

FACTS against MYTHS

VIKAS ADHYAYAN KENDRA

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INFORMATION BULLETIN

Engineering Riots or Spontaneous Outbursts? The Myths behind the Godhra Riots

COMMENT

The Gujarat riots of 2002 has since not only led to a prodigious amount of data but also evidence on how minorities were subjected to massive rounds of brutalities bringing in its wake bloodshed, arson, looting, and rape; how law enforcement agencies of the Modi Government played to the tunes of most rabid communal outfits like the Sangh Parivar. This, plus the apathy to the violence itself served as an aid to these groups to exhort people to "save our country by boycotting Muslims economically and socially". Gujarat's print media too raised their anti-Muslim pitch during the riots and even thereafter and still continues to do so. The local press carried banner headlines: "hundreds of Muslim terrorists" being apprehended daily. The targeting of Muslims is a conscious strategy to terrorise the community with sexual violence as an essential weapon in their arsenal.

The riots also reflects how the Gujarat police dealt with riot cases as affecting the Muslim community i.e. out of 4252 cases filed during the post-Godhra communal violence, 2120 were closed. The Supreme Court, however, intervened and ordered the police of the Modi Government to review such cases. The State apparatus responded by pursuing what is now commonly known as 'Accused Protection Programme'. Large scale granting of bails and acquittals led to sub-standard investigations and farcical conduct of the trials. Most of the accused in the post riot cases were released on bail within one year whereas only 1 of the 75 accused in the Godhra case was not. The draconian law, POTA, became a weapon in the hands of the Modi government in targeting the Muslim community. Muslim youth were detained and third degree torture inflicted upon them to extract confessions. (Cf. also Box on page 2) Leaders of the VHP, Bajrang Dal, etc, were depicted as targets of these 'terrorists' thereby making them heroes among the Hindu community who then become apprehensive of the Muslim community in general.

The law and order apparatus during the riots clearly failed to fulfil its constitutional responsibility. The harrowing narration of the barbarism also failed to influence the judges of not only the Session Courts but also of the High Court of Gujarat. Yet, these judges did not fail to unhesitatingly condemn the National Human Rights Commission! Moreover, it later even confronted the Election Commission, challenging its powers of when to hold the State Elections. Further, public prosecutors also failed to help the victims. On April 12, 2004, however, the BEST Bakery Judgement was pronounced, again, by the intervention of the Supreme Court when the Gujarat High Court upheld the Session Court's decision to acquit the accused.



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The Supreme Court ordered for a re-trial and the case transferred from Gujarat to Mumbai, thus indirectly damming the judicial system of Gujarat as prejudiced and ineffective. Fresh public prosecutors were also appointed in consultation with the victims.

On the other side, the BJP and its leadership during the riots generated a bogey that the whole Godhra incident was a well-planned conspiracy. Accordingly a warped theory on riots was manufactured which is nothing but a political ploy to serve as a camouflage for the genocidal violence that was unleashed almost immediately following the Godhra riots. The formulation is an important feature in the construct of a communal theory of riots also as part of a campaign to control the numbers of 'backward' minorities, it stressing the communal divide in mixed areas. In so doing it fuels riots that lead to the exodus of specific communities from specific localities and States which succeeds in ghettoizing the community. With such a construct on riots, is it any wonder that from Day 1, neither the police nor the railways in Gujarat paid any attention in investigating the case comprehensively given the gravity of the tragedy?! Depositions of passengers and witnesses were not collected systematically; the post-mortem of the victims was not conducted carefully and the site of the tragedy not quarantined. Forensic samples were not lifted in a timely or schematically rational manner; some forensic material were even discarded!

The Government sought to generalise the problem of riots out of existence in the name of peace. Legal governance also sought to individuate the problem out of existence when the Courts' insisted on rigorous proof of individual complicity. It is precisely this kind of deliberately manipulated ambiguity that Modi, the Togadias, and others escape both moral and legal blame arising out of their direct or indirect involvement in riots. As a result, there is a general pervasive attitude on the part of governance that riots are simply unfortunate events; that sooner such events are forgotten the better. After all the need of the hour is to

heal wounds and make peace in communities rather than rake up issues that re-open wounds.

