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GUJARAT 2002

IN THE WORDS OF THE MEN WHO DID IT

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REPORTER'S DIARY:



EARLIER IN TEHELKA



How public prosecutors ran with the hare and hunted with the hound, keeping their sympathies strictly for the accused. Government Counsel Arvind Pandya on how he hopes to subvert justice by manipulating the Nanavati-Shah Commission, set up to ascertain the truth

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The Sangh was preparing its case for the defence even before the riots, selecting lawyers with the utmost care

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Nov 03, 2007

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Photo: Cherian Thomas

A PANEL OF ADVOCATES was constituted to defend the rioters by key members of the Sangh Parivar on the very night of the Sabarmati Express fire

CHETAN SHAH, a VHP member and a leading lawyer of Ahmedabad, was the first to defend the accused in the Naroda Patiya massacre case. In what became a pattern of having Sangh sympathizers represent the government in crucial cases, he was later appointed as public prosecutor in the Gulbarg society case

DILIP TRIVEDI, general secretary of the VHP's Gujarat unit, is the senior pleader in Mehsana district, which was among the worst affected areas during the riots. He has been coordinating riot cases across Gujarat

IN SABARKANTHA, public prosecutor Bharat Bhatt is the VHP's district president. He says he has been doing his best to help the accused

ARVIND PANDYA, the state government's counsel in the Nanavati-Shah Commission, casts aspersions on the judges. According to him, Nanavati is after money and Shah is sympathetic to them

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VOYAGER BETWEEN TWO WORLDS
Ashish Khetan

EARLIER IN TEHELKA

IT WAS not just the carnage that was clinically planned and supervised by the State, it was also the aftermath. Even before the riots began, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad had started chalking out a strategy for providing legal assistance to Hindus who were likely to be accused of rioting and killing. Dhimant Bhatt and Deepak Shah, members of the BJP's Vadodara unit — Bhatt also being the chief accountant of the Maharaja Sayajirao University (MSU) and Shah a member of the University's executive body — told TEHELKA that key members of the Sangh Parivar met on the night of the Sabarmati Express incident to constitute a panel of advocates to defend the rioters. The fact that the VHP had a good number of advocates — both private lawyers and public prosecutors — among its ranks, made the task easy. Deepak Shah named many Vadodara lawyers, such as Rajendra Trivedi, Neeraj Jain and Tushar Vyas, who were present in that preparatory meeting.

In district Sabarkantha, Narendra Patel and Mohan Patel — both members of the RSS — told TEHELKA that after the riots the RSS had formed a body called Sankalan to provide legal aid to Hindu rioters. Many of the VHP's lawyers, who had their own private practices, became defence counsels for the accused, and public prosecutors who were either members of the VHP or sympathetic to the Sangh extended indirect assistance to the rioters.

The public prosecutors, instead of taking forward the charges against the accused, actually helped them in the case. So, in many places, both the defence and the prosecution were on the same side — on the side of those who looted, raped and killed. What hope then did the Muslim community have of seeing their tormentors convicted? First the police sided with the

rioters through shoddy investigations, and now the prosecution too was ranged against the victims.

Chetan Shah, an active VHP member and a leading Ahmedabad lawyer, was the first to represent the accused in the Naroda Patiya massacre. The government later appointed him as the public prosecutor in the Gulbarg society case. TEHELKA met a Gulbarg case accused named Prahlad Raju, who said that while he was on the run, he was being advised by Chetan Shah about when he should surrender before the police.

In Mehsana district, Dilip Trivedi, general secretary of the VHP's Gujarat unit, is also the senior pleader leading a team of about a dozen public prosecutors working under him. Mehsana was among the worst-affected areas during the riots. Two cases in Mehsana in particular — the Deepda Darwaza incident in Visnagar town and the Sardarpura incident — had shaken the conscience of civil society for the number of people killed and also the barbaric manner in which the killings were carried out. Trivedi, whose job was to oppose the bail applications moved by the accused in these two cases, was accused by civil society of helping the accused get bail. After several representations before the Gujarat High Court and the Supreme Court by the victims, Trivedi was removed from representing them in riot cases. TEHELKA went to see Trivedi at his office within the Mehsana court premises on June 15, 2007.

