

CHENNAI

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NEWS 15

People want peace to return in Delhi

But it will be a long time before the trust is restored among them



People leave even as Paramilitary force personnel take out a flag march in Chand Bagh after days of violence, in New Delhi on Wednesday SANDEEP SAXENA

AM JIGEESH

Maujpur/Yamuna Vihar (New Delhi), February 26

Though a majority of the Hindus and Muslims in the riot-hit Maujpur/Babarpur/Yamuna Vihar/Chand Bagh want normalcy and peace restored, a section of both the communities is bitter about the loss to life and properties in the Sunday riots. The Police and para-military forces are keeping a strict vigil on the area particularly after the visit by National Security Advisor Ajit Doval.

Life will not be the same for me, said 25-year-old Kunal who stays in Maujpur. He has heard about the 1984 anti-Sikh riots from his parents. He never thought that he would have to witness a full-fledged riot. "I saw people getting killed. I don't know how many months it will take to establish trust between the two communities," he said.

Kunal's friend Sanjay said their MLA and AAP leader Gopal Rai and MP and BJP state president Manoj Tiwari did not visit the place despite such largescale violence. "People are suffering. Pota-

toes are sold for ₹80 a kilo and tomatoes are ₹100. Milk is not available in our area and almost all the shops are closed," he added.

Muslims also have their share of woe. "Three of our mosques have been torched — two in Gokulpuri and one in Ashok Nagar. A number of people have died and we get SOS calls to save their lives," said Usman, an autorickshaw driver. They fear that violence is likely to escalate after the visit by top officials such as NSA Doval.

Malik, a carpenter, said his acquaintance, a migrant

from Bihar, lost his life in the firing by a mob. "It all started after a speech by BJP leader Kapil Mishra. The Police should have taken immediate action at the beginning of violence. They delayed action," he alleged. Ram Dayal, a worker in a coaching centre near Yamuna Nagar, counters

"The mobs were carrying guns. How did they get it? Acid is thrown even on CRPF personnel. The police should raid their colonies," Dayal said.

BJP reminds Congress of anti-Sikh riots

OUR BUREAU

New Delhi, February 26

BJP on Wednesday responded to Congress demand for Home Minister Amit Shah's resignation by bringing up the Opposition party's involvement in the 1984 riots in Delhi following former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's assassination.

"Those with the blood of Sikhs on their hands are now talking about communal harmony. They commented 'when a big tree falls, the earth shakes'. They now have the nerve to demand answers," retorted Union Minister Prakash Javadekar immediately after the Congress President Sonia Gandhi accused the Centre and the Home Minister of 'inaction'.

(The Minister was recalling the remark by former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi in the aftermath of the 1984 anti-Sikh riots sparked by the assassination of then prime minister Indira Gandhi.)

Javadekar said the Congress President is politicising the Delhi violence while the Home Minister is continuously working with police to control the situation in the national capital. "Violence is ending. Investigation is on to find out the truth and identify culprits. No accused will be left out. At such a time, attacking government and politicising violence is dirty politics," he said.

Shah had called an all-party meeting on the violence in Delhi and it is the responsibility of all parties to help maintain peace, he asserted.

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BusinessLine

Cong demands Amit Shah's resignation

OUR BUREAU

New Delhi, February 26

The Congress on Wednesday demanded the resignation of the Union Home Minister Amit Shah for 'colossal failure of duty' of the Delhi Police to curb the raging riots in the city. A meeting of the Congress Working Committee (CWC) also urged Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to be more proactive in the riot-hit areas.

Talking to reporters after the meeting of CWC, Congress president Sonia Gandhi expressed shock at the silence of the top leadership at the Centre on the ongoing violence. "Where was the Home Minister and what was he doing since last Sunday? Where was the Chief Minister of Delhi and what was he doing since last Sunday? What were the

reports given by the intelligence agencies in the days immediately after the conclusion of the Delhi elections and leading upto today? What was the strength of the police force deployed on the night of Sunday when there were clear indications that violence will break out? Why were additional security forces not called immediately when it was clear that the situation was beyond the control of the Delhi police?" Sonia asked while talking to reporters after the CWC meeting.

'We see a pattern'

"There is a well-planned conspiracy behind the continuous traumatic accidents that have been happening since last Sunday. The country saw this conspiracy during the Delhi elections as well," she said. The CWC expressed

grave concern over the "unprecedented continuing violence" and charged 'they have a history, design and pattern'. "Several leaders of the BJP made inflammatory statements clearly intended to create an atmosphere of fear and hate. The last of these statements was made on Sunday, when a BJP leader gave an ultimatum of three days to the Delhi police and warned that 'after three days don't tell us anything'," the resolution said.

It said the deliberate inaction

of the Centre and the State government in the last 72 hours has resulted in 20 lives being been lost so far, including a head constable, and hundreds are in hospital, many with gunshot injuries including a journalist. The CWC, after reviewing the situation, said what has happened in Delhi is a colossal failure of duty for which the entire responsibility must be borne by the Centre and particularly by the Home Minister. It called upon Shah to tender his resignation immediately.

"The Chief Minister and the Delhi government are equally responsible for not activating the administration to reach out to the people to maintain peace and harmony. It is the collective failure of the two governments that has resulted in a great tragedy in the capital city which threatens to become worse by the day," the party said.

A team will meet President Ramnath Kovind on Thursday and organise a peace march on Wednesday.



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