

LURKING FEARS IN PAKISTAN

A section of Pakistanis was jubilant as Taliban stormed into Kabul on August 15. As the discussions on a pro-government TV channel indicated, there were those in Pakistan who thought it was more of a defeat for India than for the United States. Prime Minister Imran Khan said that capture of Kabul by the Taliban was the liberation of Afghanistan. But not all Pakistanis considered forcible capture of a country as its liberation. Awami National Party (ANP), which swears by non-violence, criticizes the Taliban for spreading terror in Afghanistan. Khyber Pakhtunkhawa's ANP Provincial General Secretary Sardar Hussain Babak told party workers' convention in Bajaur that it was wrong on the part of the Taliban to take Afghanistan by force. He was critical of the international community and Muslim countries for not supporting former Afghan President Ashraf Ghani against the Taliban's onslaught. The Pakistani jubilation is not without an undercurrent in security. Currently there is debate on whether or not Prime Minister Imran Khan should shift to the official Prime Minister's House from his private house for security reasons. But Imran says he is very comfortable in his own private house.

Because of Afghanistan there is security concern in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also. Before Muharram earlier this month, the provincial government declared seven districts sensitive in view of the developments in Afghanistan. This decision was made at a meeting chaired by Chief Minister, Mahmud Khan and attended by civil and military high ups and regional police officers. He said that any situation in Afghanistan had a direct impact on the province. The existence of Pakhtuns or Pushtuns is traced to 4000 BC. Currently, divided to Durand Line, they are about half of Afghanistan and one fifth of Pakistan. Afghans do not recognize this Line. Pakistanis stick to it. Now they have put up a strong fence there. Afghans claim that the Durand Line has given many Afghan tribal areas to Pakistan, dividing Pushtun families. During their rule in Afghanistan (1996-2001), the Taliban refused to accept this Line although the Pakistan Army had installed them into power in Kabul. Recently, one of the Taliban said there should be no borders between Muslims. This reflected the Taliban's disapproval of the fence.

The Taliban are largely Pushtuns whose kith and kin were separated by the Durand Line. Muslim League leader Mohammad Ali Jinnah's two-nation theory, he propounded in Lahore in March 1940, did not attract Pakistanis Pushtuns. In the 1946 elections to provincial Assemblies in United India, they supported the Congress Party, led in the province by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his brother Doctor Khan Sahib. The Congress won and Doctor Khan Sahib became the Chief Minister.

When Pakistan came into being, Jinnah became the Governor General of the country and dismissed Doctor Khan Sahib government saying the Congress had no place in Pakistan. On August 12, 1948 hundreds of Ghaffar Khan's followers, known as Khudai-Khidmatgars, were killed in Babara when they protested against the dismissal. Khidmatgars were non-violent servers of people. The Awami National Party (ANP), which is there-incarnation of Ghaffar Khan's National Awami Party (NAP), sticks to the policy of non-violence. That is why it does not approve Taliban's terror activities.

But NAP's policy of non-violence is now like a voice in the wilderness in the tribal areas which are now a resentful part of Kyber Pakhtunkhawa. Pushtuns in the tribal areas turned out to be the main target of Gen Raheel Sharif's 2014 military action which was purportedly aimed at terrorists. But the terrorists had been pre-warned to leave the targeted areas. The Army killed hundreds of residents and presented them to the world as terrorists. Their houses, schools, hospitals, shops and road were all destroyed in aerial bombing. Seven years later, they are still living in these ruins during summer, monsoons and freezing winters. In addition to this, there is very high cost of living and rampant unemployment among Pushtun youth here. There is nagging feeling among them that the government is not concerned.

Perhaps Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhawa fears the impact of the Taliban's takeover of Kabul on his province is simmering Pushtunanger. The Pushtun youth, led by Manzoor Pashteen, have set up an organization to protect Pushtuns. It is called Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM). It considers the Pakistan Army as the main enemy of Pushtuns. The Army, therefore, is its target at all public meetings at the risk of courting the charge of sedition.

Last year in January, Pashteen was arrested for 14 days on various charges including that of sedition and terrorism. Amnesty International condemned this arrest. The anger of Pushtun may not be the only reason for Pakistan's fear of its own creation, Taliban. Their interaction with world powers and the media in the past 20 years has kind of transfigured them. In the next dispensation, they will not be so beholden to Pakistan as they were during 1996-2001.

