

**April 28, 2002. The Hindu (India). Hasan Suroor
Violence was planned months in advance: U.K. officials**

LONDON APRIL 27. British officials in India have been quoted by the BBC as saying that the violence in Gujarat was "planned, possibly months in advance" and its aim was to "purge Muslims from Hindu areas."

It said that according to a "damning" internal report, prepared by British officials who visited Gujarat, the violence had "all the hallmarks of ethnic cleansing and that reconciliation between Hindus and Muslims is impossible while the Chief Minister remains in power."

"It's a damning indictment of the State Government. It says the violence, far from being spontaneous, was planned possibly months in advance, carried out by an extremist Hindu organisation with the support of the State Government," the BBC said.

This is the second time in a week that the findings of a British High Commission investigation have been "leaked" to the media despite the Indian Government's strong protests. A Foreign Office spokesman confirmed to The Hindu last week that a team of the British High Commission in India had visited Gujarat, and that the British Government was "concerned" that the scale of violence and deaths was higher than earlier believed.

The Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, is reported to have spoken to his Indian counterpart, Jaswant Singh, and regretted the leak. But he is under pressure from the families of British victims of the Gujarat events to speak out more strongly against the continuing violence, and the alleged role of the State Government. "We have told him that a line has been crossed and it is no longer an internal matter of the Indian Government," a spokesman of the Council of Indian Muslims (the U.K.) said today.

**April 30, 2002. Sify (India).
Gujarat riots pre-planned by BJP men: US rights group**

BJP members were directly involved in the killings of hundreds of people in Gujarat, which were pre-planned and could spread throughout the country, Human Rights Watch charged Tuesday.

The New York-based rights group said the state government of Gujarat was engaged in a "massive cover-up" to hide its role in two months of communal violence that has left at least 900 people dead.

"What happened in Gujarat was not a spontaneous uprising; it was a carefully orchestrated attack," Smita Narula, Human Rights Watch's senior South Asia researcher, said in the 75-page report.

"The attacks were planned in advance and organized with extensive participation of the police and state government officials," she said.

Police officials who sought to protect Muslims were removed from their positions, while some police even led distraught victims directly into the hands of their killers, the rights group said.

At the height of the riots between February 28 and March 2, thousands of people descended on Muslim neighborhoods "guided by voter lists and printouts of addresses of Muslim-owned properties -- information obtained from the local municipality."

"This is a crisis of impunity," Narula said. "If charges against members of these groups are not investigated and prosecuted accordingly, violence may continue to engulf the state and may even spread to other parts of the country."

The rights body said mass graves have been found around Gujarat and that the death toll from the riots could be as high as 2,000.

Human Rights Watch quoted a woman at a mass grave in Ahmedabad who washed female victims' charred and mutilated bodies before burial.

"Some bodies had heads missing, some had hands missing, some were like coal -- you would touch them and they would crumble. I washed 17 bodies on March 2; only one was completely intact. All had been burned, many had been split down the middle," the woman said.

Mansoori Abdulbhai, a 53-year-old resident of Ahmedabad's Gulmarg Society neighborhood, said 19 members of his family were killed.

"First they cut people so they couldn't run and then they set them on fire. One or two women were taken inside and gang raped. After five hours the police came and brought us here (to a mass grave site). It was so well-planned," he said.

Citing witnesses and police reports, Human Rights Watch said the BJP was directly involved in the violence along with several affiliated groups, including the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Bajrang Dal and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

March 07, 2002. Indian Express (India).

Mobs used voters lists to target victims

Ahmedabad, March 7: Police investigating the systematic manner in which mobs identified minority targets, picking up houses, restaurants and business establishments, believes that voters lists were used to a deadly effect.

"The manner in which targets were selected indicates that the mobs had perfect information about who was living where and owned what," said officials of an investigating agency in Ahmedabad.

"Even if one or two families were living in a largely Hindu-dominated area, those who lead the mobs knew exactly where their houses were. This shows they had precise information about their targets," says City Mayor Himmatsinh Patel.

