securing justice for survivors.

Medico legal issues

Several lapses in medico-legal documentation were evident, even without a systematic investigation. Post mortems were not conducted and medico-legal cases were not recorded in several cases; dying declarations were not recorded. We do not know if this was deliberate, because such lapses are common in normal times as well. However, in this situation, they have serious consequences for survivors in their attempts to get justice.

ANNEXURE – 25

Source: 'Rights And Wrongs, Ordeal By Fire In The Killing Fields Of Gujarat': Editors Guild Fact Finding Mission Report by Aakar Patel, Dileep Padgaonkar, B.G.Verghese, New Delhi, May 3, 2002
Type: Excerpts from the fact-finding report

Summary of reporting /coverage by Electronic/Cable Network during the violence. TV and Radio networks

Zee TV, Aaj Tak and ETV (Eenadu) operate Gujarati channels in addition to Doordarshan. There were few critics of ETV and its coverage was described as balanced. Aaj Tak in particular received a lot of flak for its candid coverage. Aaj Tak used mobile OB vans that allowed quicker and more exhaustive coverage.

Star TV (NDTV) carried some graphic footage and interviews in the thick of the riots – in Ahmedabad and along the Vadodara-Godhra highway where a number of industrial establishments and trucks were burnt. There were strong critics of its coverage, including what was termed as the arrogant and hectoring tone of its correspondent while interviewing a tired Ahmedabad police commissioner at the end of a long day and its insistence that the Army's deployment was unduly delayed. Rajdeep Sardesai, NDTV's Political Editor, responded to this criticism in a subsequent newspaper article. Star also carried an extremely moving interview with Professor J.S Bandukwala in Vadodara, a man whose secular ethos continues to burn bright even after going through a terrible ordeal.

There is little doubt that some of the television coverage unmasked the State Government. The State Government hit back by banning Star on March 2 for several hours. In an interview to “Outlook” (March 18, 2002), Mr Narendra Modi was asked why he had sought to muzzle the press. His response was that “There was no ban on the media. I blacked out just one channel because of the provocative reporting methods used. Traditionally the print media has used its own methods of self-censorship, taking care not to mention the names of communities while reporting riots. If every half an hour names of communities are going to be mentioned, without any substantiation or any attribution, it inflames the situation instead of allaying it. It is not difficult to see what impact it will have. I must also tell you that since then the channel has tendered an apology and made amends”. Asked about this, Star News commented that it met Mr Modi at a press conference and requested him to lift what it termed an unfair ban. The Chief Minister complied. It must also be added that Mr Modi was given opportunity on the channel to air his point of view on events in Gujarat by prior arrangement before the ban.

The coverage by Doordarshan and AIR’s Ahmedabad kendras was staid. There were viewers and listeners who said that they appreciated this though others expressed dissatisfaction. One of our interlocutors said that while AIR reported the facts, Doordarshan said the situation was under control. The Chief Minister’s peace appeal was replayed several times by Doordarshan. Peace rallies in different parts of the State and programmes emphasising communal harmony were aired. These included sound bytes in Gandhiji’s voice, culled from archival material, and stories of Hindus sheltering Muslims. Efforts were made to counter rumours and scenes of joint Holi celebrations were screened.

According to a report in the Indian Express (March 8, 2002), AIR, Delhi was quizzed by somebody in the Prime Minister’s Office regarding an English discussion that was critical of the manner in which the Gujarat riots had been officially handled. This is said to have resulted in an inquiry and the transfer of the concerned Programme Officer. The discussants, Bhishma Narain Singh, a former Governor, Prof. Imtiaz Ahmed of JNU and Amulya Ganguli of the Hindustan Times were admittedly critical. However, if the issue was an alleged lack of balance in the programme, the answer is that Prasar Bharati cannot be totally anodyne about stark events and hope to enjoy any credibility; nor is balance always possible in a single programme and may often only be achieved over a series of broadcasts that allow all legitimate points of view a fair airing.

ANNEXURE – 26

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Evidence of Attacks on the Media by VHP Activists

In Vapi, activists snatched the camera from an ETV crew but returned it later. In another incident an ETV cameraman, a Muslim filming a shop being burnt in Dakor, a pilgrim town, was taken away by activists but later let off. ETV received threatening calls for showing the severed hand of a Muslim man. This portrayal was deemed partisan. A Zee TV crew, filming a restaurant being burnt, was similarly attacked. On February 28, Muslim miscreants in Behrampura burnt an ANI camera and car and confined the crew in a State Transport bus for over four hours. An office of Gujarat Today in Ahmedabad was attacked and damaged.

Ms Medha Patkar, the NBA activist leader is a red rag to the bull to many in Gujarat for her opposition to the Sardar Sarovar project. That, however, was no reason for her to be attacked by an unruly Congress-VHP crowd at Sabarmati Ashram on April 8 while attending a Gujarat peace meeting. The Police rescued her and was leading her to safety but then suddenly lathi-charged the newsmen covering the scene. The Chief Minister expressed his regret over the incident and appointed a one-man judicial inquiry under retired Justice S.D.Dave of the Gujarat High Court. He was to report by the end of April.

Barkha Dutt of NDTV reported of vigilantes armed with swords surrounding her car on a Gujarat highway screaming “what’s your religion?” Hindu, she replied, “privately cringing for my cameraperson, Ajmal Jami”. (Outlook, March 25).

Indian Express photographers were targeted and its chief reporter, Janlyala Srinivas, threatened. Its Rajkot man, Parish Joshi was mobbed and his camera damaged while photographing a shop being set on fire. In Ahmedabad, its photographer’s flashgun was damaged though this could have been by accident when the police was trying to control crowds. In Surat, the Express cameraman along with a colleague from Sandesh and another media person were attacked by a Muslim mob. Kerosene had been poured on them but a passing RPF posse was fortunately able to rescue them in time.

Bhargav Parikh, the news coordinator of Zee News and Tejas Gondalia, his cameraman were beaten up and had their camera smashed in Ahmedabad. The police in Rajkot beat the Times of India’s Sudhir Vyas. NDTV crew had to cry Jai Sri Ram before their vehicles were allowed to move.

Sonal Kellog of Asian Age and a local reporter of another paper were barred from entering part of Surat’s walled city where they had gone to interview a woman who had been attacked. They were themselves beaten and were unable to file a complaint with the police. (Hindu, April 9, 2002).

The Resident Editor of the Indian Express, Mr Virendra Kumar told us that the office van used for dropping night staff home was routinely and repeatedly searched by prowling mobs armed with swords and pipes looking for Muslims. Identity papers had to be shown. All this during curfew hours. A Muslim member of the staff sometimes slept at the office. Another, finding his house surrounded by a mob, phoned the office, which in turn alerted the police. Mr Kumar himself received a stream of hate mail accusing the Express of being anti-Hindu. The tenor of what seemed like an orchestrated campaign was, “You have no right to live in India and write like this”.