

## VOICE OF REASON

# Rajnath defends Kashmiriyat spirit

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**NEW DELHI:** Union home minister Rajnath Singh used Twitter on Tuesday to counter angry demands for retaliation against the terror attack on Amarnath pilgrims in Kashmir and to send out a clear message that not all Kashmiris are terrorists.

Singh, not as prolific on the micro-blogging platform as Prime Minister Narendra Modi or external affairs minister Sushma Swaraj, turned the tables on author Shuchi Singh Kalra, who used a cuss word to question the home minister's defence of Kashmiriyat — the Sufi philosophy that for long defined life in Kashmir.

Hours after the attack that killed seven Amarnath pilgrims and injured several more on Monday, Singh noted in a tweet that the people of Kashmir had strongly condemned the brazen assault by terrorists. "It shows the spirit of Kashmiriyat is very much alive," he said.

Kalra responded by asking in a tweet: "Who gives a f\*\*\* about the spirit of Kashmiriyat at this moment? It's not your job to placate. Just drag those cowards out and cull them."

Singh's response to Kalra was devoid of any anger and to the point — he made it clear that he did care about Kashmiriyat.

"Ms Kalra I certainly do. It is absolutely my job to ensure peace



**> (...)** It is absolutely my job to ensure peace & tranquility (sic) in all parts of the country. All Kashmiris are not terrorists.

RAJNATH SINGH, Union home minister, on Twitter

& tranquility (sic) in all parts of the country. All Kashmiris are not terrorists," he said.

After Singh replied to the tweet, Kalra deleted the controversial tweet. Earlier, the Union minister described the assault on the pilgrims as a "cowardly act of terror" said it was heartening that the "whole nation stand(s) united against terrorism".

Singh, who has more than six million followers on Twitter, earned both praise and reproach for his tweet on Kashmiriyat. Some thanked him for his calm approach while others demanded he take action against the terrorists instead on tweeting a condemnation.