

## MEERUT RIOTS OF MAY 1987

### PUCL REPORT, 1987 BY (JUSTICE) RAJINDAR SACHAR (RETD), SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL, PROF A M KHUSRO, PROF DALIP SWAMY, AND PROF K C GUPTA.

*[In May 1987 the police and the PAC had connived in Hashimpura of Meerut and allegedly picked up and killed more than 40 Muslims during communal disturbances in the area. It was alleged that the bodies of the killed were dumped in the upper Ganga Canal.*

*The then UP Government ordered an enquiry the findings of which were made public in 1994. The case was dragging in Ghaziabad courts. Some Human Rights workers formed a Legal Advisory Committee for the Hashimpura case. In 2002, this Advisory Committee approached the Supreme Court praying for the transfer of the case to Delhi fearing pressure and influence by the accused if the case continued in Ghaziabad in UP. (It may be pointed out that Ghaziabad is a neighbouring district of Meerut).*

*The Supreme Court transferred the case to Delhi where the court of Additional Session's Judge N P Kaushik, on June 1, 2006 framed charges of murder, attempt to murder, criminal conspiracy, abduction, unlawful confinement, assault, and unlawful compulsory labour against the Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC) personnel charged with killing of Muslims during curfew in Meerut on May 22, 1987.*

*The PUCL had appointed a committee to investigate the immediate and the basic causes of these riots. The committee comprised the then President of PUCL (Justice) Rajindar Sachar (Retd), Shri Inder Kumar Gujral, Prof A M Khusro, Prof Dalip Swamy, and Prof K C Gupta.*

*We are reproducing below the entire report of the committee brought out on June 23, 1987, to put the proceedings of the important case in proper perspective. – **Chief Editor**].*

The riots that erupted in Meerut during May and June 1987 have unfolded an ugly face of our society. The administration proved unwilling as well as incompetent to handle the situation of street murders, arson, and looting. Its attitude of benign indifference, bordering on partisan lines created an intense mistrust in the minds of people regarding the role of the law and order machinery. The ferocity with which the social and communal misbehaviour and the accompanying police atrocities occurred in the city are not only a matter of shame but they have also disrupted our social order.

The PUCL decided to investigate the Meerut riots to focus the immediate and the basic causes of these riots and to suggest ways and means to prevent such riots in the country. The team

constituted of: 1. Mr Rajindar Sachar, 2. Mr I K Gujral, 3. Prof A M Khusro, 4. Prof Dalip Swami, and 5. Prof K C Gupta.

On June 12, its members met and interviewed several advocates, social workers, trade union leaders, academicians, eminent citizens, administrative officers (including the District Magistrate). It was assisted by the local executive committee of PUCL, especially Mr Jain.

Meerut is an important town about 60 kms, from Delhi. With a population of half a million (4,13,395 in 1987 census of Meerut Municipal Board area), of which 62.5 percent are Hindus and 34 percent Muslims, the town has maintained a relative communal balance. It is known for its weaving, publishing, handloom, printing, sports, brass-band, and scissors factories. The factories are owned by Hindus as well as Muslims, the former dominating the class of employers and the later dominating the labour force. Both communities have shared the economic prosperity that occurred over the 1970, though Hindus have generally prospered at a faster rate than Muslims. The Ansaris among Muslims have acquired considerable economic clout on the basis of the 40,000 strong powerloom factories, which are operated mainly as a domestic industry. Gaddis (dairy owners) and Kassies (meat dealers) are also among the prosperous Muslims. The level of education, is however, low; only 6 percent of Muslim children are registered for higher education. The rich Hindus own cloth printing factories, sports, publication houses, and shops. Direct competition in the same industries between the two communities is not significant, but the employer-employee contradiction in several lines overlaps the communal division.

With 34 percent of total population, Muslims are a decisive factor in the electoral calculation of any political party. All parties tend to woo the Muslims voters. During the days of anti-imperialist struggle Meerut was a strong centre for Congress and Muslim League politics. It was an important centre of Khilaafat Agitation during 1916-23. After 1947 the Muslims mass turned to the Congress. With the formation of B K D and later the Lok Dal a sizeable number of them, mostly engaged in farming, transferred their loyalty from the Congress to the Lok Dal. Most Hindus owe their allegiance to the Congress, but the BJP also holds attraction to those engaged in trade and services. The left parties anyhow wield only marginal influence in the area.

