

Annexure 1

SOME TESTIMONIES

These are some testimonies that we gathered in the course of the last two and a half months. There are many more. These testimonies were selected to give an idea of the events and their effects on people, over different phases of the disturbances.

1. Zubeidabibi Chandmian Shiekh (Hathikhana, Genda Faliya, Baroda) I am a married woman, age 45 years.

On 27/04/2002, Saturday, between 1.00 to 2.00 pm, D staff people had knocked on our doors and we had got frightened. As there was a delay in opening the door, it was broken down. My husband and I and our children were having lunch. As soon as they came they put their guns to my chest. My children got frightened. The children were also threatened with the guns. Raju Kaliya and his D Staff men several beat my brother-in-law, Rehmanmian Azammian Sheikh. After beating him inside the house, he was also taken to the street and again beaten and was abused verbally, using extremely dirty words. Women and children were also hit with the butts of their guns. We were dumbfounded. We had not even thought in our dreams that the D staff personnel sent for our security would perpetrate such inhuman treatment upon us. Wrongful and inhuman treatment has been meted out to us and to others in our *mohalla*. This has stunned our community. Therefore we request you, sir, to take necessary legal action and take strong steps.

2. Mumtazbibi Yasinmian Sheikh (Hathikhana Genda Faliya, Baroda) Age 50 years. I am married.

On 27/4/02 Saturday between 1-2 pm "D staff" persons had come with sticks, shouting abusive words. We had sat down for lunch. Shouting that the police had come, we fled to our upper room and there we were having lunch. The door downstairs was only closed. They barged into the house, opened the fridge, took two pouches of milk meant for my ailing grand daughter, the fruit kept for juice was also eaten. They drank from the water bottles and threw out the bottles. Not seeing us there, the staff personnel left. They stoned the apartment above ours. We were already troubled with our grand daughter's illness, on top of that the D Staff wrongfully treated us. My daughter-in-law who is pregnant was told, "Don't talk or else you will be shot down". Thus they have wrongfully threatened and harassed women and children. We wish to request you to take legal action and strong measures against Raju Kaliyo and his staff.

3. Afsanabanu Noor Mohamad Malek (Mahavat Falia, Hathikhana, Baroda) I used to live in Mahvat Falia. I am 20 years old, married and expecting a child.

On Saturday, 27th April at around 2.00 pm, in the afternoon, the police from D- staff barged into the house, used bad language and slapped me on the face. They use *lathis* to beat me up. I asked them not to beat me up as I had not done anything and was innocent. I told them I was pregnant. They did not respond to my pleas. They broke open the safe and robbed my anklets. They asked me where the revolver was. I replied that I had no revolver. But they carried on beating me till I was near unconscious.

4. Salmabibi Abid Sheikh (Hathikhana Gendafaliya, Vadodara) My age is approximately 38 years. I am married.

On Saturday, 27/04/2002, between 1.00 pm and 2.00 pm, persons of the 'D Staff' – it was Raju and his staff – came hurling *lathis*. We got scared and closed our doors. These people did not even knock our doors. They started shouting, "Break their doors". When they started to break my door, I called 'saab, wait, I am opening the door'. So saying I opened the door. There was a chain on the door of the toilet, seeing which they felt that someone was hiding inside. They put the rifle on my throat and said that if they found anyone inside, they would shoot me. They struck me twice with *lathis*. They put the rifles on my children and threatened them – "Shut up or we will kill you". My small children got so frightened that they developed a temperature. These were Raju Kaliyo and his staff. They hurled abusive language on us women and children. They perpetrated atrocities on us. It is our humble request that legal steps be taken against the D staff people.

5. Rehana Junaid Mansuri, 20 years. (9 months pregnant). Suleimani Chawl, Ajwa Road.

On 1.5.02, Wednesday night when police entered our area from a distance we shut our doors in fear and sat inside our house. Then policemen came in drunk and barged on our doors. When the guns were being barged on the door, I got up to open the doors and the police's gun's backside hit me on my chest. They also hit on my thighs, under my knees. There are bruises on my chest. It is five days since my delivery. After the delivery, there is bleeding from my breasts instead of milk. Even now it has not stopped coming.