The general approach, therefore, towards a riot is not to deal with either the problems that give rise to it or the atrocities that are committed during riots. Consistent in this "riots-are-best-forgotten" approach, many stratagems of governance¹ are manufactured. The first is to assuage people's feelings by quickly appointing a Commission of Inquiry. A Supreme Court or High Court judge is appointed who, over several years, goes through the evidence. When the Report is finally tabled after it has conquered all the procedural hurdles placed in the way of its production, the report ends up finally as a dead letter! If recommendations are made for prosecuting particular individuals – as in the case of the Justice Srikrishna Report – it is greeted with political annoyance. Sometimes – as in the case of the Wadhwa Report – the judge shows unenviable restraint in refusing to make political indictments in ways that have been rightly described as unsatisfactory.

The policy of 'riots are best-forgotten' approach is in no way a policy of good governance. It is merely one of political expediency, calculated to get the problem out of the way until it recurs again; and, then, get rid of it once more. There is no egalitarian dignity in this. Instead, it is surrender to dominant communal politics to leave behind the shocking message that Indian governance will not pursue communal injustice in the name of communal harmony of peace. This is not because the peace in our country would be put in peril, but because it is more convenient (even expedient) to swallow the injustice, eclipse its existence and gain political dividends for doing so.

This evasive approach is not to be confused with the policy for 'truth and reconciliation', which Nelson Mandela used with some embarrassing success in South Africa. The 'truth' commission, however, was a forum for people to admit their guilt as acts of contrition. In India, the transgressors admit no such guilt! Nor do they make any symbolic act of contrition as part of

Godhra Accused & Torture²

In a highly controversial move, at least 7 persons accused in the Godhra violence were subjected to intense interrogation after being given doses of sodium pentothal, better known as 'Truth Serum', a drug which lowers inhibition and makes people more communicative. The 7, including prime accused M.H. Kolota and Haji Bilal Ismail Sujela who are facing charges of murder, rioting and arson, were subjected to the treatment for 3 days at the Sir Sayaji General Hospital in Baroda in the first week of July 2002. One of the accused, Anwar M. Mada, was reportedly suffering from the drug's side effects. Such tests are illegal and violation of the basic rights granted under the Constitution. While Art. 20 is clearly against forcing someone, even if accused of committing a crime, to be a witness against himself. Art. 21 grants protection to an individual from any inhuman or degrading treatment. Besides, truth serum tests are banned under international laws to which India is also signatory. In 1999, the UN had dubbed the use of the truth serum as a form of torture as it meant physical and psychological abuse to extract information.

reconciliation. Nor is any remorse expressed at all on the pogrom. The violence is, instead, justified and even glorified!

The Gujarat pogrom of 2002 has since become a synonym for blood curdling images of charred bodies of largely Muslim men, women and children. Major findings of various independent citizens' groups brought out the enormity of the barbarism. Almost every independent body – the International Initiative for Justice in Gujarat, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Minorities Commission, Election Commission and number of fact-finding teams and committees – PUDR, PUCL, AIDWA, SAHMAT, etc., — concluded that either the State police was aiding the rioters or itself participating in it. Ex-President K.R. Narayanan confirmed, to the Nanavati-Shah Commission, belatedly though, of having talked about a definite "conspiracy" between the Centre and the State governments in perpetuating the riots in Gujarat. In his letter to the Commission on April 8, 2005 the President indicted the Vajpayee government for inaction. The former Gujarat bureaucrat, Sunder Singh Bhandari, during the riots, recently accused Modi of taking the riots lightly and the demand that Modi be removed from office.

Riots, however, cannot and must not be erased from memory. Riots are a reminder of much that is rotten in our society. Above all, they represent potent political statements by those who make political capital of them.¹ The State on its part formally pretends to neutrality, asking people to accept riots as an unfortunate aberration and as such should be best forgotten. This act of 'soft pedalling' the issue of riots only plays into the hands of the communalists 'hard pedalling' their insidious and evil designs. For those who seek to derive social and political gain from a communal riot portray 'rioters' as heroes rather than murderous criminals who acted for and advance the communal cause. Hence, it is imperative that instead of examining riots as mere aberrations to be eventually erased from memory – without justice to the victims and prosecuting the culprits — riots must be dealt head-on, not kept hanging in the air or eventually swept under the carpet or pigeon-holed.

MYTH: The Godhra riots like any riots are undoubtedly diabolic incidents that emerge at the spur of the moment, spontaneously, and therefore it is impossible to lay blame on any person or body.