There are many instances of cross voting. For example in the elections of 1985 the Hindus dominating four segments voted for Mohsina Kidwai. The Babri Masjid - Ram Janambhoomi issue has triggered a new wave of communalism through out U.P. (The rally held in Delhi and some of the provocative speeches made there were its contribution to worsening the atmosphere).

The Central Government is also not above-board in matters relating to communalism. Government's prevaricating approach to Babri Masjid has contributed generally to communal tension.

This forms the back-drop to the Meerut riots. The events that led to the riots in May were as follows:

On 14th April 1987 when Nauchandi fair was in full-bloom communal violence broke out. It is said that a police daroga on duty was struck by a fire cracker and as he was drunk he opened fire killing two Muslims. Another incident is also reported to have occurred on the same day. Muslims had arranged a religious sermon near Hashimpura crossing. Nearby there was a mundane function in a Hindu family. Some Muslims objected to film songs being played on loud-speakers and there was a quarrel. Somebody from the Hindu side allegedly fired. The Muslims then in return set some Hindu shops to fire. In all 12 persons, both Hindus and Muslims, were reported to have been killed. Curfew was imposed and the situation was controlled. However, the tension prevailed and both sides were bent on doing some further trouble.

On May 14 two bombs exploded in Mohalla Chhipiwara and Chhatta Tagi Hussain. The police did not take any action as Muslims were observing Rozaas. On May 16 also there was a bomb explosion in Mohalla Kainchian (In the evening Ajay Kumar Sharma was murdered in Kainchian, which was described by the police as Landlord-Tenant problem). The action of the police, in making searches at early hours in the morning in a rough and callous manner was bound to create quite a panic amongst the Muslims in the locality and out of panic there were appeals to Muslims to collect together so as to prevent police excesses. People panicked when the police tried to interrogate people in the area.

The scene of action on 18th May was the Hashimpura locality and the nearby Imliyan mosque, where Ansari Muslims belonging to the weavers community live. At about 9 p.m. two kiosks (small wooden shops) situated at Suraj Kund Road were put to fire by some miscreants. Of these two kiosks, one was owned and run by a Hindu manufacturing shuttle cocks and the other owned by a Hindu and run by a Muslim manufacturing carrom-boards. Thereafter electricity suddenly went off. A mob began to form. After about one hour at 10 p.m. on the Hapur Road, opposite to Imliyan Mosque, a shop, Lakshmi Confectioner, was looted and burnt down and one of its proprietors, Kulbhushan, was done to death.

The police tried to nail the suspected culprits and went to Hashimpura and Imliyan for making arrests. It was after namaaz time, during the month of Ramzaan. Police action was strongly resisted by the inmates. While the police was retreating a Jawaan dropped his rifle (some say the rifle was snatched). Soon after the midnight police reinforcement arrived, they announced that the people should get out of their houses otherwise there would be firing. More than 3000 people of Hashimpura and Imliyan came out. Now the electricity was restored and the rifle which was dropped was found outside a house. The police entered that house and shot dead two brothers inside.

A police jeep was parked near Imliyan. A police officer wanted to drive away in the jeep with some arrested persons. The women assembled there resisted, but the jeep drove off killing a girl. There was a great commotion and the mob naturally became unruly and police opened fire killing several persons. According to the DM 130 persons were arrested between midnight and 2 a.m. Curfew was clamped.

It is at this stage that something very unfortunate happened. There appears to be no doubt that some mischief makers got control of the loudspeaker on the mosque and started exhorting people to gather together and to save Islam. We were told this by various reliable people, both Hindus and Muslims, and we have no manner of doubt, that either out of panic or because of the mischievous call given to the Muslims, people collected together in the street. The result of this exhortation was not unexpected. A carnage followed.

The mob fury started after 3 A.M. They started burning, looting, and killing Hindus at Hapur Road, Golekuan, Pilokheri, Lakhipura, and Shyam Nagar. Hapur Road was blocked by big wooden logs. Several vehicles along with their occupants were set to fire. Shops and a petrol pump and many other establishments of Hindus were looted and burnt.

One of the unfortunate incidents was the burning alive of Dr Prabhat, who was, ironically going out to attend a call of a Muslim patient. His car was stopped and the mob in its senseless fury burnt him along with the car. This is doubly unfortunate because Shri Har Pal Singh, father of the deceased, even much later, continues to subscribe to his non-communal approach and was responsible for saving a few Muslim lives when Hindu mobs went on a rampage subsequently.

