

Widespread condemnation of Kishtwar violence

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Aug 10: People from all walks of life including leaders of various social and political organizations have condemned the yesterday's violence at Kishtwar that claimed two lives and left several others injured.

Senior Congress leader and Rajya Sabha Member, Dr Karan Singh today expressed shock over the communal clashes in Kishtwar and appealed to both the communities to desist from indulging in violence.

In a statement, issued from New Delhi today he said he was "deeply grieved at the communal clashes which have resulted in loss of precious life and considerable damage to property."

Dr Singh, said "Kishtwar was part of my Parliamentary Constituency for 18 years. I appeal to both the communities to desist from violence and re-establish their traditional communal harmony."

He also appealed to the State Government to take all necessary steps to secure the lives and property of people living in that area and also institute an inquiry so that miscreants can be identified and brought to book.

President Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) and former Union Minister, Prof Saif-ud-Din Soz has also expressed his shock and grief over the Kishtwar situation.

In a statement issued from Srinagar, he said "I and entire Congress Party in the State feel deeply hurt by the current situation in Kishtwar. Our first thoughts are with those who have been the victims of the violence that has claimed two lives and injured many others. Loss of property is immense, confidence in the administration has been dented and the communal harmony has been disturbed", he added.

He said "we should not take these developments lightly but focus on preventing such incidents in the future too and staying vigilant against divisive and disruptive elements that are bent upon playing politics with the lives of the people for benefit of their own agendas."

Prof Soz further appealed the people of Kishtwar and other parts of the State to maintain communal harmony and not to give in to the designs of vested elements.

He also strongly condemned the acts of violence that have disturbed peace in Kishtwar even on a day that Muslims, Hindus and others celebrate Eid together with traditional brotherhood and amity. He also demanded constitution of an independent Commission of inquiry to probe the matter.

PDP president and Leader of Opposition, Mehbooba Mufti while expressing concern and deep shock over the loss of human lives in Kishtwar violence, has called upon the people to maintain communal harmony and brotherhood to frustrate the designs of the forces inimical to peace.

In a statement issued from Summer Capital today, Ms Mufti said that J&K is an example of brotherhood and communal harmony and there is need of maintaining this centuries old tradition of the state. She said Kishtwar the land of Sofis and Saints, is a symbol of peace, amity and communal harmony and there is need to further strengthen the tradition of tolerance and brotherhood among various communities living in this region.

Expressing her anger over failure of the State Government to stop such unfortunate incidents, she regretted that after creating secretary divide in Kashmir Valley, now the ruling party has brazenly been indulging into dividing people of Jammu region.

Chairman J&K Legislative Assembly, Amrit Malhotra has expressed grief and shock over the Kishtwar incident in which two persons lost their lives and several others were injured.

While condemning the incident Malhotra termed that incidents weaken centuries old composite tradition which is hall mark of the State. He appealed the people to maintain amity, peace and communal harmony.

Speaker State Assembly, Mubarak Gul has expressed his heart felt condolences over the demise of two people in Kishtwar violence yesterday and termed the incidents unfortunate.

In a statement issued from Srinagar today he said that such incident should be condemned by one and all as these happenings create wedge among the people of different faiths.

Minister of Roads and Buildings, Abdul Majid Wani termed the Kishtwar incident ill fated, saying that such incidents put threat to the entire peaceful atmosphere of the State. Condemning the incident Mr Wani expressed shock over the death of two persons in the violence and expressed his deep sympathy with bereaved families.

In a joint press statement provincial president of National Conference Devender Singh Rana, senior State vice president Surjit Singh Slatia, vice president Rattan Lal Gupta, provincial secretary

Sheikh Bashir Ahmed, former legislators Kashmir Singh, Brij Mohan Sharma, Ram Pal and others said that J&K has been an abode of peace where people of different faiths have been living in complete harmony and brotherhood since long.

The NC leaders said that any sort of discord among different sections of the society does not go well with the time tested unity and glorious traditions of the State that has been a shining and proud symbol of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh Christian brotherhood.

Urging the people to rise above party politics and work for sustaining and strengthening the communal harmony and peace across the State, National Conference leaders said that this is the time when all political parties should join hands and isolate those who want to create wedge between different communities. They issued appeal to the people in general besides political, social and religious organizations to exercise maximum restraint and work for restoring peace in the area.

The members of Bar Association Samba also strongly condemned the Kishtwar violence and abstained from the court today in protest against the incident.

