

Press Release

India: People's Alliance for Democracy and Secularism condemns mob violence against Kashmiri students and traders after Pulwama attack

Thursday 28 February 2019, by [PADS \(IN\)](#) (Date first published: 23 February 2019).

Kashmiri students, traders and workmen have suffered violent attacks in different parts of the country after a suicide bomber of jihadi terrorist organisation JeM killed more than forty CRPF jawans in Pulwama in Kashmir valley. Students in Dehradun, Ambala, Jaipur and Yavatmal were physically threatened and forced to leave. Two institutions in Dehradun have given a written undertaking to the student union led by ABVP that they will not admit Kashmiri students from the next session. According to one report at least 10 Kashmiri students have been booked and 24 rusticated and suspended from colleges for what officials have termed as 'anti-national' social media messages. Traders in Bihar and West Bengal were attacked and their shops destroyed. Kashmiri workmen in a sugar mill in Muzaffarnagar were asked to leave. In Jammu city also Kashmiri state government employees were attacked in their residences and their properties ransacked. One governor of a state has publicly endorsed social boycott of Kashmiri people.

According to reports mobs targeting Kashmiris were led by RSS affiliated organisations like Bajrang Dal, VHP and ABVP. Educational institutes have acted against Kashmiri students without any enquiry and giving students an opportunity to defend themselves.. Well known journalists who raised questions on Modi government's Kashmir policy have received threats. A worrying fact is that no political party, except Kashmir based NC and PDP, and Akali Dal of Punjab has come out against attacks on Kashmiris.

It is commonly argued that these attacks are a 'natural' expression of the hurt and rage felt by some patriotic Indians after Pulwama bombing on Indian defense forces. Indeed random mob attacks and even lynching are not uncommon in India. They show how easy it is to violate the civic rights of citizens in the country. The so called 'nationalist' attacks on Kashmiris are a deep-rooted conspiracy to alter and control the political character of Indian society. Modi government and activists of Sanghparivar have systematically attacked selected groups whom they label 'anti-national' - Kashmiris now so-called urban Naxals; students from JNU, Dalit groups and indeed, religious minorities all over the country. All these activities are designed to create a frenzied atmosphere so that the Indian public comes to accept the violation of democratic norms as a natural state of affairs. We need to realise what is at stake.

The BJP and Modi government are bent upon using the anger of ordinary Indians when Indian soldiers are attacked for narrow political gain in the coming elections. Modi is being shown as the only strong leader who can defend the nation. Indians need to realize the falsehood of this propaganda. The BJP and Modi in reality neither have political wisdom, nor are they interested in solving burning issues of national defense like Kashmir. They want to only milk it for immediate political advantage against their opponents.. Only now, after more than a week of violence, and after

Supreme Court's directions to states that Kashmiri students be protected, Modi has condemned violence against them. This is woefully inadequate. If the PM were sincere about protecting Kashmiri citizens, as is his constitutional duty, then this statement should have come right when these attacks started.

The Peoples' Alliance for Democracy and Secularism (PADS) demands that:

1. Criminal proceedings be instated against Bajrang Dal/VHP/ABVP leaders who led mobs against Kashmiri students and traders,
2. All students suspended and rusticated from educational institutions be taken back immediately, and
3. All Kashmiris living outside the valley be provided adequate security

We also call upon all democratic citizens and civil society organisations to reach out to any Kashmiri students and traders in their campuses and localities; show them solidarity and protect them against any attacks, verbal or physical. In particular the Police need to be reminded that all citizens are to be protected by law, regardless of their ethnic or religious identity.

Released by People's Alliance for Democracy and Secularism (PADS) on 23 February, 2019
Battini Rao, Convenor
