

India 'Outraged' Over Verdict

NEW DELHI - A day after two Indo-Canadians were acquitted for the 1985 bombing of an Indian airliner, New Delhi on Thursday said it was outraged that those responsible for the terror attack had not been brought to book.

"At this difficult moment, we can only share the hopes of all those affected by this tragedy that one day, justice may yet be done," external affairs ministry spokesman Navtej Sarna told reporters.

"We have noted the judgement delivered on March 16 by the British Columbia Supreme Court regarding the Air India Kanishka bombing case," he said.

The Kanishka bombing has been the most heinous terrorist attack in civil aviation history.

"We share the sense of outrage among the relatives and friends of those who lost their lives in that attack that after almost two decades,

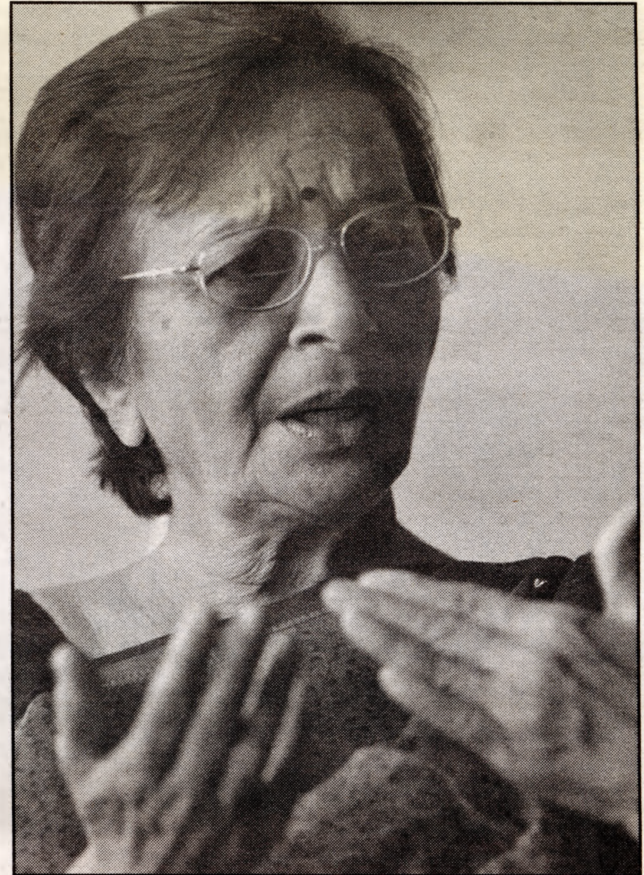
the culprits have not been brought to account."

Canadian Judge Ian Bruce Josephson on Wednesday declared the two accused Indo-Canadians - Ripudaman Singh Malik and Ajaib Singh Babri - innocent in a historic judgment that came 20 years after the disaster.

Josephson called the evidence presented by witnesses as inconsistent and accused Canadian security agencies of gross negligence in investigations into the bombing of Air-India Flight 182 over Ireland that killed 329 people.

Upset relatives of some of the victims of the Kanishka bombing have demanded an official inquiry into the acquittal of the two accused.

The British Columbia attorney general has said his office would look closely at the 600-page verdict and decide whether an appeal would be filed.



Mukta Bhat, 73, who lost her son, daughter-in-law and six-month-old grandson to the deadly terrorist bombing of an Air India jumbo jet that killed all 329 aboard on June 23, 1985, speaks to media. Bhat said that she has not forgiven the accused and awaits the verdict of a Canadian judge set to rule on Wednesday.