

# Sikhs, Moslems join in Toronto protest over Indian strife

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By DREW FAGAN

More than 300 Moslem and Sikh opponents of the Indian Government joined forces yesterday at Toronto City Hall to demand an end to the killing of civilians in the state of Punjab and the city of Bombay.

"Sikhs and Moslems are up against the same ruthless dictatorship masquerading as a democracy," Zafar Bangash, editor of an Islamic newspaper in Toronto, told the chanting crowd.

Asaf Shujah, an organizer of the rally, said the Sikh and Moslem communities should begin joint fund-raising for the victims of attacks by the Indian army.

"Our cause is now the same. We must prevent the transformation of India into a Hindu society through the crushing of its minorities."

Yaqoob Khan, president of the Canadian Institute of Islamic Studies, said Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is instituting a reign of terror against the Moslem minority across India.

"She is trying to eradicate the Moslems as an effective political force in India. Over 6,000 Moslems have been killed in Bombay in the past month by Hindu extremists while the police looked on."

He told the crowd, about 25 per cent of whom were Sikhs, that Canada should institute economic sanctions against India to persuade Mrs. Gandhi's Government to stop "treating Moslems like second-class citizens."

In an interview, Mr. Khan said Moslems throughout India are a well-assimilated minority, and, unlike the Sikhs, are not demanding an autonomous state.

"We are a God-fearing people. Those who were murdered will achieve immortality," said Gurdeep Singh Nagra, vice-president of the Federation of Sikh Societies of Canada.

The Indian army attacked the Sikhs' sacred Golden Temple in Amritsar, the capital of Punjab, two weeks ago. Estimates place the number killed in the battle at as many as 2,000.

"There is no law and justice in India. The Government has mutilated and killed thousands of innocent people," Mr. Nagra said, to cries of "Khalistan", the proposed name of an independent Sikh state in Punjab.

After the demonstration at Nathan Phillips Square, many of the demonstrators marched in the rain to the Indian Consulate at Yonge and Bloor streets.