

On November 1, the fire spread from the heart of the capital, Connaught place, to Naraina, Moti Nagar, and Janakpuri, commercial areas of Karol Bagh, Chandni Chowk, Trans- Yamuna colonies, Palam Colony and even in the fruit and vegetable mandis of Azadpur in north Delhi. Taxis and trucks were particular targets. There was a pattern and a plan to the riots all over.

Throughout the day truckloads, jeep loads and car loads of armed people were brought into Delhi's suburban colonies. A large number of people were brought from Bahadurgarh at a time when the Delhi-Haryana border was said to have been sealed. Even posh colonies like Vasant Vihar, Maharani Bagh and Friends Colony, where normally peace reigns, were not spared... By far the worst affected was Guru Harkishen Public School, Vasant Vihar. Its furniture, books, office records were all set on fire, even ceiling fans dropped down due to heat. Mata Jai Kaur Public School in Ashok Vihar met with a similar fate and so did several other Khalsa schools. Anything that was even remotely linked with the Sikhs was a target of mob fury...

With so much violence raging in the capital anxious Sikhs made several calls to the police control room. They got no response. When some desperate Sikhs switched their radio sets to FM frequency they discovered from the messages that the only instructions to the police were for "Bravo Two", that is, to look after the new Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's safety and security.

The police apathy was mainly due to two factors. In composition, the Delhi Police consists largely of the Hindu Jats of Haryana (about 70 per cent), and a small percentage of the Sikhs and Muslims. On October 31 itself the Sikh force, of about 1,000 men, was completely withdrawn for security reasons, with the specious argument that Sikh policemen would not only be a grave provocation, but would also be easy targets of mob fury. With this, the constabulary nearly 30,000 strong, was mainly left to the Haryana Jats whose dislike for the Sikhs is notorious....

Delhi Transport Corporation drivers from Hari Nagar Depot accompanied by anti-social elements attacked some shops and buses in G Block. Arson followed looting. Cars, private buses, trucks and scooters belonging to the Sikhs were burnt down. The residents assisted by Hindu neighbours of Fateh Nagar succeeded in driving away the miscreants. Around noon, on November 3, the Station House Officer, came in a jeep and asked the local residents on vigilance patrolling to go indoors. But because of the previous day's incidents they continued to keep a vigil.

The SHO sent a posse of policemen to a 75-year old retired army officer's house, beat his family members and confiscated his unloaded licenced revolver, which he had owned since 1944.



They dragged him by his hair to the jeep and took him to the police station. He was told to kill two Sikhs if he wanted to be set free. When he refused the sub inspector shouted that "no Sikh would be allowed to live in the area with his hair and beard." He was beaten unconscious. The following day the police took him to a court where a case under Section 307 of the I.P.C. was registered against him. He was released on bail on November 12. (*Report of the Citizens' Commission, p.22*)

By November 2, isolated murders had built up into large scale massacres. East Delhi was the worst affected. Block 32 of Trilokpuri had about 180 Sikh homes, besides a few Sikh families lived in the huts across the road. They had organized themselves to resist marauders. In the morning some Hindus had set the gurdwara in Trilokpuri on fire. (In fact, gurdwaras, granthis and Granth Sahib were the first targets. In the capital alone some 300 gurdwaras went up in flames along with the silk wrappings and the copies of the holy Granth.) The priest of the Trilokpuri Gurdwara and his uncle, who had come from Punjab, were tied together by their hair and set on fire. Infuriated, a few young Sikh boys, mostly three-wheeler scooter drivers, screamed wielding kirpans: "Let the mob come and we'll show them our might." When the mob came at 10 A.M. about 500 Sikhs managed to drive it away. The mob came back several times but on each occasion it was forced to beat a hasty retreat. No Sikh life was lost, nor was any property damaged. A police patrol party stopped by and asked the Sikhs to go indoors. They assured them "full protection". But barely had they bolted their doors than thousands of people armed with iron rods, sticks, petrol, needles, knives and a "white-coloured chemical" stormed the area. The Sikhs were systematically dragged out, beaten or burnt to death, their belongings taken away and their houses set on fire....

In less than two hours, there were 275 widows in 180 houses. In an area less than 1000 sq. yards, 500 limbless bodies lay scattered all around. "*Badi bhaagwan hoigi jis ghar wich bus ik moiya hoiga*" (She must have been a lucky woman who lost just one family member on that day), said Jaswant Singh, who had a shop opposite Block 32. While the male members of Sikh families in Trilokpuri were slaughtered without mercy or exception, the women were molested with fiendish abandon.