6. Noorjahanben Ismailbhai Ghanchi (GIDC, Makarpura)

Since 2.12.2000, I have been working in Kiran More Helmet Factory, No. 504 GIDC Makarpura. There were 8 women working in my department – mazgaar or assembly department. All others were Hindu. On Feb. 28, the *bandh* was announced. I was told to come back after 15-20 days when things cool down. When curfew opened, I went and signed and was told by Santoshbhai, Supervisor said come back later. I was at Tandajja Aashiana Camp for a month. On April 24, Santoshbhai told me we have cancelled your card. I have not been back since. The seth's name is Sameerbhai.

I was getting Rs. 850/- pm and an incentive/bonus of Rs. 100/- if I was present for a full month.

My sewing machine, a source of supplementary income was burnt down with all my other belongings. I have no source of income now. We received Rs. 3000/- from Narmada Bhavan. My complaint was of Rs. 85,000, they noted down Rs. 20,000 and gave us only Rs. 3000/-.

7. Sabinabano Magboolhusain (Panigate – Raja Rani Talao.)

On Saturday, 27.4.02, there was an attack on our area. They came from Bhoiwada and Bawchawad. They entered my house from behind and put acid bottles and 'Kakdas'. I have three daughters. They looted all the dowry that had been kept for my daughter. I do not know the people who came.

Police fired from Panigate. The bullet hit my goat, instead of me and it died. Kept the goat's body for three days. Could not go to bury it and finally threw in the lake. The backside of the house is completely burnt. Front is OK. When I went to protest about my goat, the policeman beat me on my legs and my face. There is swelling now also.

I work in households and run my house on that income. My husband works in Sardar Estate in a spectacle glass factory which also has been burnt and so he is without work.

Now we are staying in Charottar Jamatkhana.

8. Kaushal Bano Mansuri (Kagda Chawl, Bawamanpura) She is 9 months pregnant

On Muharram at 7.30pm from Bhoite wada the stoning started. In Bahucharwad people started running in panic. Police arrived from the police chowki which was nearby. They didn't go to Bhoite wada. They came here. They came here to look for the men whom they thought that the women were protecting. They entered into houses, looked under the beds, pulled out the women, beat them with their *lathis* and *dandas*. They gave vulgar *gaalis*. Out of the 6, 4 were drunk. Kanani of DCP was there. Nandu, a PI from Bahucharwad was also there.

This is a very poor area. Most of the people here are vegetable vendors and others are daily wage earners.

I was putting my child to sleep at 9.00 pm on March 23rd. Suddenly, I found lots of policemen in my house. They didn't find our men at home and started giving us *ghalis*. Hit me with *Dandas*. They hit me on my hand, on my stomach and when they saw I was pregnant, they hit me in my *jung*. Only today I have started moving out. They were all saying Kanani, Kanani. They were all his staff. I went into the *dargah* and hid there. I told them that I was *pet-se*. They still say that they haven't hit me. My *saas* also said that I was pregnant. They said, 'we have to kill it before it happens'.

9. Ferozabibi Abdul Sattar Mansuri, 45 years, (Chamboosa Baba Dargah Tekra, Raja Rani Talao)

Bhois came and attacked us on April 28 at 6.30 p.m.. I was at home with my daughters. Policemen, around 10, came in. They smashed my door, broke it open, entered inside. They hit me and my daughters on the knees with a stick. One of my daughters, Tahirabano is 4 months pregnant, they hit her in the stomach with the rifle. Nazima, my other daughter was also hit on the knees. She cried out in pain. They were in the house for 15-20 minutes. We told them, 'Go where the attacks are taking place'. They said, 'Why, do you want to go throw stones?' They wrecked the Dargah and the meter and electric wires with their rifles' butts. They said, 'Let them (the Bhois) do whatever they are doing. We will deal with you.' They used extremely abusive words. I went to register my complaint at the Panigate Police Station but they refused to register it.

