

AFGHAN SHOULD BEWARE OF PAK’S DESIGNS

Pakistan's proposed offer of citizenship to Afghan refugees is a colossal fraud on the people of Afghanistan given the grim scenario of starvation and violence facing them caused by none else but Pakistan. Pakistan's silence on the Taliban revenge killing of civilians and gross-ill treatment of Afghan refugees over the decades reveal the true nature of its intent-to use Afghans as a leverage to extract billions of aid, a repeat of `global war on terror` tactics of pocketing billions.


The most telling and tragic consequence of Pakistan's treachery has been stark starvation and deaths staring at millions in Afghanistan today. Just after a elected government in Kabul, millions of children, women and others are faced with starvation and other malnutrition-related ailments. The United Nations report that at least a million young children are in the grip of an endless cycle of malnutrition and could face serious ailments and death in the coming weeks. Children have already started dying in some of the poorer regions. In Ghor for instance, at least 17 children have died of malnutrition in the last six months. Another 300 are under medical care for the effects of hunger. Several hundred children in central parts of the country face a similar dire situation.

In all, the UN estimates that about five million children will be struggling with malnutrition and its serious aftereffects by the end of this year. What the UN chooses not to state publicly is how many of these children will die of starvation? And what is the number of women and old who face starvation and even graver consequences? Pakistan's role in the unfolding collapse of their beloved country could not be lost to the people of Afghan who are now being tempted by an offer of citizenship. It is clear to them that Pakistan was a bigger enemy than the Taliban or Islamic State of Khorasan (ISKP). Behind the facade of a helping neighbor, Pakistan has played a deceitful game on them and has brutally snatched a sliver of a chance at becoming a progressive, democratic country. Today, Afghanistan is faced with the scenario of becoming a basket case, all because of Pakistan and its ally, the Taliban. Pakistan has betrayed the people of Afghanistan in another gruesome manner--it has remained mute to the Taliban's spree of revenge killings in areas where they faced stiff resistance to their takeover. In Spin Boldak for instance, the Taliban have gone on a killing spree of civilians since taking over Kabul. The Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission termed it a war crime and sought international help in holding the Taliban accountable.

Despite such hue and cry, the Taliban, in collusion with Pakistani intelligence agency, ISI, was hunting down former Afghan military personnel and police officials.

In Kandahar, for instance, the Taliban massacred at least 40 former and current government officials. The Taliban are specially looking out for former army personnel. Several Special Forces soldiers have been killed in Jalalabad and Kandahar. Many have gone into hiding. The Taliban have launched a house to house search in many provinces, driving former soldiers out and then shooting them in cold blood. Pakistan's silence speaks volumes of its complicity in the latest round of atrocities on the people of Afghanistan. Pakistan's malevolent intent towards Afghans is also borne out by how it was denying international aid to Afghan refugees who had to fled to Pakistan in the past as well as in the present \$5.20 per refugee per year in international aid for providing healthcare and education facilities to Afghan refugees. If the total number of registered refugees is taken into account i.e. 1.5 million, the total aid amounts to several millions of dollars. A large part of this aid is quietly diverted by Pakistan, leaving Afghan refugees to fend for themselves most of the time. The Afghan refugees are viewed suspiciously in Pakistan, questioned and detained for every crime involving drugs and killing sin cities like Karachi.

The offer of citizenship is nothing but a sugar-coated cyanide pill aimed at killing the spirit of proud Afghans.



OFF 'D' CUFF

‘Monism in Kashmir Shaivism’

Although the main principle of both Kashmir Saivism and Vedanta is advaita, monism, pure monism, yet there are many important differences in their thinking. For example, Vedanta masters teach that karmayoga means yoga in action. They believe that you must practise nishkama karmayoga, which means that you are to perform all the actions of the world without asking for any reward.