When the hordes came the immediate concern was to save the few possessions they could. Women concealed cash and jewellery in their brassieres and salwar belts. But the marauders were unsparing: "Take out all you've hidden in your salwars", they screamed, "Otherwise we'll strip you naked". And so while the daughters were being ravished their mothers were being stripped naked to recover valuables. Some women even received severe blows. "We will see how you live outside Punjab, "Will you demand Khalistan?" "Will you celebrate Guru Nanak's birthday?" With



every query came deadly blows.

Next morning when petrified women left for the nearby Chilla Gaon to take refuge, they rubbed slush on the faces of their unmarried daughters, pulled their *dupattas* to form a veil around their faces and made them carry a child each to save them from the clutches of the rapists at large.

....In Tilak Nagar and Fateh Nagar, in West Delhi, and Bhogal, in South Delhi, the Sikhs organised themselves. While men patrolled the streets armed with lathis and *Kirpans*, women sat on roof tops with stones and bricks to aid their men. Huge cauldrons of chilli powder mixed in water were stocked on roof tops to be used to blind the marauders....

So strong was the feeling of insecurity among the Sikhs that even industrialists like Raunaq Singh, pro-Congress (I) Sikhs like Tejwant Singh and his family (incidentally his construction company "Skipper" rebuilt Akal Takht which had been severely damaged during Operation Blue Star) thought it prudent to go into hiding. Whether you were the President of India, Giani Zail Singh, Congress (I) MP (Charanjit Singh whose Campa Cola factories were set on fire) or the Mayor of Delhi, Mohinder Singh Saathi, (an attempt was made to drag him out of his car when he went to pay homage to the slain PM at the hospital), you were a target of mob fury if you happened to be a Sikh.

In terms of caste the mobs comprised Gujjars (milk vendors), Jats of Haryana, Scheduled Castes and a handful of Muslims: that is down trodden people mostly from resettlement colonies. These colonies were the Congress (I) creations as a result of Sanjay Gandhi's slum clearance drive during the internal emergency from 1975 to 1977. These slums had been nurtured as Congress (I) strongholds. From here crowds were mobilised during the solidarity rallies and the bank-loan functions in January, 1984. All this belies the general assertion that the carnage was the result of a spontaneous out-burst of grief following the assassination of Mrs. Gandhi. It was an organised pogrom, genocide of the Sikhs instigated by the Congress (I) leaders. This explains the conspicuous absence of the members of the middle class among the rioters.

The police displayed an almost uniform behavioural-pattern all over the country. They either abstained from rushing to the troubled spots or stood as passive spectators or actively participated in the orgy of violence against the Sikhs. Such was the apathy of the police that the first police officer reached Trilokpuri 30 hours after the carnage started, even though, *The Indian Express* correspondents, Rahul Bedi and Joseph Maliakan, informed Additional Commissioners, Nikhil Kumar and H.C. Jatav 12



hours earlier. Even when the reporters had counted 350 bodies in Trilokpuri the Police Commissioner, Subhash Tandon, said at his press conference in the evening: "May be 20 people have died in the violence during the day." To this the Lt. Governor P.G. Gavai added the deliberately misleading reassurance: "The situation is under control now."

So much logistic support – supply of unlimited quantities of kerosene and petrol, (Incidentally, the former was rationed in the capital and normally even for a litre one had to stand in a queue for hours), combustible chemicals, iron rods, sticks and transport in the form of trucks, jeeps, tempos, cars, and scooters that ensured such large scale violence certainly needed a well-knit organisation and a high level of co-ordination.

Investigations by Citizens for Democracy revealed that kerosene oil was procured from "Jhuggi dwellers by threatening them, ration shop owners who were too willing to help, and kerosene depot owners; petrol and diesel from petrol pumps, passing motor vehicles, cars and scooters" (p.20). Even rioting mobs were brought in. For example, in the Ashram area a 400 to 500 strong mob arrived by Delhi-Palwal shuttle from Faridabad at 9.48 A.M. and by Qutub –Express at 10.45 A.M. armed with lathis, iron rods, soda-water bottles and drums of kerosene. They joined the local 700 strong mob, who had come from nearby JJ Colonies. Even the police was in league. In Shakarpur ACP, East Delhi, Ramji Das Malhotra, told the mob: "you should have blown up the gurdwara and killed Bhatia (Trilochan Singh Bhatia of H-Block, Shakarpur)." Malhotra accompanied the mob in one jeep, a station wagon, two men with stenguns and revolvers. The SHO, Jai Singh, openly said that the mobs were free to do what they wanted for three days.