10. Neema Ahmed Gulam Kuvawala (Resident of Baranpura)

On Feb. 28 when all these attacks were happening, the mobs were shouting '*Hai re miyan, hai, hai*' and throwing stones. They would throw stones but stop when the police came and then start all over again. These were people from our area itself. We called out to some boys and told them to stop or we would inform the police. They came and told us "do not give all our names. We will tell you whom to name. We will not do anything to you because you are like family to us. If you want you can come and stay at our house". We were assured and so just sat inside the house and even did not bother all through the night.

The next morning we called out to a vegetable vendor, because we had nothing at home, but these people did not allow him to come to our house, warned him against coming to our house. We have a police point right next to our house. That day was a Friday (March 1) when we have our *namaaz* in the afternoon. While the *namaaz* was going on, the mob went to burn a bakery near our house. The police told us of this. According to the police when they tried to stop them, they were also attacked and in fact some of them got injured also. After this the police were thrown out from there. Then the mob entered the bakery with acid, petrol, truck tires and torches and set the whole place on fire.

Next to our house is a coal depot. In the evening the mob with people from the area and outside, came back. They wanted to burn the depot. Our house has one older part at the back and a newer part in the front. It is made with tin sheets and is very strong and unbreakable from the front. The only way to enter it was from the back through the coal depot next to our house. They came from the back through the house belonging to Chandrakant Patni and threw petrol and acid bottles inside the coal depot. The old part of our house, which is made of wood is very old. We have reconstructed the front part of the house and had left the old remain as it is.

When they lit the depot, it caught fire because of the acid and the petrol and the wood present there. When we went to put off the fire, they threw stones at us and did not allow us to go near it. They were also verbally abusing us all the time thus making it very difficult to do anything. As a result both the coal depot and the house caught fire and got completely burnt. Now we are left with nothing. We had everything, TV, fridge, computer. Now we have nothing.

The people in the mob gave threats to my father that they would kill him. They said that, "You did not leave when the police came to take you, now you sit and watch your house burn and then we shall kill you." My father said that, "I am anyway totally finished. What is left for me to live? You can kill me."

We were requesting the police and the fire brigade to save us from getting burnt. But they did not help. After the *namaj* I had been calling the fire station all the time but nobody came. They used to switch off the phone after every minute. The person who was at the fire station was Prafulbhai who we kept speaking to. So the fire brigade never came in there. Later one person from there told us that the P.I. from Wadi police station was not letting them enter. We left that place after 9:30 pm on March 1 but till then no one came. When we went to that area on the next Friday (on March 8 when the curfew was lifted), the fire was still burning. We called the fire brigade and then two vans came and put it off. The next Friday when we went again, we saw that the place where we kept our mattresses in the house was also still burning. So we called the fire station again.

There was a police point near our house sine the 1969 riots and one of the SRP persons there on that day was S. K. Pandey. The PIs who came from Wadi police station, tried to fire in the air and burst tear gas bombs to disperse the mob. But finally at 9:30 pm, they gave us police protection and brought us to Madar gate.

Our house and shops have, however, been totally looted and gutted. There were three rounds of attack. We have a cycle shop, two dress material shops. All of these had their shutters broken, their materials looted and then burnt down. We are a large joint family and have had a lot of material losses. None of us have been hurt. My mother and father both have burnt hair but there is no other injury.

My brother was, however, threatened to be killed. On the day there was a Gujarat *bandh*, my brother was going for his afternoon *namaj* when he saw three of his friends – Vijay, Akhtar and Deepak Soni talking amongst themselves that they would finish him when he came back. Vijay was standing with weapons and Deepak was also there. We heard this and four of us were also waiting to watch out and call out to my brother. Two of us were at the window and two downstairs. But my brother only came with the police and so they could not do anything. **All three of them were friends of my brother and all had been part of a function on January 26 on communal harmony !**

11. Wahida (w/o Abid Ibrahimhai Delawala deceased in police firing on the night of April 29-30 in Tai Wada).

Wahida, age 19 years, occupation housewife, permanent resident of Taiwada. I live here with my husband and one year old daughter Simran. My husband worked as a skilled labourer in a steel cupboard factory.

