

March 25, 2002. Washington Post. Rama Lakshmi.

For the First Time, the Cameras Didn't Blink

NEW DELHI When sectarian violence erupted recently in India's western state of Gujarat, much of this country's outrage and dismay were directed at the news media. Among other perceived excesses, journalists used two forbidden words in their coverage of the Hindu-Muslim violence:

Hindu and Muslim.

In a nation that has been wracked by numerous sectarian clashes since it gained independence in 1947, Indian newspapers traditionally have exercised immense caution and restraint. For years, journalists routinely filed reports of religious clashes that gave no details about the faith of victim or aggressor. Descriptions were often limited to such phrases as "members of one community clashed with another" or "a place of worship belonging to a community was attacked."

The unwritten code was that, in this predominantly Hindu nation with 140 million Muslims, the explicit reporting of a sectarian riot at one site could spark violence at another.

But the violence in Gujarat changed all that. For the first time, India's nascent 24-hour privately owned television channels covered ugly scenes of rioting and mob fury and beamed them into people's homes. It was no longer possible to hide the religious identities of the attackers or the victims. In covering riots that came in retaliation for a Muslim attack on Hindus that killed at least 56 people, the networks loudly -- and accurately -- declared that the mobs were Hindus and the victims were Muslims.

"Communal riots have taken place before, but the words Hindu and Muslim were never uttered by journalists," said Narendra Modi, Gujarat's chief minister, whose resignation is being demanded by opposition parties that accuse his Hindu-nationalist state government of deliberate inaction. "For the first time, such explicit language was used. It was irresponsible and it fueled the fires."

Many Indian journalists said the change was long overdue. As Hinduism has risen again in government and society in the past decade, leading figures in the print and television media see themselves as guardians of India's underlying principle of secularism and say it is past time to rethink their policy of restraint.

The media's dilemma was complicated in Gujarat by what they considered the complicity of the state in the mob violence. The Hindu nationalists in the state government and the police force merely watched as members of Hindu right-wing groups went on a rampage setting hundreds of Muslims' homes and offices afire, often with the Muslims inside.

Television channels showed the city of Ahmadabad in flames, revealed the faces of rioters as they shouted Hindu slogans and even caught the police spectating. Television crews were attacked by angry Hindu mobs who forced journalists to reveal their religious identities and shout Hindu slogans.

"We were reporting in a situation where the line between the mob and the government was completely blurred," said Rajdeep Sardesai, who covered the violence for Star News channel. "I believe showing those images was essential. With TV, there is no place anymore for the rioters to hide."

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, whose Bharatiya Janata Party has close ties with Hindu nationalist groups, said the television channels were exaggerating the incidents of violence and acting irresponsibly by showing scenes of carnage.

And the umbrella group of Hindu radical organizations, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (National Volunteers Group), recently accused the media of not condemning the attack on the Hindus that sparked the riots as much as they did the Hindus' revenge attacks on Muslims. The group warned that the media "should stop insulting Hindu sentiments."

Faced with the shoot-the-messenger mood all around, reporters and editors have responded by defending themselves in seminars and magazine columns, while also reflecting on some uncomfortable but basic questions about journalism. Some say they believe that the first televised religious violence in post-independence India offered a few lessons in the value of restraint.

"The media tends to overlook its primary responsibility to try to contain the violence from spreading," said Chandan Mitra, editor of the *The Pioneer*, an English-language newspaper. "Violence should not be reported live, as it may provoke copycat riots elsewhere."

May 03, 2002. Hindustan Times (India).

Cops admit killing more Muslims

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.

Modi: Architect of Gujarat Genocide. State and Police Complicity

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 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. Four of these 26 Hindus were killed by the RAF.

February 2, 2003. Indian Express (India). Syed Khalique Ahmed

Modi justice: cops book disabled

Vadodara, February: On the day he was sworn in, Narendra Modi promised "five crore Gujaratis" justice for all. He might not have been aware that, just a few days prior to that, his policemen were picking up 20 people for attacking a victory procession.

Among them were two youths, one mentally challenged and the other physically challenged. They were released on bail, then picked up a month later under the heavyweight Prevention of Anti-Social Activities (PASA) Act.