It was a bizarre competition in barbarism, each police-man trying to out-do his colleagues. In Sultanpuri, SHO, Hari Ram Bhatti, first disarmed the Sikh inhabitants and then supervised their massacre. When the situation was limping back to normal on November 3 and 4, he made the Sikhs shave their hair at gunpoint.

... A large number of Congress (I) Members of Parliament and Metropolitan Councillors were among rioters, rapists, arsonists and murderers. In Azadpur, Lalit Makan reportedly paid a hundred rupees and a bottle of liquor to each of the rioters; in Anand Parbat Moti Lal Bairwa, Mahendra Kumar Jain and Mangat Ram Singhal, all considered to be supporters of Dharam Das Shastri, a Congress (I) MP, were conspicuous; in Kalyanpuri, Dr. Ashok Kumar held a meeting following which violence broke out immediately; in Shakarpur Sukhan Lal Sood led the mob, in RK Puram, Sector IV and V Jagdish Chander Tokas instigated violence. In Mangolpuri, Congress (I) corporator Ishwar Singh



guided the mob to lynch the Sikhs.

The Congress (I) collusion became even more violent later when the army started recovering looted goods. H.K.L. Bhagat, Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting intervened to get the miscreants, who were held in Shahdara Thana released. Dharam Das Shastri came to the Karol Bagh police station and protested: "Let them take away recovered property, but there is no need to arrest them. These people are not criminals."

A report by Citizens for Democracy later observed: "The pattern was sequential: taking it easy, first the gurdwaras were destroyed one after another and then the Sikh men were humiliated, their hair was cut, their turbans torn apart, then they were brutally murdered and finally burnt down. This clever pattern leaves very little doubt that the violence had been extremely well organized by men who were experts at the game" (p.22-23)....

After Delhi, Bihar had the dubious distinction for being the worst scene of communal carnage. Over 200 people died in various cities- Bokaro, Patna, Dhanbad, Ranchi, Jamshedpur, Bhagalpur, Jhumritalaya and Daulatganj. The only difference was that the violence in Bihar was organized unabashedly by the Seva Dal volunteers of the Congress (I). As in the capital, there too the police showed apathy and hostility. When the Sikhs went to police stations to file complaints, these were not recorded. In fact, policemen brazenly said that the killings were only a "natural reaction." The two other Hindi-speaking States, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh also witnessed scenes of anti-sikh violence. In Madhya Pradesh, all but two districts, Panna and Dhatia, remained unaffected. In Uttar Pradesh, over 500 people were killed. Kanpur was by far the worst affected accounting for almost 50 per cent of the total casualties in the State. Ghaziabad and Dehradun came next. Blinded by feelings of savage revenge the avenging hordes did not spare even the Sikhs in uniform. Some of them were dragged out of trains and mercilessly butchered.

The government-controlled Doordarshan allowed the slogan '*Khoon ka badla khoon se lenge*' (Blood for blood). On November 1, three wheeler scooters went round in various colonies of the capital announcing that the Sikhs had poisoned the water supply systems. This led to tension even among friendly neighbours. The rumour was denied over all India Radio bulletins nearly 24 hours later. According to another rumour, the Sikhs had slain the Hindus in Punjab and had dispatched a train-load of them by the Jhelum Express to the capital. In Lucknow, the arrival of Gomti Express, was a scene reminiscent of the partition days. An angry crowd shouted: "the Sikhs have slaughtered the Hindus in Punjab and have dispatched them by Punjab Mail."



Thus, when the train screeched to a halt the mob grabbed and slaughtered every Sikh on the train. No one had bothered to check the rumour, the beast in man had overpowered his reason. The bodies on a train arriving in New Delhi Railway Station were so badly mutilated that looking at a pile of bodies kept on a luggage trolley a Railway policeman remarked: "We have received these bundles of flesh."

The Pink City Express from Jaipur arrived with 10 dead bodies. Eleven corpses were thrown out of Ahmedabad Express between Delhi Main and Bijwasan. When the Deluxe from Bombay was made to halt at Tughlakabad infuriated mobs searched for the Sikhs in compartments....At Morena Railway Station, in MP, 12 bodies of the Sikhs were recovered from the Raipur Bound Chattisgarh Express....

The non-Congress (I) ruled States remained largely unaffected by the mob frenzy that disfigured the face of northern India. The only exception was West Bengal. A Sikh from Calcutta gave his cold logic: "Don't forget Rajiv Gandhi was in West Bengal (in Contai, Midnapore District to be precise) when he got the news of his mother's assassination. That's the reason violence started there four hours before Delhi." A Sikh was beaten up in the forenoon near Writers Building and one more was attacked in Kidderpore area around the same time. Sikhs were also beaten outside Gurdwara Jagat Sudhar. But violence in this State, known for its volatility during the partition, did not spread because neither the politicians, nor the police behaved like their counterparts in the other states. As soon as the first signs of violence manifested BSF was deployed.