FACT: This understanding of riots is both dishonest and irresponsible.¹

What, then, is a riot? Is it an explosion of events, which simply occurred for which no one is responsible? Or, does it congeal a series of incidents and events which when broken up into their individual sequences reveal barbaric acts by individuals and groups who have mercilessly chosen to inflict acts of cruelty on innocent fellow beings and everything around them through pre-



For those who don't understand Gujarati, it means, "What is today's pogrom?"

mediated acts which it would be irresponsible to say that they are not responsible. A riot is carnage. A ghastly form of violence by people who know what they were doing whilst pursuing their own social and political agendas. Riots are not effusive explosions that simply happen for which no one is to blame. Riots are not crimes of passion. Broken down frame by frame they aggregate as a series of gruesome murders, arson, rapes beatings and killings. Picasso's *Guernica* reminds the world to fracture our perceptions of what appears to be an impressionist blur to see a riot as a series of chilling criminal acts committed by callous people for cruel ends to viciously inflict torture and pain on the innocent. In this conception, a riot is a series of events for which people are culpable.

In this context we are reminded of the well-known saying 'let a sleeping dog lie', understood as an acquiescent mindset. Politicians conveniently used in interpreting violence like communal riots as events that should not be deeply probed into, lest "old wounds" get needlessly reopened. Such a notion was conveniently used it to jettison the Sri Krishna Commission, probing the Mumbai communal riots in 1996! The guilty were thus let off! The Commission was however reviewed by Atal Behari Vajpayee on the final day of his 13th-day government in 1996. He did this not so much because he disapproved of the communal argument but because he was wooing the secular camp at the time by placing the contentious points on the BJP's Hindutva agenda on the back burner¹. Thus, in essence, what the communal lobby failed to achieve in Mumbai by closing down the Sri Krishna inquiry, it tried to enforce in Gujarat by shutting

down the police cases and influencing the witnesses — exploiting their emotions i.e. their desires to bury the past and return to a life free of fear and tension — playing upon their “desire” of ‘Letting bygones be bygones’.

Communal riots like the Godhra riots are largely pre-planned events. A member of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) headed by its Chairperson, Justice J.S. Verma, pointed out the horrific fact of “the communal riot (having) been planned weeks in advance... and Godhra was the occasion and not the cause”. According to him, the Commission has information that the VHP had sourced voters’ lists and documents from the Registrar of Companies to identify Muslims as also establishments in which members of the minority community held more than 50 per cent of equity. Similarly, some government sources³ stated that VHP members drew up lists of even government departments (e.g. the Food Corporation of India) and their allied agencies, and identified ‘undesirables’ and their addresses. (Incidentally, this strategy had been adopted during the 1992 riots in a Mumbai area of Pratiksha Nagar). “The riots on this scale could not have been planned in a day. It would have taken weeks. What followed was systematic and pinpointed targeting”, Justice Verma noted.

MYTH: The S/6 Coach of the Sabarmati Express that was set ablaze was a preplanned “terrorists” attack by Muslims of Godhra to burn alive the *kar sevaks* in the train.

FACT: The Justice U.C. Bannerjee interim report has debunked this claim. Its findings have shot holes in this and other such claims. A brief summary⁴ itself will throw light on the whole issue:

1. That the Railways did not conduct any inquiry into the Godhra incident though it was the statutory obligation on the part of the Commissioner of Railway Safety to make an inquiry as soon as possible. Significantly, the Commissioner of Railway Safety, Western Circle, Mumbai informed the Railway administration by a letter dated 30.10.2002 that it was thought prudent not to conduct the inquiry since the State Government had ordered an inquiry under the Commissions of Inquiry Act. It was noted that inquiry under the Commissions of Inquiry Act was ordered on 6th of March, 2002 i.e. after 8 days of the incident whereas the Commissioner of Railway Safety ought to have conducted the enquiry within 48 hours to collect the evidences immediately. Justice Banerjee therefore held that Railway’s failure to take steps against the errant official is an act of great indiscretion to the say the least.
2. That the report of Shri B.B.Mogdgil, former Divisional Railway Manager (D R M) of Vadodara dated 28.2.2002 clearly exposed the collusion of certain highly placed railway officials like the DRM

himself who helped spread the rumour that the passengers could not alight from the S6 coach because the doors of the said coach was closed from outside! The paragraph 1.10 of the DRM’s report contained the shocking assertion:

“1.10: A majority of the passengers of the S-6 coach were unable to alight from the burning coach, primarily due to sever pelting of stones on both side by the mob as well as locking of the exit door from outside.”

That a top executive of the western railway can resort to such falsehood to help spread the rumour that the *kar sevaks* were burnt to death by locking the doors from outside is indeed shocking and criminal. It is not only of common knowledge that the doors of any railway compartment cannot be locked by any private person from outside but it is also the finding of the Forensic Science Laboratory that three doors of S-6 were actually open while the coach was burning! The vernacular press spread this rumour all over Gujarat to instigate the Hindus against the Muslims during the aftermath of the Godhra incident, which led to the infamous theory of “reaction”.