On 29/4/02 at about 10 p.m. my husband left the house after dinner and joined some other men on Hanifa apa's 'otla' (verandah) who were keeping vigil as our area is continuously threatened by the neighbouring Hindu locality near the Neelkanth Mahadev Mandir. He asked me to go and sleep in my *nani's* house along with the baby as I was alone. At about 1.30 a.m. some people came to call me saying that my husband was shot. By the police. I rushed to the spot with my father. I saw that my husband was shot in the head. The police who had shot my husband had fled from the spot. There was a large crowd where my husband was lying. Close to him Noor bhai was also shot and some people were standing around him as well. When I reached there my husband was crying out for water. However within a few minutes two jeeps of police (DCB) arrived on the scene and asked the crowd to disperse or else they would shoot us. I pleaded with them to allow me to give water to my husband but they pushed us aside with rifle butts. Then they burst tear gas shells near the two people who were shot. The police said "*patti gayu*" (its all over) and began dragging the bodies as if they were dead dogs. Then someone offered a handcart and they took the bodies away. When I inquired from people near Hanifa apa's house as to what had happened they told me that the men were seated in the darkness. Some policemen stealthily crept towards them from the side of the *masjid* and shouted run or we will shoot. My husband was shot as he was running. Some people recognised one Shri Parmar PSI in the shooting party.

After the post mortem the bodies were returned to us but none of the other possessions on their person were handed over. Abid had the keys of the factory where he was working and the scooter keys of his employer's scooter. He also had a lot of money on his person as he kept all our savings in his pocket for fear we might have to run away any time. I don't know exactly how much money he had but he would give me Rs. 20 everyday to buy milk for the baby and for household expenses. At present I don't have a single penny. My sisters help me but this cannot continue as they are very poor. My family is also very poor. My parents in law are dead. We were a nuclear family. I often worry how will I pay the electricity bills, for gas etc. Will I ever get back my savings and my husband's clothes? How will I support myself and my one year old baby.

12. Zubeda behn, Taiwada, w/o Noorbhai Yaroobhai Carvani (deceased in the incident described above)

(age 35 years, Occupation domestic servant. Permanent resident of Taiwada)

I live here with my husband and four children Jabir age 15, Farheen age 13, Akil age 10, mentally handicapped, and Julubia age 8. And my husband's extended family. My husband was self-employed. He was an automobile mechanic

On 29/4/02 only women were in the house. The men have been staying out due to fear as the police have raided our house before. At about 1.00 a.m. we heard that Abid had been shot. A few minutes later I got news that my husband has also been killed. I rushed to the spot with my sister. He was shot below the ear. I felt very dizzy when I saw him so some women took me away. There were police around my husband's body. They were preventing us from going near. They were abusing the women in very filthy language. Meherunissa, my sister was pleading with the police but the police pushed her saying "if you try to go close we will shoot you" and he fired one shot which hit the wall of Noorbhai Pulaowala. My son Jabir contacted the local municipal corporator Mr. Bafati but even he could not help us. They dragged away my husband's body from the legs, they had no respect for a dead human being.

13. Badrunissa Ismailbhai (Suleimani Chawl)

On 30/4/02. at about 9.30 p.m. a *sutli* bomb was thrown in the lane behind my house. My neighbour Idris, a 17 year old boy picked up the bomb and tried to throw it away from the houses but it burst in his hands and his entire palm was blown off. We informed the police. The police accused us of trying to throw the bomb and under that pretext began combing operations. That day they arrested 22 boys. Four of them were released because their exams were going on. They also began search operations, forcibly entering homes, vandalising property, breaking glasses, electricity meters, abusing and assaulting women particularly in houses where they could not find the men. They brutally beat up the boys as they arrested them and continued to assault them even in the jeep. Our boys were screaming like lambs being taken to the slaughter.