They say that by acting in this way you are carried toward the existence of the Real Being, the Real Nature of Self. From our Kashmir Saiva point of view, however, karmayoga means something else. It does not mean carrying out all of the activities of the world. Yoga in action is pure yoga and nothing else. Pure yoga is one-pointedness, and this one-pointedness must be developed in three ways.

You must develop one-pointedness in the existence of your being. This is one-pointedness in the state of para vak, supreme speech. You must also develop one-pointedness in the state of madhyama vak, medium speech. And finally, you must develop one pointedness in the state of vaikhari vak, inferior speech, in the state of ordinary speech....

When will bloodshed end in valley?

■ OMKAR DATTATRAY

The targeted killings of the minority community members are once again taking place at the behest of the rouge state of Pakistan. The selective killings of seven civilians belonging to the Hindu and Sikh communities are unfortunately taking place in just seventy two hours. The killings of the Kashmiri Pandits and other minority community members is a very serious matter and it should attract the attention of the powers and the ways should be found out to stop such killings. These killings put a big question mark on the plan of the return and rehabilitation of the Kashmiri Pandits. The unfortunate killings of the Pandits and other minority people bring down shivers down ones spine and these killings are condemnable. These selective killings remind us of the hay days of terrorism of 1990 when the killings of the prominent Kashmiri Pandits was done to scare them and made them to flee Kashmir. This time also the aim of the terrorists is to create fear psychosis so that the Pandits and other minority members will be forced to leave the valley. The killing of the Pandits and other minority community members is a heinous act and an act against the man and god. This blood bath of the Kashmiri Pandits should stop for the sake of the humanity and for flourishing of the secularism. But one fails to understand how long these killings will continue to take place. The killing of a policeman belonging to Kashmiri Pandit community and thereafter the brutal murder of the famous Kashmiri Pandit chemist Makhan Lal Bindroo who was running his medical shop in the centre of the Srinagar city and was providing the medical services to the local and poor people is a gruesome act and deserves strongest condemnation by one and all. Now the dastardly killing of the two school teachers in the broad day light and in the school itself should open the eyes of those who are parroting day in and day out that the situation in the Kashmir are normal and peace is returning to the valley. Pakistan wants to create the atmosphere of fear and insecurity in the valley and

thus its terrorists are killing the soft targets in order to create fear psychosis to force the minorities to leave the valley. This time the brutal killing of Deepak Chand, who was employed under the PM Package is a teacher is aimed at creating fear among the PM package employees so that they will leave the valley and loose their job. To be clear the strategy and modus operandi of the terrorists is to kill one and scarce the hundreds so that those Kashmiri Pandits working in the valley are forced to leave Kashmir and take refuge in Jammu and other places of India. The killing of the PM package employee is a direct threat to all those who are working in Kashmir and the single aim and objective of the gun wielding youth is to create fear so that the employees who are working in the valley and belonging to the Kashmiri Pandit community will think of leaving the Kashmir. The killing of the non-local Hindu Pharewala is shame on the face of Kashmiriyat and insaniyat. The selective killing of the minorities of the Kashmir is continuing and the spilling of the blood does not stop. The government should give full powers to the security forces so that the unfortunate killings of the minorities and other civilians will not take place again. The government should act fast and empower the security agencies to nab the terrorists and put them behind the bars. But the powers seem to be in deep slumber and are only taking to propaganda of the so called return of peace in the valley .However the hard fact is that the terrorists are once again consolidating their cadres and are killing the people especially the members of the minority community with sadistic pleasure. Pakistan does not like the return of peace in the valley and is in the look-out for creating trouble in Kashmir and so she directs its trained terrorists to continue the naked dance of death and destruction. Therefore the terrorists are continuing their shameful game of killings of the minorities and other civilians to bleed the Kashmir valley and thus force the minorities to shun the valley for good. The fact of the matter is that the Sikhs by and large did not leave the