TRIVEDI REVEALED that in his capacity as the VHP's general secretary, he had coordinated all the riot cases in Gujarat. While the reporter was sitting in Trivedi's chamber, two people walked in to discuss a riot-related case in which Hindus were accused. The men needed Trivedi's help to engage a lawyer who could represent the accused. Trivedi called up a few lawyers and tried to find his visitors a suitable lawyer. After the two men left his office, Trivedi said that the defence lawyer who was handling their case had fallen ill, and the responsibility of finding a new defence lawyer had again fallen upon him. He grumbled about having to manage everything — from coordinating with government lawyers and defence advocates to talking to cops who were reinvestigating the riot cases. He further said that out of a total of 74 riot-related cases in Mehsana, only two had resulted in conviction.

"In one case, I got the acquittal after I made an appeal in the Sessions Court... In the second case, the appeal has been made before the High Court but everyone is out on bail... the conviction was wrong." He then went on to narrate the worst cases of the killing and looting of Muslims that happened in Mehsana post-Godhra. He said one such case — the Sardarpura case — had been stayed by the Supreme Court, but since the accused were out on bail, he was not worried. He then went on to explain how after the accused in the Sardarpura riot case were granted bail by the Mehsana court, the victims had made such a big noise, that *The Times Of India* had carried a front-page story accusing him of playing a partisan role in riot-related cases.

A gleeful Trivedi boasted that even though the allegations against him were true, nothing could be proved "on paper". Everybody knew, he said, that after the riots, he had camped in every district holding meetings with government prosecutors, his own workers and police officers.

In Sabarkantha, TEHELKA met public prosecutor Bharat Bhatt, who also happens to be the VHP'S district president. Bhatt said he had been doing his best to help the accused. This public prosecutor has in fact turned broker — instead of fighting for justice, he is pushing for out-of-court settlements.

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Legal Subversion

Devil's Advocate

The state counsel before the Nanavati-Shah Commission believes it's better to cripple Muslims than to kill them



Arvind Pandya

THE COUNTRY always believed that Chief Minister Narendra Modi was the guardian deity of the murderous hordes let loose across Gujarat following the Godhra carnage. This belief had acquired the force of truth not only due to Modi's own pronouncements and to those of other members of his party, but also because of an across-the-spectrum indictment of the Modi regime by the media, human rights groups and independent factfinding teams. The Nanavati-Shah Commission, the official probe into the carnage, has been recording statements for a few years now. But in a serious indictment, Arvind Pandya, the Gujarat government's counsel, reveals that he's trying to manage the proceedings.

Pandya, the special public prosecutor appointed by the Modi government to defend it before the Nanavati-Shah Commission, too believes, like everybody else, that had it not been for Modi the Hindus could not have taken their "revenge" for the Godhra killings. Pandya is privy not only to privileged state information, he is also aware of Modi's own thoughts on the matter. Leading a battery of lawyers for the past five years to absolve Modi and his government of charges of sponsoring and backing the 2002 pogrom, Pandya told TEHELKA that during the riots Modi had given oral instructions to the police to "be with Hindus".

"A Hindu-based government was there when this incident took place, so the people were ready and the state was also ready... this was a happy coincidence," Pandya said. This reporter met Pandya twice – on June 6 and on June 8. On both occasions, Pandya emphasised that had there been a non-BJP government in power in 2002, the riots would never have happened. He said that Modi was so upset after the Godhra carnage that he would himself had dropped bombs on Juhapura — a Muslim neighbourhood in Ahmedabad — but his position as chief minister constrained him. Pandya said he believed that the mass killing of Muslims in Gujarat should be celebrated every year as "victory day". He said that crippling Muslims was better than killing them, as that would not only invite lesser punishment but a crippled Muslim would also serve as a living advertisement of what Hindus were capable of. Inflicting economic loss on Muslims was as important as killing them, Pandya asserted.

This isn't all. Even as he was defending the government before the Commission, Pandya

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was also simultaneously arguing the cases of the riot accused. He told TEHELKA that in many cases, the judges had given him their full cooperation and guidance.

