

ENHANCE INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITIES

As the threat of terrorist attacks is looming large because the desperate terror mongers are facing pressure from their mentors sitting across the borders, the need of time is that intelligence agencies should enhance their edifice by adopting a multifaceted strategy because they only have the key to stop such attacks. Lately, the security forces are working with close coordination and the only lacuna coming in the way of ensuring complete peace is gaps in intelligence inputs. The Government should work on this aspect as soon as possible because the strong intelligence can stop terror mongers from executing their nefarious designs like the one on Monday in Srinagar outskirts in which three cops were martyred and 11 others got injured. The police and other agencies in Jammu and Kashmir are quite resourceful since they have worked out the case to a large extent by identifying that two foreign and a local terrorist were involved in attack on Police Bus in Zewan in Srinagar. In this regard, Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kashmir, Vijay Kumar has informed that 25 policemen were in the bus at the time of the attack, carried by a Jaish-e-Mohammad offshoot. There is no doubt that cops and other security forces are rendering yeoman's service in cracking all cases related to terror but the intelligence network needs to be ramped up to nip the evil in the bud. This is very important right now as already so many lives have been lost and it has to be stopped by all means. Pertinently, this was first major attack on security forces in the Kashmir since Lethpora Pulwama car bombing in February 2019 that martyred 40 CRPF personnel. Although police is saying that preventive measures would be taken to prevent such attacks in the future but for this intelligence inputs can play a vital role. As major losses have been incurred by the country due to terrorism sponsored by Pakistan therefore government should ponder to take help from other countries to get latest intelligence related expertise as the same holds the key to stop terrorists from giving shape to their dangerous designs.



OFF 'D' CUFF

We can safely assume that all of us go through life with some incident happening that we do not like or that hurts us. Some person has wronged us in some way. Maybe someone has said something to hurt our feelings or hurt us physically. Someone might have taken something from us. Maybe someone has cheated, deceived, or lied to us. Someone we trusted might have broken that trust. Power, position, or wealth might have been taken from us. There is always a root cause of a problem between two people.

So, what happens next? We become upset, hurt, annoyed, and angry. We don't like it and we can't seem to forget it, thinking about it again and again. We may even talk to the person who hurt us or to others. Some people who have less control over themselves may thrash out physically to the person or take out their anger on someone else.

As the incident escalates, we find our thoughts and words occupied with how to rectify the situation. Some people will try to solve the problem peacefully by talking it over with the person who they felt had wronged them. Sometimes we try that, but the other person is not willing to listen to change. Then, we feel we must do something more drastic.

This leads to retaliation or revenge. We begin to think about ways to get back at the person who hurt us, or we think about ways to get even with them. Our mind refuses to forget what has happened until we retaliate. Thus, from that one incident, we end up creating more scenarios and situations in response. The other person then may get back at us for retaliating. A cycle of action and reaction may go on and on, escalating a small situation into a major problem.

What has happened in the process? We have lost our peace of mind. The initial incident may have lasted a few moments, or a few hours, or a day, but we have now spent hundreds of hours and countless days replaying what happened and thinking about how to

Anatomy of Anger and Retaliation

get even.

If someone has hurt us, we can choose to forgive and forget, or we can choose to retaliate. The choice is ours to make.

We do physical harm to ourselves when we are caught up in anger, hatred, and vengeance. These feelings cause damage to the body.

There are certain responses in the physical body designed to help protect itself in order to preserve the species. When a living creature senses danger, there are certain hormonal and chemical reactions within the body that help it respond to danger. These hormones cause one to fight or take flight. They are useful for giving the body strength and quick physical responses, such as running or protecting one's self. But if we interpret daily problems as life-threatening when they are not a threat to survival, then we are responding with the fight or flight hormones for no reason.

This causes the body to circulate hormones needed to run or protect one's self over minor situations that are part of daily life. Because these hormones, such as cortisol, are circulating through us when we do not need them to, they end up causing damage.

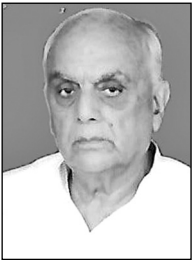
We know, for example, that cortisone has side effects on the body, so doctors recommend using it cautiously.

