

سانچہ لاہور پر مختلف انگریزی اخبارات کے ادارتی تبصرے

The Nation

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A murder most foul

Death of a religious scholar is always a great national loss but a death which is actually a murder is doubly distressing. We had an occasion to comment in these columns on the terrorist engineered bomb blast at a public meeting held on March 23 at Qila Lachhman Singh, Lahore, that killed seven people and injured more than a hundred. Allama Ehsan Elahi Zaheer (the Chief of the major faction of Ahl-i-Hadith) who was the main speaker on the occasion sustained serious injuries. These have now proved fatal. He died in a Riyadh Hospital, to which he had been rushed only a day earlier. His death will be widely mourned and his highly effective public oratory and his courageous stand on many religious and political issues will be long remembered. May his soul rest in peace.

In his public speeches for nearly a year now the late Allama had consistently been critical of firstly, the sponsors of the Shariat Mahaz and, secondly, of President Zia-ul-Haq. Although his criticism of the President was often more wide-ranging (because of the President's obvious involvement in a large number of problems) than that of the Mahaz, he, it seems, felt that but for the President's tacit approval or his active encouragement, the Mahaz could not have come into being. He repeatedly pointed to the dangers of divisiveness inherent in the course that the Mahaz was pursuing. There was no consensus, he said, on many aspects of the Shariat that the Mahaz wanted the Parliament to adopt, and the Mahaz's advocacy of the bill could only do lasting damage to the unity of the Umma. This is not to suggest that those responsible for his murder could be adherents of the causes that the late Allama openly condemned, but merely to state how imperilled are the people who choose to challenge the vested interests in politics or religion. The price asked for is often one's life. But causes, especially noble causes, such as the one that the late Allama espoused, do not die with the death of their sponsors. They live on. And therein lies the utter futility of the crimes of those who would have the voice of the guiltless silenced. And let them also remember that nemesis for them is not far.