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Mourning yet another victim of extremism

Scores of civil society activists gather at the Super Market to pay tribute to the slain minister

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ISLAMABAD

Hundreds of civil society activists on Thursday organised a candlelight vigil in front of the Super Market in F-6 to pay tribute to the slain Minister for Minority Affairs Shahbaz Bhatti.

The participants, including members of Pakistan Catholic Woman Organisation, strongly condemned the assassination and termed it "an attack on the entire country and not just an individual."

Carrying banners and placards inscribed with slogans against the extremists, the participants said that the government has failed to protect the lives of its citizens.

Speaking at the occasion, human rights activist Tahira

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A relative of Shahbaz Bhatti, **Shahid Massih**



IN MEMORY: Civil rights' activists gather at the site of the attack on Shahbaz Bhatti and demand justice, while people light candles during a candlelight vigil in Super Market on Thursday. PHOTOS: AFP

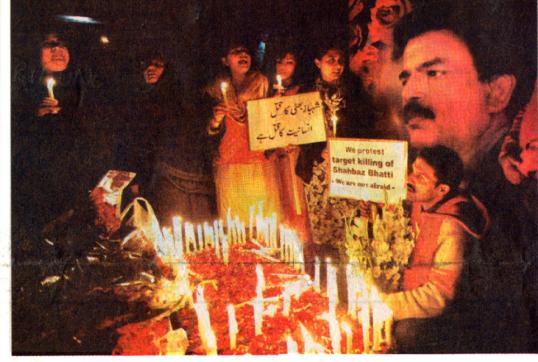
nate that there is no writ of government is committed to the government as nobody is continuing his mission. secure in this country." She The participants later gathsaid that if the government is ered in the house of the slain unable to protect the lives of minister in sector I-8/3 and minorities, "then they have expressed solidarity with his no right to govern."

demned Mr Bhatti's as- Haqooq Ittehad.

Abdullah said, "It is unfortu- sassination and said the

family.

Pakistan People Party The event was organised by Senator Saeeda Iqbal con- a civil society network, Insani



"I was shocked to know that the government did not provide him foolproof security despite continuous threats from militants. It was the prime responsibility of the state to provide him security especially after the killing of terfaith harmony in Pakistan Salmaan Taseer," said Shahid Massih, a relative of Bhatti.

While reminiscing, a he said.

close friend of Bhatti, Ram Singh, said when they last Pakistan's flag represents met, the minister gave him the minorities in the coun-Rs500,000 in compensation for the death of his relative, who was killed by militants. "Bhatti worked towards inand his assassination is a huge loss for the country,"

"The white crescent in try, whose rights were emphasised by the founder of our country," said Member Provincial Assembly Akram Masih Gill. "Unfortunately, the incumbent government has failed to implement the principle of the founder."