



KASHMIRI PANDIT SANGARASH SAMITI

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PRESS RELEASE

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(Shopian Rape and Killing Incident)

An emergency meeting of the executive council of Kashmiri Pandit Sangarash Samiti held today.- The participants at the meeting deliberated on events surrounding the gang rape and murder of two young women in Shopian.

Kashmiri Pandit SANGARASH samiti condemned the dastardly and inhuman act allegedly committed by members of the police force who are supposed to protect the life and honor of citizens. The KPSS members were visibly emotional while discussing the the act of horror by the Kashmir police officials as has been found in the enquiry.

The KPSS also condemns the initial cover-up by local administrative officials in Shopian that led to an incorrect initial assessment of the situation by the Chief Minister. Similarly the initial press briefing by the Divisional Commissioner and the IGP, Kashmir Range, was misleading. The SAMITI has expressed shock over the transfer of the SP, Shopian, to another district as a promotion. We expect all these acts of omission and cover-up will be fully examined and condemned by the Justice Jan Commission.

KASHMIRI PANDIT SANGARASH SAMITI hails residents of Shopian for their determination to seek truth and justice in this matter.

KPSS further stated that the state government has not carried out full inquiries into other previous similar cases like Kunan Poshpora, Hilar Bahi, etc. where it is still unclear if various criminal acts were committed by security personnel or militants. The SAMITI recalls the failure of State authorities in investigating the horrific acts of rape and brutal murders of the Braroo family (Shri Sohan Lal, Shrimati Bimla, and daughter, Archana) by militants in 1994 in their house at Nai Sarak, Srinagar, when the mother and daughter were raped in front of the husband and then the entire family was wiped out. That case was all the more disturbing as every body in the vicinity of the Braroo home knew the culprit but police still did not act.

The KPSS is critical of both mainstream and separatist political parties for politicizing some acts of criminality, violence, and human rights abuses while conveniently ignoring other similar cases that too require attention and justice. The Samiti stated that the latest shameful incident has once again put the honor of all Kashmiri women - without cast, creed or religion -



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at stake as authorities and leaders of the civil society, who are supposed to protect and defend the dignity and honor have been maligning it themselves. We believe no Kashmiri woman is now safe until and unless the State acts tough against perpetrators of Shopian rapes and murders, and all such horrific acts in the recent past be it in the hands of security forces or by militants.

The credibility of the State government is at stake. The KPSS demands that following completion of the Judicial inquiry, justice must be served immediately and forcefully. The culprits deserve no leniency and all guilty personnel must be prosecuted in accordance with the law and receive the harshest punishment under the category of the “rarest of rare cases.”

The Kashmiri Pandit Sangarash Samiti will support all the pro-people programs by responsible leadership of Kashmir to register the protest and compel the state government to take stern action against culprits irrespective of their stature in the society or official rank. The SAMITI has called upon all Kashmiri citizens that include professionals, businessmen, employees of state & central government organizations, and students to wear “BLACK CLOTH ON THEIR ARMS” until the guilty are identified and charged. Similarly, shopkeepers, transporters and other public institutions should hoist small black flags until the justice is done.

KPSS strongly believes that rapist and killers can never be the masters and protectors of any civilized society.

KPSS appeals the state govt. to convene meeting of all section of society to defuse un rest in the valley at the earliest.

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