The Chief Minister, Jyoti Basu, who was in Tamil Nadu attending a trade union conference rushed back to Calcutta and men from the BSF, Eastern Frontier Rifles and the army were deployed to nip the violence in the bud. In Andhra Pradesh, the Chief Minister, N.T. Rama Rao, categorically warned, "No harm should come to a single Sikh in my State." Immediately, the police force moved out on the streets guarding their life and property.

The general behaviour of non-Sikh neighbours and friends fell broadly in four categories. First, the Hindu neighbours gave the Sikhs shelter and during the days when mobs ruled the streets they fetched milk and vegetables for them. Second, while refusing shelter to the Sikhs, they did not join in the attacks. Third, they acted against the Sikhs so as to ensure their own security by pointing out the Sikh homes to miscreants; and fourth the Hindu neighbours (by and large) joined in the attacks on the Sikhs.

Respite came to beleaguered Sikhs only on the evening of November 3 after Mrs. Gandhi was cremated. Although as early as November 1, the authorities had announced that the army had been called in to control the mob frenzy, they were not in



sight until the evening of November 3. Curfew was announced but never imposed. Shoot at sight order and extensive patrolling by the police and para-military forces were heard only over All India Radio and Doordarshan. Even helicopters reconnoitered the area to spot the mobs who were on the rampage but there was no follow-up action. In the Congress (I) ruled States too, troops flag marched and disappeared.

...The extent of damage could be visibly gauged: over 25,000 people were rendered refugees in East Delhi alone. But even after four days no relief was provided by the administration. Both the Union Home Secretary, M.M.K. Wali, and the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, P.G.Gavai, said that: "There was no need to establish relief camps since the army had been called and they would bring the situation under control." Sikhs had to fall back on their own resources. Gurdwaras and community schools were converted into refugee camps and crates of medicines and clothes were collected by the Sikhs and expeditiously sent there. Survivors, who were evacuated by the army, were taken to police stations as a rule. Soon these were bursting at the seams with toilets running like open sewers, with no food or medicine in sight. Voluntary social groups and individuals from within the community later came to their aid.

True to their tradition of suffering and self-esteem, most of the victims refused government help when it came. A new Sikh militancy was in evidence in most camps. When the Information and Broadcasting Minister, H.K.L. Bhagat, sent blankets to a camp in East Delhi, which incidentally was also his Parliamentary constituency, the refugees refused to accept these from "the butcher of East Delhi." In a camp in Janakpuri one sign-board read: "Sorry. No Congress (I) politician allowed." Another read: "No stray dogs allowed..."

Such large scale pogroms led to the total alienation of the Sikh community. In the first place hardly any FIR's were registered. In a few places when they were registered they were slip shod with a clear aim to protect the guilty. Finally every effort was made by successive Congress (I) governments to protect the guilty. As a result even after 31 years the Sikhs are waiting for justice.



Harminster Kaur

Excerpts from the Book

Blue Star Over Amritsar

The Days of the Holocaust in Delhi

It was the 31st of October, 1984 when I was attending a very important meeting of the media people in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi presided over by the Secretary of the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Mr. S.S. Gill. The majority of the persons attending were from the Film Industry, when a member of the Secretary's staff in Shastri Bhawan came and whispered a few words in the Secretary's ear. The Secretary seemed to be irritated and dismissed the man summarily. But about 15 minutes later the staff member appeared again and seemingly said something to Mr. Gill of a serious nature, when he announced that he had to leave because of some very urgent task and requesting a very senior film maker to carry on with the meeting, he hurriedly left the hall. When after sometime, the meeting broke for lunch, the Joint Secretary dealing with films in the Ministry Mr. Jafa told me that the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi had been shot at by two of her bodyguards. When I asked him if by any chance the assailants were Sikhs, he replied in the negative, which made me heave a sigh of relief. But the very mention of the Prime Minister having been shot at filled me with grief and having lost my appetite for lunch I made for the Akashvani Bhawan, where I immediately went to the room of my Director General, Mr. S.S. Verma, who without pausing for a single second announced that 'she' was already reported dead. Since the shooting probably three hours had elapsed and 'she' was in the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, where she had been taken by Mrs. Sonia Gandhi and Mr. R.K. Dhawan, as the Prime Minister's Medical attendant Dr. Mathur and the ambulance were not available at her residence after her shooting by the bodyguards. Since I was next to the Director General on the Programme side, he expressed surprise as to why the wounded Prime Minister had to be first taken to the Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital and then to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, when a lot of time must have been wasted. Since I was not aware of this quandary, I kept quiet. Filled with apprehensions and sorrow I went to my own room to see how