The action has provoked a wave of outrage among lawyers, social activists and opposition leaders, who call it "gross misuse of power". They have criticised the police's decision to invoke PASA as the accused are neither habitual offenders nor do they have a previous criminal record.

It all began on December 15, the day the election results were declared, when the residents of the Muslim-dominated Suleimani Chawl were accused of throwing bombs and stones at the victory procession of BJP MLA Bhupendra Lakhawala. They were also accused of assaulting a police constable with "an intention to kill."

Two days later, 20 chawl residents were arrested, including 24-year-old physically challenged Asif Mansuri and 20-year-old mentally challenged Ghulam Moinuddin Mansuri. Two cases were registered against them, for attacking the procession and assaulting the policeman.

All were released on bail on Dec 27, after the court observed there wasn't sufficient evidence against the accused. It did, however, direct them to report to the police every Sunday to complete investigations.

On January 12, when they went to the Panigate Police Station, they were arrested under PASA. The families are, obviously, traumatised. Asif's father Shamsuddin Mansuri says: "My son, who strings beads to make a living, can't even walk properly. How can he throw stones and bombs at a procession?"

He produces a medical certificate issued by Dr Rosy Mathai of SSG Hospital on Nov 28, 1994, which finds Asif "25 per cent disabled due to post-polio lower limb weakness."

Senior advocate and Baroda Bar Association president Narendra Tiwari is clear that there's something fishy. "The use of PASA in this particular case amounts to gross misuse of power by authorities.

Though charges levelled against the culprits come under offences punishable under Chapters XVI and XVII of IPC, the accused in this particular case can't be booked under PASA as they're not 'habitual' offenders and they allegedly resorted to the action under certain circumstances."

"The Act is preventive in nature, it's draconian because courts can't interfere", Tiwari adds. "Only the PASA board can decide the fate of the detainees and the board has to meet within 45 days of the arrest. The board can release the accused if it feels the charges are insufficient, or confirm the detention in case it finds the charges are adequate."

Locals believe the case and detention are politically motivated. They say a politician-builder wants the chawl removed because it's affecting the profile of his multi-storey complex next door.

September 11, 2003. Indian Express (India). Manoj Mitta.

Raped, child & family killed, she's told take a walk

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 10: Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi and his sympathisers will find it hard to dismiss Harish Salve as a "pseudo-secularist" whining over the riots. The former Solicitor-General defended Modi in the Supreme Court when he wanted early elections soon after the violence. And just this week, Salve was the counsel for the Modi government arguing against bail to the Godhra accused.

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But in a stinging rebuff to the Gujarat government, Salve has refused to appear for it against the National Human Rights Commission in the Best Bakery case which comes up in the Supreme Court on Friday.

Instead, Salve has taken up the case of a 22-year-old woman called Bilkis Yakub Rasool, a case which NHRC chief Justice A S Anand referred to him and in which the Gujarat government was put on notice by the Supreme Court two days ago.

"I took up her case because it represents the failure of the system," Salve told The Indian Express, "the failure of the police and of the courts in Gujarat...When Justice Anand asked me to appear in this matter, I went through the records and decided to fight this injustice."

The records tell a horrifying story. Of how a woman, five months pregnant, was raped and saw 14 of her family killed, including her three-year-old daughter. And her two sisters, mother and two brothers. Of how the court closed her case without giving her a hearing— despite a senior police officer putting on record serious "shortcomings" in the investigation.

What makes it more compelling is that these records aren't NGO statements or lawyers' arguments but official Gujarat police records culled out by the NHRC, in a brief, a copy of which is with The Indian Express.