The Panthers Party activists held protests in different parts of J&K as well as in the national capital, New Delhi at Jantar Mantar demanding immediate dismissal of Omar Abdullah led government to save the State from further death and destruction.

At Jammu, a demonstration was held by the JKNNP activists under the leadership of Anita Thakur while in Kathua, the demonstration was led by District president Ravinder Pathania. The protests at Udhampur and Samba were led by Sudesh Sharma and Shiv Charan Singh, respectively.

Alleging foul play and a deep rooted conspiracy in the eruption of violence and communal tensions in Kishtwar town, JKNNP chairman and MLA Harsh Dev Singh has sought a high level judicial probe into the ugly incident that has subsequently triggered unrest and violence in various parts of the state.

Mr Singh said that it was required to be probed as to what was the cause of provocation, who is the real master behind the said incident and what was the role of civil and police administration to diffuse the situation as there appeared to be an attempt to vitiate peace ahead of polls as was done in 2008.

The workers of Dogra Front and Shiv Sena Jammu Kashmir took out a procession from the Rani Park Parade to City Chowk. Led by Ashok Gupta, the Sena activists raised slogans against State Government and also torched an effigy of MoS Home Sajjad Ahmad Kitchloo.

They demanded sacking of Kitchloo as MoS Home and imposition of Governor rule in the State besides compensation for the losses in Kishtwar riots.

For condemning the incidents of violence and communal riots in Kishtwar, a meeting of senior Congress leaders was held at the party headquarters here today. The meet took stock of the situation that has emerged due to yesterday's incidents of communal violence and demanded in-depth inquiry in the circumstances leading to the situation for identifying the culprits to bring them book as per law. Congress leaders also appealed the people to maintain age old tradition of communal harmony and peace by not allowing the forces inimical to secular fabric.

Those who attended the meeting included Dharam Pal Sharma, T Hari Singh, Gurmukh Singh, Prem Sagar Aziz, Ravinder Sharma, Mula Ram, Janak Raj Gupta, R S Chib, Ch Lal Mohd Sabir, Vinod Sharma, Om Chopra, Shah Mohd, Indu Pawar, Shiv Dev Singh, Rani Bilowria, Jugal Kishore Sharma, Ravi Singh Slatia and others.

Congress MLC Naresh Gupta has also trained his guns on MoS Home Sajjad Kitchloo alleging that he masterminded the attack on minorities in Kishtwar yesterday as stated by local people. Gupta also demanded a high level probe by the sitting High Court judge to fix the responsibility on those who remained mute spectators and allowed the rioting and violence for six hours and delayed implementation of curfew.

PCC secretary Thakur Jugal Bhandari while strongly condemning the Kishtwar violence has demanded a CBI probe into the same and appealed the people to maintain communal harmony at all costs which is need of the hour.

Leaders of the Kishtwar unit of Congress have demanded resignation of Sajjad Ahmad Kitchloo on

moral grounds and adequate compensation to the affected people. Asking Government to take stringent action against the culprits, they alleged that some bad elements were trying to divide the national on communal lines.

Ex-Corporator and Congress leader Namrata Sharma has demanded that MoS Home Sajjad Kitchloo should be sacked immediately for his dubious role in Kishtwar violence yesterday. She also demanded adequate compensation to the affected people and action against the officers who failed to control the situation.

PCC member and Congress leader from Vijaypur Arun Sharma also demanded sacking of Sajjad Kitchloo and stern action against the elements who were responsible for yesterday's violence in Kishtwar.

President of Block Congress Committee Bishnah, Shashi Sharma has also strongly condemned the Kishtwar violence and appealed the Government to ensure return of peace in the disturbed area.

Termining the Kishtwar incident as reminiscent of July 13, 1931 raid on minority Hindus of Kashmir, Panun Kashmir president Ashwani Kumar Khurungoo said that the only difference this time was that Pakistani flags were also used to give a message to the takers that there is a potential to repeat Kashmir-1990.

Former Minister and president of Dogra Sadar Sabha Gulchain Singh Charak has urged upon the Government of India to constitute a high level enquiry committee to probe into this communal violence incident so as to identify those who were involved in hooliganism and responsible for the violence in whole of the Kishtwar. He further said that the Government should make proper security arrangements to safe-guard the lives and properties of minorities in the area and to ensure besides punishment to the officers responsible for the administrative failure.

