

Surya
INDIA

POLITICS OF BLOODY REVENGE

**The Lapse In Security That Led To Mrs. Gandhi's
Death Was Shocking.**

**Even More Shocking Was The Ineptitude Shown By
Her Guards And Confidants.**

**For, At The Time Of Her Assassination She Was
Surrounded By A Ring Of Five People.**

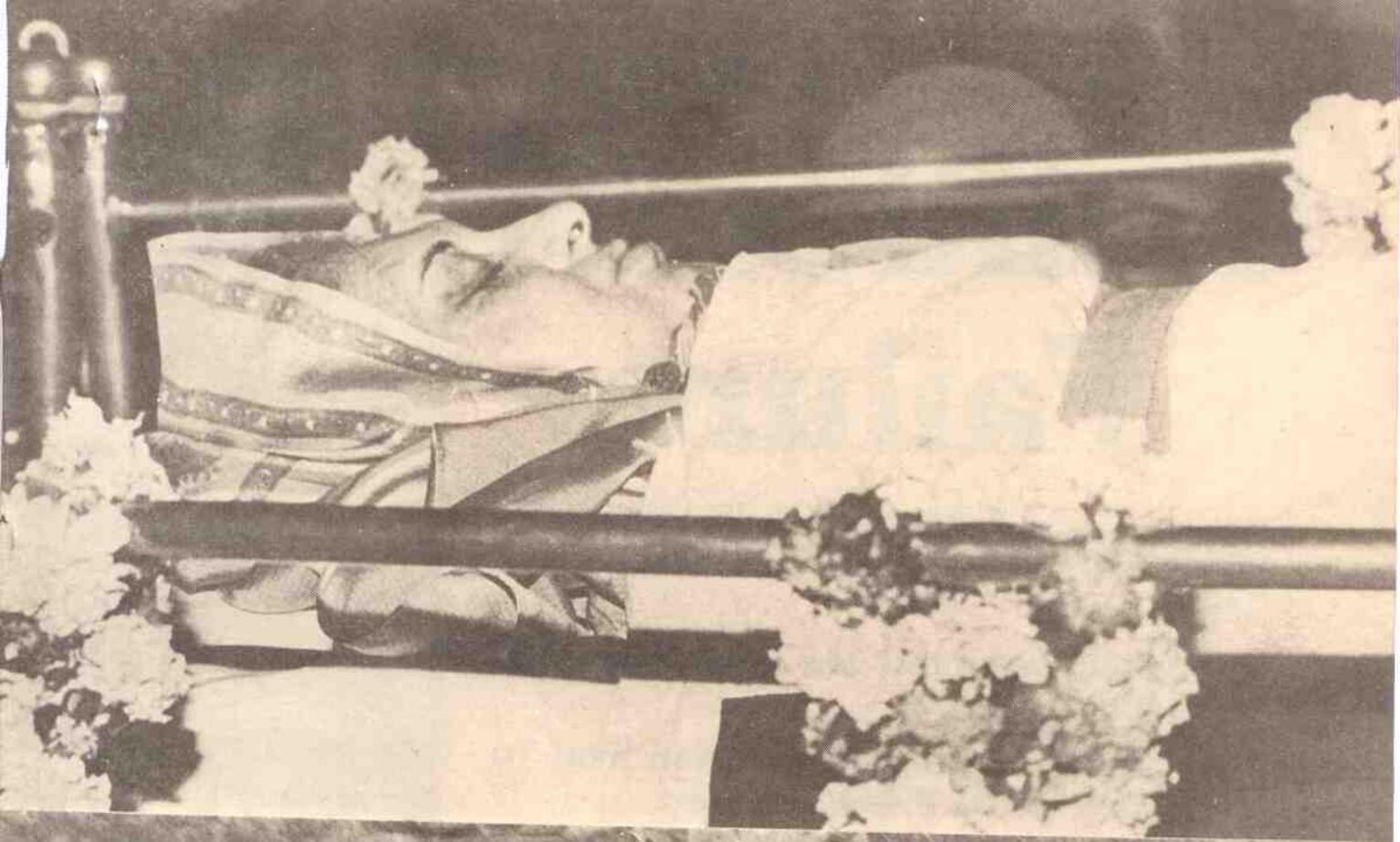
None Of These People Even Tried To Save Her.

***Rajeev K. Bajaj, Surya's Special Correspondent,*
Discusses The Manner In Which The Government
Failed Completely During The Assassination And Its
Even More Tragic Aftermath.**

***Dr. J.K. Jain, Editor (Surya) Analyses The Post-Mortem
Reports Of The Dead Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale
And Maj. Gen. Shubeg Singh, And Says That The Dead
Terrorist Leaders Might Have Been Murdered.***

***Khushwant Singh, Consulting Editor (Surya), Talks
About The Phenomenon Of The Politics Of Murder
That Seems To Have Invaded The Indian Political Arena.***

***Ram Jethmalani Member of Parliament, Reports On The
'Riots' In The Capital After The Assassination, And
Whether Or Not These Were Incited
By The Congress(I).***



Politics Of Failure

Rajeev K. Bajaj, Reports On The Manner In Which The Government Failed On All Counts.

- It Failed To Protect The Life Of Its Chief Executive.
- It Failed To Gather Information Vital To The Life Of The Prime Minister.
- It Failed To Provide Adequate Medical Care To The Shot Prime Minister.
- It Failed To Manage Information Pertaining To The Assassination.
- It Failed To Provide Adequate Protection To Its Citizens.
- It Failed To Control Members Of The Ruling Party Who Were Allegedly Inciting Violence.

Guns For The Government : The Army Was Able To Control The Situation, But Only After Thousands Had Died.

MRS GANDHI's life was under constant threat. Everyone knew it. *Surya* had written about it, as early as July, 1984. In an item entitled "The man who came to kill Mrs Gandhi", we had written about an alleged plan to assassinate the Indian Prime Minister. Again, in the very next issue (*Surya India*, August, 1984), we had talked of the security measures being taken to protect the Prime Minister's life. But we had still raised the question of whether or not that security was fool-proof. Ours has always been a voice of dissent. Did the

Government ignore it, only because of that reason?

At the time of the assassination, Mrs. Gandhi was walking towards the office within the compound of her house, where Peter Ustinov waited to film an interview with her. Dinesh Bhatt, her personal security officer had been sent to the office building to see if everything was all right with the filming set-up. Normally, the personal security officer is not supposed to leave the Prime Minister's side even for a second. But on October 31 this was not done. But then R.K. Dhawan was walking beside her to her left side. Nathu Ram her personal attendant for so many years was behind





Dhawan. To the right on the other side of that narrow path walked Narayan Singh, the Prime Minister's armed security attendant. Behind Dhawan and the Prime Minister, slightly to the right of Nathu Ram was Asstt. Sub-Inspector Rameshwar Dayal. Behind Dayal was the Prime Minister's Information Secretary H.Y. Sharda Prasad. Besides these, there was the usual contingent of ITBP (Indo Tibetan Border Police) personnel and Delhi Police guards. Included in the guards were of course ASI Beant Singh and Constable Satwant Singh, the killer guards.

Beant Singh who had been on duty on the other side of the small

gate separating adjoining compound of Akbar and Safdar Jang Road buildings, opened the gate, pistol in hand, in full view of everyone, took aim and shot the Prime Minister, Dhawan at that time was busy whispering something in the PM's ear. Even as the first shot slammed into the Prime Minister's person, not one in that ring of five around her even tried to lunge at Beant Singh or otherwise hamper him in anyway. The Prime Minister fell down. Beant shouted at Satwant Singh to use his sten gun. Even then the men around her did not move. Dinesh Bhatt at that time was some distance away from the killers, in fact behind them. Personal

Security Officer as he was, he stood rooted to the spot, like all the rest of them, and watched as Satwant Singh sprayed the Prime Minister with practically the whole magazine clip of his sten gun. Dhawan was there, Nathu Ram was there, Narayan Singh was there, Dinesh Bhatt was there, Rameshwar Dayal was there and so was Sharda Prasad . . . and so was the much vaunted Security Cell of the Prime Minister; yet all of them watched as the Prime Minister was mercilessly done to death. Indeed the only other person said to have received any injury in the whole incident was ASI Rameshwar Dayal that too only in legs and this despite the fact that practically everyone around the Prime Minister was in the direct line of fire. One does not quite know if everyone else instead of trying to save the Prime Minister's life took evasive action to save his own skin.

Assistant Commissioners alternate with Inspectors at SHO level. The ACPs/SOs have 100 Sub-inspectors at their command, this force coupled with 100 ASIs and 50 Head Constables, under whose direct supervision are 350 constables, constitute the Prime Minister's special Security Force. And despite this 500 strong force with its in-built check and balances, not one single person made even an attempt to save her. Kao had only planned the Prime Minister's security, it was up to others to implement it. The Government failed to do so.