These records say:

- On March 3, 2002, Bilkis, then five months pregnant, was on the run with 16 family members after violence broke out in their Singwad village in Dahod. Eight women in the group, including Bilkis, were raped in a forest. Bilkis lost consciousness.
- When she woke up, Bilkis found she was naked, injured and alone amid the bodies of her relatives. She spent the night in the forest and the next morning she came across a tribal woman who gave her a ghagra to wear.
- She then walked up to the road from where she was taken in a police jeep to the Limkheda police station.
- It was then that Bilkis lodged an FIR. The police conducted an inquest on March 5 with three independent witnesses who examined the crime scene and recovered seven bodies. The inquest report confirmed, in chilling detail, evidence of rape.
- The next day, March 6, she named the accused in a statement recorded before a Godhra magistrate. On March 7, she lodged a second FIR naming three people who she says raped her.
- On April 24, 2002, a forensic report confirmed that Bilkis was raped.
- Yet, instead of arresting the persons accused by Bilkis and filing a chargesheet, the police submitted a final report to the court in January this year saying "the offence is true but undetected."
- This despite the fact that in November 2002, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Limkheda division, R S Bhagora, pointed out serious "shortcomings" in the case papers. Bhagora noted that the forensic report confirmed Bilkis was raped and yet no medical examination was done of the accused she had named. "You are directed to take lawful steps against the accused after conducting detailed investigation into the offence."
- That didn't happen. Instead, the police filed a final report in January 2003 telling the court that "in the absence of any evidence and independent proof against the accused named in the complaint... no action has been taken."
- The police claimed that Bilkis had given "contradictory statements." And that in the first FIR she said she hadn't been raped.

However, in an interview to The Indian Express (see story), Bilkis claims that she did name names in the first FIR itself but the police didn't record them. That she was raped was subsequently confirmed in the forensic report.

- The police also disbelieved the names mentioned by her because they are "respectable persons in the village."
- On March 25, 2003, the magistrate of Limkheda allowed the police to put Bilkis's complaint in cold storage without giving her a hearing.

Hence, a writ petition filed by Bilkis asked the Supreme Court to set aside the magistrate's order and direct the CBI to investigate the case afresh. The petition also sought a direction to take action against the police officials found to have abused their powers.

When the petition came up for hearing on Monday, Salve recalled the law laid down by the Supreme Court in 1996 that in cases of sexual molestation, minor contradictions or insignificant discrepancies should not be a ground for closing the investigation and that conviction can be founded on the sole testimony of the victim.

**December 16, 2003. Times of India (India).
Policeman Modi 'fuelled' the riots**

Modi: Architect of Gujarat Genocide. State and Police Complicity

AHMEDABAD: Riot victims of Gomtipur area told the Justice G T Nanavati and Justice K G Shah commission of inquiry on Tuesday that personnel of the Rapid Action Force (RAF) not only targeted Muslim women but also supplied petrol from their official vehicles to the mob to set ablaze houses belonging to minorities.

Mumtaz Ansari, a resident of Salatnagar Ambika Mills told the commission that police inspector Modi instigated mobs from Maninagar to attack the Muslims of her area. "The inspector directed that petrol be taken out from his vehicle and it was used by the mob to set our society on fire.

The police even beat us with raffle butts when we protested against the arrest of some innocent men," said Ansari. A victim, Sabina Sheikh, told the commission that the RAF team which arrived on April 4 afternoon in Gomtipur beat up women and children of the Mehboob Chali area.

"Even after we shifted to a relief camp in Gomtipur, Jitendra Vaghela, who is now MLA from Shaherkotda, led a mob on April 23, with a RAF team following. While mob pelted stones, threw acid bulbs and crude bombs, RAF men entered houses to look for the menfolk and assaulted women," said Sabina Sheikh. "Though I had a fractured leg after the police beat me up earlier, they made obscene gestures and sexually assaulted me and banged my head onto the wall," she added.

"The police did not even spare our pets and shot a dog. The RAF personnel tore off my clothes and snatched my chain on April 21," said Sahjahan Bano of Dhobi chali. She said that the police knocked on her doors on April 22 morning while her daughter studied for her board examination.

"Why are you making her study ... send her out and we will teach her the trade, they told me," she said as she broke down sobbing. "The police even stopped autorickshaws which were rushing those injured in police firing to hospitals," said Mohammad Qureshi, whose son was also hit by a stray bullet on April 21. "As we were taking the victims including an old man, his daughter and my son to the VS Hospital, we were stopped by the police on the Gomtipur flyover. The old man, Mehmood Hussain, and her daughter died due to the delay," said Qureshi.