AIR would play its part to project this tragedy to the Nation, when I was called by the Director General again and was told that the President, Giani Zail Singh was returning from his State visit to Yemen and he had already decided to appoint and swear in Mr. Rajiv Gandhi as the next Prime Minister. I was told that I must coordinate with the Engineer-in-Chief to arrange a running commentary from the Prime Minister's residence as soon as her mortal remains were brought in from the AIIMS and take all necessary action required in the matter. I asked him to rest assured that all arrangements would be made. I put a couple of experienced members of the staff of the Delhi Station



of AIR, besides booking three outside broadcasters to report at the Broadcasting House, from where they would go together to the Prime Minister's house to do a running commentary. I was very politely and sympathetically advised by the Engineer-in-Chief and the Director of News Services not to venture out of the Akashvani Bhawan or the Broadcasting House as the situation outside was very dangerous. I was wondering what could happen to me as I was a very honest government servant and a very loyal citizen. But hesitantly I decided to act on their advice.

The next day i.e. at about 5 A.M. on the 1st November I was rung up by a commentator that while they were broadcasting running commentary from the Prime Minister's house, they were told to leave the place as some religious ceremonies were to take place. I immediately told the commentator that he and his companions should leave the room where Mrs. Indira Gandhi's dead body was lying and proceed to the Teen Murti house where the body was to be placed in state for homage to be paid by the public. Simultaneously I told the Duty Room of the Delhi Station of AIR to start playing Bhajans and religious songs of other faiths with an announcement that the running commentary would be resumed from the Teen Murti House at 7A.M.

Having spent the whole night in the room of the Station Director of AIR Delhi, where I had worked for over four years, I thought I was looking untidy and I badly needed a bath and a change of clothes. While I reached the Transport Section adjacent to the porch, I found that no Driver was willing to take me and they ran helter and skelter. I was told that they were all afraid of taking me in any of the AIR vehicles for fear of their own lives. Finally a private Taxi Driver, whose vehicle had been hired, agreed to take me home, but he took a circuitous route, which I had never used earlier. While we reached the Ashram and waited for the green light, I felt that persons on the right and left of the road were looking queerly at me and had started advancing towards my vehicle. The saving grace was that the driver was a clean-shaven Sikh and comprehending the threat posed by those people, started his vehicle violating the red lights. While turning right on the road, I found certain DTC buses totally burnt, because, I was told that their Drivers were Sikhs and also a few houses had been completely burnt out.

While I was taking bath at home, I was told by a family member that the Driver had gone away asking to convey to me that I should call for another vehicle. When I rang up my Director General to arrange to send me another car, he advised me to stay at home till he rang me up to attend the office. Thus I was holed up in my house for full three days and it was only on the 4th of November when he rang me up to say that I should attend office after 10



A.M. and then for another four days he sent me home at about 4 P.M. which was never my wont earlier. Working late in my office had been my daily routine. On the evening of the 1st November, a neighbour warned me that a crowd of more than 500 persons was advancing towards our residences, I rang up my immediate neighbour asking to give shelter at least to two women in our family, one of whom was expecting a baby. First he promised to do the needful, but when we reached the roof, he expressed his regret for allowing anybody into his house, because he had two grown-up unmarried daughters of his own and he could not take the risk of the would-be intruders guessing that one of the two ladies in my family had been given refuge in his house. We were dumb struck by his dilemma, but accepted his stand. On the other hand a casual Hindu friend living at a small distance supplied us with a loaf of bread and some butter alongwith powdered milk for four days without our making any request to him. All these things baffled us quite a bit and we failed to understand where we stood in the tragic loss of Mrs. Indira Gandhi's life. We grieved over her assassination, as did hundreds and thousands of Sikhs all over Delhi and elsewhere, yet a few thousands of them were brutally killed with countless of their women were dishonoured. Their houses were burnt to ashes, their means of livelihood were destroyed and a trail of disaster was left behind, from which they have not been able to rise till this day.

Whereas the mobsters were given a free hand to kill Sikhs, destroy their properties and burn the gurdwaras, most of custodians, who were supposed to keep the law, lent their active help and support to perpetrate destruction. While the official estimate of the persons killed was 2733, the Citizens Justice Committee arrived at a toll of 3870. Apart from these quite a large number of people were killed in Kanpur and other places including some Sikhs engineers who were burnt alive. All people massacred were innocent, the custodians of the law and order connived with the mobs, the Army was not called for three days, but when they were called they were not asked to use force.

