



Honourable Deepak Obhrai, P.C.
Member of Parliament
Calgary Forest Lawn

Media Release

For Immediate Release

August 27, 2018

Vicious attack on Calgary journalist due to his political reporting threatens our freedom of speech and democratic principles, says Hon Deepak Obhrai.

(Calgary) Hon. Deepak Obhrai, P.C., M.P. for Calgary Forest Lawn, today held a press conference to denounce a vicious attack on a senior South Asian journalist, Mr. Kumar Sharma, following a Punjabi music open air concert (Mela).

The attack on Mr. Sharma, which took place last Sunday (August 19th), was due to a Facebook post critical of a candidate in the UCP nomination in Falconridge.

Mr. Sharma told the press conference that two people known to him as supporters of this candidate approached him and threatened him with “dire consequences” if he published the FB post.

“Situation became so tense that I feared for my safety. Because of that, I deleted the Facebook post right on the spot,” Mr. Sharma said. Subsequently, as he reached his vehicle to leave the concert grounds, he was viciously attacked from behind by a group of about seven men. He received treatment from paramedics who arrived at the parking lot and spent the next several days at home recovering.

“This has had a very severe impact on my health, on my emotional well-being and on my family,” Mr. Sharma said.

Hon. Deepak Obhrai condemned the attack on Mr. Sharma, who has worked as a journalist in Calgary since 1995.

“When influential people like US President Donald Trump say journalists are enemies of the people, this creates a poisonous atmosphere towards journalism. The vicious attack on Mr. Kumar Sharma is political violence towards a journalist. This is not only an attack on our freedom of speech, but on our democratic principles as well,” Mr. Obhrai said.

Mr. Obhrai called upon the Calgary Police to investigate this attack and charge those associated with this crime.

Ottawa Office:

Room 426N Centre Block
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6
Tel: (613) 947-4566
Fax: (613) 947-4569



Constituency Office:

Radisson Centre
Suite 225, 525-28 Street SE
Calgary, Alberta
T2A 6W9
Tel : 403-207-3030
Fax : 403-207-3035



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“Our own security and the safety of our communities are also threatened by such incidents,” Mr. Obhrai said.

The link to the Press Conference video is available here:

<https://www.facebook.com/deepak.o.mp/videos/10214114827038880/>

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*For more information, please contact
The Office of Hon. Deepak Obhrai, P.C., M.P. at (403) 207-3030
or by email at Deepak@Deepakobhrai.com*

Ottawa Office:

Room 426N Centre Block
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6
Tel: (613) 947-4566
Fax: (613) 947-4569



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