3. That the S-7 coach which was adjacent to the ill-fated S-6 coach was partially damaged but mysteriously, not detached from the train at Godhra along with the S-6 and S-5 coaches. Later on, in the “Conspiracy Theory” the S-7 coach was brought into prime focus when it was alleged that the “Muslim conspirators had entered the S-6 coach by a cut they had allegedly made in the canvas covering of the vestibule of the S-7 coach and therefore poured 60 litres of petrol inside S-6.” An obvious question would be to know whether the canvas was examined for finding out the alleged “cut” made therein! Justice Banerjee’s report has brought out yet another shocking revelation in this regard. He had discovered that the said piece of canvas was sold as scrap. This proof is now lost forever! The Gujarat police story thus is woven around a non-existent piece of evidence!

Additionally, on the so-called Conspiracy Theory.⁵ It also has several loopholes. These are: How did the conspirators know that there were *kar sevaks* on the Sabarmati Express? The train was also running over 4 hours late! And as for *kar sevaks* they were scheduled to return a day earlier but were delayed by a day. How could then the conspirators know that they were on the Sabarmati Express? Even if they did, delay of over 4 hours could have upset their plan. In such matters even minutes count, let alone hours.

Finally, after examining several witnesses and voluminous documentary evidence, the Banerjee report concludes that on the basis of the evidence presently available, the “Petrol theory” or even the “miscreant theory” is totally absurd. The fire in the S-6 coach was essentially an accidental fire.

MYTH: The culprits responsible for the Gujarat riots were immediately apprehended, booked and the riots brought under control within 72 hours

FACT: On the contrary! This claim failed to square with the NHRC Chairperson's assessment of the situation. The Chairperson Justice Verma, on his return from Gujarat, hit out at the Modi Government for its failure to restore normalcy, even 3 weeks after the riots broke out!⁶ Justice Verma had also rejected the preliminary report and sought a more credible explanation. He also sought an assurance from Modi who had called upon him at the time that given the all-round tension, school examinations would be postponed, and the VHP's threatened "asthi (ashes and bones of Godhra victims) yatras" to 750 different places nationwide, would not take place!

During the communal riots the Gujarat Government took vindictive action against officers who had done their duty as they were duty-bound to and no action against those who failed to carry out their responsibilities in checking criminal acts. This has been done despite clear-cut norms set by the National Human Rights Commission.

Riots – Rewards...

On February 23, 2005 the Gujarat Government issued an order⁷ promoting 3 or 4 Additional DIG's to the DG rank. It also gave the assurance that compliant officers were promoted. These officers were:

P.C. Pande: He was Commissioner of Police, Ahmedabad, where some 500 people were killed. He

was transferred and then went on deputation to CBI. When the UPA Government came to power, he was removed. Today the State government has promoted him as DG and considered very close to Modi.

G. Subha Rao: He was the State Chief Secretary. Toed the Modi line during the carnage. On his retirement, he became the chairperson of the Electricity Appellate Authority.

Bhagyesh Jha: He has been Vadodara Collector for almost 4 years and set to become the longest serving collector of the district. (Generally, collectors and DDOs are transferred after 3 years)

Ashok Narayan: He was Additional Chief Secretary, Home. On retirement, he was posted as State Vigilance Commissioner.

Rakesh Asthana: He was posted as IG, CID and heads the SIT constituted to probe the Godhra carnage. Recognising the "service" rendered in establishing the conspiracy angle behind the incident, he was transferred as IG, Vadodara range. He continues to head the SIT probe. After the Bannerjee Committee submitted its interim report debunking the conspiracy theory, the Modi government asked him to brief the press about how a conspiracy theory was hatched by Muslim fundamentalists to kill 'kar sevaks'. (Cont. on pg. 8)

M.K.Tandon: He was joint commissioner of Police, Ahmedabad, Sector II. The Gulbarga Society and Narodya Patiya were under his jurisdiction. He was shifted as IG, Surat Range.

