

Date: 15-08-2009

**Statement of Shri Suresh Mehta, aged-74 years,
Formerly Chief Minister, Govt. of Gujarat**

I belong to Kutch-Bhuj. I am living in a rental accommodation in Ahmedabad as my grand children are studying here. I am a law graduate and had served as a Judge in Ahmedabad during 1969-70 and later as an Advocate. I, joined Bhartiya Jan-Sangh Party in the year 1962 and remained its active member, I was elected as MLA for the first time in 1975 and served for the full term till 1980. In 1980, I did not contest the election. From 1985 onwards, I remained MLA till 2002. From 1990 onwards, I served as a Minister/Leader of the opposition till 2002. In 1995-1996, I remained the Chief Minister of Gujarat for about a year. In the year 2002, I lost election. In 2007, I resigned from the party before elections as I find it difficult to work under the leadership of Shri Narendra Modi, Chief Minister.


In February, 2002, I was a Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Industry & Law in the Govt. of Gujarat. On 27-02-2002, a sleeper coach of Sabarmati Express was burnt near Godhra Railway Station in which several kar-sevaks returning from Ayodhya were killed. On going through the minutes of the Assembly proceedings for 27-2-2002, I state that Dr. Mayaben Kodnani, MLA from Naroda constituency had raised the issue relating to the Godhra carnage in the Assembly at 13:00 hrs during the question hour and had requested the MoS (Home) to make a statement. Shri Gordhan Zadafia, the then MoS (Home) accordingly made a brief statement in which he informed the house that six persons had died in the incident and that the death toll may go up to ten. After the question hour the house was adjourned in the afternoon with the instructions from the Speaker that the house would reassemble on 28-2-2002 at 8:30 hrs. At the time when the MoS (Home) made a statement, I was sitting by the side of Shri Narendra Modi, CM who remarked that "Hindus should wake up now". The Chief Minister went to Godhra by helicopter on the same afternoon. Shri Gordhan Zadafia, MoS (Home) also went to Godhra by road. Shri Narendra Modi, CM returned to Ahmedabad in the night. Subsequently, I learnt that a review meeting of the situation post Godhra incident was held by the CM on 27-2-2002 night with the senior officers. I was not present in this meeting, as I had not been asked to attend the same. The fact related to the review meeting held by the CM with higher officers had also been

admitted by Shri Gordhan Zadafia in the assembly on 14-3-2002 as per the minutes.

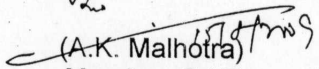
On 28-2-2002, the house assembled at 08:30 hrs. Shri Narendra Modi, CM made a statement about the Godhra incident and two minutes silence was observed. After the referendum, the house was adjourned at 08:40 hrs with instructions from the Speaker that the house would reassemble on 1-3-2002 at 08:30 hrs. It is not understood as to why the house was adjourned on 28-2-2002, though none of the deceased persons were either an Ex-member or sitting member of the assembly. However, the house did not assemble till 13-3-2002 for the reasons best known to the Govt.

Read over and admitted to be correct.

Typed by me


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Before me


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