

Stolen Lives—Killed by Police

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The Magisterial Enquiry, which is mandatory in every encounter case (and which was never done in the Batla House encounter) has finally termed it Ishrat Jahan's killing as a fake encounter in a metropolitan court. It is not a matter of surprise that she was killed in cold blood. Such things are happening and happened in Gujarat under Modi.

On June 15, 2003, the Ahmedabad city crime branch, then headed by the now jailed IPS officer D G Vanzara, shot four young people—Ishrat Jahan, Javed Shaikh alias Pranesh Pillai, Amjad Ali Rana and Jisan Johar. It was propagated that these four young people were alleged Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) operatives who were allegedly on mission to kill chief minister Narendra Modi.

Ishrat, was a 19-year-old student of Khalsa College in Mumbra, a Mumbai suburb.

Ishrat's mother filed a petition in the high court in 2004 demanding death compensation and a CBI probe. Ishrat Jahan's mother's Petition alleged that it was a fake encounter as one of the many that the present government regime in Gujarat headed by Narendra Modi had done to achieve Political Mileage to publicly create panic and sympathy that the Chief Minister was sought to be assassinated.

The crime branch carried out the operation and the same agency conducted investigation.

When the petition was heard by Justice KS Jhaveri, he immediately proposed, almost on line taken by the Supreme Court in the infamous Sohrabuddin fake encounter case, for which Vanzara was jailed along with other policemen, that a five-member team—all of the rank additional DGP—should probe this case.

The encounter was done allegedly by the infamous D G Vanzara and his team who are presently arrested under Orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of fake encounter of Sohrabuddin and his wife Kausarbi. Sohrabuddin's encounter has been admitted by the state to be fake and recently on 11/08/2008, they have agreed to deposit an amount of Rs 10.00 Lakhs as interim ex-gratia compensation for being paid to the Kith and Kin of the two.

There are allegedly 28 encounters which were fake and have been covered up.

In Ishrat Jahan's matter the CBI was impleaded as a Party and it took a stand that if the Court so orders they are willing to carry out fresh investigations and unearth the truth. Such stand triggered panic with the State Government and it seems even with some Officers of Central Home Ministry. After UPA came to power some tainted CBI officers placed in Gujarat during the NDA with questionable track record were removed after a lot of pressure and almost two years but they soon found plush positions in Delhi under UPA regime. To everybody's dismay the Ministry of Home Affairs stated reportedly in an affidavit that Ishrat, Javed and two others Jisan Johar and Amjad Ali Rana were all operatives of Pakistan-based terror group Lashkar-e-Toiba.

Maintaining that the four were terrorists, the Union government told the high court, "No proposal for CBI investigation is under consideration of the Centre nor does it consider the present case fit for CBI probe."

Moreover, the Centre claimed that "there is no question of independent inquiry, as an additional DGP (CID & Intelligence) had carried out an independent probe into the incident and the officer is neither working with crime branch nor is he a subordinate to the crime branch, which carried out the operation and later investigated the case itself."

The reason behind filing of the Affidavit by the Central Government was to dissuade the Court from appointing a strong SIT and give a message that even the Central Government had approved the act of fake encounter. But for the magisterial enquiry the Central Home Ministry had left no stone unturned to prove that Ishrat deserved to be killed. The logic used always is what will happen to the morale of the

officers. The question is what happens to the morale of the officers when they torture innocent young people, when they kill them, when they illegally detain them, beat them. What happens to their morale then? Do they just go home and sleep?

The affidavit filed by the Home Ministry is a proof of the fact that in Ishrat Jahan's fake encounter case UPA has connived with the Gujarat government in a blatantly communal manner.□