The solution for protecting the body against the hormones released by hatred, anger, and vengeance is simple: forgiveness. It is only through forgiveness that we can calm ourselves down and avoid the reactions of hatred and violence.

One technique to develop forgiveness is meditation. The problems of life will not end. However, through meditation we can focus our attention on the peace within so we can rise above life's difficulties. Through meditation we are in touch with a place of calm within us that gives us the strength to forgive others, overcome anger, and stay calm. We can choose peace and calm which will help improve our physical and mental health, and make for a happier life.

Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj

Omicron scare looms large



■ ER P L KHUSHU

The humans across this globe are under the wrath of this Coronavirus disease, (COVID-19) from the last 2 years now. The situation across the world has been such that humanity on this earth is under the cosmic vigilance of 'Nature', through its anger. Might be it is due to the bad behavior of humans across the globe towards 'Nature' and its potential qualities of simplicity and tolerance. Excessive mutilations have been committed and are still being committed by the subjects of this globe to harass the nature and its ecology for our personal benefits and lustful desires. Probably we are all suffering for that. The punishments are very serious yet simple to operate. Serious in the sense that we cannot shake hands to pay compliments to each other, as also we are supposed to talk to each other from a distance maintaining a minimum gap of about two meters and that too after plugging our mouths with masks etc. Though it is a process which is easy to operate yet it is a very serious punishment when the humans on this earth are supposed to gag their mouths and inhale back their good or bad breaths. In the alternative, we may not perish through each other's breaths, presumed to be containing a severe virus, which is nature's creation and spread across the globe as a death warrant for all the humans of this globe. Shaking hands as usual or making physical contacts with each other too has been banned as per this death warrant through the instrument of virus of COVID-19 pandemic. Does it mean that one human is a threat to the other human even within the same corridor of living atmosphere? It is augmented now by a new virus variant known as Omicron. It is a new dangerous virus making its way across the various regions of the world. First identified in Botswana and South Africa, this new iteration of the coronavirus has prompted concern among scientists and public health officials because of an unusually high number of mutations that have the potential to make the virus more transmissible and less susceptible to existing vaccines. The World Health Organization has called Omicron a 'variant of concern' and warned that the global risks posed by it were 'very high', despite what officials described as a multitude of uncertainties. Cases have been identified in dozens of countries on every continent except Antarctica. The 53 cases have been detected across India so far. In South Africa, where the variant is believed to have taken hold in some regions, the weekly average of new infections jumped from more than 2,000 on November 28 to over 8,500 on December 4. In Denmark, with experts attributing spike to Omicron infections and variant becomes a dominant strain in UK by the middle of this month, as per agency reports. In UK, Omicron's share in all samples analyzed to determine their genome sequence roughly doubled every three days. Similar growth has been recorded in European genome surveillance. Omicron's discovery has prompted considerable panic across the globe, with a number of countries banning flights from southern Africa, or like Israel, Japan and Morocco, barring entry of foreign traveler's altogether. But public health experts have urged caution, noting that there is as yet no firm evidence that Omicron is more dangerous than previous variants like Delta, which quickly overtook its predecessors in the United States and other countries. Although Delta turned out to be much more transmissible than prior variants, and there is some data suggesting it can cause more severe illness in the unvaccinated, but there is little evidence that, it is more lethal or capable of outsmarting vaccines. Much remains unknown about Omicron, including whether it is more transmissible and capable of causing more serious illness. There is some evidence the variant can re infect people more readily. In South Africa, where Omicron is already the dominant form of the virus, scientists have reported a sudden, sharp rise in coro-

navirus cases among people who had already been infected, in a study that has not yet been reviewed and published by a scientific journal. The experts noted that there was no such upswing when the Beta and Delta variants emerged.