January 13, 2004. Indian Express (India).

'Gujarat cops' (in)action fishy'

New Delhi, January 13: AS SAJAL Jain, prime accused in the Ahmedabad gangrape case, continues to be in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of the Millennium Hospital, questions have been raised on the role of the Ahmedabad Police.

Hospital authorities today said the condition of Sajal showed steady improvement and they would shift him to a general ward by tomorrow morning if he is better.

Inspector M.D Lathia, who is heading a Ahmedabad Police team, said they would be taking Sajal's DNA sample tomorrow. "Our man will be leaving with the sample to Ahmedabad by train at 11:45 am tomorrow," Lathia said.

The Ahmedabad Police have surprisingly not moved court for Sajal's transfer to a government hospital. The doctors have told us that there will be improvement in Sajal's condition in three to four days, said Lathia.

Howsoever, senior officers of the Delhi Police feel that the first thing the Ahmedabad team should have done here was to move for Sajal's transfer to a government hospital as that would bring a clear picture about his health.

Moreover, the police team hasn't contacted their Delhi counterparts for initiating any action against the hospital if deemed necessary for harbouring a rape accused, the police here said.

Ahmedabad Police's initial response had also raised eyebrows. The family of Bijal Joshi, the victim, had alleged that while Sajal kept threatening the family by sending SMS, the police did little. Bhavin, the elder brother of Bijal, said that police were given the phone numbers and addresses of Sajal and co-accused Karan but police responded by saying, "Where will they go. They are going to get caught someday," he alleged.

No lookout message was issued to the state police control room to stop the accused from crossing the state border even though they had the description of the vehicle — a Delhi-registered Hyundai Terracan, the family alleged. Moreover, a police team left for Delhi to investigate the case only after the victim committed suicide.

When Bijal's elder sister Vaishali went to Sola police station early on January 1 to lodge a complaint, she was allegedly told that the case falls under the jurisdiction of Shahibaug police. This was despite the State Home Department and the Police Commissioner issuing notifications that police register a complaint even if it was beyond their area limits.

February 2, 2004. Indian Express (India). Abhishek Kapoor & Ritu Sarin

Missing, said Gujarat cops, but 2 years later CBI starts digging up human remains

CHAPPADVAD/ NEW DELHI, FEB 1 In the first significant step towards getting to the truth in the rape and massacre of family members of Bilqis Yaqoob Rasool — they had been declared missing by the Gujarat police — a team of Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), under orders from the Supreme Court to reinvestigate the case, has dug up human remains.

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Highly placed sources said there was strong reason to believe these were remains of the members of Bilqis' family, butchered while fleeing rioters in the wake of the Godhra incident, but a confirmation would have to await DNA tests.

The plight of Bilqis was first highlighted by The Indian Express and this is the first post-Godhra case being investigated by the agency.

While a skeleton was recovered on Saturday, remains of three others were dug on Sunday from the bed of a rivulet in thick jungle. Sources said the remains, which appeared to be those of three women and a child, will now be sent for forensic tests.

CBI officials said they located the site on the basis of their own investigation. A security cordon has been thrown at the site where the team has even brought in an excavator for the digging work.

At the time of the incident on March 3, 2002, Bilqis, then five-months pregnant, was raped. So were eight other women in her group, on the run from rioters.

Bilqis watched 14 of her relatives, including her three-year-old daughter, being killed. The Gujarat police, instead of arresting the persons accused by her, closed the case saying "the offence is true but undetected." The police even declared her family members as missing.

But now a high-level team of CBI official and forensic experts, including Dr T D Dogra of the AIIMS in Delhi, has exhumed human remains. CBI Additional Director Vijay Shanker and Joint Director Vivek Dubey have been to the site twice already. Apart from Superintendent K N Sinha, who's the investigating officer, DIG Karan Singhal is also camping at the site.

