

The Genocidal Pogrom in Gujarat: Anatomy of Indian Fascism

Date: February 28, 2002

PRESS STATEMENT

Muslim ulema condemn the Godhra incident

(Dear Madam/Sir,

Given below is an English translation of a press statement in Hindi which have received through fax from Mr. Hisam Siddiqui, Jadid Markaz, a well-known Urdu weekly published from Lucknow. In view of the public importance of the content of the press statement, we are forwarding the same to you. – Editors, Communalism Combat)

Lucknow: Muslim religious leaders, including the treasurer of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB), Maulana Abdul Karim Parikh, the AIMPLB spokesman Maulana Khalil-ur-Rahman Sajjad Nomani and the AIMPLB vice-president Maulana Kalbe Sadiq, have strongly condemned the attack on the Sabarmati Express at Godhra yesterday.

The religious leaders said that killing innocent men, women and children in such a heinous manner is a shameful and inhuman crime. The perpetrators of such a dastardly crime must be condemned by all and the government should take the strictest possible action against them, they added.

The leaders have also appealed to the Gujarat government and the media not to hold an entire community responsible for the misdeed and not to harass innocents even before the identity of the criminals is clearly established.

Meanwhile, Maulana Abdul Karim Parikh has issued the following separate statement issued from Nagpur:

Nagpur: Yesterday evening we received the heart-rending news that four bogies of a passenger train had been set on fire at Godhra station and that as a result of this inhuman act 55 passengers were killed. This shameful conduct is an ugly blot on the country's tradition of religious tolerance.

I appeal to people from all communities to help maintain peace and harmony in the country, and refrain from inhuman acts and the sin of killing fellow human beings. Such killings will not solve any problem. I appeal to the Gujarat and the Central Governments to mete out the strictest of punishment to those Muslims who are responsible for the violence in Godhra.

My colleagues and I are extremely saddened by this dastardly incident and we pray to Allah that people from all communities join hands to maintain peace and harmony. I also appeal to people from all communities to help the government restore peace and normalcy.