In Pilokhari several cloth printing factories owned by Hindus were burnt by the mob that surged in thousands at 6.30 A.M. the police picket posted there was too weak to handle the arsonists. The mob burnt several factories, burning about a dozen persons (chowkidaars) inside the factories. The mob then went to Lisari Road. The farm of Nepal Singh was attacked, 6 persons are said to have been burnt to death. The loss to the factory was incredible.

Subhash Nagar, which is next to Hashimpura, was another area which was the scene of shooting on the early hours on 19th May. The team visited the area and met Mr Ganesh Dutt, President of the Subhash Nagar Samiti. The version given to us was that in the early hours there was slogan shouting from adjacent area from Hashimpura. Naturally a large number of people went up to their roofs curious to know what was happening. Evidently there was mutual stone throwing from Subhash Nagar and Hashimpura area. Gun shots were fired from Hashimpura area and one Sushil Tyagi and two others, who were standing on the roof in the Subhash Nagar area were killed on the spot. Though the matter was immediately reported to the police but none came to the spot. As a matter of fact the grievance of the local people was that even till the day of our visit, i.e., 15th June, 1987 no one had come from the police to make investigation. This was totally unexplained conduct on the part of administration, considering that a written report about the killings had been sent to the administration. Even under the normal law investigation should have been done on the report of a murder but evidently the administration was paralysed and continued to be so even after 3 weeks of the incident.

We met Mr Tyagi, father of deceased Sushil Tyagi, who though, naturally, very upset on the death of his son, nevertheless told us proudly and with restraint that he had taken the body to the village Ahmadshahpur Padra and had stayed there for 3 days to make sure that no untoward incident took place as a result of the death of his son. We were heartened to note that there were people, who, even in the face of such a tragedy, refused to lose their balance.

We would like to pay publicly our tribute at this worthy conduct and wish more people would follow this example. This police indifference however continued to be as bad as before, even though FIR about this murder was recorded at the police station.

We went on the top of the houses in Subhash Nagar at Mr Mehta's building and saw from there the path the gun shot would have taken. There does not seem to be any doubt that firing came from Hashimpura side which did result in killings in Subhash Nagar.

In the afternoon of 19th the Hindu mob under the benign protection of the PAC began to retaliate. They started burning and destroying Muslim houses and shops on Hapur Road, the Mawana bus stand, stadium, Shastri Nagar, and Miyan Mohammed Nagar. In Mohammed Nagar 225 houses of the total of 354 were gutted. The residents, mostly poor Muslims like rickshaw-puller, etc., narrated the event with a cold helplessness. They accused the PAC of clear complicity and direct involvement in destruction. The PAC allegedly began firing at 2 p.m. and then started looting and burning the houses. Many persons were burnt alive and the remains of their houses could still be seen when this team visited the area. The D.M. pointed out that 130 families were compensated at the rate of Rs 15,000/- each.

In Shastri Nagar several Muslim houses that were strewn between Hindu houses were burnt by the mob which came from other localities. The houses of an income-tax official, a chief engineer, an executive engineer, a noted Urdu poet, and a rich business man who had recently migrated from outside were burnt and looted. Just as at Miyan Mohammed Nagar, here too there was total destruction except the house walls. A shrine of Najafshah was also completely demolished.

Curfew was clamped at 11 a.m. on 19th in areas falling under Delhi Gate, Lisari Gate, and Kotwali police station. It was subsequently extended to other areas also. Despite this violence continued through the city. At most places the police abetted by their benign indifference. Next day, i.e., on 20th May the muslim shops at Eastern Kacheri Road, Western Kacheri Road, P L Sharma Road, Abu Lane, Mawana bus stand, Transport Nagar, etc. remained disturbed.

One of the most shameful chapters of human callousness was enacted in Hashimpura area. It would appear by then that sufficient contingents of police and PAC had been inducted into Meerut. It was not clear but it seems that some decision was taken to really spread terror in Hashimpura area. Pursuant to this on May 22 Hashimpura was surrounded by the PAC. The PAC then forced all residents out of their houses to the main Road. Then a house to house search was conducted. The residents complained that several houses were looted by the PAC.

All residents of Hashimpura were lined up on the main road segregated, and one person in Burkha identified 42 young men, who were asked to board a police lorry. Another group of 324 were arrested and taken by other police vehicles.