In Delhi, CBI officials admitted they had recovered samples for DNA testing. "Besides DNA, we will be collecting other samples too for scientific tests. If need be, we will even import equipment for the tests," an official said. "There is enough evidence lying there. We will be using state-of-the-art equipment and the best forensic experts to unravel it." Bones, clothes and what appeared to be the victims' possessions have been found. Sources said these would help get to the truth. "Certain acts of omission and commission were committed during the (police) investigation of this case. We hope the material we recover will help us piece it," said an officer on condition of anonymity. Almost a fortnight ago, CBI arrested 12 people in connection with the Bilqis case. Among those arrested were Ramesh Chandana, former PA of a BJP MLA, and Sailesh Bhatt, a senior VHP functionary.

August 18, 2004. Indian Express (India). Stavan Desai.

Post-Godhra: Cops shut half the cases

AHMEDABAD, AUGUST 17: Among the over 2,000 post-Godhra riot cases to be reviewed by police officers on Supreme Court orders are many cases in which prominent leaders and local policemen have been named. Most cases relate to murder, arson, rioting and illegal possession and use of firearms.

The figures, and the grounds given by police for closing cases:

- Of the 4,252 post-Godhra cases registered across the state, 2,108 have been closed. z In closing 2,032 cases, police have said that the complaint is correct, but the accused have not been found. z In 55 cases, police have said that the facts stated in the complaint are true but no offence was found to have been committed. z Only in 21 closed cases has the police found the complaint to be false in part or in full. In many of these closed cases, it was police who initiated the complaint and filed FIR.

Among prominent cases in which the prosecution hasn't appealed against acquittal are:

- Fourteen Muslims hiding in the fields of Kidiad were massacred on March 3, 2002. A case was filed at Malpur police station, Sabarkantha district. More than 30 accused were acquitted as prosecution failed to establish their involvement.
- At Pandarwada, nine Muslims were killed on March 1, 2002. Among those accused — and later acquitted— was Kalubhai Maliwada, a local BJP leader. A year after the acquittal, the prosecution is yet to file appeal. Maliwada is also accused in another case in which more than 80 people were burnt alive in two vehicles .

And some cases closed by police are:

- Five survivors of the Naroda Patiya massacre had filed an FIR on March 18, 2002, that among those who led the mob that attacked their homes were VHP leader Dr Jaideep Patel and local MLA Maya Kodnani. Police informed the court on September 9, 2002, that the main complainant had stated that he no longer remembers Patel and Kodnani's presence in the mob.
- Himmatnagar PS inspector P.I. Chavda had filed an FIR on March 3, 2002, that a mob of 1,500 had set fire to several Muslim houses. One man was killed. The case was closed on September 23, 2002, on the ground that the accused could not be found.

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- On March 1, 2002, Vasad police filed an FIR that a mob had attacked Muslims , killing one. The case was closed on August 29, 2002, on the ground that the accused hadn't been identified.

August 31, 2004. NDTV (India).

Gujarat politicians ordered cops: Former ADGP

Gujarat's former intelligence chief today told the Nanavati Commission investigating the riots that he was informed of politicians who were directly giving orders to police inspectors during the riots.

His affidavit had already questioned the decisions taken by the Narendra Modi government during the post-Godhra violence, and in his cross-examination, former Gujarat intelligence chief RB Sreekumar went a step further.

Names not disclosed

He claims that police officers in Ahmedabad had mentioned the names of politicians who were giving orders to police inspectors directly on how to handle the rioting.

But the former intelligence chief refused to divulge the names of these politicians. His reason - it would harm his sources.

Independent lawyers say this proves the political involvement in the riots and they are now hoping that the Commission would take upon itself the task of finding the names of these politicians.

"This is a term of reference of the commission and it is ultimately the function of the commission to find out the names," said Mukul Sinha, a lawyer for the Jan Sangharsh Manch.

Other claims

The police officer also made other important claims. According to him, the western Railway Police had warned the Gujarat police about the kar sevaks' return journey from Ayodhya.

He also said that there was no intelligence report to suggest that the Godhra train burning was a conspiracy.

Govt denies claim

But the officer's claim that the state government had failed to act on intelligence warnings is denied by the Gujarat government.

