

BRINGING DOWN THE BARRIERS

Looking at the Gujarat Carnage: Five Years On



On 27th February 2002, a train containing Hindu pilgrims caught fire whilst leaving Godhra station in Gujarat, India. 59 people died in the blaze and blame was attributed by the state government and its 'Hindutva' supporters to a group of Muslims gathered on the train platform.

A sequence of events starting the very next day led to an explosion of widespread ethnic violence primarily directed towards Muslims. By some estimates, over 2000 people died and around 200,000 people were internally displaced. Human rights organisations have severely criticised the state government, who have been accused of complicity in the violence, and exploiting the situation for political gain in view of up-coming elections.

Since this horrific event, people from all religious backgrounds have strived to restore their lives to normality. Despite this, parts of Gujarat remain deeply segregated along religious lines.

This discussion event aims to re-examine the Gujarat Carnage and explore what the episode can tell us about the following:

- What's religion and power politics got to do with violent identity struggles?
- Multiculturalism: Is it a melting or boiling pot?
- How can people from different cultural, faith and non-religious backgrounds deal with outbursts of violence together?
- Can the Gujarat episode tell us anything about the riots in Lozells, Oldham and Bradford?



SPEAKERS

Ram Punyani from Mumbai is a leading commentator on communal/ethnic violence, globalisation, the rise of fundamentalism, and has authored several books around these issues. He is also actively involved in initiatives promoting communal harmony and understanding.

Arun Kundnani is the editor of the Institute of Race Relations news Service and a regular contributor to CARF magazine and the journal Race & Class.

Parita Mukta (Warwick University) interest's centre on deprivation and suffering in the developing world; the erosion of the politics of hope; and the rise of Hindu authoritarianism in India and within the British Indian community. Her recent book '**Shards of Memory: Woven Lives in Four Generations**' came second in the Institute of Historical Research's History Prize (2002).

We will be also be showing short excerpts from the multi-award winning documentary '**Final Solution**' by **Rakesh Sharma** (www.rakeshfilm.com).

This is a free event but we do have a registration process in place to monitor numbers. The process is simply to confirm attendance by emailing confirm@southasianalliance.org with attendee names.

SUNDAY 25TH FEBRUARY 2.30PM – 5PM

Venue: Moseley Community Development Trust (Above the Moseley Post Office Building), 149-153, Alcester Road, Moseley, Birmingham. B13 8JP.

Info: 07970 679725 or email enquiries@southasianalliance.org

Web: www.southasianalliance.org / www.cultivasian.org



SOUTH ASIAN ALLIANCE

CULTIVASIAN

inqLab