

# The Rajiv Gandhi assassination: Will the truth prevail?

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Recent depositions given by individuals to the Justice M.C. Jain Commission, set up almost four years ago to help investigate the assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, have finally brought into focus the tell-tale signs of a broader conspiracy behind the heinous crime.

Testifying before the Jain Commission recently, Mahant Seva Dass, a Sikh and president of the Shiromani Akali Dal (Pheruman), dropped a bombshell when he said that he had learnt of the plan to eliminate Rajiv Gandhi before the fact from the London-based Khalistani leader Jagjit Singh Chauhan. Seva Dass said that he met Chauhan three times in London in December 1990—almost five months before Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by a “human bomb,” allegedly planted by the Tamil Tigers. Seva Dass also claimed that after the assassination had taken place, Chauhan had told him that the “human bomb” was activated through remote control, and he did not divulge who actually triggered the bomb to go off.

## Spilling the beans

Seva Dass, who knew Chauhan from the days when the latter was the finance minister of the state of Punjab in the late 1960s, met the Khalistani leader at 64 Western Court in central London, the so-called Khalistani headquarters. And it is there, Seva Dass claims, that he came in contact with a number of Khalistanis, Tamil Tigers, and Kashmiri militants. It is here that Chauhan told Seva Dass that all plans had been made to liquidate Rajiv Gandhi.

When Seva Dass cautioned Chauhan that such an act would have to be paid for in blood by innocent Sikhs, Chauhan informed him that the actual killing would be done by “people from Haryana” (a state adjacent to Punjab and Delhi), and not by people from Punjab.

Seva Dass claims that upon returning from London, he informed not only Rajiv Gandhi of the assassination plot, but also a host of others, including such senior Congress Party leaders as Ratnakar Pandey and A.R. Antulay, the present Union Minister of Health. Rajiv Gandhi had pointed out to him in return, of the incident involving two Haryana policemen in front of his 10 Janpath residence, Seva Dass testified. The police constables had been put in place by former Harya-

na chief minister Om Prakash Chautala, who was also a major money-wielding wheeler-dealer in the V.P. Singh, and later Chandrashekhar, governments.

The Mahant also claimed that his 1990 visit to London was undertaken on behalf of then-Indian Prime Minister Chandrashekhar to deliver a message to Chauhan. However, Chandrashekhar, who was decidedly uneasy while testifying before the Jain Commission, categorically denied that he had sent Seva Dass to deliver a message to Chauhan, though he did acknowledge that Seva Dass had supplied information about the impending assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. Without saying it in so many words, Chandrashekhar made it clear that the credibility of Seva Dass should be ascertained before giving his claims unwarranted weight.

## Gandhi's protection removed

There are obvious reasons for Chandrashekhar's uneasiness in owning up. The Varma Commission, which was set up six days after Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated, and which presented its limited findings before the Parliament almost a year later, had concluded that V.P. Singh's government, which took over from the ruling Congress Party following an electoral victory, knew through December 1989 and January 1990 that the threat to Rajiv Gandhi and the lives of the members of his family had not diminished, and yet, removed the inner Special Protection Group (SPG) cover from the former prime minister.

Chandrashekhar, who succeeded V.P. Singh in November 1990, did not restore the SPG cover, and has recently quietly admitted that it is quite likely that Rajiv Gandhi would not have been killed by the so-called human bomb if the SPG cover had been kept intact. In other words, Chandrashekhar feels guilty for his failure to act while V.P. Singh and his henchmen continue to avoid responsibility for the murder.

This is particularly damaging in light of the repeated requests made to the V.P. Singh government throughout its reign by P. Chidambaram, the person nominated by the Congress Party to deal with matters pertaining to Rajiv Gandhi's security and now a cabinet minister overseeing the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case on a request from Prime Minister Narasimha Rao. Chidambaram's plea to put back the SPG

cover has been amply recorded in the Varma Commission report.