"Whatever Srikumar has said, and his messages to the government were investigated and it was found there was no evidence," said Arvind Pandya, Gujarat government lawyer.

Sreekumar's affidavit may have been explosive and his cross-examination may have opened the Pandora's box.

But the fact that he stopped short of naming the politicians now means that it is upto the Commission and the independent lawyers to establish who exactly these politicians were.

November 28, 2004. Indian Express (India). Stavan Desai.

Top cops knew ex-Cong MP Ehsan Jafri was burning, his friend had sent out SOS.

Part VI

Phone logs show Jafri, ringed by mob, called party man Badruddin Sheikh. Sheikh, in turn, called DGP, Commissioner, DCP, Mayor, even Oppn Leader. 3 hrs passed before killers got to Jafri.

who called whom, WHEN Gujarat WAS Burning- PART SIXAHMEDABAD, NOVEMBER 27 The picture of an unknown Outbuddin Ansari with folded hands became a symbol of the vulnerability of an entire community during the Gujarat riots in the face of mob fury. But if there was one victim whose plight showed how the official administration fiddled while the state burned, it was former Congress Member of Parliament Ehsan Jafri.

A resident of Gulbarg Society, he was charred alive, along with 37 others by the evening of February 28, 2002, a day after the Sabarmati Express attack. There was little left of him—in fact, his body hasn't yet been discovered. All that his son found was his pair of slippers.

What's known so far is that Jafri called people for help. Investigating cellphone records during the worst days of the riots, The Sunday Express has now found that Jafri called a party colleague who, in turn, worked the phones.

From the Director General of Police to the Police Commissioner, from the city's mayor to the leader of the Opposition. But Gulbarg kept burning.

Jafri's phone records also hide one story that has so far remained untold. Being an ex-MP, Jafri was a VIP resident and so fearful neighbours began rushing to his house hoping he could pull strings that they couldn't. Among them was an 18-year-old girl and her brother.

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She used Jafri's landline to make a call for help. Records show she dialled the cell of one Noorkhan Habibkhan Pathan. The Sunday Express tracked down Pathan who said he was her neighbour years ago. "That was the first call I received in the day. It was a girl named Samshad, whose family used to be my neighbour a few years back. She had called me for help but I told her that I myself am trying save my family. I told her I would not be able to come. I later learnt that she and her brother were killed by the mob."

It was from this same landline that Jafri called Badruddin Sheikh, local Congress leader and then chairman of the standing committee of the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation.

Sheikh confirmed that Jafri called him at 11.51 am and then, an hour later, as well.

"The last call I received from Jafri was on my landline which was at about 1 pm. At that time also he was pleading for help," says Sheikh. "After that I do not know what happened."

What is known—and what's confirmed by cell phone records—is that Sheikh called up then Congress Leader of the Opposition Amarsinh Chaudhary, asking him to help get police deployment.

He called senior police officers, including then Director-General K Chakravarthy, Police Commissioner P C Pande, and Joint Commissioner M K Tandon, who was in charge of the area where Jafri lived.

WHAT THE POLICE TOLD THE COMMISSION

Chorus: We sent forces, we don't know what they were doing

DGP Chakravarthy:

- "At 2 pm on February 28, 2002, I learnt that a large mob has surrounded Gulbarg Society. I informed Commissioner Pande. He told me he had sent more officials...as I was busy with other work, I had not inquired as to which officers had been sent and as to when they reached there. "Later I asked (Pande) why did the incident at Gulbarg happen? He told me the mob was in a large number and the police did what it could but still (it) happened."

Police Commissioner P C Pande:

- "I sent two DySPs with police force to Gulbarg. I had not asked the sector commander (Tandon) to go as police inspector and DCP rank officers are normally able to control such situations. "I cannot say when the police force sent by me reached Gulbarg Society. I cannot say what the force was doing when people were being burnt. I had not asked for any written report in this regard after the incident."

Joint Commissioner of Police (Sector II) M K Tandon:

- "At about 2 pm, I received a message that there was a need to shift Shri Ehsan Jafri to another place. But I had not gone there immediately. On receiving the message, I called the police control room for sending more forces, but I was informed that two DySPs, a police Inspector and a section of CISF had already been sent there."