During the course of killings of hapless Sikhs, the mobs were given a free hand without any fear of the law. The country which had flourished on non-violence during the struggle led by the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi and his close companions, was left to the mobs, who enjoyed active support of some political leaders as well as the police in general. Some Sikhs who tried to exercise their right to self-defence were disarmed by the police and left to the mobs for killing and looting them. For example, Kusum Lata Mittal's report stated that the weapons of the Sikhs in Kalyanpuri were forcibly taken away to ensure that the Sikhs would not be in a position to defend themselves. There was no spontaneity in the killing of the Sikhs. Almost all killings



were well planned and deliberate. When the groups of rioters pounced on the hapless Sikhs for killing them and raping their women-folk, the custodians of the law withdrew from the scene and left it open to the mobs.

Even the shops and showrooms owned by the Sikhs at well-known places in New Delhi were not spared and were looted and set ablaze, what to talk of the houses and jhuggis owned by the poor and working class of the community. It was forgotten by the Congress(I) leaders who were fanning the flames of violence that even when the Father of the Nation was killed, the culprits were tried in a court of law and only two found guilty of the murder were hanged and a few were given various punishments of imprisonment. But in the case of the tragic assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, all the principles of law and justice were ignored and a few thousand of totally innocent people were put to humiliation and painful death. It was tragic that young Sikhs and even children were made targets of extreme violence. And what was the fault of a few hundred uniformed Sikh soldiers, and some of their officers, to be pulled out of the trains and brutally put to death ! And those people were supposed to be the defenders of the borders of our country against foreign aggression!

After the carnage when elections to the Lok Sabha were held, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi won a landslide victory. Addressing a joint meeting of the two houses of Parliament at the behest of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, the President, Giani Zail Singh said, "Disturbances and violence in Delhi and in some other parts of the country, following Indira Gandhi's assassination, resulted in loss of life and property. Stern and effective action was taken to control the situation within the shortest possible time. My government extends its deepest sympathy to the families which suffered during the violence'. But twenty-one years after the carnage, Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh admitted candidly in the Lok Sabha: "Twenty-one years have passed, more than one political party has been in power, and yet the feeling persists that somehow the truth has not come out and justice has not prevailed." Dr. Manmohan Singh also promised that wherever the Nanavati Commission had named any specific individuals, all possible steps would be taken for their re-examination. The next day, Dr. Manmohan Singh said in the Rajya Sabha that "There were lapses in 1984. Several commissions have gone into this matter. We all know that we still do not know the truth, and the search must go on". Dr. Manmohan Singh further said, "It took the Sikh community a lot of time to regain its self-confidence after the tragic events of 1984. I have no hesitation in apologizing not only to the Sikh community but the whole Indian nation because what took place in 1984 is the negation of the concept of nationhood, as enshrined in our Constitution. On behalf of our government, on behalf of the entire people of this country, I bow my head in shame that such a thing took place."

Though there were only two Sikh bodyguards of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, who had committed the horrific crime of killing her with



their official weapons, which were given to them to protect her, thousands of innocents including men, women and children had to pay the price. In a large number of cases, the protectors of the law and order forgot or made to forget their duty of protecting the innocents, became instruments of criminal acts. But it does not mean that the entire Hindu community punished or injured all Sikhs. Innumerable Hindu and even Muslim brethren helped in saving the lives and honour of the beleaguered Sikhs, gave them protection in their houses from the mobs. There are instances when even policemen helped the beleaguered Sikhs.

In the Report of a Joint Inquiry by the People's Union for Democratic Rights and People's Union for Civil Liberties entitled 'Who are the Guilty?' it is pertinently asked why the armed forces were not called immediately. They have stated that during the seven valuable hours, between the time of the assassination and the time of the news of the death was made public, no security measures were taken. In his Memoirs, the President, Giani Zail Singh has stated that in a study conducted by an independent non-party organization "Citizens for Democracy" and published under the title 'Truth About Delhi Violence', an eminent jurist V.M. Tarkunde has said that though there was a communal element in the violence following Mrs. Indira Gandhi's assassination, it could hardly be described as a communal riot. It was entirely a one-sided affair. The Sikhs did not play any aggressive role in the Delhi riots. It was on November 1 and two succeeding days a massacre of hundreds of Sikhs and burning and looting of their shops and houses took place. The rioting was organised by a number of unscrupulous politicians, who are habitually associated with anti-social elements and downright criminals. That is the reason why looting was so extensive and the killings of the Sikhs were attended with unparalleled brutality. Scores of Sikhs in Delhi were literally burnt alive. The report stated that the State had forgotten its role of the protector. Instead, it became the collaborator in violence against a minority.