“Every judge was calling me in his chamber and showing full sympathy for me... giving full cooperation to me, but keeping some distance... the judges were also guiding me as and when required... how to put up a case and on which date... because basically they are Hindus... so help from each and every class of people came forth... the people remained united and their only motive was the survival of Hinduism,” said the lawyer.

According to Pandya, it's not just the judiciary in Gujarat that has been complicit in the victimisation and persecution of Muslims. Pandya claimed even the Nanavati-Shah Commission has been compromised. He says KG Shah, who heads the Commission along with Nanavati, is sympathetic to the BJP. Pandya was also full of derision for Nanavati, who he said was only interested in money. What follows is a part of the conversation that TEHELKA had with Pandya at his residence in Ahmedabad on June 8, 2007. [Click here](#)

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‘Some Cases Were So Weak. By God’s Grace We Managed’

Transcript: DILIP TRIVEDI

A VHP general secretary, the senior advocate says he coordinated all the riot cases in Gujarat and received whole-hearted support from lawyers across the state



Dilip Trivedi

JUNE 15, 2007

Dilip Trivedi: I have coordinated all the cases in Gujarat... Being the general secretary of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, I have coordinated all the matters in all the courts, hence all the advocates gave their honorary services to me and that is why they are all very close to me...

TEHELKA: That is why Arvindbhai Pandya [the government counsel in the Nanavati-Shah Commission] kept repeating your name...

Trivedi: It is by God’s grace that a lot of advocates like Arvindbhai Pandya have kept faith in me and also respected me. In this matter, they worked the way I told them to... It’s God’s grace... I haven’t even given anything to these advocates...

TEHELKA: All of them have contributed and given their support in whatever way they could...

Trivedi: Not just that, we have also taken a lot from them other than this... They must be impressed... they have done a good job... [Two people walk in to discuss a riot-related case with Trivedi. The conversation between them is in Gujarati. The men need Trivedi’s help in engaging a lawyer who can represent a few Hindus accused of rioting. Trivedi calls up a few lawyers and discusses the case with them]

TEHELKA: Was this case about the riots?

Trivedi: Yes, it was a case about riots... the trial is going on in the Kalol court... The defence lawyer who was handling the case has undergone a major surgery. He is bed-ridden now...

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TEHELKA: So a new lawyer has to be arranged now?

Trivedi: Some other lawyer has to be arranged... No matter wherever the trial goes on, who will you meet to engage a lawyer?

TEHELKA: You. Were the accused Hindus?

Trivedi: Yes... Hindu... The thing is, I have to manage all of this... Dialogues, settlements with the public prosecutor and the defence lawyers, I coordinate all of it...

TEHELKA: How many districts do you manage?

Trivedi: The whole of Gujarat... I just have to call up these people on the phone, like this lawyer we were talking about, and he will go and meet up with them...

TEHELKA: So the defence lawyer will be arranged...

Trivedi: Yes... everything will fall in place... Whenever anyone has any problem, they call me on the phone, I think about the right man and then inform the concerned person... Meeting the DGP, and the people under him, like the DIG and the AGP, talking to them, all of that...

TEHELKA: It is your responsibility?

Trivedi: Yes we do it... get it done...by finding out who has contacts at which place... All God's grace... we have managed at all the places... otherwise the cases were so weak that sometimes we also thought... And out of the 12 cases, in three cases the conviction has been done by Muslim judges... That will stay...

•••

Trivedi: There is a lot of support from KG Shah in the Nanavati Commission... The other thing is the arrangements we have been making to defend the Hindus... For that, the BJP is making its own arrangements, the Sangh is making its own arrangements and the Parishad is making its own... This kind of division won't work out...

TEHELKA: How many cases have been registered in Mehsana?

Trivedi: A total of 182 complaints were filed in Mehsana, out of which chargesheets have been filed in 78 cases. In two cases it was filed later... Out of these 80 cases, three are pending... three or four... the other 76 are now complete...

TEHELKA: In favour of the Hindus?