Of the 500 odd security personnel recruited from the Delhi Police, only about 2 percent were Sikhs. Of these few, two only happened to have been influenced to commit murder. Their movements were known to all. The people they were meeting was an open secret. In fact Beant Singh is even reported to have



Policing For Their Lives : Policemen Were Still On The Roads Before Noon, Later The Sikhs Among Them Had To Run For Their Lives.

And this was despite the presence of a Police contingent, almost 500 strong. Indeed when one looks at the organization of the Delhi Police in the PM's security, it is amazing how after having fired the first bullet, Beant Singh was not shot at, was not disturbed by anyone in anyway—in fact nobody even lunged at him when he started to fire. But what is even more amazing is that Beant Singh was actually able to tell Satwant Singh to open fire and Satwant was able to point his gun at the Prime Minister's person almost as though he was on parade, and yet no one stopped him, and what is even more amazing, no one even tried to stop him. Not one person in that force of specially trained commandos. The PM's security consists of an Additional Commissioner of Police at the top, under him is a Deputy Commissioner of Police under whose overall supervision work three Assistant Commissioners of Police. These

reported for duty in a taxi, as also Satwant Singh. Yet the Intelligence Agencies did not sit up. The Government failed to gather information which it should have been gathering even in the normal course of things. The people who shot her were not strangers. They were her own security guards.

INDEED even more amazing is the manner in which, not only the security, not only the intelligence but even the Emergency medical facilities got ready for any such contingency, failed to show any results. *Surya* had carried an item last year, talking about the wastage of scores of bottles of blood, of the rare O-negative type (Mrs. Gandhi's Blood Group) being indulged in by the Red Cross Blood Banks. After that we were informed that the blood was being kept ready to deal with any emergency arising out of an attack on the Prime Minister's person. We were satisfied with

the explanation. However unfortunately, all those preparations came to nought when the specially equipped ambulance, especially procured for just such an emergency was not used at all. It is surprising that the members of the Prime Minister's household thought it fit to take Mrs. Gandhi to the All India Institute in an Ambassador car, when the ambulance was parked in the Prime Minister's house. And it was not as though the car was taken straight to the AIIMS. The initial thought was to take the Prime Minister to the Ram Manohar Lohia hospital. However, mid-way through the journey somebody in that Ambassador car changed his/her mind, and the car sped towards the AIIMS. The patient should have been put on an intra-venous drip and blood transfusions, then and there only, especially when the things were available. Vital minutes crucial to the life of the Prime Minister were

Time was lost even in organizing a trolley and a stretcher. She was attended by the resident doctors in the casualty. Dr. Guleria, Professor of Medicine, was the first Senior Doctor to examine and found her dead. It was then that Dr. Safaya (Medical Superintendent, AIIMS) ordered the shifting of the Prime Minister's body to the Operation Room on the 8th floor of the building. Here Venu Gopal (Professor of Cardio-thoracic Surgery) and Dr. M.M. Kapoor (Professor of Surgery) and a number of other surgeons were pressed into service, apparently to try and perform a miracle on the body of the Prime Minister. Eighty-six bottles of blood were pumped into her.

While All India Radio and Doordarshan were keeping up the fiction of the Prime Minister still being alive, the hospital staff members were telling everyone that Mrs. Gandhi had been dead



The Congress(I)'s Revenge: Long After The Very Echoes Of Gunfire That Killed Indira Gandhi Had Died, The Fires Of Genocide Were Still Smoldering In All Major Cities.

lost when the decision was taken not to use the ambulance. And what to speak of minutes almost a quarter of an hour was lost in imparting life-saving treatment to the Prime Minister when the course of the car was changed. The members of the Prime Minister's household could not but have known that her own personal physician Dr. K.P. Mathur, was the Medical Superintendent of the Ram Manohar Lohia hospital. As such, it was more advisable to take the Prime Minister there, Ram Manohar Lohia being nearer to 1, Safdar Jang Road than the AIIMS.

The whole sordid tale assumes almost sinister connotations when one looks at the fact that the doctors at the AIIMS had no prior information of the Prime Minister's condition when the Ambassador car arrived at the doors of the AIIMS. No body had telephoned them from P.M. house that she was being brought there.

on arrival. Indeed, but the failure of the Government to smoothly co-ordinate management of information was appalling. Rumour mongers were having a field day all over the city, but especially outside the AIIMS. One of the main reasons for the tragic aftermath of the assassination was the utterly un-coordinated, almost mischievous manner, in which media coverage was given to the dire event. The implications are clear. The government had failed, or it had been deliberately allowed to fail—on all counts.

FOR long after the very echoes of gunfire that killed Indira Gandhi had died down, the fires of genocide were still smoldering in all major cities of the country. Official figures stated that the death toll was 1,000 for the whole country. Unofficially, the same figure was being quoted for one area of Delhi alone.

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COVER STORY

It was a pogrom, unequalled in the annals of the bloody history of a country ravaged by thousands of massacres. "The partition was nothing as compared to this," said Jaswant Singh Bedi, a local Congress(I) Pradhan (Mongolpuri Area of New Delhi). "At least at that time we had somewhere to run to. Where do we go now?"

Bedi a Congress worker for three decades, said that he was ashamed of being a Congressman. He went to the extent of actually naming local Congress(I) leaders, and charged that they had actually incited violence. Indeed, that was a constant refrain of people who had survived the holocaust.

"The government did it," wailed Ranjit Kaur. Her husband, a three-wheeler driver had been burnt alive in front of her very eyes.

Living as they were in their squalid one room house in the Y-Block of Mongolpuri, Balwant was dragged out of his house, doused in kerosene and set alight. He ran, screaming for mercy and water. What he got were jeers and insults. "They prodded him with rods. They beat him with sticks. When he asked for water they told him he had killed Indira Gandhi," his widow wailed. Balwant Singh took a long time to die.

There were hundreds of Balwant Singhs made, after October 31.

At the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, the crowds had come. They had come to see for themselves whether or not what they had heard was true. There were Hindus, Sikhs, Mussulmans, Christians—everyone was there. There were wails of women and slogan shouting of the usual Congress kind. But as the wails grew



louder, the slogans grew more sinister. Arjun Das, Congress(I) Councillor from the Laxmibai Nagar area had come. So had the Congress(I) MP from outer Delhi, Sajjan Kumar. And it wasn't long before 'Indira Gandhi Amar Rahe' (Long live Indira Gandhi) became *Khoon Ka Badla Khoon Se Lenge* (We will take blood for blood).

By 6 p.m. all hell had broken loose. You wore a turban and you signed your own death warrant. Groups of men, with scores of teenagers in rags in tow, systematically started picking out Sikhs and smashing them up.

In the meanwhile an irate mob gathered around the gurdwara at Laxmibai Nagar, in Arjun Das's constituency. The leaders of the mob alleged that the Sikhs inside the gurdwara had been distributing sweets to celebrate Mrs. Gandhi's assassination.

Even as sticks and stones began to fly, the crowd stopped three-wheel auto-rickshaws driven by Sikhs and started smashing them up. They then turned on the drivers.

Satpal Singh was caught and dragged out of his auto—by a crowd of 20 to 25 teenaged boys. Apparently, they were from the re-settlement colonies in outer Delhi. Abusing Satpal in the foulest terms, a 15-year-old hammered in his right cheek with a brick. Sheer panic seized Satpal—with a super human strength he did not know he possessed, he broke through that murderous cordon and ran. Nobody ran after him. There were Sikhs in plenty around the gurdwara.

SURYA INDIA

FOR, what the Congress(I) had done in Punjab was paying rich dividends in Delhi, and elsewhere. *The involvement of the Indian intelligence agencies was clearly indicated in the Punjab violence. According to practically every survivor of the rioting in Delhi the Congress(I) was clearly involved, with one Metropolitan Councillor Mool Chand Gupta allegedly leading the rioters himself. Whereas names like Arjun Das, Dharam Das Shastri and Sajjan Kumar kept on surfacing in connection with instigating people to riot and loot; Mool Chand Gupta however is alleged to have begun the looting and arson himself.*

● As evidence of the connivance of the Ruling Party with the mobsters, Dharam Das Shastri actually went to the extent of threatening the SHO, Karol Bagh with dire consequences if he did not immediately release all those arrested for rioting. Dharam Das Shastri, local Congress(I) MP from Delhi, said, "Let them (the police) take away looted property if they have to, but there is no need to arrest... these people are not criminals..."

● As evidence of the Ruling Party's connivance, slogans, *Khoon Ka Badla Khoon Se Lenge*, directed against the Sikh community were raised in the presence of the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and actually telecast over the national television network. The same

Politics Of Ashes

Menaka's Request For An Urn Containing The Ashes Of The Late Prime Minister For Immersion At The Holy Prayagraj By Her Son And Indira Gandhi's Grandson Feroz Varun, Has Been Turned Down By Rajiv Gandhi.