The finding hints that Omicron may be less vulnerable to the body's immune defenses. Researchers in South Africa also reported that the variant appears to be spreading more than twice as quickly as Delta, which had been considered the most contagious form of the virus. There are some early signs that Omicron may cause only mild illness. But that observation was based mainly on South Africa's cases among young people, who are less likely overall to become severely ill from this virus. Experts are watching local disclosures from hospitals in South Africa's Tshwane, which is in the Gauteng province, the hotspot of Omicron infections. The assessment adds, "This is a picture that has not been seen in previous waves. In the beginning of all three previous waves and throughout the course of these waves, there has always only been a sprinkling of patients on room air in the COVID ward". The report, thus, implies that there are more COVID-19 patients in regular wards of the hospital than on oxygen support compared to previous COVID-19 waves which were caused by other variants. While this could be good news, there are several factors that could be involved - most of the infections may have happened in younger people, who are more likely to have high contacts. But, more importantly, it could simply be too soon for the infections to have progressed to a stage where people need oxygen support. The wait for conclusive evidence on this, however, continues. A preliminary scientific assessment in this regard says the variant appeared to be significantly more resistant to natural immunity in people who previously had COVID-19. They were yet to study the effects on those who had a vaccine, or both, a shot and an infection. Early reports suggest that people infected with the Omicron variant have symptoms similar to those of the flu, fatigue and head and body aches, whereas people with the Delta variant often report low oxygen levels, elevated pulse rates, and loss of smell and taste, according to experts. The advisory in this regard to be safe from this virus is the same as is in the case of coronavirus. Particular attention is towards vaccination and those who are still to get vaccinated are advised to get vaccinated soon and for those who have received only a single dose so far should immediately go for the second dose. Experts are thinking of booster doses too at least for the elderly. Then use of masks and self-distancing is very much essential to be safe from this virus. Public gatherings and social groupings are to be limited to a larger extent. The question remains as to how we respond to these measures as responsible citizens to avoid spreading of this new virus known as Omicron before it consumes us.

As per Dr Subramanian Narayanan-1st, the weight of a coronavirus is measured at 0.85, atto-grams or about one millionth of a trillion grams. 70 billion viruses that will make a person sick will be about 0.0000005 grams. Since, total number of cases workable worldwide is now over 2 million, the total weight of the rogue viruses that have descended on the world comes about to one gram. At the end of the day it means that the entire planet (or let us say MANKIND), is on its knees with just one gram of virus taking over. So, much for our illusion of self-grandeur and achievements in science. (Less than One gm of an organism that cannot even be called to be alive and the whole human race is at its knees). Thus, we have to be humble to the nature and subjugate to its natural parameters of divine principles, so that no imbalance is caused by the man made theologies, to suit our temporary desires and unlimited spurious needs at the cost of the degeneration of cosmic balance.

(The author is a Chartered Consultant Civil Engineer, who has fascination for his Motherland the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir).

Peace in Kashmir post-1339: Dear Farooq, Pak came into being only in 1947



■ PROF HARI OM

Chairman of Gupkar Gang, NC President and former J&K Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah, like Vice-Chairperson of Gupkaris, PDP President and former Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti, has once again urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to initiate a dialogue with Pakistan to restore peace in the Union Territory. The upshot of his whole argument is that accommodation of Pakistani view on J&K alone could help restore peace in Kashmir. He put forth the suggestion a day after terrorists attacked a police bus in Srinagar on December 13. The well-planned attack in which three J&K policemen were martyred and 11 others got injured.

The suggestion of the out-on-the-limb and frustrated Farooq Abdullah is as ridiculous and preposterous as it is outrageous, unsettling and utterly unacceptable. It's true that Pakistan - epicenter of global terrorism - has been bleeding and convulsing J&K's socio-religious and political scene since its very inception in August 1947, waged wars at regular intervals after September 1947 and unleashed dangerous low-intensity proxy war in 1980s to accomplish what it calls the 'unfinished agenda of partition'. However, it would be a devious and mischievous attempt to suggest that peace in Kashmir became a story of the past in 1947, when J&K was merged with India as per the Indian Independence Act of 1947, and that negotiated settlement with Pakistan over J&K alone would help restore peace and normality in this part of the country.

