

Pakistan: Aliabad tragedy victims still await justice

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GILGIT: Even after over three months of the tragic incident that occurred at Aliabad, there is no step being taken by the local government to take off the lid on its root causes and the people behind the plot.

More disappointing is the fact that the masses also seem to be oblivious to the situation as if there was no such incident at all.

A resident of the area and his son were gunned down by no other than the protectors of the citizens - the police - during a peaceful demonstration by the affected people of the Attabad artificial lake and the devastating floods of 2010 when the chief minister Mehdi Shah was on an official visit to the area. Who were the people that ordered the police to open fire on the unarmed civilians, what was their motif, was the crowd really posed a danger to the chief minister or there were some other reasons behind the cold-blooded killing of the poor man and his son. These are the questions which still remain un-answered.

It also needs to be probed that who had given permission to the organizers to hold the protest demonstration when the chief minister was visiting the area and who was behind mobilizing the people on that day. Normally, when a VVIP is visiting any area, the local administration and the law enforcement agencies never allow people to gather and impose section 144 there. But the residents say that the protesters, included the affected people of the Attabad Lake and the 2010 floods, were there with the hope to convey their grievances to the chief minister during his visit to the area.

Though the chief minister slipped away from the scene successfully, violence broke out in the area and the government saw hard days to maintain law and order there. In order to pacify the angry people, the regime later announced formation of a judicial commission to probe into the incident and expose those behind the tragedy. It also promised that those found guilty by the commission would be taken to task. However, many weeks have already passed since the commission completed its report and submitted it to the government but still its contents have not been made public by the government let alone any action against the perpetrators.

This has further created doubts among the public that there were some elements who were still trying to protect the responsible officials behind the killing of the two persons.

It is also intriguing that the government despite repeated promises has failed to take action against DSP Babar and his men for opening fire on the peaceful demonstrators. The government had said that soon after receiving the report of the commission, action would be taken against the responsible persons. However, the Mehdi Shah government has also failed to fulfill this promise further creating anger among the residents.

It is time the government avoided further dragging its feet on the matter and besides making the judicial commission's report public take action against those who were responsible for the killing of the two innocent persons, so that justice is provided to their families and such incidents do not occur

in future.

By Our Correspondent

P.S.

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