Trivedi: In only two of the cases was there a conviction... In the remaining 74 cases, all the accused were acquitted... In the two cases where there was a conviction, we appealed in one and got the accused acquitted... In the second one, we have filed an appeal in the High Court... The appeal has been admitted and the accused have got bail... That conviction was also wrong... Yes in some districts they are still in jail... but... more than 3,000 Hindus were arrested... Out of these only 100-150 people haven't got bail as yet...

TEHELKA: So Mehsana was most affected by the riots that followed Godhra...

Trivedi: It turned serious at a lot of places... like Beesnagar... Beejapur tehsil...

TEHELKA: Beejapur...

Trivedi: Beejapur... There is a village there called Sardarpur... In Sardarpur, where the houses of the Muslims were set on fire, 14 people were accused... This was a big case... The Supreme Court has imposed a stay on it... Now I am not worried because all the accused in the case have got bail...

TEHELKA: Nothing to worry now...

Trivedi: The other one is an incident in Beesnagar... It is known by the name of Vistaar... there is an office in Beesnagar tehsil...it's known by the name of Deepdarwaza...

TEHELKA: Deepdarwaza, yes...

TRIVEDI: Deepdarwaza...

TEHELKA: Arvindbhai told me about it... Deepdarwaza...

Trivedi: In that case too, the Supreme Court ordered a stay...

TEHELKA: How many Muslims were killed there?

Trivedi: Not many were killed there...

TEHELKA: Ok... Most of the harm was done to the property...

TRIVEDI: Yes, more harm was done to the property... Actually not many dead bodies were found there... they were found at different places because the place that was set ablaze was near a pond... there are two-three more cases, there too all the accused were acquitted... Then there is one Kadi tehsil... There is a village there called Medhaagraj... The incident that took place there was also a big one... In the incident in Kadi city, we again got the acquittal... Whatever one-two convictions that were made were in Ujjha tehsil...

TEHELKA: Where?

Trivedi: Ujjha... Since there is a tehsil office there, the damage was done only to property...

TEHELKA: Still there was a conviction?

Trivedi: Yes, 32 people were convicted in it...

TEHELKA: Why?

Trivedi: There was a mob...

TEHELKA: Weren't you the government pleader in the case?

Trivedi: No...

TEHELKA: You weren't there in that case?

Trivedi: The judge convicted them because of a different reason...

TEHELKA: Was he a Hindu judge...

Trivedi: Yes, he was a Hindu judge... But the reason why he handed out convictions was something else...

TEHELKA: Some local politics...

Trivedi: Not politics... He had some issue with the High Court... By doing this he wanted to show that he was unbiased... In all there were 95 accused in the case... 62 were acquitted and 32 were convicted... Of those we have already filed an appeal in 32 cases, there will be an acquittal in them too...

TEHELKA: Have they been acquitted?

Trivedi: No, all of them have have been bailed out because they were sentenced for only three years...

Trivedi: We got bail that day itself from there... Then one has to appeal in the High Court to get it... we got that too... It keeps happening...

TEHELKA: Who is the public prosecutor in Godhra?

Trivedi: Piyush Gandhi... He is also from the VHP only...

TEHELKA: Cases were reopened in Mehsana also...

Trivedi: I told you two cases were reopened...

TEHELKA: Two cases...

Trivedi: They also have to give some reply to the Supreme Court... they have to show that they have done something... so in every district they show something or the other...

TEHELKA: Which were the twocases reopened in Mehsana

Trivedi: For loot and arson etc... in Randhikpur, since the beginning the show was being run by the VHP... be they workers from the Sangh, the VHP or the BJP or from the Hindu samaj... we worry about all of them... we still worry about them... We provided food for all those who were lodged in Sabarmati jail... we ran a full kitchen

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'I Never Took Money From The Accused'

Transcript: BHARAT BHATT

Public prosecutor Bharat Bhatt thinks it is his sacred duty to shield Hindus, even if he is arguing against them in court



Bharat Bhatt

JUNE 17, 2007

Bhatt: See... initially a certain environment was built up... It was an environment the judiciary and the police department were all keen about. They helped because they thought they should, because they were Hindus themselves and because they are the kind who will go with the music... It is only when the music stops, that they get to know that they are tired... In such a situation only that worker can be strong who is...