FIRST they fought over Sanjay Gandhi's political inheritance. Then they fought over Sanjay Gandhi's son. Now they are fighting over the ashes of Sanjay Gandhi's mother.

Published alongwith is a copy of the letter written by Menaka Gandhi to her brother-in-law Rajiv Gandhi, requesting him for an urn containing her mother-in-law's ashes, so that they could be immersed at the Holy confluence of rivers, at Prayagraj, by her son, Feroze Varun.

Rajiv in his typical fashion has clutched at the ashes and snubbed his sister-in-law, 'My mother, my ashes'. The almost macabre manner in which the dead body of the late Prime Minister was sought to be utilized for party purposes, is brought into sharp focus when one realises that Mrs. Gandhi's dead body was made out to be the private property of the present Prime Minister.

Mrs. Gandhi's dead body lay in state at Teen Murti House. TV and radio crews

from media organizations all over the world were there. And what did they show and tell their audiences? Rajiv Gandhi, and Rajiv Gandhi, and Rajiv Gandhi. It wasn't as though the rest of the country did not want to pay its respects at the body of the woman who had ruled India for almost two decades. It was just that either the people were not allowed to go in, and when they were, our Doordarshan cameras suddenly developed this jerkiness that made them swing away.

Indeed but when the RSS leadership decided to go to Teen Murti House to pay collective homage to the departed Prime Minister, they contacted a senior member of the late PM's cabinet so that their visit may go through smoothly. The

minister told them to come via the VIP gate. The delegation consisting of Balasaheb Deoras, Nanaji Deshmukh, Rajju Bhaiyya, Lala Hans Raj Gupta and others reached the VIP gate on schedule. There they were accosted by an Army jawan who clearly under orders from somebody higher-up stopped them and rudely told them to join the queue. Luckily, Vijaye Raje Scindia (MP, BJP) was there and Balasaheb Deoras was able to go inside with her. The rest, however, were unceremoniously shunted out.

After all if Rajiv can refuse to allow her grandson to immerse her ashes according to Hindu rites, what else is he capable of or rather what is he incapable of doing?

मेनका गांधी

ए-4 महारानी बाग
नई दिल्ली

आदरणीय प्रधान मंत्री जी,

५ नवम्बर १९८४

मेरी हार्दिक इच्छा है कि फिरोज की दादी की अस्थियों को हिन्दू संस्कृति तथा परम्परा के अनुसार उनकी आत्मा की शान्ति के लिए वैदिक क्रियानुसार तीर्थराज प्रयाग के संगम में फिरोज के हाथों से प्रवाहित करें। फिरोज की दादी ने स्वयं परिवार के अन्य सदस्यों का अस्थि विसर्जन संगम में आयोजित किया था। यह पुनीत काम उनकी मान्यता के अनुरूप होगा।

अतः आप से प्रार्थना है कि शक्यस्थिति/इस पुनीत कार्य हेतु उपलब्ध कराने की कृपा करें।

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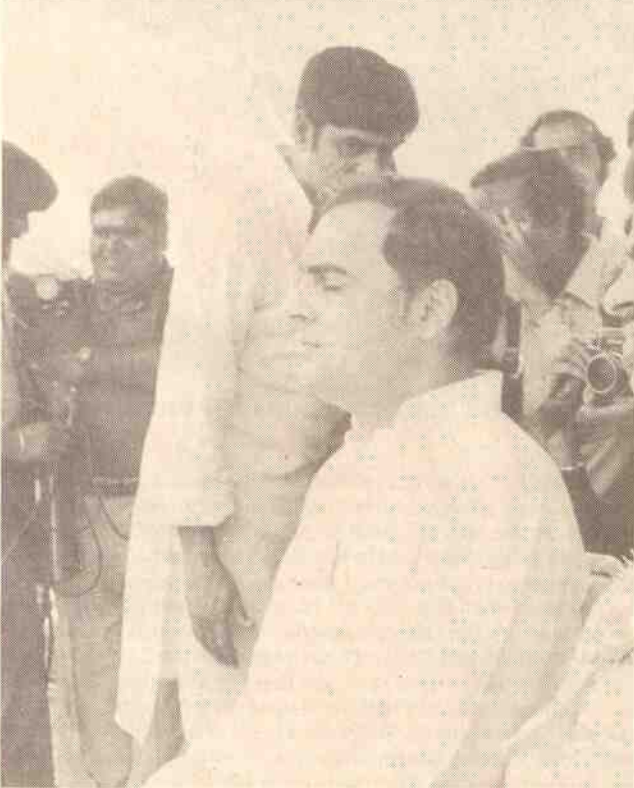
श्री राजीव गांधी,
प्रधान मंत्री,
१ सफ्तरजंग रोड
नई दिल्ली।

मेनका गांधी

act was repeated on the day of the funeral. The point to be noted is that apart from Rajiv Gandhi no other Congress(I) leader gave even semblance of being disturbed over such a blatant show of communalism by the Congress(I).

- As evidence, the Lt. Governor did not call out the Army on the day of the Assassination itself, though the situation showed every sign of going out of control. After the looting and arson had taken 100 to 200 lives, the Lt. Governor P. Gawai decided to impose curfew, under cover of which the maximum number of killings were committed.

- As evidence, the proposal to impose curfew was made



around noon on Friday, November 2. But no decision was taken till 6 p.m. The Director General of Police, S.C. Tandon met Gawai late in the morning to ask for clearance to impose curfew. Indeed, officers in the field who had asked for curfew to be imposed, were told that permission could be had only from Rajiv Gandhi. The point however here was that the DG himself is empowered to impose curfew. But Tandon seems to have decided that situation demanded a political rather than a policing action. This is hardly surprising; Tandon has served in the Intelligence Bureau for more than ten years, and as such is more susceptible to political pressures than most other policemen. H.C. Jatav, ACP (Delhi Range) has served in the UPSC and Gautam Kaul ACP (New Delhi) was in the Bureau of Police Research and Development.

- As evidence none of the Congress(I) MPs intervened even to try and put an end to the violence in their own respective areas. The trans-Jamuna area witnessed the most savage killings in the capital. But the Congress(I) MP from the area H.K.L. Bhagat did not visit the area till as late as November 3, evening. And even when he did so it was with an armed police escort; and a hurried almost cursory glance at the burnt houses, that Bhagat brought to the people of his constituency.

- As evidence, Jagdish Tytler the Congress(I) MP from Sadar never came anywhere near his constituency, but was seen demanding an armed posse of policemen for himself in the DG's office. Sajjan Kumar, Congress(I) MP from outer Delhi, instead of trying to stem the violence actually reprimanded those police officers dealing firmly with the looters.

The Police In Delhi And Elsewhere Had Requested Permission To Impose A Truly Effective Curfew, Instead Of A Curfew Only In Name. The Permission Was Not Forthcoming.

- As evidence, local Congress(I) block level *pradhans* were named by survivors of the rioting as having actively instigated people to riot. Practically all the block *pradhans* of the Congress(I) in the Mangolpuri area were named by the survivors as having instigated the rioting. Prominent among them were alleged to be Mala Ram, Ali Akbar, Majid Qureshy and Dileep Kumar. They are all Congress(I) workers and block level *pradhans*.

- ACP (West), Saxena admitted that the police started evacuating riot-stricken people only three days after the riots. Whereas Saxena claimed that ten buses had made more than 29 trips all over the Western district to rescue more than 5,500 people, the rescued Sikhs in the police station next door to his office vehemently condemned the police for its ineptitude and inactivity. Everyone of the rescued Sikhs said that it was the army that had rescued them. Not one single person said that he or she had been rescued by the people.

- As evidence the army arrested two persons near the Vasant Vihar area; both these persons, alleged to be Congressmen, were found carrying a cassette tape recorder with a public address system and cassettes containing inflammatory recordings of speeches directing the people to massacre Sikhs.