A preliminary report with investigating agencies states that those who lead the mobs were armed with voters lists too. "This has happened. The people who were at the forefront of the mobs were grassroots level workers of parties. They knew the wards and areas well and who lived where. There is no doubt about the fact that they sat with the lists on the night of February 27 and prepared for what to do the next morning," an official said.

"If they ever are identified, we are sure they must be the people who have sat at party tables outside the polling booths during elections. They would know the demography and population profiles of the areas," sources said on condition of anonymity.

Senior police officers said, the pattern of attacks last week clearly indicated those who lead the mobs knew where the targets were exactly. "After that it was just a matter of inciting the mob, whether they knew who lived there or not, to attack them," officials said.

Police is also investigating reports that business rivals also passed on information to the mobs. "This is especially the case with restaurants, hardware shops," said officers.

A senior city police officer said, "Even they did a survey of Duffnala area in the posh Shahibaug area where most of the senior government officers stay in their official bungalows. It seems now that Godhra was only an issue, this master plan was prepared months back and they were just waiting for a chance."

Requesting anonymity, he also said that even lists of restaurant owners in the city on the basis of their religion were with the mobs. That is why none of the assets owned by others were left untouched. "It seems, as we go deeper into investigation, everything was pre-planned."

November 25, 2002. The Hindu (India).

Godhra carnage an organised crime, says citizens' panel

AHMEDABAD Nov. 21. The Concerned Citizens' Tribunal headed by Krishna Iyer, a retired Judge of the Supreme Court, has held the post-Godhra carnage in Gujarat as an "organised crime perpetrated by the Chief Minister, Narendra Modi, and his Government" while maintaining that the Godhra train carnage could be "accidental."

The nine-member tribunal, appointed by a group of "concerned citizens" which recorded evidences of more than 1,500 people during its sittings in various parts of the State in May, released the 600-page first two volumes of its final report here today. The third and the last volume carrying "technical details" was under print, Mr Justice P. B. Sawant, another retired judge of the apex court and Deputy Chairman of the tribunal, said while releasing the report.

The tribunal included Hosbet Suresh and Lone, both retired judges of the Bombay High Court, K.G. Kannabiran, senior criminal advocate, K.S. Subramanian, a retired police officer, Ghanshyam Shah, academician and social scientist, Aruna Roy, former IAS officer and social activist, and Tanika Sarkar, historian. Mr. Justice Sawant said both the State and the Central Governments were given opportunities twice to depose before the tribunal and contradict its findings if they had substantial evidences, but chose to ignore its notices. The tribunal said that while no concluding evidence had yet been found to claim that the Godhra carnage was "pre-planned", it was clear that the post-Godhra violence was pre-planned and executed with "military precision" by the Sangh Parivar with the State's complicity. It also indicted the BJP-led Government at the Centre for "failing in its duties". It said the State's complicity was evident from various acts of omissions and commissions and several members of the Modi Cabinet participated in the genocide or instigated the mobs.

January 01, 2004. The Hindu (India).

Gujarat riots were planned, says Amartya Sen

NEW DELHI DEC. 31. The communal riots in Gujarat in the wake of the Godhra carnage in 2002 were planned and a court of law must examine the allegations regarding the involvement of the Narendra Modi Government, according to the Nobel laureate, Amartya Sen.

"We had this terrible riot in 2002. It started with arson in which the victims were primarily Hindus ...But then the reaction that followed and the organisation that went with it clearly points to a well-disciplined riot," Dr. Sen said in an interview to be broadcast tomorrow by the British Broadcasting Corporation, where he spoke at length on communalism and the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Modi: Architect of Gujarat Genocide. Pre-planned attacks on Muslims

Though it was for the court to adjudicate on allegations of the riots being a pogrom undertaken by the BJP Government in the State, Dr. Sen said there was evidence pointing towards State involvement.

A recipient of the Nobel Prize for Economics in 2001, columnist and political commentator, Dr. Sen had earlier criticised the Gujarat Government for its "failure to avert the riots after 58 people were burnt alive inside a coach of the Sabarmati Express".

Hailing the tradition of dialogue as essential to Indian political and cultural tradition, he said: "There has been temptation on behalf of at least one part of the Indian polity today to silence people rather than to encourage arguments".