JKDF Youth general secretary Advocate Sunny Mahajan along with Rameshwar Jasrotia have termed the Kishtwar incident as a conspiracy to attack the Machail Yatris and warned that such acts will not be tolerated any more and people will not sit quiet if strict action is not taken against the culprits at the earliest.

Several Kashmiri Pandit organisations also condemned the communal violence in Kishtwar and demanded a CBI probe.

Panun Kashmir (PK) convener, Dr Agnishekhar cautioned the authorities in particular and the people of Jammu in general against seemingly a big conspiracy that's yet to unfold in its entirety to foment an unprecedented communal tension in Jammu the yesterday's organized attack on Hindu minorities at Kishtwar is part of that.

Dr Agnishekhar in a statement while condemning the large scale incidents of violence, arson, looting and vandalizing in which two persons were killed and scores of others were critically injured, expressed his apprehension that it might be a part of an intrigue to engineer minority cleansing from erstwhile Doda district.

Dr Agnishekhar further expressed his shock and anguish over the total collapse of civil and police administration due to which mob thrived on free for all situation for several hours. He maintained that a sinister design seems to have been orchestrated from across the border to keep security forces and civil cum police administration on tender hooks on one hand and push terrorists into this side of the border under a military cover from across the LOC and international Border.

Dr Agnishekhar hailed the people of Jammu for making Jammu bandh a success across the length and breadth of the region.

All State Kashmiri Pandit Conference (ASKPC) has also strongly condemned the communal violence in Kishtwar and blamed the coalition for its total failure in protecting the minorities.

ASKPC president H L Chatta and senior vice president R K Raina demanded that the entire Kishtwar district be handed over to Central forces so that the confidence of minorities is restored there.

Jammu Kashmir Vichar Manch (JKVM) while expressing serious concern over Kishtwar violence and demanded immediate handing over of the area to Central forces, registration of FIR against MoS Home, institution of high level probe, handing over the security of minority community inhabitations to the Central paramilitary forces, stern action be taken against the culprits and victims be given appro-

priate compensation. Kashmiri Pandit Conference (KPC) while strongly condemning the Kishtwar violence has accused the State Government of its total failure in protecting the minorities in Kishtwar. It termed the attack on minorities a part of a big conspiracy and demanded stern action against culprits, sacking of MoS and payment of adequate compensation to affected families.

All Parties Migrants Coordination Committee (APMCC), lashed out at Minister of State for Home Sajjad Kitchloo, and accused the district administration of inaction.

"We strongly condemn the Kishtwar communal violence triggered due to the inaction of district administration... and demand immediate dismissal of Kitchloo and ordering of CBI probe into the circumstances that lead to large scale violence in Kishtwar district yesterday," the APMCC Chairman Vinod Pandit said in a statement here.

The APMCC demanded action against senior police officers and questioned why the government "had not bothered to issue a single press statement even after such large scale violence."

All Migrant Camp Coordination Committee (AMCC) has also strongly condemned the Kishtwar violence and held the MoS for Home, Sajjad Kitchloo responsible for the same.

The AMCC, while extending full support to Jammu bandh call for 72 hours said that nationalist forces should join hands to defeat the designs of separatists and Pakistan.

AMCC president Desh Rattan urged the Government to ensure that such incidents do not recur any where in the State in future.

Jagti Tenement Committee (JTC) while strongly condemning the violence in Kishtwar held MoS Home Sajjad Kitchloo responsible for the same. The JTC president, Shadi Lal Pandita demanded his immediate sacking and full compensation to the people whose business establishments and houses were looted and razed.

BJP Anusuchit Jaati Morcha in its meeting here, today while strongly condemning the Kishtwar violence in which the minorities were attacked by the mob on the instigation of miscreants demanded stern action against those responsible for the violence.

The meeting which was chaired by Surinder Bhagat, president of the Morcha, demanded a Government job for the one member of the bereaved family and adequate compensation to shopkeepers and others who suffered heavy loss in the violence after their houses and shops were looted and razed.

BJP leader and former corporator, Omi Khajuria and Party's Kissan Morcha president Karan Singh have also demanded sacking of Mr Kitchloo and adequate compensation to those whose business establishments and houses were looted and razed to ground by frenzied mob in Kishtwar yesterday.

BJP Migrant Cell convener Bharat Bushan Gosani, while condemning the yesterday's violence at Kishtwar demanded imposition of Governor rule in the state as the law and order situation has totally deteriorated.