Unmindful of any personal danger, a large number of Sikhs had gone to Teen Murti House in the early hours of 1 November 1984, just like others to pay their homage to their departed leader, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, but within an hour and a half the presence of the Sikhs from those queues was completely gone. By that time the plan (of wreaking vengeance on the Sikhs) had been put into operation. Systematic violence, as distinct from sporadic, had erupted in the capital between 9 and 11 o'clock in the morning. The initial target of attack were the Gurudwaras, followed by loot, arson and killing of the Sikhs, first the men, particularly youths and then members of their families.

A team of Supreme Court advocates visited some violence-affected localities of New Delhi, where the neighbours of the victims told the same story that they wanted to save and



protect their Sikh brethren, but were helpless against the highly organised mobs having superiority in numbers. But thousands of Sikhs were saved by their Hindu friends at the risk of their being killed and their own houses being set on fire by the threatening mobs. Many survivors said that the violence was not communal, but that it was instigated.

A Citizens' Commission formed with Justice S.M. Sikri, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Badr-ud-Din-Tyabji, former Commonwealth Secretary, Rajeshwar Dayal, a former Secretary to the Government and T.C.A. Srinivasavadran, former Home Secretary stated that there was the least indication of the presence or active concern shown by senior police officials or others in what was happening in the affected localities.

Members of the Commission found no evidence to suggest that any systematic steps were taken to restore a sense of security or confidence amongst the residents of the several localities, which were subjected to continuing outrages during the four days. They also could not find any information of the perpetrators of mayhem, arson, murder, rape, abduction etc. having been prosecuted.

These gentlemen made a lot of other observations about the atrocities against the Sikhs and also stated that a large number of Sikhs shared in the sentiment of grief and revulsion over the tragic death of Mrs. India Gandhi. But certain elements exploited the situation as a pretext for rousing public feelings and channelling them into the dangerous direction of seeking revenge against a particular community for partisan advantage. The crimes committed were instigated and directed to a large extent by political elements abetted by the indifference, if not active complicity of the custodians of the law.

Rajiv Gandhi told the President that the reports of PUCL, PUDR and the Citizens' Commission were biased and one-sided. The Home Minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao did not say anything.

Manohar Singh Batra



The Citizen's Relief Rehabilitation & Education Fund

(Registration u/s 12-A of the I.T.Act 1961 Dt. on 8.12.1987)

Gurbir Singh Alag – C.A.

The Trust was founded by Lt. Gen. Jagjit Singh Aurora Convenor of The Sikh Forum, on 14th September 1987 for the public and Charitable purposes as 'The Citizen's Relief, Rehabilitation & Education Fund'. Following persons were originally registered as Trustees.

- Lt. Gen. Jagjit Singh Aurora, Convenor The Sikh Forum
- Dr. Maheep Singh, Scholar, Columnist, Author, Activist.
- Dr. Amrik Singh, Vice Chancellor.

The Charitable Trust is entitled the provisions of 80-G, under the Income Tax Act, to be renewed, after the stated period, by the Income Tax authorities. The number of Trustees to be appointed is not to exceed nine. To start with some of leading dignatories were appointed as Trustees :

- Dr. (Bhai) Mohan Singh – Ranbaxy Laboratories Ltd.
- S. Raunaq Singh – Apollo Tyres & Tube Ltd.
- S. Manmohan Singh – Frick India Ltd.
- Dr. Gurpreet Singh – Continental Devices Ltd.
- S. Raja Singh – Texla TV, Guru Ram Dass Academy
- S. Amrik Singh Bhandari – Bhandari Builders Pvt. Ltd.
- Major (Retd.) B.P. Singh – Punjab Regiment – Entrepreneur.

Additional Trustees were added by a Resolution on 07th January 1988, with the responsibility to operate the Accounts.

- Prof. Harkrishan Singh
- Wg. Cdr. R.S. Chhatwal – Secretary Trustee

Subsequently new Trustees were appointed and when, to fill up the vacancies.

The victims & destitutes of Nov'84 Carnage were badly in need of financial help to rehabilitate and restart their lives. Liberal donations from all quarters poured in, 'The Sikh dignatories from Corporate Sector made generous contributions to the fund. Tens of hundred widows, orphans, destitutes were extended relief for their rehabilitation hundreds of children have been extended financial help for their educations and vocational training over the last 30 years or so. A numbers of girls from victim family were extended generous help for their marriages.