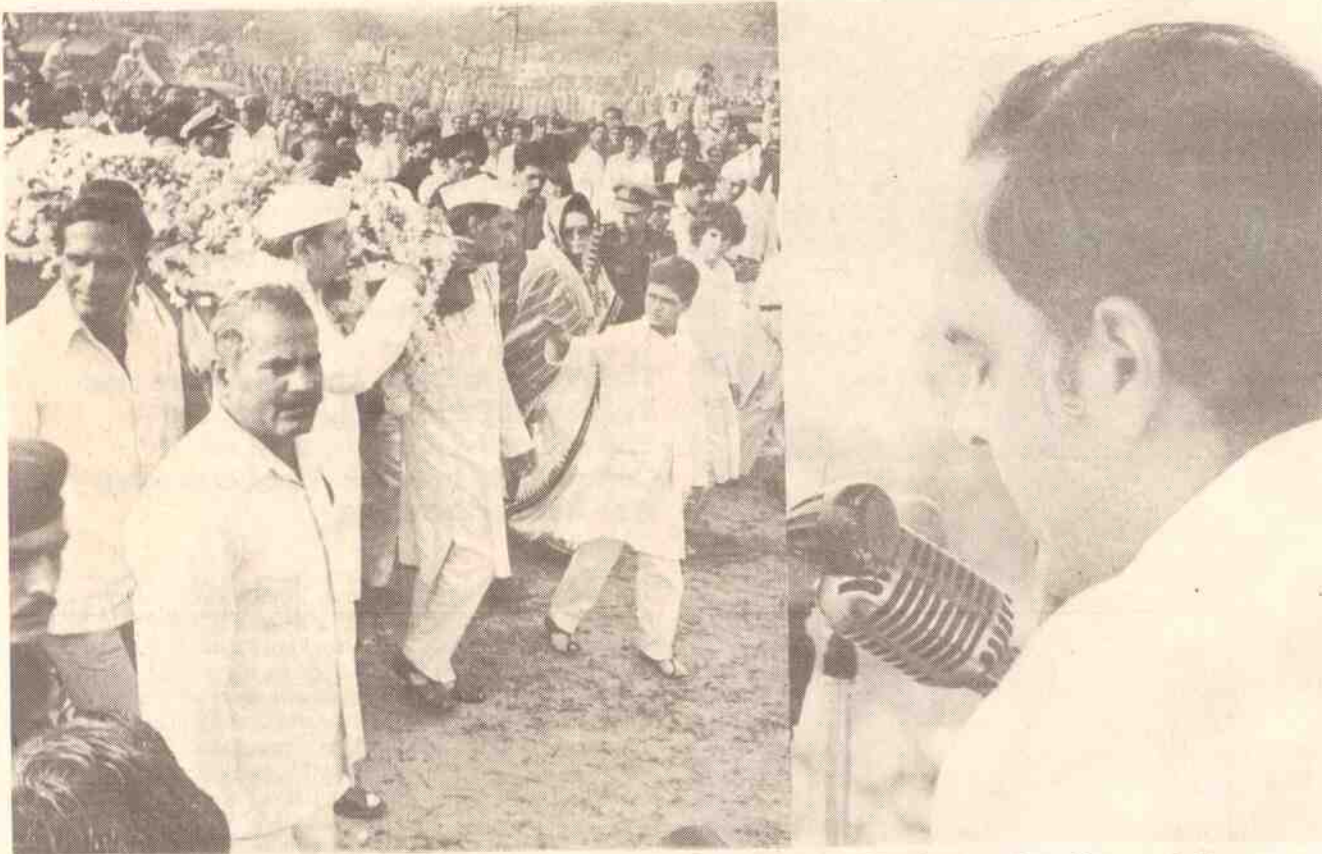
- As evidence, whereas curfew was declared on the evening of November 2, shoot at sight orders were not promulgated till 24 hours later. And for a full three days the police, the army and the other para-military forces did not receive orders regarding the situation in the city. Shoot-at-sight orders were announced but no written orders were given to anyone for a full two days.

● As evidence of the government's abetment to the killings, on November 2, the authorities at the New Delhi Railway Station had received the information as early as 9.30 a.m. that trains had been stopped at Tughlakabad by a mob. For several hours even as Sikhs were pulled out of the trains and butchered there was no sign whatsoever of the police; only a small contingent of the Railway Protection Force was present at the Tughlakabad Station. Obviously unconcerned the RPF guards just looked away. Even when the police did arrive they allowed the killing to continue for a whole hour before moving in. But by that time the railway track had been littered with corpses.

● As evidence of the government's total complicity in the rioting, the police officers posted at the Jehangirpuri, Trilokpuri and Mangolpuri areas were actually asking the looters to burn all

● Police sources allege that two Congress(I) groups are trying to gain control of the capital. One led by Bhikhu Ram Jain, Congress(I) MP from Delhi; and the other one led by H.K.L. Bhagat, Sajjan Kumar and Dharam Das Shastri. This political battle between these two has had disastrous repercussions for the people of the city. But then, for the Congress(I) the people have always been expendable.

They were expendable when the Army was sent into Punjab and the full terror of the Armed Force was unleashed against the people of the state. Indeed but far more pathetic was the plight of the pilgrims who had been trapped in the Golden Temple during the course of the Operation Bluestar. The SGPC did not evacuate them, the Akalis did not care about them and the Government had them killed.



The Great Lady's Last Journey: Mrs. Gandhi Being Carried To The Cremation Ground, Even As Rajiv Assumes Command

bodies lying around in the open. As reward they were told the police would not confiscate the goods heisted by them. Which is why a score of bonfires were seen around these areas on the nights of November 4 and 5. The whole operation was conducted with the full knowledge and connivance of Congress(I) leaders.

● As evidence that even Congress(I) leaders were appalled at what was happening, Laxmi Narayan a Congress(I) Rajya Sabha MP from Delhi threatened to resign his seat in Parliament unless action was taken against policemen giving shelter to rioters and storing looted goods. Laxmi Narayan actually gave the names of officers, and identified 6 Police Stations where stolen goods were being stored to the then Lt. Governor P.G. Gawai. Gawai however, was not allowed to do anything.

● The police in Delhi and elsewhere had requested permission to impose a truly effective curfew, instead of a curfew only in name. The permission was not granted. And with Congress(I) mobsters leading the attacks it would be the Sikhs that would suffer the most. The Congress(I) did not need their support anymore.

The list is unending. The list of atrocities perpetrated on the people goes on. The chips are now down. They were down since the day Mrs. Gandhi had installed Bhindranwale in the Golden Temple. Her death in this paroxysm of Sikh revenge just brings to fruition, the unutterable calamity that has stalked the nation from the Indira Gandhi brand of politics. The politics being of revenge. And the heir being Rajiv Gandhi. But the inheritors of the political fall-out were the people who died. They were, after all, expendable...

Politics Of Suppressing Evidence

Dr J.K. Jain, Analyses The Contents Of The Post-Mortem Reports Of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale And Maj. General Shubeg Singh, And Points At The Glaring Lies The Government Has Been Telling The People According To An Analysis Of The Reports :—

- The Time Of Death Mentioned In The Reports Is clearly Wrong.
- The Reports Admit That Both Men Died Of Fire-Arm Injuries, But Makes No Mention Of The Flame And Soot-Effect.
- The Reports Do Not Mention The Types Of Bullets That Pierced Their Bodies.
- The Reports Make No Mention Of Bullet Holes Or Other Marks On The Clothes Of The Men.
- The Question Is, Were These Men Naked When They Fought The Army?
- Or Did The Army Exterminate Them In Cold-Blood On Delhi's Orders?

It was Saturday, October 27, as many as four days before the assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, that *Surya* Special Correspondent *Rajeev K Bajaj* returned from Amritsar. He met me at the Jain Medical Centre. I had just come out of the Operation Theatre, and as such was not exactly upto listening to his report. "The situation there is pretty bad. They—the surviving extremists—are going to try and kill her," he had said.

"Why? For the sacrilege... sending in the Army into the Golden Temple?" I asked him.

"No, for the murder of Bhindranwale. The tale doing the rounds there is that Bhindranwale was alive when the Army caught up with him. But he was shot and killed later," he told me.

"What are you saying?"

"Its true. Point is, Doc I have seen a photograph of the Sant surrendering to the Army. He was obviously wounded; he had his hands up in the air. Amrik Singh was at his side—but barely able to stand. There was an Army commando pointing a gun at him from the front, with another one at the back," he elaborated. "However, I was not able to get the photograph for publishing".

"But he is being made out to be a martyr," I said.

"That may be... we don't know anything about that," said *Rajeev*. "But the fact is such a picture exists. I have seen it. And what is more the Sikhs in Amritsar believe that he was murdered on Mrs. Gandhi's orders."



The Dead Bodies Of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, Bhai Amrik Singh And Baba Thahara Singh

I did not quite know what to say. Without the photograph in hand we could not really write anything about the manner of Bhindranwale's death. But then, *Rajeev* had something else with him. Placing some papers on my table he said, "These are the post-mortem reports of Bhindranwale, Shubeg Singh and Baba Thahara Singh. I think it would be interesting to find whatever evidence that can be gleaned from them. We may be able to get some proof."

It was only a few days later that I was able to study those reports. Though I am no forensic expert, but the facts that I was able to find from my own study of the reports are too startling to be brushed aside lightly. We publish here the post-mortem reports of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and Maj. Gen. Shubeg Singh.

It is possible to determine the date and time of death with the information available in the post-mortem report (Issue 1). We may also attempt to know the manner of death (Issue 2).