14. Shahnaz Banoo (Suleimani Chawl), age 25 years.

I have come to my mother's house for my delivery. I have brought along my four small children. On 30/4/02 the police forcibly entered my house. The children and four women, Wahida, Nasreen Banoo, Shameem Banoo and myself were in the house. The police abused us in very filthy language and hit Wahida with a *lathi* on her hand and Shameem later asking for our men. We said we did not know. They threatened to rape us and sexually violate us. They kicked my 4-year-old son Aftab and pointed a gun towards him. At that point all four of tried to protect the boy. They beat us mercilessly with *lathis* and rifle butts. Due to the beating I delivered prematurely. Our hands and legs are still swollen. (they show their injuries). We do not know if we have fractures, we could not get medical assistance for fear of being assaulted by the police again We have been managing with household remedies. The police kept saying that we will kill you then your men will be forced to come out. Among the police who beat us were a PI from Panigate police station and one Harish, who was not in uniform. The police were all drunk. When one of the *sahebs* told them 'its enough now, just stop' they replied 'you go ahead, we are doing our job.'

15. Siddiq Ismail Qureshi (Jhanda chowk, Kisanwadi Was staying at Qureshi Jamat Khana Relief Camp, Vadodara at time of interview)

My name is Siddiq Ismail Qureshi. My age is 34 years. Originally a resident of Jhanda Chowk. I am now residing at Qureshi Jamat Khana Relief Camp. Before 28/02/2002, I had a mutton shop near Kisanwadi vegetable market.

On 28th February, as the *bandh* had been declared, the atmosphere was tense. But we thought that there would be no more disturbances. People were asked to close their shops. At around 7 pm in the evening mobs of 500 to 300 to 200 had begun gathering on the streets of Kisanwadi. They wore masks. Many wore saffron turbans. They had in their hands, *trishuls*, swords, sticks and spears etc. They were crying out slogans as " *Jai Shri Ram*", " *Har Har Mahadev*", and "Kill the *Miyas*". First of all Usman Gani's mutton shop was broken and set alight. And thereafter, different lanes in Kisanwadi viz, Jhanda Chowk, Husaini Chowk, Khatri Mohalla, Imamwada, Hai Ambe Faliya, ie wherever Muslims had their establishments, they barged in and began destroying things. Seeing the mob everybody started fleeing. We hid at the house of our neighbour, Balubhai. From there, the local leader Ramdasbhai Pillai took us away. Ramdasbhai had given shelter to 200 people from different places at his house. Shouts of "kill" could be heard from all directions. Ramdasbhai sheltered us for the whole night. He telephoned the police several times but the control room answered that as enough policemen were not available, they would not be able to come there. At 10 in the morning, the police came. Ramdas Pillai arranged for a tractor. Police vehicles accompanied the tractor at the front and at the back. As many as could be accommodated in the tractor, were taken to Jamat Khana. The others came by the city bus on 01/03/2002. This city bus had two policemen in it. However, it came under stone pelting near the Sapsuri Mandir (Kisanwadi) from the Bajrang Dal office. Rasoolbhai Ghanchi and a couple of others were injured.

Out of 120 Muslim families in Kisanwadi area, 50 stay at the Qureshi Hall now. The others have taken shelter in other areas. The mob which attacked us included :

- Vishnubhai Prajapati who stays at Jhanda Chowk, Kisanwadi and who is a volunteer of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad.
- Kishor Marathi who stays at Kilwadi, Jhanda Chowk and is a Bajrang Dal activist.
- Yashwant alias Tatya Marathi, Jhanda Chowk, Bajrang Dal activist.
- Badri, the vegetable vendor
- Ramesh Patel

- Kalpesh Raval
- Chiman, the vegetable vendor

Among others, who we know personally, all belong to the same area. On 28th February, these people indulged in looting, destroying and arson the whole night.