PK leader Ramesh Manwati while expressing his shock and grief over the Kishtwar incident said targeting of minorities was unfortunate and the violence has exposed the State Government and its claims of being secular have been proved totally hollow. He demanded that those responsible for communal violence and anti India activities be apprehended and sternly dealt under law.

H N Tickoo, advisor K P Sabha while strongly condemning the Kishtwar violence termed it beginning of the second phase of cleansing of minorities after Kashmir Valley. This was a conspiracy to ensure that Hindus will flee from Kishtwar. He said this all happened in presence of MoS Home and police remained a mute spectator to the vandalism, loot and arson.

Vivek Gupta president Dudhadhari Chowk Shopkeepers Association and district vice president JKNC led a protest demonstration here at Shastri Nagar and torched the effigy of Pakistan.

He appealed the people not to fall a prey to the separatist manipulations who are hell bent to disturb peace in the State.

Members of Sports Council Bishnah, Dushara Committee along with activists various organization held a protest opposite Degree College Bishnah against the failure of the Government to ensure safety of minorities in Kishtwar. Protest held in several other places like Rehal, Sultanpur, Palli, Kanai and Kheri.

demned the communal violence, which erupted in Kishtwar town and in its surroundings recently. JSM asked the Central Government to hold thorough probe into the whole episode and also demands compensation to the effective persons and families to meet their losses so that they can re-establish their businesses and reconstruct their houses.

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) held a meeting under the chairmanship of its State president Tulusi Dass Langeh and demanded Rs 25 lakh compensation and Government job to the family members of the deceased Arvind Kumar Bhagat.

A protest was held by the activists of Jammu Kashmir Democratic Front (JKDF) at Talab Tillo against the killings and damage to the properties of the Hindus in Kishtwar. Rohit Kerni, district youth president criticized the behavior of Government towards the Hindus and warned the government to stop their criminal attitude towards the Hindus.

All J&K Movement for Peace and Justice condemned the Kishtwar incident and demanded filing of criminal case against District Administration Kishtwar and Minister of State for Home affairs.

Sanatan Dharam Sabha, Doda held a meeting under the chairmanship of its president and condemned the communal violence at Kishtwar. The members of the Sabha demanded immediate compensation to the loss suffered by the families.

Janata Dal Secular held a meeting under the chairmanship of its State president Mast Nath Yogi and demanded independent inquiry into the Kishtwar incident by the sitting Judge of Supreme Court. They also demanded compensation of Rs 10 lakh to those, who had suffered losses during the incident.

J&K Gujjars united front held a meeting under the chairmanship of its president Shah Mohammad Chowdhary and condemned the Kishtwar incident. Chowdhary criticized the district administration, which miserably failed to protest lives and property of the citizens. He demanded compensation to the loss sufferers.

Akhil Bhartiya Shiromani Mahajan Sabha held a meeting under the chairmanship of its president Mahesh Gupta, during which members of the Sabha expressed concern over the Kishtwar incident. Sabha requested the Government to provide Government job to one of the members of the family of the deceased besides compensation to those whose business establishments were looted and then put on fire by the miscreants.

Peoples' Revolutionary Movement (PRM) held a protest demonstration and condemned the Kishtwar communal violence incident. Addressing the protesters, Rajinder Jamwal termed the incident as most unfortunate. Jamwal demanded judicial enquiry after registration of case against Sajjad Ahmad Kitchloo, main accused for Kishtwar crime.

All Parties Sikh Co-ordination Committee (APSCC) has condemned the Kishtwar incident and termed it unfortunate for J&K. APSCC Chairman Jagmohan Singh Raina urged the people of Kishtwar to maintain harmony and brotherhood. He demanded punishment for the officers, who failed to take timely action and also demanded higher level investigation.

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Vishva Hindu Parishad activists protesting against the communal riots in Kishtwar at New Delhi on Saturday.(UNI)

Protest in capital over Kishtwar violence

NEW DELHI, Aug 10:

Scores of people today staged a demonstration in front of Jammu and Kashmir House in Chanakyapuri area here over the communal clashes in Kishtwar district of the State.

According to the police, the protest started peacefully at around 11:30 AM but soon turned violent as protesters pelted stones and vandalised sign boards on the road following which police used water canon to disperse them.

"There were around 150 demonstrators from different groups including BJP, VHP, Bajrang Dal and others. Initially

the protest was peaceful but some anti-social elements sneaked into the demonstration and it turned violent. We used water canon to disperse them. Situation was totally under control by 2:00 PM," said a senior police officer.