The Time Of Death

One of the main criteria for deciding the time of death is the presence of *rigor-mortis* (rigidity of muscles following death). *Rigor-mortis* generally starts setting in within 6 hours death). *Rigor-mortis* generally starts setting in within 6 hours the lower extremities. The order being, more or less, first the face, then the upper extremities, the trunk and then the

"There is some more evidence in favour of this timing. His stomach was empty. The stomach takes about 6 hours to get emptied after ingestion of food. Emptying may be further delayed in situations of emotional stress. In spite of so much stress, that Bhindranwale must have been under, the stomach was empty at the time of death. It means it was quite some time after the last meal he had taken, which must have been the evening before. His urinary bladder was empty but intestines show the presence of faecal matter. This shows

NAD	ingured the pericardium and heart through	13
stomach	and through, injured right paravertebral muscles	
NAD	to make wound of exit to right injury no (6). Injures	
	(1) and (2) communicate with each other. Free fluid	
	blood and blood clots about 100cc present in	
	chest cavity	
	(1) A lacerated wound 8 cm x 3 cm with ragged	
	margins on medial aspect of right leg. Wound	
	blacked on lower 1/2 of leg. Underneath muscles	
	grossly lacerated and both bones of leg fractured	
	into multiple pieces. Blood clots present. Wound	
	injured tissues	
	(1) A lacerated wound 6 cm x 3 cm with ragged	
	margins on inner aspect of right foot in	
	plantar half. Underneath soft tissues injured	
	and bone fractured.	
	(1) A lacerated wound 1 cm x 0.5 cm with ragged and	
	ecchymosed margins on inner aspect of left ankle	
	(1) A lacerated wound 1.5 cm x 1 cm on outer aspect	
	of right foot in its plantar half.	
	On dissection, the bullet after entering through	
	injuries (1) injured soft tissues and left ankle	
	joint, fractured lower end of left tibia and left	
	talus bone and made wound of exit through	
	injury no (12). Blood clot present beneath injured	
	soft tissues. Injuries (11) and (12) communicate	
	each other	
	(1) A lacerated wound 0.5 cm x 1.5 cm with ragged	
	and ecchymosed margins on right side of forehead	
	4 cm above right eyebrow	
	(1) A lacerated wound 2.5 cm x 1 cm with ragged	
	margins on right side of head, 10 cm above right	
	and 4 cm above right ear	
	On dissection the bullet after entering through	
	injury no (13), fractured right side of parietal bone,	
	injured brain membranes and brain matter 4 cm	
	and made wound of exit through injury no (14)	
	after fracturing right parietal bone. Injuries (13) and	
	(14) communicate with each other	
	All these injuries are anteroposterior. Injures	

Injury	Disease or Deformity	Fracture	Dislocation
described	-	described	-

VI-REMARKS BY MEDICAL OFFICER

In my opinion death is due to shock and I believe as a result of massive head injury and severe chest and left lung accompanied with multiple fractures which is sufficient to cause death in a short time.

Handed over to ASI Sandeep Singh.

1) Secured body with clothes etc.

2) C.G. Park

3) Police papers - four

As per my report

% Civil Surgeon.

Amritsar

able time that elapsed
(a) between injury and death

Instantaneous

between death and
post mortem

About 30 minutes

ABSTRACT OF CHEMICAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

Post-Mortem Report Of
Maj. Gen. Shubeg Singh

M.S. H.B.S. P.C.M.S.
Medical Officer
Urban Family Planning Bureau

Part no 6711 dated 9.6.84 Body
brought to mortuary 10.30 AM (7) - 10.30 AM

POST MORTEM REPORT

12

NAME Retired General Shubeg Singh
FATHER'S NAME -
Or - Not furnished
HUSBAND'S NAME -
CASTE Sikh
RESIDENCE near Amritsar
SEX M AGE about 60 yrs
Date 9.6.84

Brought by Kapoor Singh Body identified by Dr. H.B.S. P.C.M.S.

Where brought: Dead house S.G. B. Mr.

Police information DATE OF HOUR OF -

Death 6.84 Examination of body 4.6.84 Despatch of matter to Chemical Examiner 10.30 AM Appearance of symptoms of poison or disease

Time observed or death 10.30

Info furnished Alleged to have died due to Fire Man

R. The Medical Officer will observe the state of all the organs and when he finds on injury, he should write in the appropriate place the word "Healthy"

I. EXTERNAL APPEARANCE

Height of body 5' 10"

Weight of body -

Color of skin -

Color of lips -

Color of tongue -

Color of nails -

Color of hair -

Color of teeth -

Color of eyes -

Color of ears -

Color of nose -

Color of mouth -

Color of throat -

that while he must have urinated before death, he might not have been able to defecate—a situation leading to the morning situation once again.

Let us now take up the time of death of retired General Shubeg Singh. The police has reported the time of death as 9.00 a.m. on 9.6.84. The putrefied and decomposed body was examined at 10.30 a.m. on the same day, on the basis of the medical data available in the post-mortem report, the examining doctor has rightly concluded that the death must have been instantaneous but the time elapsed between examination and death was about 72 hours, i.e. three days before the date and time of examination—again leading to the morning of June 6.

Sant Jarnail Singh and General Shubeg Singh were the top leaders of the terrorists' movement. Both of them must have been together in Akal Takht when the Army operation began. It is more than likely that both were together at the time of death—especially in the light of evidence coming from their post-mortem reports.

The possible manner of death :

To examine this aspect, we shall have to look for medical as well as circumstantial evidence.

The medical evidence :

The report admits that the deceased was alleged to have died due to fire-arm injuries. But while describing injuries, no mention has been made of the flame effect, soot effect, (presence of carbon particles, surrounding the injury)—

On the scalp, numerous small grey and sandy pulled out, eyes bulging, closed, opaque. Lip swollen, distorted, tongue swollen, protruding and stuck between teeth. Abdomen, distended, flaccid, distended, greenish discoloration present on the front of abdomen, around the navel. Skin peeling off from the body.

III-THORAX

1. Walls, ribs and cartilages	Dissected	Injuries - (1) A circular, excavated wound 2 cm in diameter on the right side of front of chest, 4 cm above the nipple, at 10 o'clock position.
2. Pleurae	Dissected	(2) A bullet wound 2 cm in diameter on the posterior chest, 5 cm above the level of the heart, 10 o'clock position.
3. Larynx and trachea	Dissected	(3) A circular, excavated wound 2 cm in diameter on the front of chest, 4 cm above the nipple, at 10 o'clock position.
4. Right lung	Dissected	(4) A bullet wound 2 cm in diameter on the posterior chest, 5 cm above the level of the heart, 10 o'clock position.
5. Left lung	Dissected	(5) A bullet wound 2 cm in diameter on the posterior chest, 5 cm above the level of the heart, 10 o'clock position.
6. Pericardium - dissection	Dissected	(6) A bullet wound 2 cm in diameter on the posterior chest, 5 cm above the level of the heart, 10 o'clock position.
Heart - dissection	Dissected	(7) A bullet wound 2 cm in diameter on the posterior chest, 5 cm above the level of the heart, 10 o'clock position.
Large vessels	Dissected	(8) A bullet wound 2 cm in diameter on the posterior chest, 5 cm above the level of the heart, 10 o'clock position.

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Psychology Of Revenge

I went to the Golden Temple on October 21, and remained there for about a week. The Akal Takht had been repaired. But a lot of rubble was still there. So was the anger of the people against the Army, the Government, and Indira Gandhi. The constant refrain there was—"innocents were killed by the Army". "She had betrayed the sikhs." There were many who said "you give me a revolver, I want to go and kill Indira and Rajiv, no matter what happens to me."

Paramjit Kaur, wife of Pritam Singh a *sevdar* of the Golden Temple is now the only survivor of her family. When the Army came in, and after the action was over, Paramjit left her room in the outerlying

region of the Guru Ram Das *sarai* to search for her husband. He had left his room to go towards the *Parikrama*. She was accosted by two jawans of the Dogra Regiment, when she saw her husband and brother-in-law. Calling out to him she told the army men that he was her husband. Talking to *Surya*, she said, "My husband and brother-in-law were led towards me. My three-year-old daughter left my arms and hung on to her father's neck. Thereupon they led them both towards the *Sarai* side. The lined them up with two other men. I thought they were going to photograph them. Instead they poured bullets into all of them. Dimple, my daughter, was also killed. I thought I

would go mad. I screamed and tore at everything and everyone. They dragged me to the *parikrama* and left me lying there amidst the blood and the bodies."

There were many Paramjit Kaur in Amritsar and they kept repeating their tales of horror. The S.G.P.C. supplied 121 photographs and the names and addresses of such people who were not terrorists, who had nothing to do with Bhindranwale—they were *granthis*, *sevadars* and *pilgrims*, but were killed during the course of Operation Bluestar. We publish their photographs. (For want of space we have not been able to publish their names and addresses).

—RAJEEV K. BAJAJ in Amritsar.







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Politics Of Murder

Khushwant Singh, Discusses The Tragic Manner In Which Murder Has Become A Way Of Solving Political Problems In India.

CHANAKYA approved of it. So did Machiavelli. But both recommended, it be carried out surreptitiously so that the identity of the perpetrator would remain secret. Both would have regarded assassination as clumsy and counterproductive. No sane person today would agree with Chanakya or Machiavelli. The civilised method of eliminating a political rival is to convert public opinion against him and defeat him at the polls.