What should be alarming to Pakistan is that the Taliban take independent decisions about its foreign affairs which Pakistan may consider against its own policy. For example, the Taliban's desire to have good relations with India including transit trade through Pakistan. Also, the Taliban may raise the issue of fencing the Durand Line which the Afghans do not accept. They may also raise the question of the plight of Pushtuns in Pakistan.



OFF 'D' CUFF

Sign of strength

gain or acts in rage and anger. Punishing oneself unjustly is also a form of violence. Non-violence is a manifestation of a state of mind which does not wish to harm anyone. When a person has perfected the practice of non-violence, in his very presence all violence disappears.

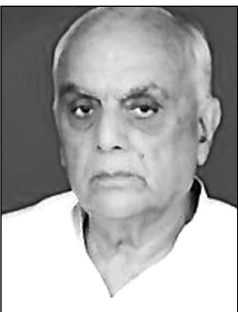
To some, ahimsa might appear as a utopian and impractical ideal. But it is not so. Just dig deeper and see it in the context of the intention or the seed behind an action. Anything that is done without rage or deliberate intention to harm, will not amount to a violation of ahimsa, even if the action appears to be harming other lives. On the other hand, if a person harbours a thought of harming someone but doesn't act on it, the very thought itself would constitute an act of violence.

Violence occurs when one harms others for personal

Even if a snake is not poisonous, it should pretend to be venomous.

-Chanakya

Political awakening in Jammu on rise, situations speak for itself



■ ER P L KHUSHU

Life is short and unpredictable like the April rain. The humans under the influence of selective amnesia try to forget most of the happenings in one's life. But the scars left by bigger damages in one's life cling to one's ethos of memory like showing a red rag to a bull. When it happens, one feels paralyzed in a whirlwind of emotions. Such situations play havoc with psycho-physical system of a person, making it a complicated procedure to shift normal thinking to the grief torn situations associated with the memories of one's loss of his/her birth place and the augural components attached with it, which ultimately gives a prolonged sadness to a person. That is true about this author along with his family members, who is a displaced person from Kashmir for no fault of his, getting often reminded about his origin and birth place, viz, a treasure of heavens. But the nature is so magnanimous that it has kept pain and pleasure as the two sides of the same coin. Jammu has been his abode after the forced migration as is the case with all other such Kashmiri migrants mostly. Out of the Frying pan into Fire does not fit in here as it was almost reverse with all the migrants Pundits, after landing in Jammu. Jammu and its noble people sheltered most of the migrants from Kashmir with love, affection and decent credence of dignity, without any bias of region, caste or religion. Kashmiri Pandits got a new lease of life in Jammu and of course saved them from death and annihilation, though the scars of their destruction and annihilations due to forced migration will continue to haunt them forever. While living in Jammu, the author of this article comprehended the pain and distress which Jammu and its people have been facing since 1947, due to the apathetic attitude of the dynastic rulers of Kashmir towards Jammu, who had been considering Jammu as their colony with a sordid support of the central government which most of the times was of congress party. It is dismally unfortunate that the leaders of the congress party from Jammu maintained a suspicious silence about this discriminatory attitude of the valley based political rulers towards Jammu, for their surmounting personal gains, mostly political in nature in such a process. This author through the columns of the STATE TIMES Jammu wrote several articles about such a poignant situation of Jammu and its people since 1947, for being neglected in all the spheres of developments at the hands of the dynastic rulers from Kashmir. A regular appeal was being made in all such articles to the various political parties of divergent views to come together and fight for the cause of Jammu, its development and rights through the columns of STATE TIMES, a pioneer newspaper of Jammu, vociferously fighting for the cause of the neglect of Jammu through its meritorious journalistic approach. There is a famous dictum which says 'Silence amounts to Speech'. If Jammu and its people remained silent and peaceful so far, while accommodating all the insinuations in respect of its governance and development, both from the central government and the dynastic rulers of Kashmir, it does not mean that they do not understand as to what is happening around. This silence needs to be gauged by the rulers in power seriously, now as enough is enough.

