

Attempts Afoot To Sow Seeds Of Extremism In Sindh: Altaf Hussain

By Dawn's Staff Reporter



HYDERABAD, Sept 11: The Muttahida Qaumi Movement chief Altaf Hussain said on Thursday that deliberate attempts were being made to spread extremism in peace-loving Sindh as miscreants were sending messages to places of worships of Ahmadi Jamaat, churches and Imambargahs to incite hatred and create a sense of insecurity.

Addressing the party's general workers meeting simultaneously in Karachi, Hyderabad and other districts of the province over telephone from London, Altaf called for tolerance for all.

He referred to recent killings of Ahmadis in Nawabshah and Mirpurkhas and simmering sectarian strife in Parachinar, Dera Ismail Khan and Bajaur and claimed the campaign for Talbanisation in Sindh, particularly in Karachi was continuing.

Without naming any particular party, he blamed religious outfits for spreading hatred and urged his followers not to fall prey to their negative propaganda. "If you are following their line then you must say good bye to me because I can't support sectarian strife," he said.

Making a reference to Lower Dir incident in which several people were killed when militants threw explosives in mosques while people were saying taraveeh prayers. "Is it in accordance with teachings of Mr Jinnah!" he asked.

He said that the concept of nation state was flourishing in the world. People belonging to different religions lived in the UK, USA and France in complete harmony and brotherhood and nobody tried to encroach upon the other's religious beliefs, he said.

If the UK, which was a predominantly Christian country, decided today to expel Muslims, Hindus and other religious communities then what would happen to the people of developing countries who were earning their livelihood there, he said.

Likewise, would it be prudent that since Pakistan was an Islamic state other religious communities could not live there. "If we attack places of worships of non-Muslims then we won't need any external enemy," he said.

He said at the outset of his address quoting excerpts from the speech of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah to Constituent Assembly on Aug 11, 1947 and said that people of Pakistan were free to go to their places of worships because the state had nothing to do with anybody's personal beliefs.

Mr Jinnah had desired to see people living in peace and harmony, he said and raised the question whether today people were following Jinnah's teachings. He said that people should create a watchdog system in their areas to keep a close eye on the intriguers, who were busy hatching conspiracies against the society and criticised the forces, which were blaming MQM for working against Pukhtuns.

It was the MQM, which had donated Rs1 million to Prime Minister's Fund for the internally-displaced people of Bajaur and other areas of the NWFP and a made similar donation of Rs500,000 to National Assembly Speaker's fund.

He directed party workers to keep an eye on the people who were sending messages to members of religious minorities and asked them to collect zakat and fitra fund to help the destitute and the deserving people.

He urged media persons not to promote programmes, which might reflect religious bigotry or intolerance and reiterated that Sindh's assets were being disposed of.

Media, intellectuals and writers of the province should raise their voice against the disposal of assets, which belonged to Sindh, he stressed.

He exhorted Ulema and scholars to promote religious cohesion to help the country pull out of present morass.

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