valley in the hay days of terrorism of 1990 and they stayed back in Kashmir and they are an eyesore for the terrorists and hence the terrorists are looking for the opportunity to make them to flee their homes and hearths. Thus the women Sikh principal of a higher secondary school was killed in the school premises and such a killing is a heinous crime and deserves strongest condemnation by all right thinking people. One fails to understand as to how long will the blood bath continue to take place. We have seen many deaths of the innocent persons and much innocent human blood has been spilled during these years of terrorism and now it should stop for the good of the country and for the flourishing of the secularism as the killing of the minorities is a slap on the secular face of the country. We have seen the blood bath of the minority Pandits in Nadimarg, in Sangrampura, of minority Hindus in Prankot, and of the Sikh community members in Chattisingh Pora. All this goes on in the independent India and it is a shame to us all. Now the killing of the Pandits and other Hindus and Sikhs should stop immediately. For this the government should crack on the terrorists and give full powers to the different agencies so that they are in a position to kill the terrorists and nab those who surrender. In any case the killing of the Pandits and other minorities has put a great question mark on the government's plan of so called return and rehabilitation of the Pandits in the valley. If the killings of the Pandits and other minorities continue to take place all the plans of the return and rehabilitation pale into insignificance and are derailed. Thus because of the unfortunate killings of the Pandits the return and rehabilitation seems to be utopian and only God needs to rescue the Kashmiri Pandits and other minority Hindus as the powers have failed to contain terrorism and terrorism. For stopping of the blood-bath the government should strike the very base of terrorism in Pakistan if it really wants to stop the dance of death and destruction in Kashmir. Enough is enough and now the bloodbath should stop. When will these minority killings stop is the million dollar question?

Break chain of child labour

■ ER PRABHAT KISHORE

Children are the future of a nation and are the mirror of its development. Their shriveled or blossomed face reflects country's degradation or advancement. Since ancient times, their care has been the sole responsibility of the society. In human life, childhood is the stage when they need love, affection, trust, responsibility and acceptability and safety. The people whose childhood has been secure, respectful & reciprocal, their personality and future are generally found to be balanced and they contribute for the well-being of the society. But, it is poignant that large portion of children have to spend their childhood in a miserable condition. The children, who should have to contribute in nation's progress as engineer, doctor, scientist, officer, journalist, businessman, or progressive farmer, are unfortunately engaged as child labourer for livelihood of their family.

A child is meant to learn and not earn. Chronic Poverty, high population growth, lack of interest in education, migration, natural disaster, increasing landlessness, rising and unemployment etc. are the underlying reasons behind the child labour. These children come from such family, who has no other means other than human work-force. Even after 73 years of independence, India has not come out of poverty. The economic as well as population policies of governments have failed and a large portion of the masses are bereft of even basic amenities. The problem of child labour has always been neglected at national level. Although this problem has its presence in all ages. In ancient time, the children engaged themselves in agriculture or other family occupations. After industrialization, the concept of child labour also transformed. Children became an independent unit and they have to join the workplace without guardian's protection and have to handle their problems themselves.

The child labour has been promoted gradually by industrialist, factory owner, hotels, and landlord farmers, because the children work for undefined hours without any hue & cry on minimal wages. 'More hands more work' mentality of labourer family has made the situation from bad to worse. Such children are deprived of inclusive social protection regarding education & all-round development and their whole childhood undergoes for earning wages. They are seen having sickle, fade or other equipments in their hand in place of books or notebooks.

The problem of child labour can be found in every corner of the world. India, Brazil, Haiti, Kenya, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Bangla Desh are the most affected countries. UNICEF report 2020 reveals that approximately 16 crore children are engaged in child labour, out of which half belongs to Asian sub-continent. Globally 9 million additional children are at risk of being pushed into child labour by the end of 2022 as a result of pandemic COVID 19.