All these officers, deposing at the Nanavati-Shah Commission, kept passing the buck. The DGP was in Gandhinagar, Pande stayed indoors in the Commissionerate (see box).

And all this while, one of the officers was in regular touch with two of the accused in the Naroda massacre that had broken out even as Gulbarg was ablaze.

A close scrutiny of Sheikh's cellphone log reveals that during the day Sheikh made several calls to Chakravarthy, Pande and then DCP (Zone VI) B S Jebalia within whose jurisdiction Shah Alam falls, the area in which Sheikh lives.

Police Commissioner Pande's logs reveal that he received calls from the Joint Police Commissioner and P B Gondia, the DCP in charge of Meghnani Nagar, where Gulbarg Society is.

Gondia's cellphone records, however, show a clear picture of police indifference.

From 11.52, Gondia's records show, he was in constant touch with two of the riot-accused— VHP general secretary Jaideep Patel and Naroda killing accused Nimesh Patel. And he moved out of Meghnani Nagar when it was burning to areas from where little violence was reported.

Jaideep Patel was in constant touch with him in the morning. At 2.13 pm, he left Meghnani Nagar following a call he made to Nimesh Patel.

Though he came back from Naroda to Meghnani Nagar at 2.46 pm, he left again for Revdi Bazaar where there was no violence.

He returned to Meghnani Nagar at 4.12 pm, by which time, according to the police, the former Congress MP had been charred to death.

WHO ALL DID BADRUDDIN SHEIKH CALL

February 28, 2002

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- 11.23 am: Sheikh calls then DCP (Zone VI) B S Jebalia.
- 11.28 am: Sheikh calls then leader of Opposition Amarsingh Chaudhary and speaks for 122 seconds.
- 11.32 am: Sheikh calls then police commissioner P C Pande and speaks for 41 seconds.
- 11.51 am: Sheikh receives a call from Ehsan Jafri's residence. By then, Gulbarg has been surrounded by a violent mob. According to the police FIR, the attack on Gulbarg Society started at 11 am and went on till 7 pm.
- 1.11 pm: Sheikh calls Chaudhary.
- 1.48 pm: Sheikh calls then state DGP K Chakravarthy and speaks for 91 seconds.
- 2.01 pm: Sheikh calls Chakravarthy and speaks for 61 seconds.
- 2.04 pm: Sheikh calls DCP Jebalia and speaks for 151 seconds.
- 2.20 pm: Sheikh again calls Jebalia.
- 3.23 pm: Sheikh calls then city mayor Himmatsinh Patel.
- 3.41 pm: Sheikh again calls Patel.
- 4.04 pm: Sheikh calls Pande.
- 5.50 pm: Sheikh calls mayor Patel.
- 6.07 pm: Sheikh calls Chaudhary and speaks for 104 seconds.
- 7.01 pm: Sheikh calls Chakravarthy.
- 7.06 pm: Sheikh calls then joint commissioner of police (sector II) M K Tandon and speaks for 61 seconds.

Meanwhile, what did the police do when Jafri was waiting?

DGP K CHAKRAVARTHY:

- 11.56 pm: Calls up Commissioner Pande and speaks for 56 seconds
- 12.18 pm: Is in Gandhinagar, receives a call from then district collector Srinivas and speaks for 59 seconds
- 1.06 pm: Gets a call from Srinivas
- 1.43 pm: Calls Pande and speaks for 116 seconds
- 1.48 pm: Receives a call from BADRUDDIN SHEIKH, 91 seconds
- 2.01 pm: Another call from SHEIKH
- 2.12 pm: Calls Pande and speaks for 49 seconds
- 3.50 pm: Reaches the city and calls his office at Gandhinagar. (Jafri is suspected to be dead by now)
- 3.51 pm: Receives a call from Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order) and speaks for 132 seconds
- 3.55 pm: Reaches Shahibaug and calls Pande