TEHELKA: Who is totally committed...

Bhatt: Who is committed... People that we get in by force lose their enthusiasm. I gave a book to two judges today... The jihad Pravinbhai [Togadia] had written about...

TEHELKA: I have it...

Bhatt: You have it?... see, their [Muslims'] *dharmjunoos* [religious fervour] is very high... In comparison, ours is low...

TEHELKA: So how many cases have been registered against the Hindus in the district?

Bhatt: Fourteen hundred cases have been registered in the entire district...

TEHELKA: And in Modasa?

Bhatt: In Modasa, the total number of cases are 1,400... out of which 600, or around 550, were committed in the beginning itself... The rest were re-opened... When they were re-opened, people were again disturbed... Due to the stand the Supreme Court has taken now, the people are scared. These judges in the lower court aren't courageous enough... not daring...

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TEHELKA: Did they show some courage in the beginning?

Bhatt: They did in the beginning... Actually right now, the ones in the upper courts have ordered the retrial of the Baroda case...

TEHELKA: Best Bakery...

Bhatt: The Best Bakery one... after that, the morale of new people went down...

TEHELKA: But there is still some support from people...

Bhatt: We are trying to fulfil our responsibility... whatever matters I have dealt with here, I was very hard with the Muslims... They kept changing their statements... gave additional statements... I said these don't have evidentiary value... But these judges from the lower court... they also do wrong... they are scared of their seniors... It's like a *policewala* who may be corrupt but he will still be scared of his senior officers because his SP can suspend him...

TEHELKA: So what is the attitude of the police now?

Bhatt: Attitude of the police?

TEHELKA: In the cases that have reopened.

Bhatt: See, they are also a little scared for their jobs but they don't go against us... They help us... listen to us... agree with us... They also know that the Muslims are trying to get as much compensation money as they can out of us... Recently they took around six and a half lakhs from us... to settle this...

TEHELKA: Which case?

Bhatt: A riot case only... Section 436.

TEHELKA: Was it in Modasa?

Bhatt: He was asking for Rs 20 lakh... It was then settled for 10 lakh...

TEHELKA: Were they convicted then?

Bhatt: No... Then too these people resolved it by paying money... Do you get it? If you were told that you wouldn't have any problems, would you pay?...

TEHELKA: No way

Bhatt: But still even you would be scared about whether you'd be acquitted or not... Moreover, we also have those psychological and fictitious fears... And then we also have traitors... in our community... out of those 25 accused, three turned traitors the moment people started telling them to get the case resolved or they would be convicted...

TEHELKA: How was the money raised?

Bhatt: These people themselves contributed...

TEHELKA: The accused?

Bhatt: The accused contributed... Before this, when I used to handle all the cases in the district, I never used to take any money from the accused. I used to hold meetings in the villages of the accused and tell the rich people there that there were people in Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana and UP who had property worth crores of rupees but had lost everything once madarsas opened nearby. What is the point of having money if you can't even put it to use for the welfare of your own community. While some gave Rs 5,000, others gave 10,000, sometimes even a lakh, this is how we collected five seven lakhs... which is what it took to settle the case since it was a daylight murder and he had used his sword to cut the man to pieces... Five people did it but they [the victims] named some decent people instead... for instance, the medical store owner...

TEHELKA: In Modasa?

Bhatt: No, in Biloda... I got it settled for Rs 4,60,000, out of which four lakh was collected by me... from the people...

TEHELKA: This happened in the beginning?

Bhatt: In the beginning...

TEHELKA: So what are the problems in the cases that have reopened recently?

Bhatt: In cases that have recently reopened, the problem is that we don't have lawyers who can make sacrifices, and to get these kind of lawyers one has to spend money...

TEHELKA: Don't you handle these cases... Aren't you a public prosecutor?

Bhatt: I am a public prosecutor, but they will need a defence lawyer...

TEHELKA: But can't they get any help from your side?