IN India the *Ganga* is indeed running backwards. Having evolved from a feudal to an independent, democratic society, we have put the nation's chariot in the reverse gear. We just started fouling electoral processes, on which rests the democratic edifice. This we did by rigging polls, capturing polling booths and

injecting vast sums of black money in election campaigns. By so doing we deprived our legislative bodies of their representative character. Next we corrupted and demoralised the judiciary and the bureaucracy and rendered them incapable of maintaining justice, the rule of law and indeed the day to day task of administration. With the crumbling down of these pillars of our democratic set-up, we left the common people no choice but to take the law into their own hands, and when they can not get what they want because of political obstacles, they descend to destroy by them by force. Godse could not get the better of Mahatma Gandhi by legitimate means; so he killed the Mahatma. Thereafter Nehru was able to restore a semblance of law and order and the Government functioned smoothly.

THE slide downwards began in Nehru's later years and the number of assassinations of politicians increased. The killing of Pratap Singh Kairon (Punjab) and Mishra (Bihar) was followed by killings of lesser men all over the country, notably in Assam and Punjab. The man with the worst record was Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale whose victims included the Nirankari Baba, Lala Jagat Narain and his son Ramesh Chandra, D.I.G. Police Atwal and scores of innocent Hindus. The Government instead of trying him for murder, after arresting him, let him go scot free. Ultimately the Government itself had to eliminate him, and hundreds of his followers by killing them. And with them, thousands of innocent men, women and children. Thereafter killing came to be recognised as the accepted means of resolving political problems. Mrs. Gandhi has been the latest, but not the last victim. We have just entered the era of the politics of murder.



Politics Of Criminalisation

Ram Jethmalani, Was Among A Group Of 35 Lawyers Who Had Taken Out A Procession In Riot-Torn Delhi In An Attempt To Restore Peace Laying The Blame For The Violence Squarely At The Doors Of The Government And The Congress(I), Jethmalani Discusses What He Saw, In This Exclusive Report For *Surya India*. Those Who Collaborated With Him In This Report Were Lawyers Rani Jethmalani, Kamini Jaiswal And Laila Kabir.

ON Friday, November 2, 1984, a group of 35 lawyers assembled in the Supreme Court Library to take stock of the increasing reports of violence in the capital following the assassination of Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi. All the lawyers present were unanimous about the urgency of visiting the areas affected, to make a firsthand report and if possible, to soothe feelings and restore calm in all sections. Several Human Rights activists participated in the meeting,

including V.M. Tarkunde, Soli Sorabji, F. Nariman, Anil Dewan, Govind Mukhoti, Kapil Sibal and Ranjan Dwivedi. Among the women lawyers who participated were Kamini Jaiswal, Lata Krishnamurti, Bhushan and Rani Jethmalani. It was decided that the lawyers would go in a procession and would as far as possible keep together since it was important to show group solidarity with the victims of what was undoubtedly an orgy of violence and recklessness.

The first halt was at Shakarpur. Two or three helpless policemen with batons in

their hands stood by outside the area that had obviously been witness to some ghastly scenes. The skeletal remains of several buses that had been burnt were only too visible. A Gurdwara had also been demolished. A crowd consisting of people from the area looked at us suspiciously and enquired why we had come. We explained that we had come only to restore a sense of sanity and calm and preach tolerance and peaceful co-existence. The crowd consisted mainly of Hindus who informed us that they were protecting the colony from violence, which they had been subjected to, the previous evening, when hordes of goondas and ruffians invaded their locality to wreak inexplicable havoc and destruction.

It was evident that there had been no victimisation by the Hindu neighbours and the violence was the work of outsiders who had been manipulated to demonstrate their muscle power and their potential for destroying the Sikhs who lived in the area. We were assured by the local residents that they had every desire to protect their Sikh brethren and that they shared with us a sense of concern and compassion for them. We enquired from the policemen why they had not protected the vehicles from being burnt. We were informed by the police that they had only batons to protect both themselves and the residents and in the absence of any other assistance from the Govt. there was very little they could do in the circumstances.

The group of lawyers made their way in their procession of 8 cars to Pandav Nagar East. Here there was an uneasy truce between the Hindu and Sikh residents. The Hindu residents had been instigated by the local Congress-I elements into a frenzy of resentment and suspicion against their Sikh



neighbours. There was however no evidence of a break-up of violence in the area. What was palpably felt by all of us was the underlying tension which could be ignited into a holocaust of hate and revenge by irresponsible elements. The Hindu residents showed their fear of the Sikhs who had taken refuge in an unconstructed Gurdwara. We were taken to the Gurdwara which housed about 50-60 Sikh men and women. The Sikhs looked visibly terrorised and the faces of all the women were haunted by fear of reprisals. The Sikhs in the Gurdwara expressed their gratitude to the lone police officer, Vinod Sharma who was very much visible in the Gurdwara. He had an unusual presence of mind, found lacking in every other police officer that we met. He had taken the *Kirpans* (swords) from the Sikhs and kept them in the custody of the S.H.O. at

into Vinod Nagar which consists of a row of cheaply constructed houses divided by a small kuchha lane. Charred bodies were visible in the lane. On closer scrutiny the bodies were unmistakably of the Sikhs; the long hair had been cut and was lying around the bodies; iron rods had been pierced through their backs and they had obviously been burnt by kerosene or petrol. A male corpse was lying in the verandah of every house, tears rolled down the cheeks of women and children, who were too shocked by the sudden tragedy and violence that they had been subjected to, the previous evening.

An inconsolable woman with her child narrated how mobs of hundreds had entered the house and despite all her pleas for compassion had killed and burnt her husband, taken away her gold earrings and

herself on his body to save him from the anonymous persecutors and in the process had herself been seriously wounded in her eye.

Five other women had gaping wounds which needed immediate medical attention. All of them were immediately put into a car and escorted by Rani Jethmalani who took them to the Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital where Members of Parliament are permitted to bring their staff and families for medical assistance.

Hostile mobs were present throughout the city as the car sped with the injured to the Willingdon Hospital. The terrified lone Sikh male in the car covered his head lest he was identified. The five Sikh women who had been traumatized by the senseless violence, the previous evening, were a picture of courage in spite of the irreplaceable loss in their lives. They recounted the brutal manner in which their husbands died and the degradation and humiliation that had been inflicted upon them. The imbecile mob while cutting their hair had jeered and mocked at them chanting 'Mona, Mona, Mona' (Shaven Sikhs). They had then been ordered to keep dancing while the mob laughed wildly, threw kerosene at them and gloated at the human bodies who were shrieking in horror and pain. The women who wanted to save them were prevented from doing so and had to stand by as mute spectators at the awful and shocking spectacle. Some of the women said that they could identify their persecutors. All of them stated that the mobs had been led by politicians belonging to the ruling party.

At the Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital they were subjected to further trauma and humiliation. The Medical Casualty officer I/c, Dr. Ravinder Mohan enquired where the patients had been brought from. On being informed that they had been brought from Vinod Nagar East, where there was no police or medical assistance, the Doctor expressed his regret and inability to treat the patients in view of a Govt. Circular which had distributed medical work District-wise among various hospitals. The victims would, he stated have to be taken to Swami Dayanand Hospital. Rani Jethmalani insisted that the Govt. Circular be shown to her. Eventually, a Circular dt 9 May '84 No. 10/30/82-H.P. II of the Delhi Administration (Home) (Police Deptt.)—was shown to her. The Circular stated that there was to be a Zonal distribution of "medico-legal" work among various hospitals. The distribution was according to the Annexure to the Circular. Rani Jethmalani informed the C.M.O. that the Circular was not applicable as it only dealt with "medico-legal work", and in any case the Circular dated 9th May could hardly



Courtesy: Patriot

Where The Government Refused: The Relief Camp Established By Dr. J.K. Jain's Jain Medical Centre At Shahdara.

the police station and had assured the Hindu residents that they need not fear any attack from them since they were defenceless. It was this that brought about a feeling of security and restraint and prevented the out-break of violence. Across Pandav Nagar we were taken to the Gurdwara where charred bodies of a few Sikhs were visible. While we were at this Gurdwara a Journalist who was cycling back from Vinod Nagar East informed us that we should go to Vinod Nagar where there had been a virtual genocide of the Sikhs.

As we turned into Vinod Nagar, an identified body was lying across the road. A few passers-by who were present informed us that the body was of a Sikh who had been shaved and burnt with kerosene and that he was a resident of Vinod Nagar. We made our way

into Vinod Nagar which consists of a row of cheaply constructed houses divided by a small kuchha lane. Charred bodies were visible in the lane. On closer scrutiny the bodies were unmistakably of the Sikhs; the long hair had been cut and was lying around the bodies; iron rods had been pierced through their backs and they had obviously been burnt by kerosene or petrol. A male corpse was lying in the verandah of every house, tears rolled down the cheeks of women and children, who were too shocked by the sudden tragedy and violence that they had been subjected to, the previous evening.