What the police did in Hashimpura is something which can never be lived down and the shame of this will continue to haunt any civilised Government. We talked to old persons whose sons

and grand-sons were taken away by the police. We met young women whose husbands were taken away and later on they were either missing or their dead bodies were found. The way the residents of Hashimpura were treated was shameful. We were told that hundreds of people were taken out from the locality and asked to sit on the road. One army person asked people over 50 years and less than 10-12 years to get on one side and all the others were dumped into waiting trucks. We were told by one Ahmed, who had got away on the excuse that he had his MA examination that morning, and that 3 of his colleagues, namely, Kamaludin S/o Jamaludin, Sarajudin S/o Sabarudin, Nasim S/o Nasim Ahmed, had been taken away on the trucks. These three had not come back thereafter and the father Jamaludin corroborated this version.

Out of 42 only 6 persons are traceable, others have just disappeared. There is no record of these persons with the police. Abdu Bhai the grand father of Zulfikar told that Arif and Karimuddin were also with his grandson. They were arrested together and taken in a truck to Muradnagar and when the truck reached a canal Zulfikar saw Karimuddin being shot by the PAC and thrown in the canal. More than 20 bodies have in fact been found floating in the Ganga Canal.

One of us (Mr Rajindar Sachar) on coming back from there wrote to the Chief Minister of UP bringing to his notice as to how hundreds of people had been taken away and how many had died and were not traceable and requesting that the matters needed to be immediately looked into. A copy of these letters was also sent to the Prime Minister for doing the needful. We are sorry to say that not even an acknowledgement was received from the Chief Minister of U P or from the Prime Minister.

The other group of 324 persons was taken to the civil lines Police Station, where they were beaten. After keeping them for a night they were shifted to Meerut jail, where their injuries were noted down. Subsequently other criminal prisoners were provoked to beat them up. Some were shifted to Fatehgarh jail, where 5 persons died inside the jail. Abdul Rashid and Nasirudin, who remained in Fatehgarh jail for 21 days, narrated the inhuman treatment meted out to their group in the jail. They were mercilessly beaten; five of them died inside the jail. The DM confirmed the deaths inside jail and pointed out that a CID enquiry was instituted, though he pleaded that it was outside his jurisdiction.

Another gory incident related to village of Maliana. The PAC picket is accused of having fired indiscriminately and killed 2 dozen people and grim destruction of property also took place. The Maliana incident has left a deep scar as the allegation was that the police systematically killed Muslims without any provocation. It is a matter of regret that though judicial enquiry is ordered, its findings have still not seen the light of the day. This incident continues to act as a constant source of bitterness between the two communities. Unfortunately though PAC is responsible for this carnage, Hindus get the blame because Muslims believe that this was done because PAC is a Hindu police and they acted in a communal way and not as a law and order force.

In all localities and almost all persons whom we contacted told that when approached the

police did not respond. The incidents of killings and injuries in Subhash Nagar, factory burning in Pilokhari, murders on Hapur Road were all reported, but the police reported that they did not have enough manpower. No incident of death was investigated even after a month. The DM maintained that the outburst was too high to be attended to individually. About the 5 deaths in jail the DM gave us two versions. One, the prisoners were attacked by a crowd collected at the gate, two that the persons were attacked inside the jail. He also maintained that there was no obstruction to lodging FIRs. Postmortem of 5 bodies were done but the bodies were not handed over to the relatives. An enquiry by the CID was ordered to investigate the case.

The DM also pointed out that from 19th to 21st May there were 2 to 5 companies of PAC, which were inadequate to control the riots. On 22nd May he received 10-12 companies from outside. It was then possible to nab the culprits in Hashimpura.

Hindus resented the release of Zafar Ali, who was arrested under NSA for possessing a unlicensed gun. The DM clarified that the State Government revoked the arrest under Section 14. The license of Zafar Ali was suspended and he was asked to surrender his gun. When Zafar Ali refused to surrender his guns, he was arrested under NSA.

Spread of rumours also led to great deal of tension. In official releases expression was given that many of the Pakistanis had entered Meerut illegally. We confronted the DM with this news who told us that 7 persons arrested on 25th May from Nougaja Mohalla, only 2 persons were from Pakistan. These two had valid visa and were in Meerut to meet their relatives. They were released because there was no justification to arrest them. Somehow the news was allowed to be spread that Pakistanis had entered without visa, thus adding to the false suggestion as if there was a conspiracy behind this communal riot. This version was totally uncalled for and we feel that the district administration must exercise greater restraint in the type of news it passes on to the people.

