

Vasant Sabharwal S/o Dr. Satish

Affidavit submitted before Misra Commission (1987).

I, Vasant Sabharwal S/o Dr. Satish Sabharwal, aged 20 ½ yrs., 140, JNU New Campus, New Delhi, do hereby solemnly affirm and state as under: -

1. that I am a student of Hans Raj College, Delhi University. I am doing my Bachelors in Zoology.
2. On November 1, 1984, Gayatri Sabharwal (d/o Dr. Satish Sabharwal, r/o 140, New Campus, JNU), Rajiv Lochan (s/o Dr. A.B. Sharma, r/o Room No.209, Kaveri Hostel, JNU) and I went into the city on our cycles. We left the campus at about 0800 hrs.
3. In Munirka Market, at about 0800 hrs. I saw a small group of people standing in the lane behind Punjab Wool Store. Some men were on the roof of Punjab Wool Store and adjacent shops. At least one of them was wielding an iron implement normally used for digging. I got to talking with the men in the lane. They said they lived in Village Munirka. On being asked "Kya Ho Raha Hai? They said "Nahin, Kuch Nahin." But very clearly these in the lane were watching the ones on the roof break into Punjab Wool Store. Everything looked very peaceful. On the Palam Marg, we found a police constable in uniform. He seemed oblivious to the activities on the roof. At this time the road (Palam Marg) and the Munirka Market were fairly deserted. I stayed here for about five minutes.
4. At about 0930 hrs. I was on Palam Marg opposite the petrol station adjacent to Vasant Vihar Depot of the DTC. A very large number of people standing near the gate of the depot were in DTC uniform. One man in DTC uniform ran towards the petrol station. The crowd followed him closely. Once again, except for the fact that property was being burnt, there was great jubilation and gaiety. This DTC man operated the petrol pump and set fire to the spilled petrol, ran back. But the fire did not catch on. So he went back to the pump. This time he also set fire to one of the cars standing at the petrol station and again set fire to the petrol pump. He also ran back shouting to everyone, to move back lest the petrol stock explode. Nothing of the sort happened and the fire went out in a little while. All this happened in about five minutes. After this I moved away.
5. On Palam Marg at this time were many policemen. I had seen them in groups on the road between Malai Mandir and Munirka DDA flats. A group of them was lounging in front of the burning Punjab Wool Store. Among them was a Sub Inspector of Police too. They were making no attempt to control the crowd. The DTC depot was about 100 yards from this group of policemen. But they were not stopping the mob from arson and looting.
6. On returning to the campus at about 10:00 hrs. we saw one person – Biswajit Ghosh, a Ph.D. student of the Sociology Centre, JNU, standing at the gate of the campus. As soon as we entered the Campus a DTC bus route no.666 came up to the gate. The bus was filled with a shouting mob. Biswajit Ghosh shut the campus Gate and did not allow the bus to enter. The Bus left. Soon another DTC bus filled with similar shouting mob stopped at the gate. But as the gate was closed, it could not enter the campus.

7. On the evening of 1st November, Rajiv Lochan and I were on Africa Avenue and later on the Kamal Cinema road which connects with Africa Avenue. Many houses on Africa Avenue were burning (I counted at least 10 houses). A stream of men was carrying things from these houses into the adjacent village. There was also a group of men moving ahead. This set of men was fairly peaceful with no excitement of any kind except when they saw Sikh in some house, it entered that house and burnt up their scooters/cars. This set was not looting. The looting was done by the crowd which was following this group. This group was simply burning houses and cars systematically. This group had some cars full of some kind of liquid to help start a fire. Ahead of this group was a dark tough looking man on a Bullet motorcycle. He was riding at a slow pace, would stop in front of house to be burnt, indicate it to the men, and before they arrived would move forward. He was addressed as 'Bhaiya'. Servants from at least one house which was burnt seemed to know him, as also did the kiosk and shop owners on the road who were talking with him in friendly manner.

8. About five or six house away from the taxi stand towards Kamal Cinema, we saw an Army Officer in uniform inside a house. We went upto him. He was a colonel in the medical corps. We pointed out the Bhaiya to him, and asked him if anything could be done to stop these people. He said he was unable to raise the police on the phone but then later took his car to the police station. In about 15 minutes or so he returned saying that the police refused to do anything.

9. After that Rajiv and I returned to the Campus.