

Ruckus in Indo-Pak peace moot as speakers urge Kashmir settlement

** Group of Kashmiri pandits objects to JKLF chief Yasin Malik's presence in the moot*

** Malik suggests joint body of Indo-Pak political parties on Kashmir*

By Iftikhar Gilani

NEW DELHI: Commotion broke out at a conference of India-Pakistan peace activists when a group of Kashmiri Hindu pundits belonging to Panun Kashmir and Roots in Kashmir (RIK) organisations objected to the presence of Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front chief Yasin Malik as a speaker.

Holding placards, they hurled abuses and called Malik a rapist and a murderer before police intervened and escorted majority of them out of the India International Centre (IIC) auditorium.

Malik orated his speech amongst the commotion and challenged the protesters to prove the charges against him.

He accused the pundits of working at the behest of Indian intelligence agencies. "I want migrant Kashmiri pundits to return to their homeland. It is my wish. We are incomplete without them. They are our blood. But some vested interests keep these weeping boys active in Delhi to stop us from raising our concerns," the JKLF chief said.

Joint body: Amidst the protests, Malik suggested a joint committee of political parties across the borders involving representatives of Congress, BJP, the Pakistan People's Party, the Pakistan Muslim League and Jamaat-e-Islami to sit down with Kashmiri leaders to draw a road map for the resolution of the Kashmir dispute.

He also asked media to "grow up" and play a constructive role in the peace process.

Malik said that since 1947, the people of Kashmir had only received conflicts, pointing out that the people of Kashmir did not have a history of violence otherwise.

The JKLF leader said despite his abandoning violence and declaring ceasefire at the behest of Indian civil society activists, he lost some 600 colleagues and bore several attempts on his life.

Suggestion: Peoples Conference Chairman Sajjad Ghani Lone said although a majority of Kashmiris favoured independence, they had an emotional bond with Pakistan. Therefore, he proposed a Nepal-India type arrangement between Kashmir and Pakistan as well, where the people from each country could freely come and work in the other area.

He stressed the time had come to go beyond autonomy and self-rule which were limited to discussing power sharing formula between Srinagar and New Delhi.

Lone also called for eschewing "extreme positions" and asked for "economic sovereignty" for Jammu and Kashmir. He suggested dismantling of trade barriers between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad.

Independent MLA from Langate, Engineer Rashid, said India and Pakistan were "commercialising" and "communalising" the Kashmir issue. He asked both the countries to show respect towards the sufferings and sacrifices of Kashmiri people and rejected autonomy and self-rule as possible solutions for the Kashmir problem.

[Home](#) | [Main](#)