How much suspicion had been aroused between the two communities became clear when people complained to us that food which was brought from outside Meerut was not allowed to be distributed by the administration. We checked up with the administration (DM) who accepted that food which had been brought by some organisations from Delhi was not allowed to be distributed. According to him, first, the food was being distributed community-wise and, secondly, rumours had been set afloat that the food which was being distributed was poison and the communities may be fed on this food. Of course, he conceded that none of the food was found in any way poisoned but so much was the misunderstanding that the administration did not allow voluntary agencies to distribute food even though when many voluntary agencies both of Muslims and Hindus wanted to distribute relief without in any manner restricting it to any particular community. We are sorry that the administration should have taken this attitude because common relief work would have eased the tension. The delegation visited various areas and localities and talked to many persons including relatives of the missing and the dead. We talked to many people in Hashimpura.

They were in great panic and had horrible tales of police cruelty to tell. All of them stated that they had been beaten by police. We were given a list of 41 persons who were said to have been carried away by the police on 22nd May 1987 from Hashimpura but whose whereabouts were not known. A copy of the list, which was supposed to have been given to the Commissioner for Relief, was given to us. We were also given a list of 5 persons who were taken away by the police from Hashimpura and were said to have died in police custody when they were taken to Fatehgarh jail. Their death was confirmed by the DM Meerut who, however, pleaded that the area was outside his jurisdiction. One of our members, Mr Rajindar Sachar, wrote to the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister of UP mentioning these facts as mentioned above. A copy of the letter forms Annexure to this report.

Another incident of the total inaction and the callousness of the administration was brought to our notice when we visited Subhash Nagar. On the night of 19th firing was stated to have taken place from some house in Hashimpura and some persons who were standing on the roof of a house of Subhash Nagar were killed. We visited the place of occurrence and it does seem that firing must have taken place from the Hashimpura side because that was the only roof from which the bullet could have traveled and hit the persons who were on the top of the house. We were told by the President of Subhash Nagar Association that they had telephoned the police and other District officers asking for their help but no one from the police visited the area even by the time when we visited them. This is extremely deplorable considering that information about the cognizance of offence had been given and yet the police had not taken the elementary step of investigation which they were duty bound to do under law. That 3 people undoubtedly died in Subhash Nagar due to bullet injury is uncontroverted but the response of the administration was totally callous. Days after the incident not even a sub-inspector of police had visited the sites to record statements and find out what exactly happened. No amount of general deterioration in the situation in Meerut could be any explanation for this attitude. Conditions on that night were not so bad that the police could not have visited the scene of deaths. As a matter of fact it would appear that the whole of the administration was waiting for additional re-enforcement of police and PAC to arrive before taking any action.

But the use they made of this is something shocking. When the additional re-enforcement arrived they went out with recklessness and with a communal slant, with the result that the Muslim areas were made the special target of attack by the police (it is probably correct that a mob did come out on 19th early hours on the Hapur Road and burnt a petrol pump, and a timber godown belonging to Hindus). But, as mentioned above, the coming out of the mob on the street was a panic reaction to the police brutality in searching and killings of some persons when they went to arrest some people in Imliyan Mohalla in early morning. Thereafter from 22nd when the re-enforcement of PAC and army arrived it was a one sided communal attack against the Muslim area and Muslim individuals.

We also visited Khalla Mian Mohammed Nagar and Khalla Swad inhabited by poor working Muslims. It would appear that a mob of Hindus possibly with connivance of the Police had gone on rampage looting and burning most of the area, signs of which were visible when we went around the area. There is no doubt, of course, that on the 19th the Muslim mob had gone on a



rampage when they burnt machines, godowns of printing cloth owners, owned by Hindus. It would be a reasonable guess that the attack on machines of printing cloth belonging to Hindus were accentuated and were partly fanned by rival Muslim economic interest because the type of destruction was a senseless one and explainable on no other premise. The area was very much away from the city and mob must have had to be led and directed by someone in the know of various locations.

It won't be wrong to say that Meerut had lost balance on those days and the barbarism and the utter inhumanity being indulged in by both Hindus and Muslims was a terrible experience. Had the matter remained between Hindu and Muslim mobs, they would no doubt have damaged and injured each other sufficiently but being both equal in strength matters might have been sorted out because of the mutual exhaustion. But what made the matter horrible and made it a matter of shame was the role played by the PAC and the police which instead of behaving and trying to defuse the situation acted in a communal stance and committed barbarities of callousness on the Muslims, causing death and harm.