Bhatt: They get all kinds of help from me... Whenever I feel that there is a need to scold... I tell them you live in the village... settle the issue and keep each other's honour intact, you have all your property there... live peacefully, whatever had to happen has happened... the tongue and the teeth are both inside the mouth. Even if the teeth cut the tongue, we don't break the teeth... Similarly, if you want to live in this village where your fathers and grandfathers have lived... and anyway, you won't leave this village and go to Pakistan... forgive him, he has committed a mistake... He will say sorry... you also say sorry... keep each other's honour...

TEHELKA: So some people agree to what you suggest?

Bhatt: They agree...

TEHELKA: Do they take money to agree?

Bhatt: Some agree after taking money but some also agree on their own...

TEHELKA: So how many cases have been settled like this?

Bhatt: How?

TEHELKA: The ones in which the Muslims agreed?

Bhatt: In almost 25 percent of the cases they agreed...

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TEHELKA: Will there be a problem in the other cases?

Bhatt: As far as the support of the judges is concerned, they are too scared... If the statement is not there... then what will they do? Right now, most of the sensitive cases that had undergone trial in Sabarkantha have been reopened. It's only in this district where the maximum number of cases have reopened...

TEHELKA: In Sabarkantha?

Bhatt: The Joint District Session Judge here is a Muslim... the District Judge in Himmatnagar is also a Muslim... There are three places here... the Sessions Court that opened recently in Iddar also has a Muslim judge. That is why the maximum number of cases that have been reopened against Hindus are in this area...

TEHELKA: In Iddar?

Bhatt: Yes, Iddar... a lot of cases have been reopened there... the cases were of tribals... I have tried to convince them a lot... I am telling you this so that you also know... when these people used to come, I used to arrange for their food... I used to tell them that they could stay here, their relatives who were in jail would be released the next day... make them stay at the office of the Parishad... send *dal baati* for them twice a day from my account to the Parishad office... I am here, don't worry. This is how I have tried to convince the tribals a number of times...

TEHELKA: Then they will get agitated...

Bhatt: Then they will get agitated and the whole belt is such that... if you get time... although we can't cover it in 15-20 minutes... but we could go tonight to take a round of Khedbrahma...

TEHELKA: Khedbrahma...

Bhatt: Yes... then I also have my own office in Himmatnagar... the testimony for all the cases that took place there are lying in that office... Chargesheets must be there too... We can have a look at it... and this is a belt which is suffering from the same problem as Assam, Nagaland and Kohima... where everyone will convert to Christianity if Hindus like us don't pay attention...

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Bhatt: Nine of our men were in jail but now they are out... Every 15-20 days we used to send 20-22 kilos of ration to their homes... Though we did not burst crackers at our own place on Diwali, we sent nine cartons of crackers to their place... sweets too... clothes for everyone...

for the kids... for the parents... A vehicle was sent every 15-20 days... one person used to give us the vehicle for free... along with the diesel... the other one used to give seven packets of jaggery, 500 gm each... one person gave wheat... like this we used to collect stuff from around 10-15 people and every 22 days we would fill the vehicle and deliver the rations in their area...

TEHELKA: To the adivasis?

Bhatt: To the adivasis... because most of the men were in jail, the women had no resources to arrange for food...

TEHELKA: For how many years now have you been a public prosecutor?

Bhatt: I have been a public prosecutor since December 2003, so you can say from 2004... When I came here as public prosecutor, I received Rs 400 per day... Although I get my own car everyday... It runs on LPG... My expenditure is Rs 200 per day... So I end up earning only 200 rupees each day, but still I come for morality's sake, for our work... for the work of Hindus...

TEHELKA: Are you a public prosecutor in these cases?

Bhatt: Yes, in all of them... I tell all the Hindus not to smile when they see me... not to say a word to me.. I tell them that I will scold them if they do... whatever I have to do I will do but it will be for them only... I get all these matters solved... I have already solved two-three murder cases like this before...

TEHELKA: Were the people acquitted in those cases?

Bhatt: They were acquitted... sometimes I deceive them... I scare them but later show my affections too...

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TEHELKA: How many public prosecutors are there in Sabarkantha?

Bhatt: There are at least 6-7 of them in Sabarkantha...

TEHELKA: So how many of them are with Hindus?

