

the data to make more informed decisions and to measure the agencies' progress in reducing hazardous fuels. The departments of Agriculture and the Interior generally agreed with our recommendations. However, they were concerned that we had not given them enough credit for several actions taken or underway related to enhancing inter-agency leadership; establishing a framework to ensure that funds appropriated to reduce hazardous fuels are spent in an efficient, effective, and timely manner; and undertaking adequate research and data collection efforts. Where appropriate, we have included reference to these activities.

TRAIN ATTACK IN INDIA
REACTION TO HINDU REPRESSION

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 12, 2002

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, we were all disturbed to read about the attack on a train full of Hindus in the village of Godhra in India. It is always disturbing to see this kind of sectarian violence.

The Gujarat Samachar reported that the train was carrying high-level activists of the militant, pro-Nazi Vishwa Hindu Parishad, a branch of the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS), which is also the parent organization of the ruling BJP. They were taunting the villagers with slogans about building a Hindu temple on the site of the most revered mosque in India, which was destroyed by the BJP some years ago.

In another village, Daahod, they got tea and snacks and did not pay for them. They knocked over a vendor's stall, according to the article, and deliberately picked a fight with a man who was helping the vendor, beating him, pulling his beard and committing other acts to humiliate him. His 16-year-old daughter tried to stop them from harming her father. They grabbed her and took her on the train, according to the article. After a crowd gathered to try to rescue her from the VHP, they slammed the windows shut with the girl inside the train. Out of their frustration and anger over this action, some villagers began to burn the train.

No one condones the killing of these Hindus, even if they were militants, but I hope none of my colleagues justifies the killing of Muslims that has erupted in response while the police have stood by and let it happen. The militant Hindu nationalists want to make a Hindu society in India, and they can justify actions like these in the name of that cause, but there is no justification.

If this is how democracy and secularism are practiced in India, then it should not receive any American aid or trade. We should also acknowledge that the only way to end this kind of violence is to support independence for all the peoples and nations of South Asia. It is time for India to begin acting like a democracy and allow the peoples living under their rule to

enjoy self-determination. It is time for a plebiscite on independence.

[From Gujarat Samachar, Mar. 3, 2002]

TRUTH ABOUT THE TRAIN INCIDENT

(By Anil Soni and Neelam Soni)

The tragic incident of Sabarmati Express that occurred today at 7:30 am at about 1 km away from Godhra railway station has thrown a question mark to those people who claim to be secular or liberal. Many aspects & facts have been ignored & which I would like to bring to your notice.

Compartment (Bogey) no S-6 & two other compartment of the Sabarmati Express was carrying the kar sevaks of the V.H.P. (Vishwa Hindu Parishad). And it was due to these kar sevaks from bogey no S-6 that the incident occurred.

The actual story didn't start from Godhra as being told everywhere but it started from a place from Daahod, a place that comes 70-75 km before Godhra railway station. At about 5:30-6:00 a.m. the train reached Daahod railway station. These kar sevaks, after having tea & snacks at the railway stall, broke down the stall after having some argument with the stall owner and they processed back to the departing train. The stall owner then field on N C against kar sevaks at the local police station about the above incident.

Then about 7.00-7.15 am the train reached Godhra railway station. All the kar sevaks came out from their reserved compartments and started to have tea and snacks, at the small tea stall on the platform, which was being run by an old bearded man from the minority community. There was a servant helping this old man in the stall.

The kar sevaks on purpose argued with this old man and then bate him up & pulled his beard. This was all planned to humiliate the old man since he was from the minority community. These kar sevaks kept repeating the slogan, "Mandir Ka Nirmaann Karo, Babuer Ki Aulad to Baahar Kar". (Start building the Mandir and throw the son of Babur i.e. the Muslims out of the country.)

Hearing the chaos, the daughter (16) of the old man who was also present at the station came forward & tried to save her father from kar sevaks. She kept pleading & begging to them to stop beating her father and leave him alone. But instead of listening to her woes, the kar sevaks lifted the young girl and took her inside their compartment (S-6) and closed the compartment door shut. Their intention behind this act is best known to them.

The train started to move out of the platform of Godhra railway station. The old man kept banging on the compartment doors and pleaded to leave his daughter. Just before the train could move out completely from the platform, two stall vendors jumped into the last bogey that comes from the guards cabin. And with the intention of saving the girl they pulled the chain and stopped the train. By the time the train halted completely, it was 1 km away from the railway station.

These two men then came to the bogey in which the girl was and started to band at the door and requested the kar sevaks to leave the girl alone. Hearing all these chaos, people vicinity near to the tracks started to gather towards the train. The boys and the mob (that also included women) that had

now gathered near the compartment requested the kar sevaks to return the girl back. But instead of returning the girl, they started closing their windows. The infuriated the mob and they retaliated by pelting stones at the compartment.

The compartment-adjointing compartment S-6 on both sides contained kar sevaks of the V.H.P. These kar sevaks were carrying banners that had long bamboo stick attached to them. These kar sevaks got down and started attacking with bamboo sticks on the mob gathered to save the girl.

These was like adding insult to injury for the crowd gathered and their anger was now uncontrollable. The crowd started to bring diesel and petrol from trucks and rickshaws standing at the garages Signal Fadia (a place in Godhra) and burnt down the compartment. They don't bring the fuel from any petrol pump as being reported everywhere nor was this act of burning pre-planned as being mentioned by many people but it happened all of a sudden out of sheer frustration and anger.

After hearing about this incident, members of V.H.P. (Vishwa Hindu Parishad) living in that area started burning down the garages in Signal Fadia, they also burnt down Baddshah Masjid, (Mosque), at Shehra Bhagaad (small area in Godhra). Reliable resources have reported all these information and facts to their information and me cannot be doubted. I would also mention my sources namely Mr. Anil Soni and Neelam Soni (reporter of Gujarat Samachar, also members of P.T.I. & A.N.I.) have worked hard to dig the true facts and they duly deserve words of appraisal for their hard work. Mr. Soni's mobile number: 0-9825038152. Resident number 02672 (code) 43153, office number: 43152, fax number: 45999.

Due to no proper substantial and circumstantial evidence and the late arrival of the Police at the scene of crime frustrated the Police. Which resulted in harassment and arrests in innocent local people living in Godhra. Furthermore the police started blaming the Mayor of Godhra, Mr. Ahmed Hussain Kalota for incident. Mr. Kalota who is the member of the Indian National Congress is also a lawyer. This blaming on Congressmen was also done to humiliate, defame and demoralize the Congress. The V.H.P.'s plan is to weaken the country by planning internal conflicts between communities and bring a backwardness of 100 years in the country. Sorry to say but they are carrying out their plans successfully without the tear of being stopped by anyone. No one but only the innocents will have to bear the consequences of their plans.

It is our humble request and prayers to all the members of Parliament along with the Prime Minister, and the entire media circle to try and stop the sparks of a fire to gulp down the whole county in flames to take some auction against the kar sevaks of the V.H.P (Vishwa Hindu Parishad) before they get out of hand and stop harassing the innocents and catch the real miscreants and culprits.

We lay our request in front of you with folded hands and hearts filled with theirs for the death of innocents and anger for the wrongdoers. We hope our request and efforts will not deafened or blind-eyed.