The agriculture, forestry & fishing sector accounts for 70 per cent of children as child labour; followed by 20 per cent in service and 10 per cent in industry. The child labour in rural areas stands 14 per cent as against 5 per cent in urban areas. The

child labour is more prevalent among boys, but when household chores are taken into account, the gender gap narrows. Several industries in India are fully reliant on child labour: Kalin industry in Kashmir; glass industry in Firozabad, Cracker & match industry in Shivkashi (Tamilnadu), slate industry in Mandasaur (MP), leather industry in Kanpur & Agra, Diamond polish industry in Rajasthan & Gujarat, lock industry of Aligarh, Bangle industry of Jaipur; Hosiery, Bidi, fishery, etc. have their existence on the cheap wages of child labour. Most of the Dhabas and hotels in the country are flourishing due to 15-16 hour working of child labour. Involvement of child labour in hazardous activities leads to numerous health and psychological problems like chest & abdominal pain, skin infections, eye or ear problem, headache, physical tardiness, respiratory infections. Due to no proper guardianship & care such children often exposed to theft, violence, criminal activities, physical & sexual abuses, drugs and other immoral activities.

The problem of child labour has been tackled through protective legislation at both national and international levels. The government has enacted the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986 to prohibit the engagement of children in certain employment and to regulate the conditions of work in certain other employment. The Supreme Court in its judgement on 10th December 1996, has declared child labour as illegal. Article 24 of the Constitution prohibits the employment of children below the age of 14 years in any hazardous industry or factory or mines. Article 39 has provision of protection of children against exploitation and moral & material abandonment. Article 45 in the constitution deals the provision of free & compulsory education for children below 14 years and for 'Right to Free & Compulsory Education Act 2009' has been implemented in year 2010. The Factories Act 1948, The Plantation Labour Act 1951, Motor Transport Workers Act 1961, The Contract Labour Act 1970, and Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act 1976 have been promulgated. The words 'child' and 'labour' together signifies a disconcerting and negative narrative. But the prevailing socioeconomic conditions donot permit to root out child labour overnight. A hungry person can not be expected to listen to valuable advice unless he can fill up his stomach first. In 1987, National Policy on Child Labour was framed for education, health, entertainment, and other development works for their well-being, but it needs to be reshaped and keep free from bureaucratic red-tapism.

Child labour has been a burning issue all over the world. It cannot be eradicated without joint collaboration of society, family and administration. Child Labour is a social crime as every child has a right to shine. In today's scientific age, although we have reached on Moon and Mars, world has come closer due to globalization, and numerous works of development can be counted on finger; but the ground reality is that without rooting out the child labour, a nation cannot become 'Swasth, Sashakt & Samriddh Rashtra'.

(The author is a technocrat & academician).

YOUR COLUMN

Respect dignity of women

Dear Editor;

'Think Equal, Build Smart, Innovate for Change,' is exemplified by women around the world who are removing barriers for generations of women and girls to come. They inspire us with their determination to create a future where every woman and girl will experience freedom from discrimination at home, at work, and under the law - with every door in our society open to her. For as long as barriers and discrimination have existed, women have worked to overcome them and clear the way for the next generation, and this is also

Killing spree in Kashmir

■ COL (RETD) YOGINDER KANDHARI

A spate of recent reprehensible killing of innocents in Srinagar surprised none, not even the State Administration. Unfortunately for the grieving families, the State stood by shamelessly though forewarned through numerous written communications. After the unfortunate blood spilt on roads, the Government woke up to these warnings.

It is the bureaucrats' writ that runs the administration reducing the Lieutenant Governor to a titular head. Ever since his investiture in the seat of power, the LG was not allowed to meet a delegation of local Kashmiri Pandits (KP). They wished to apprise His Excellency precisely about the realities that unfolded to tragic consequences now. Alas! The bureaucrats always stand in the way.

India can't afford a repeat of the 1990s in the Valley. Rhetorically, the then squabbling central government, supported by the party in absolute power today, may be blamed for the lack of strategic and nationalistic vision. Theoretically, one can't similarly accuse the present dispensation.