Gujarat Communal Riots: Status Report⁸

City / District	Total cases registered	Pending Trial closed	True cases closed	False cases	Acquitted	Pending Investigation	Pending Sanction for Prosecution	Other
Ahmedabad city	959	516	358	58	7	19	-	1
Ahmedabad Rural	88	69	16	-	2	1	1	-
Baroda city	617	398	204	-	1	3	10	1
Baroda Rural	242	93	148	-	1	-	-	-
Anand	199	134	62	3	-	-	-	-
Kheda	193	134	38	-	3	17	4	-
Panchmahal	179	96	62	1	16	4	-	-
Bhavnagar	310	42	264	4	-	-	-	-
Sabarkantha	467	176	281	4	-	-	-	3
Banaskantha	61	15	45	-	-	1	-	-
Mehsana	172	78	90	4	-	-	-	-
Dahod	87	24	60	-	-	1	2	-
Others	678	262	404	2	6	-	2	1
Total	4252	2037	2032	76	36	46	19	6

Gujarat Pogrom As Genocide?⁸

Under international law, offences such as genocide and crime against humanity are committed not only against persons or communities targeted; they are also, 'erga omnes' violations, that is, violations of obligations that are owed to every nation, and thereby, to humanity as a whole. Genocide and crimes against humanity are also non-derivable violations ('jus cogens') that can never be justified. As such these crimes are subject to universal jurisdiction, which triggers the authority, and, indeed, the obligation of the international community as a whole, and every nation individually, to extradite or prosecute the perpetrators. For the reasons (*feminist analysis...) the pogrom against the Muslim community of Gujarat and the on-going persecution constitute both a genocide attack and a crime against humanity.

Under international law, "crimes against humanity" and genocide are equally grave violations. There is no hierarchy of egregiousness between them. In assessing whether the attack on the Muslim population of Gujarat constitutes either crimes against humanity or genocide the available facts on close examination⁸ in the light of the international understanding of each of these crimes and their distinct elements. Accordingly, on the basis of the criteria laid down the attack on the Muslim community 'prima facie' meet the legal criteria of both genocide and crimes against humanity. Both crimes give rise to Universal jurisdiction to try the perpetrators and obligate the Indian State to repair the damage and prevent reoccurrence.

The contemporary understanding of both genocide and crimes against humanity has also been shaped and developed through the jurisprudence of the post-World War II Tribunals and, more recently, in the ad hoc International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Sources for this conception has also been drawn upon the Genocide Convention and the Rome Statute as well as upon Tribunals' jurisprudence and other sources of international law.

Are the Gujarat Riots of February-March 2002 Genocide?

Over the years, immense caution has been exercised in the application of the term "Genocide". Since genocides are often State-sanctioned mass violence against a particular group or collectively within its territorial borders, acknowledgement that a certain situation is genocide at once holds the State or authority under which it occurs, responsible. It places an obligation on the State that acknowledges the genocide, to take all measure to prevent and prosecute those responsible. The reluctance by State in the international arena to acknowledge genocides may thus be motivated by the desire to avoid "telling on other States"; to protect their economic or other interests with the genocidal State and escape any obligation to take action. It is, however, articulated in objective terms like, whether the death and physical harm has been significant, whether the two sides are equally responsible or not, whether the "genocide" is a manifestation of internal political equations or not and other similar arguments that are generally put forward by the genocidal State.

The conclusion that was arrived on this question was based on examining some of the above issues and others such as the need to adequately describe the continuing violence, the hierarchy of harms compared to situations elsewhere in the world and the psychological significance of the use of the term "genocide". The conclusion that there was an on-going genocidal project in Gujarat and the events of February-March 2002 in fact satisfy the legal definition of the crime of genocide.

- Legal Definition of Genocide
- The Genocide Convention, completed in 1948, defines the crime of genocide in Art.2:
- Genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such:
- Killing members of the group;
- Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about physical destruction whole or in part;
- Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

If anyone or more of the above acts are committed with the intent to destroy a group identifiable as a distinct nation, ethnic, racial or religious group, it is Genocide.

There are many testimonies presented to the international panel on Gujarat and other tribunals from which it is clear that 4 of the 5 acts mentioned above have been committed.