At the Khatri Mohalla in the Masjid Madrase Islamia and in our houses, they destroyed and looted goods. They tried to blow up the Masjid with gas cylinders. They also burnt the Quran-e-Sharif and other holy books, the Maulana's clothes (the Maulana at present has gone to Bihar). They hoisted the saffron flag upon the *masjid*. They broke the *masjid* walls. Many people among us tried to register a police complaint but the police made excuses. Thereafter, finally on 12/03/2002, 50 families registered a collective complaint and the names of the accused have also been registered. But we have come to know from our neighbours that the police arrested these people for a day and then released them.

These people have been destroying things in our houses till date, i.e. 06/05/2002. Even those things mentioned in the police records, are taken away and sold off in the scrap market. We have given a list of their names along with a complaint to the Police Commissioner. I, myself, Siddiq Ismail and my brother, Yusuf Ismail, have been to see our house and bring back anything that may have been spared, on 5th April. Then at 4 o' clock, four people, namely, Vishnubhai Prajapati, Ramesh Mistry, Dilip Mochi and one other person attacked me and they were saying that they did not want any Muslims in their area and if one came there, he would be finished. I have sustained a fracture on one arm and the other arm has a crack in the bone. I have had to take seven stitches on the head. I have received Rs 10,000 towards damage done to the house whereas, the loss amounts to Rs 70,000. The compensation for the shop has also not been received.

Siddiq Ismail Quereshi

Signed with left hand as he has a fractured on the right hand

16. Ismailbhai Rehamanbhai Ghanchi (Age 42 years, resident of GIDC Makarpura) Occupation - Cycle Repair (Self-Employed)

I live at the above place with my wife Noorjahan ben age 37 years, my son Mahmood bhai age 15 yrs and Hanif age 12 years. Both study in std. 7 & 4 respectively. I had a cycle repair cabin and adjacent to it was a room of 10 * 10 constructed with tin sheets.

On Sunday 3/3/02 at approximately 6 p.m. I left my home along with my family and went to stay with some friends, as my house is in the industrial area and it was not safe to stay alone there. On 4/3/02 at about 7 a.m. I came to my cabin and found that both my home and cycle cabin were reduced to ashes....no clothes, no utensils, just nothing only ashes. I heard from some people that a mob had come and destroyed my property. Left with nothing I came with my family to live in the Tandalja relief camp.

The total losses suffered by me are in the range of Rs. 85,000. My entire family is depended on me and today I have no source of income.

My wife used to work in Kiran More's helmet factory as a labourer. But now they refused to employ her because she is a Muslim, though she has been working there for 14 months.

17. Gafoorbhai Ibrahimbhai Ghanchi (age 40 years. Occupation, self-employed, cycle/primus repair and spare parts. Makarpura GIDC, Vadsar Road Ishwar Nagar, Near Raza Masjid.)

On 28/2/02 in the early morning I went to my cabin as usual, which is situated in GIDC near Jayant Oil Mills, opposite Gala No. 440 & 441. At around 10 a.m. mobs were moving around in the locality closing down shops, so I also closed my shop and went to my mother-in-law's house where my family was. We had vacated my house in Sikoter Nagar- 2, opposite Makarpura police station as I was renovating it. On 28/2/02 I got news that my shop was burnt. For 5 days the area where I was living was under curfew, so I could not go anywhere. After that I lodged a complaint at the Makarpura dairy police *chowky*. I found that everything in the shop was either looted or burnt. Neither a single nut nor a spanner could be found, all the spare parts were either burnt or looted. After about 10-15 days of this incident a young Hindu girl who is from my village and married into Sikoter Ngr- 2 informed me that my house which I was renovating has been completely destroyed so once again I filed a complaint at the above mentioned policed station. The police took me to the spot for a *panchnama*., this was the first and the last time that I was able go to my area as I am under threat from my neighbours. I found that all the

walls of the house and the bricks have been reduced to rubbles. I have spent approximately Rs. 40,000 in the construction. Further more I have suffered losses worth Rs. 22,000 in my shop. Presently I have no source of income. My wife Amina and three children are dependent on me. My eldest son Imran was employed in Parth industries but he was forced to leave his job ever since the trouble started. There is a general trend of throwing muslims out of their jobs. After working for one year my son is now jobless.