With the passage of time, the victims having settled. The number of recipients has decreased. Presently the Trust is helping around two Scores of students from deprived families with stipends for education. The merited children based on scrutiny of examination results and certificates are given extra stipend to pursue higher education.

During the current year, 19 under privileged students have been extended help. Names of following students are under consideration for additional help to pursue higher Studies.

Name	Class	Grade/Marks	S/o., D/o./ Profession/ Income/Address	Substantial needs help.
Jasbir Singh	B.Tech from Netaji Subhash Institute of Technology	Passed 12th with Science Stream.	S.Harnam Singh C-64-A, TilakVihar Rickshaw Driver 8-10,000/- per month	Annual Fee Rs.93,670/-
Harmeet Kaur	B.A.(1st Year) from JDM College of DU	Passed 12th Class TilakVihar	S.Sukhdev Singh B-21-D,	Annual Fee Rs.3375/-
Simran Kaur	XIth Passed	Xth with 90%	S.Harpal Singh B-50-C, TilakVihar, Audo Driver 8000/- per month .	An aspirant for MBBS

The Sikh Forum has recently remitted stipends/scholarships to eight needy children of TilakVihar & ChanderVihar in NCR. Applications for assistance from 'The Citizen's Relief, Rehabilitation & Education Fund' have also been received from 11 children from U.P., belonging to weaker section of society. They have passed in examination of Xth and XIIth Class in 1st Division securing 65 to 93 percent marks. Out of interest revenue, from the Corpus, Forum is planning to give Rs. 1000/- to each

of these needy and merited Students.

To motivate and encourage, list of merited Children is appended below:-

S.No.	Name of Student / Father's Name	Class Passed	%
1.	Gurunam Singh s/o.Kashmir Singh R/o.Village Latifpur, P.O.Ram Raj Hastinapur, Meerut. (U.P.)	XIIth Passed	82 %
2.	Harjeet Singh S/o. Ranjeet Singh -do-	XIIth	72%
3.	Sachin Singh S/o.Bheem Singh -do-	Xth	79.33
4.	Simran Kaur d/o. Balbir Singh -do-	Xth	78%
5.	Balveer Singh S/o. Prem Singh -do-	Xth	77.6%
6.	Charanjeet Singh s/o.Nihal Singh -do-	Xth	81%
7.	Simran Kaur d/o.Joravar Singh -do-	XIIth	69%
8.	Jyoti Kaur D/o.Pratap Singh -do-	XIIth	80.5 %
9.	Simran Kaur D/o. S.Atar Singh -do-	Xth	72%
10.	Laxmi Kaur D/o.Ranjeet Kaur -do-	Xth	72%
11.	Simranjeet Kaur D/o.Manjeet Singh -do-	Xth	74.83
12	Gurpal Singh S/o.Sheetal Singh E-43,RanjitViharChanderVihar, New Delhi	XIIth Passed	65%
13	Ramanjeet Kaur D/o.Kartar Singh C-333,JJ Colony Khyala New Delhi.	XIIth	69%
14	Geeta Kaur D/o.Kalu Singh B-62-D,TilakVihar,New Delhi -I8.	XII	89.25%
15	Nisha Kaur D/o.Raja Singh A-10-D, TilakVihar,New Delhi -I8.	XIIth	93%
16	Jaspreet Kaur D/o.Manohar Singh RZ/I02,NihalViharChanderVihar, New Delhi.,	Xth	82%
17	Harmeet Kaur D/o.Sukhdev Singh,		

	B-21-D,TilakVihar,New Delhi -18.	XIIth	87.5
18	Simran Kaur D/o.S.Harpal Singh		
	B-50-C,RanjitVihar,Nolothi New Delhi -18.	Xth	85.5%
19	Jasbir Singh s/o.Harnam Singh		
	C-64-A,TilakVihar,New Delhi -18.	XIIth	85.25%

It is desirable, to enlarge the scope of Educational Scholarship & Stipends to the underprivileged/deprived children in numbers and the amount of grants. The financial resources at present are a restraint. We have to augment the Corpus so that with increased revenue we can reach out to more students with increased amount of stipends.

The Civil Society, at large, is requested for liberal donations/contributions to this charitable Fund. The Receipts, to claim benefit under section 80G will be furnished.

Remittances may please be made by Cheque/DD made in favour of 'The Citizen's Relief, Rehabilitation & Education Fund'. Saving Bank Account NO.03231000090388 with Punjab & Sind Bank Jangpura Extension, New Delhi-110014. MICR Code 110023029, IFSC Code : PSIB0000323.

Gurbir Singh Alag

C.A.

Treasurer,

The Sikh Forum