■ DR VIKAS SHARMA

The pomegranate (Punica granatum) is a fruit-bearing deciduous shrub in the family Lythraceae, subfamily Punicoideae, which grows between 5 and 10 m (16 and 33 ft) tall. The pomegranate was originally described throughout the Mediterranean region. It was introduced into Spanish America in the late 16th century and into California by Spanish settlers in 1769. The fruit is typically grown in season in the Northern Hemisphere from October to February and in the Southern Hemisphere from March to May. As intact sarcotesta or juice, pomegranates are used in baking, cooking, juice blends, meal garnishes, smoothies, and alcoholic beverages, such as cocktails and wine. Pomegranates are widely cultivated throughout Middle East and Caucasus region, north and tropical Africa, the Indian subcontinent, Central Asia, drier parts of Southeast Asia, and the Mediterranean Basin. Punica granatum is a native of Iran and is considered as one of the oldest known edible fruit that is mentioned in the Koran, the Bible, the Jewish Torah and Babylonian Talmud as 'Food of God' that is symbolic of plentiness, fertility and prosperity. Anar is featured virtually in all major religions and has been used for centuries as a folk medicine for the management and treatment of diverse ailments. Pomegranate fruit is a rich source of two types of Polyphenolic compounds: anthocyanins and hydrolyzable tannins, which account for 92 per cent of the antioxidant activity of the whole fruit.

Anti-oxidant: Pomegranate seeds get their vibrant red hue from polyphenols. These chemicals are powerful antioxi-

A silver lining is now being observed on the horizon, when two most credible political stalwarts of National Conference belonging to Jammu, resigned from the National Conference, not for any personal gains but on the anomaly of having felt concerned about the neglect of Jammu by various dynasty based power centers from Kashmir, to which the National Conference is the principle partner which ruled the state ever since 1947, with Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah taking the reins of governance of Jammu and Kashmir in 1948, from the great ruler of Jammu and Kashmir the Maharaja Hari Singh as a free gift at the asking of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India. Congress party too ruled Jammu & Kashmir for most of the time, but that was again an apology as for as the interests of Jammu and its people were concerned. In fact Jammu and its people suffered more during the congress rule in this part of country. Recognition had started gaining ground much earlier amongst the important political leaders of Jammu and Kashmir, that Jammu division has been ignored so far. The national conference having ruled Jammu & Kashmir for a long time, admits through its tall mentor Dr Farooq Abdullah, that Jammu has its own problems and issues, while submitting memorandums to the Delimitation Commission very recently, through leaders of this party belonging to Jammu, who have resigned now from that party. Amid criticism from various circles that National Conference's proposal to the Delimitation Commission in Jammu echoed BJP's demands, the party president said as per press reports, the issues in the two regions of the Union Territory were different from each other. Speaking to reporters, the president of this party said the different issues projected by the party's Jammu unit should not worry the people. It is an honest admission and a bold confession of facts, whatever the reasons of compulsion for such an admission. Better late than never. With the formation of Gupkar Alliance, by a handful political leaders of Kashmir, showed dissent of sorts on most of the issues like abrogation of Articles 370, 35A and the like for its consumption for the people of the valley, through a declaration known as 'Gupkar Declaration'. This alliance had no space or energy for the problems and the step motherly treatments meted out to Jammu so far since 1947. The superiors in this alliance have even gone to the extent of even going to China for help on the so called Kashmir issue. These leaders are repeatedly advocating that India should talk to Pakistan on this so called Kashmir problem, when scores of people in Kashmir particularly from the minority community and those believing in secular India are getting mercilessly killed. These leaders from Kashmir are on record to have tried many options to change the demographic character of Jammu. Thus, apparently the true nationalists amongst this party from Jammu asking seeking advice from their conscience that what is right and what is wrong for them, while being on important positions in such a party, have opted out from this political party which is still doubting the full and final accession of Jammu and Kashmir with India after the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35 A. In retaliation to the creation of the Gupkar Declaration a similar declaration is badly needed for Jammu and its people to be called as 'Jammu Declaration', when the base and the foundation stone for the same has been laid by Devender Singh Rana, a veteran and an experienced political leader from Jammu, supported and augmented by the versatile support from another shrewd and matured leader from

Jammu Surjit Singh Slathia, along with their resigning from National Conference. Devender Singh Rana has declared that Jammu Declaration which is my political philosophy will be pursued religiously, Surjit Singh Slathia and Devender Singh Rana both joined BJP recently at party headquarters at New Delhi. BJP should not take it as a shot in their arm politically. BJP should feel proud that these two prominent energetic leaders of Jammu who had kept national conference's face alive and active in Jammu and are enjoying a mass base amongst their followers have joined BJP for the development and recognition of Jammu as an entity of 'Dogra' face and culture.