### **Crooks gallery**

Besides throwing light on the functioning of the top officials of the government at the time of the assassination, Mahant Seva Dass has also named a number of shady players who have played a major role in criminalizing (or is it globalizing?) Indian politics. Seva Dass alleged that the Indian Rasputin, Chandraswamy, who has a close relationship with Tiny Rowland, a self-proclaimed British intelligence officer and former head of Lonrho, and the Middle East gun-runner Adnan Kashoggi, whose links with Israeli and British intelligence are widely established, had been conspiring with former Haryana chief minister Om Prakash Chautala and newspaper baron Ram Nath Goenka, now dead, the owner of the Indian Express newspaper group. Goenka ran an anti-Rajiv Gandhi political campaign through his newspaper and gave overt support to V.P. Singh, and it is widely recognized as having been a major political obstacle to the reelection of Rajiv Gandhi in 1989. It is Goenka who carried out a baffling and vicious attack on the Gandhi government on the Bofors Gun issue, and his paper's slogan that "truth shall prevail" (referring to the Bofors gun deal) somehow caught the imagination of the people during the elections.

Whatever Goenka was doing, however, was out in the open, or almost so. Chautala, on the other hand, now a washed-up political force, and Chandraswamy, were working in the shadows. Much of Chautala's efforts, whose greed for money, land, and thuggery made him a legend in his lifetime, turned to waste when a vast pile of illicitly earned money that he had allegedly kept locked up in a Pakistani-British intelligence-run drug bank, Bank of Credit and Commerce International, went under. Chandraswamy, whose connections in the Indian political scene are also legendary, is a big fish, heavily wired-up with British and Israeli intelligence. His jet-setting style and rustic behavior have created a great deal of curiosity among some observers in this country, but his links to the top echelon of both the Congress Party and the Bajratiya Janata Party (he is close to the Rajmata Scindia of Gwalior, a royal connection to the British for the BJP), makes him almost untouchable, at least as of now.

Earlier, Election Commissioner and top-of-the-heap bureaucrat T.N. Seshan, a quixotic character with a large following, had mentioned to a scribe that he was suspicious of movements of one of the cabinet ministers of the Chandrashekhar government prior to the killing of Rajiv Gandhi, and had told the prime minister that the assassination must be looked at as a broader conspiracy than the then-acclaimed killing by the Tamil Tigers. Seshan, who headed Rajiv Gandhi's security for a period during his prime ministership, said that he was uneasy about Subramaniam Swamy's "foreign links" and his movements prior to the Gandhi assassination.

Swamy, whose links with the Israeli intelligence service the Mossad has been alleged before, was formerly a virulent critic of Rajiv Gandhi but had managed to sidle close to him during the Chandrashekhar government's reign.

Unlike Chandraswamy, but very much like Jagjit Singh Chauhan, Swamy's game is to say the unspeakable in public and act most of the time like a buffoon. If Chandraswamy likes the protection of shadow, Subramaniam Swamy is the "purloined letter."

### **The assassins of Indira Gandhi**

While there is little hope that the truth will really prevail in the investigation of the Rajiv Gandhi assassination, it is evident that behind the assassination lurks the killers of the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. At that time, an *EIR* investigating team, in the book *Derivative Assassination*, had revealed the connection between Jagjit Singh Chauhan and Jon Speller, a Mossad agent and owner of the New York publishing house Robert Speller and Sons, Publishers.

During an interview with Speller, whose good friend Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) is now the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, *EIR* was told by Jon Speller himself that he was the handler of Chauhan and that their job was to establish Khalistan, a "natural" nation, by breaking up the synthetic nation of India. Speller also spewed venom against Indira Gandhi for her role in "suppressing" the "Sikh nationalists."

### **Focus on the same people**

What makes Mahant Seva Dass's deposition interesting, is that it has focused on the same people—Chauhan, Mossad-controlled individuals within the Indian political hierarchy, British intelligence assets such as Chandraswamy, and the network around Rajmata Scindia of Gwalior, whose closeness to Chandraswamy completes the circle neatly.

It is also evident that for the Jain Commission to come up with something which is real and useful in understanding the nature of the beast, it must take a fresh look not only at the Indira Gandhi assassination but also at the event on Oct. 2, 1986, on the anniversary of Gandhiji's (Mahatma Gandhi's) birthday at Rajghat. On that occasion, a poorly organized attempt was made on the life of then-Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. The attempt was not a serious one; but the purpose was to remove certain individuals from Rajiv Gandhi's proximity, by hurling accusations of gross failure in carrying out their assigned duty, and to pave the way for setting up the eventual assassination. The politics of that event still remain buried deep and untouched, and since "opening up" is the buzzword with Indian leaders nowadays, it is essential for the future survival of the republic that the Jain Commission unravel the "mysteries" of the series of assassinations that has made India increasingly vulnerable and a playground for a bunch of individuals directed by foreign geopolitical assassins.