POLICE COMMISSIONER P. C. PANDE

- 11.56 pm: Receives call from DGP
- 12.06 pm: Calls Tandon, speaks for 75 seconds
- 12.37 pm: Receives a call from Tandon. By this time, curfew has been imposed in the city
- 1.21 pm: Gets a call from Mehta
- 1.22 pm: Another call from Tandon
- 1.45 pm: Another call from Chakravarthy, speaks for 116 seconds

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- 2.02 pm: Receives a call from Tandon, speaks for 125 seconds
- 2.12 pm: Gets a third call from Chakravarthy
- 2.25 pm: Gets a call from Tandon
- 2.53 pm: Receives a call from then MoS Home Gordhan Zadafia
- 3.09 pm: Receives a call from then state Health Ashok Bhatt
- 3.16 pm: Calls then Deputy Commissioner of Police (Zone IV) P B Gondia, under whose jurisdiction Gulbarg and Naroda-Patiya localities fall
- 3.38 pm: Mehta calls
- 3.54 pm: Pande calls Gondia
- 3.57 pm: Another call from Mehta
- 3.59 pm: Fourth call from Chakravarthy, who reaches Pande's office minutes later

(Deposing before the Nanavati-Shah commission, Pande said Jafri was killed between 3 pm and 4 pm)

JCP M K TANDON

- 11.58 am: Calls police control room, speaks for 68 seconds. Has reached Meghaninagar, where Gulbarg Society is, at 11.34 am
- 12.06 pm: Receives a call from Pande. Three minutes later, leaves Meghaninagar area
- 12.11 pm: Reaches Naroda area
- 12.14-12.18 pm: Makes three calls to Pande and one to the police control room at 12.26 pm
- 12.33 pm: Leaves Naroda
- 12.37 pm: Calls Pande
- 12.41 pm: Reaches Bapunagar and calls ACP M T Rana, under whose jurisdiction Meghaninagar and Naroda fall
- 1.06 pm: Calls DCP P B Gondia, speaks for 60 seconds. He is then in Rakhial
- 1.11 pm: Calls then city mayor Himmatsinh Patel, speaks for 78 seconds
- 1.22 pm: Calls Pande, speaks for 54 seconds
- 1.24 pm: Receives a call from police control room
- 1.51 pm: Reaches Revdi Bazaar and Relief Rd
- 1.57 pm: Calls DCP Gondia, speaks for 98 seconds
- 1.59 pm: Receives a call from control room
- 2.02 pm: Calls Pande, speaks for 124 seconds
- 2.25 pm: Calls Pande, speaks for 51 seconds
- 2.52 pm: Calls Mayor Patel, speaks for 145 seconds
- 2.57 pm: Another call from control room
- 3.01 pm: Gets fourth call from control room
- 3.30 pm: Calls Pande, speaks for 72 seconds
- 3.39 pm: Fifth call from control room
- 3.40 pm: Calls his office number at Police Commissionerate
- 4.12 pm: Reaches Commissionerate

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- 4.28 pm: Reaches Meghaninagar area

DCP PB GONDIA

- 11.52 am: Receives a call from VHP general secretary and riot-accused Jaideep Patel, speaks for 107 seconds
- 11.56 am: Calls Tandon, moves to Naroda area
- 12.20 pm: Another call from Patel, speaks to him for 42 seconds
- 12.35 pm: Is in Meghaninagar area, returns to Naroda by 12.53 pm
- 12.59 pm: Calls police control room
- Gondia remains in Naroda area till 1.44 pm.

At 1.53 pm, he is in Meghaninagar but returns to Naroda almost immediately. On the way, at 1.57 pm, call from Tandon

- 2.13 pm: Again in Meghaninagar from where he calls Nimesh Patel, an accused in the Naroda killings. Fifteen minutes later, Gondia is in Naroda
- 2.46 pm: Returns to Meghaninagar, calls ACP Rana. Within five minutes, he leaves for Police Commissionerate, reaches by 2.55 pm
- 3.01 pm: Receives a call from Nimesh Patel
- 3.11 pm: Leaves police commissionerate but heads for Revdi Bazaar from where little violence has been reported
- 3.16 pm: Call from Pande
- Remains at Revdi Bazaar till 4.03 and at 4.12 pm reaches Meghaninagar area