A case has been registered under Sections 186, 148, 147, 353 and Section 3 of Damage to Public Property Act at the Chanakyapuri Police Station in this regard, police said.

Clashes between two communities left two people dead and at least 20 injured, several business establishments and vehicles gutted in arson in

Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir where curfew was clamped and Army called in to assist the local administration in maintaining law and order yesterday. (PTI)

RSS frames relief committee for Kishtwar violence victims

JAMMU, Aug 10: To come to rescue of the violence hit people of Kishtwar district Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) today constituted a relief committee.

The committee was constituted by RSS in a meeting held here today under the chairmanship of its Prant Sanchalaka, Brig (retd) Suchet Singh. The meeting was attended by Pawan Kohli, Prof Narinder Singh, SDS, secretary Prabhath Singh, president SDS Bhaderwah, Ashok Kotwal, Amarnath Gupta, Jammu Peoples forum chief, Ramesh Sabharwal, Purshotam Dadichi, BJP leader and former Mayer, Kavinder Gupta, Ram Paul and Krishan Gopal.

Pawan Kohli was appointed convener of the relief committee while Prof Narinder Singh, Prabhath Singh, Ashok Kotwal and Amarchand will be its members.

The committee has opened its account in UCO Bank Talab Tillo under Account number 25020110014301 and IFSC Number 0002502.

Brig Singh said the committee will collect the relief on a large scale for Kishtwar people who were hit by the violence there.

OP to attend national level painters' camp

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Aug 10: A noted photographer and painter from Jammu, O P Sharma has been invited to participate in the national level painters' camp being

organized by Sneh Hill, Dehradun, in collaboration with Raj Bhawan (Utarakhand).

The camp is being organised

from August 10 to 12, 2013. More than 30 artists from different parts of the country are participating in the camp. Mr Sharma has served in J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages as Exhibition Officer and Dy Secretary Art and Culture and presently is director of J&K Centre for Creative Arts at Jammu.

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Members of BDSA commemorating Babu Parmanand's birth anniversary at Jammu on Saturday.

BDSA commemorates Babu Parmanand's birth anniversary, distributes scholarships

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Aug 10: The Bhartiya Dalit Sahitya Akademy (BDSA), Jammu and Kashmir in a simple and impressive function commemorated 81st birth anniversary of its founder president, Babu Parmanand, former Governor of Haryana and former Speaker of J&K Legislative Assembly at Akademy headquarters, Roop Nagar here today.

Apart from the executive committee members of the BDSA, prominent citizens, representatives of different social organizations and a large section of people from all walks of life attended the event.

On the occasion rich tributes were paid to leader and different speakers recalled his life-long services for the cause of down-trodden

sections of the society. Every year the day is celebrated as Equality and Brotherhood Day.

Scholarships were distributed among the deserving/poor students of far-flung areas, which were presented to them by the family members of Babu Parmanand.

Special tributes were also paid to Bharat Rattan, Baba Sahib Dr BR Ambedkar.

Prominent among those who attended the function and spoke on the occasion were Charan Das Angral senior vice president BDSA, SS Sarangal, retired Principal and District Sessions Judge, Girdhari Lal.

The programme was conducted by Vijay Bhagat, general secretary, BDSA and Som Nath, organizing secretary.

Narco smugglers acquitted due to prosecution failure

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Aug 10: Principal Sessions Judge Kathua, M K Hanjura has acquitted Balwinder Singh, Balbeer Singh and Jaswinder Singh of the charges of smuggling of Bhukhi.

According to the police case, on August 22, 2005 Kathua Police while checking the vehicles at Nagar Kot Khad, spotted three persons carrying a plastic bag under suspicious circumstances. Two of them were apprehended while as another managed to escape. From the bag 10 kilograms of poppy straw was recovered.

Accordingly, a case under Section 8/15 NDPS Act was registered against the accused and after completion of investigation, challan was presented in the court of law.

After hearing both the sides, Principal Sessions Judge Kathua, M K Hanjura observed, "although independent witnesses were available at the place of occurrence, which is said to be a public thoroughfare yet no attempt was made to examine them", adding "the only independent witness namely Mohd Rafiq, who has been examined in the case, has turned a volte face by denying the seizure".

"By withholding the independent witnesses and not co-opting them in the investigation of the

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