Considering that both Hindu and Muslim mobs had indulged in looting, arson, and killing, the response of the PAC in picking out Muslim area and committing wanton acts is condemnable. The Muslims can have a legitimate grievance that the police did not act as guardians of law and order but played a partisan role. Rather it helped the Hindu mobs in looting and burning of Muslim areas. There is sufficient evidence to support such apprehensions of the Muslims. The role of the administration has left much to be desired. The administration remained in a paralytic stage and did not come out in strength in meeting the challenge of the communal madness. We feel that had more sober and serious efforts been made to gather together to create restraint on Hindus and Muslims it would have been easier to control the situation earlier and also would have removed the communal mistrust which unfortunately continued for a very long time.

## **Appendix**

Letter to U.P. Chief Minister

Shri Vir Bahadur Singh, Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow.

My dear Chief Minister,

A delegation on behalf of PUCL comprising Mr I K Gujral, Dr A M Khusro, Prof Dalip Swamy, General Secretary of PUCL, and myself went to Meerut on the 17th of this month. We visited various areas and localities and talked to many of the persons including relations of the missing and dead. The tension in the area is obvious and it will be long before that normalcy can be claimed. It is not my purpose to develop on various aspects what our team saw. I shall revert to that some time later. I am, however, writing to you on matters which require immediate and urgent attention.

During our visit to Hashimpura we were told how on 22nd May people of the locality were

carried in trucks in hundreds. They are said to have been beaten by the police. We were given a list of 41 Persons who were said to have been carried by the police on 22.5.87 from Hashimpura but whose whereabouts are not known in as much they are not to be found in any of the jail and their relations do not know where they are and it is suspected that they have been victims of police brutality, possibly leading to their death. A list is attached along with my letter. Out of this list I may mention that one of the persons who told us was Zamil Ahmed S/o Quadir mentioned at Serial No. 1 of the list. Similarly, Mohd Iqlak S/o Mohd Yasin (serial No. 3) met us personally and told us of their misery. We were also told that this list has been supplied to the Commissioner for Relief which evidently means that responsibility has been taken for claiming that these people are missing since 22.5.87.

This is too serious a matter to be allowed to be proceeded with leisurely. Our organisation feels that Human Rights and Right to Live is too fundamental a matter and any violation of it must receive immediate attention of the authorities concerned. I am not aware of what the district administration or the U P Government is doing in the matter. I would, however, request that immediate high level enquiry may be instituted so that some confidence is restored to the minorities.

I must also bring to your notice another very sad and serious matter. We were given a list of five people, who were carried from Hashimpura on 22.5.87 and said to have died in police custody when they were taken to the Fatehgarh jail. These facts were also confirmed by the District Magistrate, Meerut when we met him though he stated that Fatehgarh jail was out of his jurisdiction, and, therefore, he could not give us any details about it. We were, however, given to understand that a CID enquiry or Magisterial enquiry has been instituted. According to us this is most unsatisfactory and unacceptable. Five people had died in police custody when they were in jail.

The responsibility for the life of prisoners is implicitly on the jail authorities and the police. We are not aware that any action of suspension or dismissal has been taken against any of the concerned official. Death of 5 persons in such circumstances is not a matter which can be left to be enquired by a Magistrate. The least that can be done is to entrust this part of the incident also to the judicial enquiry which has to enquire into the village Malyana incident. This is apart from the fact that adequate compensation to the families of the victims and proper apology and regret on behalf of the State Govt. must be made to the families of the deceased.

That though you have announced the institution of a judicial enquiry we were told that neither the judge nor the terms of references have yet been announced. It is strange that the announcement of an enquiring judge is being delayed in a matter which has shocked the whole country. The delay in announcement of the enquiry is seriously casting a doubt on the bonafide of the State Government in finding out the truth. Immediate announcement of a judge who has to hold the enquiry must, therefore, be made.

As far as the Gian Parkash Enquiry Committee is concerned the terms of this have not been made public and, therefore, people are making a lot of speculations. One of the speculations is

that terms are restricted to 18-22 May. This would be wrong because the enquiry should not be limited to any period and must cover a period for the whole of the May so that it can find approximate causes and all the events which happened during this period. One other matter in this connection was brought to our notice, namely, that 15th June, 1987 had been fixed as the last date by which it would receive affidavits from the public. Considering that there has been a grave tension in the town, we feel that the committee should be authorised to receive affidavits which are filed by the end of this month. This would be necessary to give re-assurance to the public that no point of view is shut out.

I hope the matter listed above would receive your immediate attention. Yours sincerely, –  
Rajindar Sachar, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India, President, People's Union for Civil Liberties, D-26, Gulmohar Park, New Delhi-110049, Tel: 662933, June 23, 1987 Copy to: Shri Rajiv Gandhi Prime Minister, Government of India New Delhi .