Bhatt: All of them are with us... since the ruling party makes the appointments, all of them are with us... but they are with us only for name's sake... they don't show much interest... like when they see you they say, come, let's do some work...

TEHELKA: So how many people are actually showing some interest in this work?

Bhatt: There used to be one Hirendrabhai Trivedi, he doesn't come now, he has resigned... he worked with a lot of interest...

TEHELKA: For the Hindu society?

Bhatt: For the Hindu society... He was the district chief of the Parishad... I was the chairman... then there is one Hirenbhai... there is one lawyer called JD Jala who has a private practice. I am the one who collected all these people to make this group...

Nov 03, 2007

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Transcript: ARVIND PANDYA

Gujarat Advocate General Arvind Pandya claims the accused have nothing to fear from the Nanavati-Shah Commission



Arvind Pandya

JUNE 8, 2007

TEHELKA: Who was at the forefront during the riots?

Pandya: It will be wrong to say some were there and some were not... Practically everybody who went to the field was from the Bajrang Dal and the VHP...

TEHELKA: Did Jaideepbhai go to the field?

Pandya: Jaideepbhai had also gone... Which leaders went where, who had a role, who had a suspected role — we have before the Commission all these details, all the mobile numbers, who went where... We have the locations...

TEHELKA: Yes, some controversy also took place...

Pandya: It's still on... And I know whose mobile numbers were there... who talked to whom, from which location... I have the papers...

TEHELKA: So can there be some problem for the Hindus because of that... for Jaideepbhai etc...

Pandya: *Arrey bhai*, I am the one who has to fight the case... don't worry... don't worry about this, there will be no problem here. If there will be a problem I'll solve it... I have spent all these years for whom... for my own blood

TEHELKA: Can the commission's report go against the Hindus?

Pandya: *Nahi, nahi*... it can create some problems for the police... it can go against them... see, the judges who have been selected are from the Congress...

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Harinder Baweja

REPORTER'S DIARY:

VOYAGER
BETWEEN
TWO WORLDS
Ashish Khetan

EARLIER IN TEHELKA

TEHELKA: Yes, Nanavati... and Shah

Pandya: That's the only problem... our leaders at the time got into a controversy in a hurry... what they thought was that since Nanavati was involved in the Sikh riots... that if they use a Congress judge there will be no controversy...

TEHELKA: So is Nanavati absolutely against you people?

Pandya: Nanavati is a clever man... He wants money... Of the two judges, KG Shah is intelligent... woh apne wala hai [he is our man]... he is sympathetic to us... Nanavati is after money...

TEHELKA: You are saying he wants to make money...

Pandya: It is an internal matter...

TEHELKA: The Nanavati-Shah Commission can go against Hindus....

Pandya: They run the Commission for years... he wants money, nothing else... He is a Congressman...

TEHELKA: And Shah?

Pandya: *Nahi Shah to apnay hain* [No, Shah is one of our own]... but Nanavati is a retired Supreme Court judge and Shah is a retired High Court judge...

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Pandya: I have been the government's special AG [Advocate General] in these riots... I kept note of just two things... I told the VHP that none of you have to come to the Commission ever... you keep in touch with me, that's all... I told the BJP too to keep in touch with me, that's all... I have also told the Sangh that whenever I hold camps at various places don't come there with a big strength and don't bring a known face. You keep in touch with me on phone... If I'll need anything, you'll just receive a call, not more... I also went to all the places where the camps were held. I also held my own camps. I went to the camps to win the local people's favour... how it should be done, what is to be done.

TEHELKA: It would have created problems otherwise...

Pandya: The style of working is different... I am the one who has created this whole mood of the Commission... that is why all these lectures the Muslims give to their activists... It's written in many lectures, some have also been recorded by the IB [Intelligence Bureau] that if a Hindu or a Hindu leader gets involved then it is dangerous, but if Arvind Pandya gets involved it is 2,000 times dangerous...

TEHELKA: Has there been any inquiry against you?

Pandya: One was TEHELKA-related... I had threatened the police officer, RB Sreekumar... that leaked out and it ran on TV all day... but that was the last tehelka...

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