18. Shabir Khan (Wadi Tai Wada)

On 15th March at 10.30 pm, around 15-20 policemen, all in plain clothes and with helmets arrived in the Tai Wada area. They were led by DCP Kanani. They came into the *basti* after receiving a tip-off that stone throwing was going on. But in fact nothing like that was happening. The stones were coming from Navapura. Instead of going there they came here.

On March 15th they came thinking that firing was going on from our houses. We were sleeping. They broke open our door and took us out. They said unspeakable *gaalis* and eye our women with *boori nazar*. I told them that we were businessmen, we didn't participate in this sort of things. Twelve men came in, 6 on one side and 6 on the other and said that if we lift our hands or cry out they would hit us again. Obviously I cried out when I felt the *dandas* on my back and they hit me again. They took all three of us brothers and hit us. They damaged the furniture in our house.

In the lock-up they said ' we will burn you Muslims alive'. Neither food nor water was given to use in the lock-up. In lock-up I heard them fabricating a case against us- a case of murder whereas no murder had taken place. No weapons were found with us. A house hammer was taken away from my home as a weapon.

A Police officer looked at my wife, up and down. God forbid, even if he'd done something to her, I was in no position to do anything to defend/protect her. I requested him to leave at least one of us brothers. He said "No, we'll burn you all alive".

In the Central Jail I was for 7 days, for every 5 Hindus present, there were 25 Muslims. The Hindus in the jail were Bhois. One was caught with *astra* (blade), another with *gupti* and another with *khanjan*. One of them admitted to me in the jail, 'we'll be released and we'll collect our *saadhan* from the police station. *Hamara to yeh sab chalta hai.*' These were their words.

I suspect that the among the people who attacked our house, there were some policemen in plain clothes. They were from outside. I recognized the policemen because I live opposite to the DCP office.

There is one Muslim officer in the DCP's office. I can't name him. He told me he was powerless and couldn't do anything to help the Muslims. I asked that one of us brothers be let out. He said he had nothing in his hands.

19. Firoz Khan Karim Khan Pathan, (age 15 years, resident of Indira Nagar, Ghagretia, Kapurai Panchayat, Occupation: student of standard 12, Bharati Vidyalaya, Baranpura).

On 27.2.02 after the Godhra massacre, VHP declared a Gujarat *bandh* on 27.2.02 itself after mid-night stone throwing took place in our *mohalla*. On 28.2.02, once again after mid-night, we saw a white Tata Sumo followed by 2 trucks (1 S truck 1 Isar 460) fled with men passing through our *mohalla*. They were playing a cassettee "*bachao, bachao*". We thought 100-150 people were screaming for help. People panicked and started leaving their houses and running. Even the Hindus started running. Then they shouted "*Har Har Mahadev*" from the truck. They were also carrying a banner of VHP, so the Hindus returned to their houses.

On 1.3.02, at 2.00 pm after the Friday *namaaz*, a mob entered the area carrying Swords and *trishuls*. They burnt a butcher's cabin near the *dargah* and burnt another wooden cabin. All the Muslims decided to leave the area after this incident and went to different places, wherever they felt safe. From the next day onwards, they began systematically looting, breaking, and burning our houses and *masjid*. None of us can dare to enter our area. The villagers chase us with sword. They accuse us of filing complaint and naming them. The insecurity is tremendous we cannot think of going back. And what will we go back to? We left with the clothes on our backs and now all that is left of our worldly possessions is rubble and ashes.

Right through 27.2.02, 28.2.02 and 1.3.02, we telephoned the police. The only response we could get was, we will send the police. But no police turned up. We approached the sarpanch of Kapurai. He refused to let us enter the village. All he said was 'flee so that you can save your lives'. Women and children hid in the wheat fields for 3-4 days.

There are 40 school going children amongst us. None of them could go for their examinations. All of them have been failed.