An inconsolable woman with her child narrated how mobs of hundreds had entered the house and despite all her pleas for compassion had killed and burnt her husband, taken away her gold earrings and

apply to the compelling and urgent emergency situation in November 1984 and that Doctors were expected to exercise their discretion on humanitarian grounds. All these pleas fell on deaf ears. Jethmalani drove straight to Dr. Jain's Medical Clinic, a private clinic, at South Extension where she obtained immediate assistance.

ON November 3, the lawyers visited Pandav Nagar again to ascertain whether the Sikhs who had taken refuge in the Gurdwara were safe, in view of the tense conditions prevailing during their visit the previous day. The Hindu residents in the area told us that the locality was calm and peaceful and that there had been no incidents of violence. Some of the Sikhs in the Gurdwara appealed to us that in Ganesh Nagar East near the Mother Dairy, there were two houses belonging to the Sikhs in a Hindu row of houses and whether we could bring the families to the Gurdwara for safety, since they feared that mobs from outside may attack Sikhs who were in a minority in the area. The lawyers' group went across Ganesh Nagar where the only two houses belonging to Sikhs had been fortified with a few cobble stones and broken bricks for protection. Inside an ill-ventilated room in which the windows and shutters had been put down, a family of 12 Sikhs including several young children lay huddled beneath several blankets to prevent detection by hostile mobs. In the adjacent Sikh house a *Sardarni* who had paralysis was hiding herself in her kitchen for obvious reasons. The family consisting of 12 Sikhs was relieved at the offer of assistance for being taken across to the Gurdwara at Pandav Nagar. The other Sikh family did not wish to leave. We escorted five Sikh children and a few women to the Pandav Nagar Gurdwara.

This innocuous "rescue operation" did not go unnoticed by the Hindus in the colony, or of the local Delhi Pradesh Congress(I) Vice President Padam Sharma, who was patrolling the area in a Govt. car. While the Hindu residents had not reacted to the "rescue operations" hostilely when the children were being escorted into the Gurdwara, our emerging from the Gurdwara to leave for Pandav Nagar and to go to Trilok Puri from where we had received information of gruesome massacres the Hindu residents had, in a matter of 30 minutes, been instigated and provoked by Padam Sharma, against what was considered an encroachment by Sikhs to swell their numbers in the area. Padam Sharma wanted to endear himself to his Hindu constituents that he was their protector and saviour against Sikhs who had been fortified by lawyers. He took pride in the fact that

Sikhs were at his mercy and it was within his political clout to subject them to terror if he so desired. In a matter of a few minutes, the crowd had been provoked into violence. Rani Jethmalani with Laila Kabir in her car was stoned by the crowd. She got out of the car to plead that the Hindu residents were for peace and tolerance and that Hindu Dharma did not visualise such insensitive cruelty to their fellow human beings. The crowd jeered at her and threatened to beat her if she did not get out immediately. Rani Jethmalani stood her ground and told them that she would not be intimidated by this madness and she was willing to take the consequences of their unthinking and cowardly reaction. Suddenly, sticks and stones were thrown in the area. Both Laila



Kabir and Rani Jethmalani were persuaded by the women in the locality to take shelter in their homes. It appeared that the women had not forsaken their sense of passion and tolerance.

IN the other part of the colony, Ram Jethmalani experienced a similar reaction from the Hindu residents. Jethmalani sat down on the ground, undaunted by the threats of being killed and subjected to violence. He reasoned that the Hindus should not be manipulated by Congress(I) politicians who were very visible in the area at that time. In the meanwhile, Soli Sorabji and a few other lawyers took their cars to the police station. Sorabji could draw no response from the police officers. He stood in the middle of the road and compelled an Army truck to stop

and appealed to the Army officer to send a jeep to rescue the lawyers who were a target of mob fury and violence. Fortunately, Soli Sorabji was successful and a jeep was sent to rescue them.

The visit to Trilok Puri had to be aborted as the lawyers' scrambled into the jeep for safety to take stock of the situation and to decide the next step to restore peace and amity.

A meeting was held at the residence of M.M. Tarkunde, chairman, People's Union for Civil Liberties. It was decided that a delegation would meet the Home Minister, Narasimha Rao, to apprise him of the need for urgent action to prevent a holocaust that would further destroy the nation. In the evening, the delegation without an appointment, drove to the house of Narasimha Rao and informed the Home Minister that on the data made available to the lawyers, there had been an orgy of violence, loot and arson by those who were in no way sympathising with the assassination of Indira Gandhi, but were only using it as an excuse to plunder and enrich themselves. The Home Minister was informed that from the reports given to the lawyers and the eye-witness evidence of the lawyers who had visited the scene of tension and violence, the police had offered no protection but were in fact willing accomplices in inflicting terror on the Sikhs and in encouraging mobs to go amuck. Narasimha Rao was also informed about the criminalisation of politics by the Congress(I), who were manipulating the mobs for their own partisan ends. Narasimha Rao immediately gave orders to his Cabinet Secretary to send Army trucks to control tense areas that had been identified by the lawyers' groups. He reassured the lawyers that he would take other necessary and urgent steps.

On Monday, November 5, a group of lawyers visited the Ludlow Castle and Shahadra relief camps. The Sikhs at the latter camp categorically refused government food supplies. They informed the lawyers that Ram Narain Gupta, Municipal Councillor, Congress(I), was openly inciting mafia elements to violence and there was a conspiracy to exterminate the Sikhs who were innocent.

In an interview to *Surya* (September 1984) Kalp Nath Jha, a former Congress-I M.P. who resigned from the party after the ouster of N.T. Rama Rao in Andhra Pradesh had said that the "Congress(I) consisted of impotent minds and criminals." The carnage, rape and violence in Nagpur lent corroboration to the testimony. An impartial enquiry into the atrocities of the last few days is imperative if the country is to be saved by a government that has exhibited its impotency and lawlessness.



REACTION

Surya
INDIA

WEST BENGAL

Shocked And Shattered Peace

The assassination of Mrs. Gandhi sparked off a series of violent incidents that started to assume a highly organized pattern; it was only the intervention of the Army that brought the situation under control. Srilekha Roy reports from Calcutta.

THE immediate reaction to the assassination of Mrs Gandhi in Calcutta on October 31 was shock, anger and violence. The anger overtook the shock soon after the words spread in the city that the BBC had broadcast the death of Mrs Gandhi. Calcutta had witnessed an ugly communal violence when miscreants, masquerading as Congress(I) volunteers, roamed the city streets in jeeps and directed the people's anger towards the Sikh community. Shops, restaurants, buses and taxis, owned by the Sikhs, were attacked by riotous mob all over the city.

Many shops were looted and set on fire. Burnt vehicles were seen scattered on streets. Two famous gurdwaras, one at Burrabazar in north and another at Rash Behari Avenue in south Calcutta, were heavily stoned by a frenzied crowd of about 3,000. Vehicles parked outside the gurdwaras were set on fire. At Bhowanipur in south Calcutta, members of a Sikh family were dragged out of their residence and were severely beaten up by the mob on the street. A Sikh businessman was dragged out of his car at S.N. Banerjee Road in central Calcutta and his car was set on fire. Yet another Sikh gentleman was stabbed in the Belgachia area in north Calcutta.

During the day-long mob frenzy, not a single policeman was seen anywhere in Calcutta. The fate of hundreds of innocent men, women and children had been left at the mercy of the Congress(I) goondas. A large number of panic-stricken Sikhs took shelter at Lalbazar, the city police headquarters, seeking police protection. It is not yet officially disclosed how many persons had lost their lives in mob frenzy. But unconfirmed reports put the death toll to six in the state. The miscreants, however, did not spare the public transport services. At least 20 State buses and trams were set ablaze. Fire brigade personnel were not allowed to attend to fire calls. The normal life in Calcutta came to a grinding halt for two consecutive days as the Government



Chaos In Calcutta : Congress(I) Hooligans Were Out On The Streets, And Indulging In Their Favourite Pastime.

had withdrawn all buses, trams, trains from the city.

For the second successive day on November 1, violence continued unabated in Calcutta. The city and its neighbouring towns in districts wore a deserted look as vehicles remained off the roads and shops and markets closed. At least 27 lorries and private cars of the Sikhs were set on fire in

the city on November 1. Hundreds of Sikh families had evacuated their homes and took shelter in different police stations in Calcutta. In the Jadubabu Bazar on Asutosh Mukherjee Road in south Calcutta, which has a large number of shops owned by Sikhs, rowdies had broken open shutters of a number of electronic goods shops and looted TV sets and video cassette recorders.

REACTION

Later, they set fire to the shops. A few Sikh restaurants near Metro cinema in the Chowringhee area were also ransacked.

