



Canada India Foundation demands Canada should accept Sikhs and Hindus from Afghanistan and Pakistan as refugees

Toronto July 4, 2018: Canada India Foundation (CIF) has condemned the killings of 19 Sikhs in Jalalabad, Afghanistan on 1 July 2018, and demanded members of the Afghanistan and Pakistan Sikh and Hindu minority community be allowed as refugees into Canada.

In a statement released in Toronto, Ajit Someshwar, Chair, CIF, said, “This dastardly act is yet another manifestation of the continuing victimisation of the religious minorities in Afghanistan and Pakistan by fundamentalist Islamist forces.”

Canada India Foundation has demanded that Canada should work to alleviate the plight of the religious minorities in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

“Just as Canada took the lead in accepting Syrian refugees, the Canadian government should also allow the members of the minority communities such as Sikhs and Hindus from Afghanistan and Pakistan to immigrate to Canada,” Mr. Someshwar said.

The Islamic State (IS) has claimed responsibility of the attack on July 1 that killed 19 members of the Sikh and Hindu communities in Jalalabad, the town that borders Pakistan. Among those killed, include Avatar Singh Khalsa, a prominent community leader, who was the only Sikh candidate for the October 2018 parliamentary elections.

The Islamic State’s statement said, “A suicide bomber detonated his vest at a gathering of Afghan troops and Hindus and Sikhs, who were on their way to meet the Afghan President.” The statement added that the group was targeted, as it comprised “polytheists.”

Anil Shah, the National Convener of Canada India Foundation, said, “Our hearts and minds are with the families of the victims, and we hope and pray that they will have the forbearance to face this calamity with equanimity.”

The Canadian government should proactively work with the persecuted religious minorities in Afghanistan to prevent any further mass killings of people merely because they have a different belief system, Mr. Shah observed.