Major Riot Cases⁸

INCIDENT	KILLINGS	STATUS
Narodia Patia, Ahmedabad	83	Trial yet to begin. Some accused absconding. Two still in jail, two witnesses were also jailed.
Naroda Gaon, politicians Ahmedabad	12	Trial yet to begin. Witnesses who named were jailed in connection with a murder case.
Chamanpura, Ahmedabad	67	Witnesses asking for their statements to be recorded properly and for a thorough investigation.
Sardarpura, Mehasana	33	Witnesses asking for special public prosecutor. The present District public prosecutor is a VHP leader.
Randhikpur, Dahod	18	Case closed as true but undetected (owing to lack of evidence). Main witness named the accused. But police have not arrested them; instead the police have declared the witness "unstable".
Pandharwada, Panchmahal	21	Accused acquitted.
Khanpur, Panchmahal	73	All the accused acquitted. During the trial, the witnesses identified the culprits. They said that they did not name these accused to the police and that the real accused were different people. The witnesses named the real accused in the court. But the public prosecutor did not make an application to bring the real accused before the court. The court while acquitting the accused had passed some observations against the police for not investigating the case properly.
Anjenwa, Panchmahal	11	20 absconding. 5 accused not named in the charge sheet. Witnesses have asked for the arrest of the accused or their property to be attached as was done against the absconding in the Godhra case.
Ambika Society, Panchmahal	13	FIR clubbed with three other cases that occurred in three separate place: Kalol, Boru and Vajalpur. Trial has not yet begun.
Eral, Panchmahal	9	The witness is a woman whose daughter was raped and killed. She has asked for the 'absconding' to be arrested and for the names to be included in the charge sheet. The judge will not proceed until all 32 witnesses are present at the same time in court.

Details of Losses

- Rs.38, 000 million estimated losses suffered by the Muslim community.
- Rs.30, 000 million estimated to have been lost due to closing down of shops, industries and commerce. The Gujarat Chamber of Commerce puts the figure as Rs.20, 000 million.
- 1150 hotels were burnt in Ahmedabad alone.
- Rs.6000 million loss was suffered by the hotel industry.
- Rs.5000 million worth of property was lost due to hotels and restaurants being burnt down in Bhavnagar, Ahmedabad, etc.
- 20,000 workers from the hotel industry were rendered jobless
- Over 1,000 trucks are estimated to have been burnt.
- Transport companies lost business amounting to Rs. 700 million.
- Rs.10,000 million were lost in damage to textile mills in Surat alone.
- 55 Mosques and Dargahs were 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 Rs. 80,000 million were lodged by owners of two and four wheelers.
- 90% of commercial establishments have wiped out on national highway no 8.

A.K. Sharama: He was SP, Mehsana, where the Sardarpura incident occurred. 31 people were burnt alive there! Now he is IG, Gandhinagar range.

P. K. Mishra: He was Modi's Principal Secretary. Presently, he is with the Union Home Ministry as additional secretary.

K. Nityanandan: He was Secretary, Home. Recently, transferred as Commissioner of Rajkot by upgrading the post.

...Punishment

In contrast to such "rewards" only a few government officers in Gujarat, on principle, did not follow the clear cut but illegal instructions by the State Government to let rioters to kill members of the minority community with impunity. All four of these exemplary administrators were then transferred (Arora, V., Indian Express, October 28, 2004) these officers are:

- **Vivek Srivasta, SP, Kutch:** He was transferred overnight after he arrested a VHP leader. Now he on deputation in Delhi.
- **Rahul Sharma SP, Bhavnagar:** He saved 200 Muslim children who were in a 'madrasa' surrounded by Hindu mobs. He visited the site and ordered firing in which 3 Hindus died. The same evening he was transferred as SCP, Control Room, and Ahmedabad. He had discovered serious flaws in the Naroda Patiya and Gulbarga Society investigations. He was given an inconsequential posting in Surat. Presently, he is on deputation to CBI.
- **Sathish Sharma:** He was DIG, Ahmedabad. After dealing strictly with VHP activists, he was stripped of the post. Right now, he is posted with the anti-corruption bureau.
- **M.D. Antani:** He was an SP, Bharuch, a sensitive area but did not allow any major communal flareup. He arrested some VHP

leaders of Bharuch leading to his transferred to an Adivasi district, in Narmada.

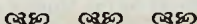
➤ **P.B. Godhia, DCP of Ahmedabad**

➤ **Himanshu Bhatta:** SP of Banskantha, Palanpur. During the riots, he witnessed a sub-inspector leading a Hindu mob. He initiated an inquiry against the sub-inspector and got him suspended. The sub-inspector, however, returned to the same post and Bhatt was transferred as SP Intelligence. Presently, he is on a study trip abroad.

Clearly, the Sabarmati Express incident is not an open and shut case of Muslims targeting *Kar Sevaks*. Had it been so the police would not have been so tight lipped.⁹

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Graphics on page 1 and 3 are from Morparia, H. & Kulkarni, A. Never Again! Cartoons on the Gujarat Carnage, YUVA/FOCUS India Programme, Mumbai, 2002.



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