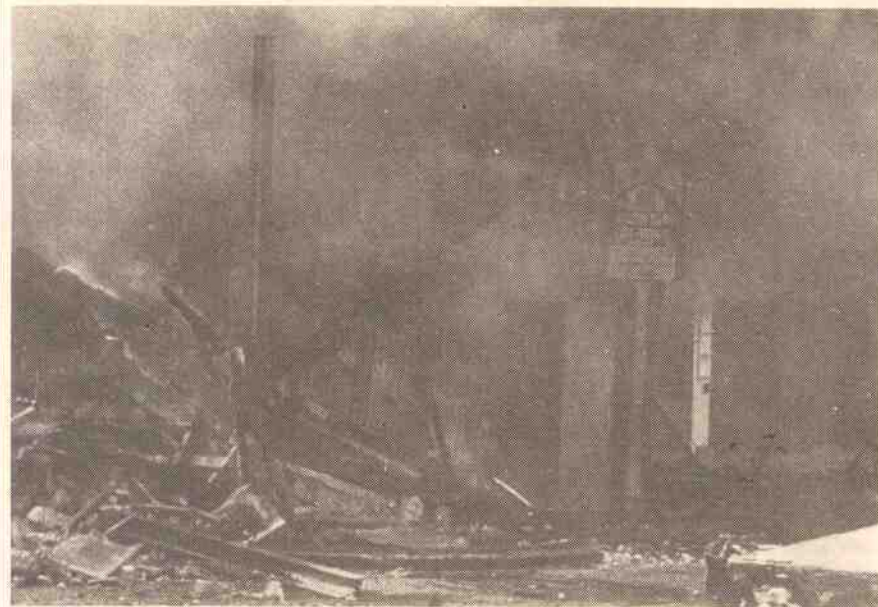
The Army swung into action at Burrabazar, the main business centre in Calcutta, in the afternoon when the miscreants had set fire to a number of lorries and started looting shops. Panic gripped the entire area when the cooking gas cylinders of one of the burning lorries had started exploding in quick succession. Led by a Major, Gorkha jawans in three trucks arrived at the scene of arson on Kali Krishna Tagore Road in the Burrabazar area around 2 p.m. and announced that the troops would fire if anybody was seen on the road. This had a deterrent effect on the rowdies, who were so long indulging in indiscriminate arson carrying Congress(I) flags with them. The sight of Gorkha troops had sent them scurrying for safety.

The darkness that descended on Calcutta and its neighbouring districts at noon is now over. But the scar it left is difficult to erase. People in West Bengal have so far lived with best of communal harmony. The Congress(I) rowdies are now out to destroy the peace by

Gandhi". The resolution adopted by the State Cabinet described the murder as a "great national tragedy".

Saroj Mukherjee, the Left Front Chairman, in a message expressed his deep shock at the Prime Minister's brutal assassination. Biswanath Mukherjee, secretary of the state council of the CPI, said: "No words are strong enough to condemn the dastardly assassination of Mrs Gandhi". Makhan Paul, secretary of the state committee of the RSP, said: "Her tragic death will certainly create a void in our national life. The country must show courage at this critical juncture and not be cowed down by terrorism. Ashok Ghosh, secretary of the State unit of the Forward Bloc, said: "People should exercise utmost restraint and maintain peace in the face of provocation from some misguided terrorists".

Rajiv Gandhi, only surviving son of Indira Gandhi and the new Prime Minister of the country, was on an election tour in West Bengal on the fateful morning of October 31. Around 11 a.m. when Rajiv was proceeding towards Mahisadal from Contai, two towns in Midnapore district of the State, his car



fomenting communal hatred and passion among the generally meek and suave Bengalis in the State. The saner section of the people are dumbfounded witnessing the ugly faces of the Congress(I) workers who seem to have forgotten that their act is an insult to the departed soul of Indira Gandhi.

The West Bengal Government in a special Cabinet meeting on the afternoon of October 31, condemned the "dastardly assassination of the Prime Minister, Indira

was stopped by the security men and he was briefly informed of the tragedy. His initial remark was: "Inside our house and that too by security guards?". Later, he told reporters who were accompanying him in his election tour, that every morning he used to notice a young Sikh security guard posted between 1, Safdarjang Road and Akbar Road who looked very suspicious. He said that he had repeatedly warned his mother about the guard (Satwant Singh?) but she refused to listen to his warning.

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Staking Everything On Rajiv



Big business in India is virtually indistinguishable from big politics, which is essentially Mrs. Gandhi's politics. For Mrs. Gandhi's regime had been very kind to all businessmen, for they had a common interest, and the interest was money. Therefore, it is not only the Congress(I) politicians but also the big business lobby which has a big stake in having a Gandhi-Nehru on the *gaddi*; for business must go on as before, no matter what happens to the country's economy, or for that matter to the country itself. Well known economist *Dr. Jay Dubashi* analyses the effects of Mrs. Gandhi's assassination on the Indian politico-economic arena.



BIG business in India never had it so good as under Mrs Gandhi. They are out of her hands and she out of theirs. It was a real coalition of interests, a kind of political-industrial combine that had the country in its fearful grip. Eighteen years ago when she first came to power, no one had heard of people like Raunaq Singh or Swraj Paul or Kamal Nath all of whom were petty traders dealing in junk. Today they are industrialists in their own right, Paul buying industries in England left and right, even those industries about which he knows next to nothing, and men like Kamal Nath lording it over such old

established groups as JK and Shri Ram. Not that these groups have done badly for themselves either. Mrs Gandhi's regime has been very kind to all businessmen, for they had a common interest, and the interest was money.

After the break-up of the old Congress Mrs Gandhi came to rely on the Soviets for political support and on big business for financial support. The credibility of her regime was so low that votes could be garnered only through money, firstly by creating an organisation of goons financed through that money, and secondly by purchasing legislators. For all this, money was necessary and it could come initially

only through big business. The big business supported her on condition that she liberalise licensing, both industrial licensing as well as imports and exports, so that they had a free hand to make money themselves —of which a portion would be handed over to the ruling party or the party's ruling clique—not only in India but also outside the country. The net result is that the big business in India is virtually indistinguishable from big politics, which is essentially Mrs Gandhi's politics, and the two between them can lay hands on funds which have been estimated at anything between Rs 20,000 and Rs 30,000 crores.

All this has been done in the name of

economic and industrial growth. For days and weeks before her death Mrs Gandhi was busy laying foundation stones all over the country, sometimes laying them at the very spot she had done so before. Public memory is, however, short, and the stones were heralded by a sycophantic press as the harbingers of another great industrial revolution. Mrs Gandhi is talked out as this country's great moderniser, a ruler who ushered in more or less single-handed one industrial revolution after another, and that too in the face of vehement opposition of 'reactionary' leaders like Charan Singh and others who, say her apologists, would have taken the country decades backward if only they had half a chance. This is precisely what Mrs Gandhi herself said about the Janata government: not that the Janata leaders fought among themselves but undid all the good that she and her father had done and that it had taken all her might to put the country back again on the road to progress after the Janata men had done their worst.

The charge has stuck, as such charges always do, but what is the reality? Was Mrs Gandhi really such a great moderniser? Did the nation's economy make a quantum jump into progress under her leadership? Did our standard of living change radically and did the number of the poor shrink beyond all imaginations? Are we, in other words, much better off than we were 18 years ago when Mrs Gandhi first assumed power?

THE answer is no. We are not much better off than we were 18 years ago and some of us may actually be worse off. The country has not made a jump, let alone a quantum jump, and is just plodding along more or less at the same pace as before if not actually slowing down. And although certain sections of the economy—and of the society—may have been modernised, the results are patchy and a great divide separates the nation into two distinct societies: that of haves and another of the have-nots, and under Mrs Gandhi the distance between the two has widened, not narrowed. This is because of Mrs Gandhi's style of governance—pitting one community against another, one class against another, and one section of the society against another. The net result is that India today is a country riven into factions, much more so than in 1966 when Mrs Gandhi took over.

Let us look at the national income. In 1965-66, the gross national product was Rs 27,103 crore. Eighteen years later in 1983-84 it was Rs 54,000 crore, not even twice the previous figure. In per capita terms, the figures are even more eloquent

Mrs. Gandhi has virtually pawned this country to whomsoever would lend her the money, a good deal of which has been spent on such tamashas as NAM, CHOGM and ASIAD. Incidentally one out of ten so-called leaders who attended NAM have either been shot dead or overthrown or consigned to limbo. So much for their leadership and contribution to world peace.



Under Mrs. Gandhi the country has borrowed as if there was no tomorrow, borrowed left and right, both inside and outside the country so that the national debt has increased ten-fold in less than 20 years, from Rs.8000 crores when Mrs. Gandhi took over, to Rs. 74,000 crores last year. What is worse, the external debt has also soared by leaps and bounds, from Rs. 2600 in 1976 to Rs. 17,000 crores last year.