History would neither spare those at the helm in the 1990s nor absolve those charged with the delicate responsibility now. True, insurgents hold the initiative in a conflict situation. Yet, the administration, security setup, including the intelligence mandarins, can't be absolved of the blame for not pursuing the credible trails to the lurking threats.

Further, counter-insurgency is a battle of wits and not about interpreting the law in the offices. Split-second decisions on the spot are crucial to success in this fight, and for that, officers of JKP must work more on the ground than to superintendent fight from their plush offices.

It is time some heads roll to ensure accountability for the dereliction. Thundering press statements scare none, insurgents the least. Political executive in New Delhi is under the spell of the mojo stories narrated by their newfound party cadres in the Valley.

A Union Minister from JKUT, post abrogation of Article 370, when questioned about the rehabilitation of KPs in the Valley, betrayed a confused understanding of the situation in the Valley.

Another Union Minister's comments comparing abandoned KPs to migrant labourers elsewhere reinforce the disdain. KP cadres in the ruling party kept mum for fear of losing the chance to make a fortune.

An expose about a KP lady corporator, with her hands in the till, might have been hushed up but it remains itched to the public memory.

A handful of left-over KPs in the Valley, spread over 272 locations, repeatedly requested the Union and the State Governments for secure accommodation at respective district headquarters only to be rejected offhand.

On the other hand, similar privilege is allowed to the newly recruited political carders from the majority community.

Why is the most vulnerable section of the society in the Valley denied this fundamental right to life? Those KPs who wear lifetime 'leadership' headgears in community assemblages remain least interested in these issues of grave concern to the Community. Post recent killings, shamefully, even the migrant KPs posted invectives against the non-migrants.

Do they wish to justify their cowardice by the use of such language? KP Community must learn to square up to its tormentors and not take pride in running away.

This behaviour is despicable. Navreh Milan address by the Second-in-Command in RSS or heralding a phony return of KPs to the Valley by the State BJP's organizing secretary are statements to befool the community.

While BJP-RSS milked the KP plight to the last drop during elections nationwide, neither the Government nor these organizations are serious about addressing their concerns.

The neglect of this minuscule ethnic minority's rights and aspirations has been absolute during the current regime's tenure thus far.

Hoodwinking the Community by creating an online portal to reclaim left-over properties is a gimmick to keep the people busy in futility.

Why can't the Government provide secure accommodation to those who seek it? An audit of the available government accommodation or JK Police resources frittered away on non-essentials would spare enough resources to house and secure the harried lot in the Valley.

The establishment would never undertake such an exercise, for, in a feudal structure, none wishes to part with privileges enjoyed on taxpayers money.

It is a deep-rooted nexus where the in-service benefits extend into retirement.

By withdrawing the option for the migrants to fight their court cases through the virtual mode, the judiciary has piled misery and additional costs on the litigants of the unfortunate minority.

Mind you, most of the litigations pertain to the usurpation of left-over properties.

Surprisingly, the virtual mode facility is still available for those who can afford expensive lawyers or those with the right connections.

Would the Chief Justice reconsider the decision? Lastly, mainstream political parties and civil society in Kashmir has not risen to the occasion in this hour of tragedy.

One can always throw a counter-argument. But the truth needs to be told.

The social and professional profile of those killed would put even barbarians to shame. Remember, rearing a snake in the backyard is always a dangerous proposition. Afghanistan is a case in point. Would the Government ever rise above petty political considerations to care for the ordinary people? I have my doubts.

(The author is a retired Army Officer).

lives. Of course, our colleges and universities wouldn't exist without our talented educators who deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. Today, it is important to recognize that women - including women of colour, Indigenous women, and women with disabilities - are disproportionately impacted by contract academic staff work, underlining the need to pay contract academic staff fairly.

Women deserve the dignity and respect of equal treatment, to have themselves reflected in the social structures around us, and the opportunity to pursue their dreams. I'm so proud to be a post-secondary educator and to be part of the labour movement bringing us closer to that reality every day.

Sugandh Sharma,
Greater Kailash.