Addressing the media after joining party at its headquarters in Delhi, these leaders said that they believed in a political narrative from Jammu for Jammu and Kashmir. To that end they said that they were in talks with political parties about the Jammu declaration and it was the BJP that was forthcoming. Jammu also has the right to have a political narrative for Jammu and Kashmir,' they said, adding that there were 'some people who want to weaken ethos of Jammu and Kashmir'. They said that BJP would take people of Jammu and Kashmir forward in the national interest. Vowing to pursue Jammu Declaration, a political roadmap emanating from Jammu 'religiously & resolutely', Devender Singh Rana described the concept as key to retrieving back the glorious ethos of inclusive Jammu and Kashmir to its pristine glory again. He said that the Jammu Declaration is a way forward for respecting the urges and aspirations of all the regions and sub-regions of Jammu and Kashmir with none being discriminated against or dominated politically, socially and economically. Each one, irrespective of region, religion or caste must have equal rights on resources and in governance. Fair play and justice should not only be the bedrock of the political system but even the perception of one being appeased at the cost of other due to politico-strategic expediencies should become an imperative of the past, he said, adding that Jammu region has hugely suffered on all these counts over the decades. Rana exuded confidence that the Jammu Declaration will eventually lead to offsetting the fault-lines created between the regions, various segments of society, as also with the rest of the country. The trust deficit of decades is, therefore, needed to be bridged for ensuring harmony and unity between peoples and the regions and sub-regions in this part of the country. In its composition it is a welcome step for Jammu and its people for the development of Jammu which is a respectable entity of India, culturally wedded to the ethos of real secularism and brotherhood. Much more political and intellectual entities need to associate themselves with 'Jammu-Declaration', and help and assist BJP echelons of Jammu to achieve this goal in real letter and spirit. BJP is the only notional political party under the circumstances in and around Jammu, which can be utilized to achieve this goal. BJP and its managers managing Jammu & Kashmir, have to rise to the occasion with a vast mind and thinking in solving problems of people of Jammu and Kashmir. It may sound bitter to say that while BJP was in governance of Jammu and Kashmir with PDP, a folly of life time for the BJP, it hardly bothered to ensure that Jammu should get its due, which is unfortunate. Let it not be repeated with the inclusion of new blood in this party.

(The author is a Chartered Consultant Civil Engineer, passionately attached and devoted to his Motherland-Jammu & Kashmir).

Pomegranate: a food of God

dants. Pomegranate juice contains higher levels of antioxidants than most other fruit juices. It also has three times more antioxidants than red wine and green tea. The antioxidants in pomegranate juice can help remove free radicals, protect cells from damage, and reduce inflammation.

Vitamin-C: The juice of a single pomegranate has more than 40 percent of your daily requirement of vitamin C. Vitamin C can be broken down when pasteurized, so opt for homemade or fresh pomegranate juice to get the most of the nutrient.

Cancer prevention: Pomegranate juice recently made a splash when researchers found that it may help stop the growth of prostate cancer cells. Despite multiple studies on the effects of the juice on prostate cancer, results are still preliminary. While there haven't been long-term studies with humans that prove that pomegranate juice prevents cancer or reduces the risk, adding it to your diet certainly can't hurt.

Alzheimer's disease protection: The antioxidants in the juice and their high concentration are believed to stall the progress of Alzheimer disease and protect memory.

Digestion: Pomegranate juice can reduce inflammation in the gut and improve digestion. It may be beneficial for people with Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, and other inflammatory bowel diseases. While there are conflicting beliefs and research on whether pomegranate juice helps or worsens diarrhea, most doctors recommend avoiding it until you are feeling better and your symptoms have subsided.

Anti-inflammatory: Pomegranate juice

is a powerful anti-inflammatory because of its high concentration of antioxidants. It can help reduce inflammation throughout the body and prevent oxidative stress and damage.

Arthritis: Flavonols in pomegranate juice may help block the inflammation that contributes to osteoarthritis and cartilage damage. The juice is currently being studied for its potential effects on osteoporosis, rheumatoid arthritis, and other types of arthritis and joint inflammation.

Heart disease: Pomegranate juice is in the running as the most heart-healthy juice. It appears to protect the heart and arteries. Small studies have shown that the juice improves blood flow and keeps the arteries from becoming stiff and thick. It may also slow the growth of plaque and buildup of cholesterol in the arteries. But pomegranate may react negatively with blood pressure and cholesterol medications like statins. Be sure to talk with your doctor before indulging in the juice or taking a pomegranate extract supplement.

Blood Pressure: Drinking pomegranate juice daily may also help lower systolic blood pressure. A comprehensive review of randomized controlled trials stated that it would be beneficial for heart health to include pomegranate juice daily.

Anti-viral: Between Vitamin-C and other immune-boosting nutrients like vitamin E, pomegranate juice can prevent illness and fight off infection. Pomegranates have also been shown to be antibacterial and antiviral in lab tests. They are being studied for their effects on common infections and viruses.

Vitamin-rich: In addition to vitamin C

and vitamin E, pomegranate juice is a good source of foliate, potassium, and vitamin K. Whether you decide to add pomegranate to your daily diet or just sip on it every now and then, check the label to ensure that it is 100 per cent pure pomegranate juice, without added sugar. Or, juice it fresh.

Memory: Drinking 8 ounces of pomegranate juice a daily may improve learning and memory, according to a recent study.

Sexual performance & fertility: Pomegranate juice's concentration of antioxidants and ability to impact oxidative stress make it a potential fertility aid. Oxidative stress has been shown to cause sperm dysfunction and decrease fertility in women. The juice has also been shown to help reduce oxidative stress in the placenta. But researchers don't yet know the exact benefits this may provide. Drinking pomegranate juice can also increase testosterone levels in men and women, one of the main hormones behind sex drive.

Endurance & sports performance: Move over, tart cherry and beet juice. Pomegranate juice may be the new sport performance enhancer. The juice may help reduce soreness and improve strength recovery. It also decreases oxidative damage caused by exercise. Diabetes: Pomegranate was traditionally used as a remedy for diabetes in the Middle East and India. While much is still unknown about the effects of pomegranate on diabetes, it may help decrease insulin resistance and lower blood sugar.

(The author is Assistant Professor in Division of Biochemistry, SKUAST-Jammu).

water lying anywhere in or around the house. It's very dangerous as these misquotes lie on this stagnant water only, it doesn't matter if it is dirty or clean.

Spray the house with anti-mosquito sprays, like Kala Hit every day in the corners of your home to kill the hidden mosquitoes. Keep your wet garbage separate and throw in a wet bin (which is kept covered). In the rains, the chances of you getting infected by the Dengue/ mosquito are extremely high due to the level of stagnant fresh water increase; at this point all measures of safety should be used.

Try to wear clothes that don't leave any skin areas exposed. Wear a mosquito repellent cream and carry it

with you at all times for dengue prevention and control. Keep the doors and windows of the house closed, mostly early in the morning and during the evening.

Change your hand towels after a day's use. Keep your wet and soggy clothes and shoes away from the dry garments. Also, try to dry the wet ones as soon as possible. It's not only about our homes, we need to keep our area and city both clean. Where ever you find gutters which are not being cleaned, find some solution for it. Take it up to your local 'residence welfare association' or community head.

Ragini Sharma, Scholar JU.

YOUR COLUMN Stay safe from dengue

Dear Editor, Dengue virus, one of the most dangerous diseases caused by mosquitoes, can be prevented if one takes proper care. The simplest way to stay safe from this dengue disease is to ensure that mosquitoes do not breed in your surroundings. Here are some tips for dengue prevention: Keep your house clean and tidy. Do not leave stagnant