Farooq Abdullah, like others in Kashmir, is only seeking to mislead the national opinion and hoodwink the gullible by trying to convince the powers-that-be in New Delhi that Kashmir would continue to face terror attacks and bleed as long as the Pakistani questions on J&K remained unanswered. The truth is that peace in Kashmir became a story of the past in 1339, when the barbarous Shah Mir usurped Hindu throne through murder, rape, intrigue and deceit. Between 1339 to 1819, Shah Mir and others of his ilk, including Sultans, Mughals and Pathans, perpetrated barbarities on Hindus, the original inhabitants of Kashmir, on an unprecedented scale. Indeed, this was the darkest period in the history of Kashmir during which an overwhelming majority of Hindus were converted and many were lynched, maimed and murdered. This was also the period which witnessed exodus of Hindus from Kashmir at regular intervals. According to many authentic studies, Kashmir witnessed Hindu exodus at least six times between 1339 and 1819.

It was only during the Sikh rule (1819-1846) and Dogra rule (1846-1947) that the Islamists couldn't further their exclusivist and sinister agenda in Kashmir. It's a fact that Muslim religio-political leadership in Kashmir did create troubles in the Valley from

time to time after Kashmir became part of mighty Dogra Kingdom in March 1846. It's also true that the Kashmiri Muslim leadership did all to win the imperialist British Government to destabilise the Dogra rule and give a particular orientation to everything in Kashmir. It's also true that the radical Islamists in Kashmir challenged the authority of the state in 1931 and launched 'Quit Kashmir Movement' in 1946, but the visionary, effective and determined Dogra rulers, especially Maharaja Hari Singh, defeated all the nefarious designs of the Islamic zealots in Kashmir. So much so, Sheikh Abdullah would again and again tender apology to come out of the jail. Their single-point agenda between 1846 and 1946 was to end the Dogra rule in Kashmir and establish a separate Kashmir State.

Things worsened in Kashmir after the accession of J&K to India or after the end of 101-year-old Dogra rule on October 26, 1947. Courtesy: Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru and Congress. The fact of the matter is that the successive governments at the Centre allowed Abdullahs and Muftis to exercise unbridled politico-administrative and extra-constitutional powers so that the Islamists in Kashmir could misrule like they did between 1339 and 1819 and also create Kashmir-like situation in Jammu province. So much so, these governments at the Centre allowed them to indulge in anti-national and pro-Pakistan and pro-terrorist activities with likes of Geelani and Malikis playing their anti-India and anti-Hindu shots with utmost ease. No wonder then that they made Kashmir 100 per cent Hindu-free in 1990 and changed demography of Jammu on an unprecedented scale between October 1996 and February 2018 through dubious legislations, atrocious administrative orders and perverted and hostile elements in the Home, Revenue and Forest Departments. It was only in June 2018 that Narendra Modi Government read the writing on the wall and took a decisive action by bringing down dangerous Mehbooba Mufti Government. It didn't stop just here. The Modi Government repealed 70-year-old seditious Article 370 and 63-year-old illegal and discriminatory Article 35A under which all the non-Kashmiris were considered a persona non-grata in J&K. It would be only prudent to suggest that the period between 1947 and 2018 in J&K was the second blackest period which witnessed terror attacks in Kashmir and parts of Jammu province at regular intervals causing immense losses; disturbing the socio-religious and political equilibrium in the state; destroying Jammu and Ladakh socially, culturally, economically and politically; and creating very serious inter-regional tensions.

What does all this suggest? It suggests that Farooq Abdullah's whole approach is subjective and based on falsehood. The causes of terrorism in Kashmir are deeper and the most fundamental cause of terrorism in Kashmir since 1339 is the politics of exclusiveness based on religious fanaticism. It's time to call the bluff of Farooq Abdullah and others of his ilk in Kashmir and call the problem by name.

good practice. There is also an absence of proper career counseling at educational institutions due to which students remain away from proper guidance and support regarding selecting their future careers.

Further, majority students do not receive guidance or support during their early stage of education due to which they are left with no other option than to pursue the career paths chosen by their parents and ignore their own likes and specialities.

In recent years, due to mounting pressure from parents, teachers and examinations, even some students were pushed to commit suicide after failing to achieve desired results. Most students are unable to perform well in the examinations or professions because they do not have adequate knowledge of these careers. India is second most populous country in the world where there is an abundance of man-

Celebrating Unifier; tributes to Sardar Patel

■ ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL

The 75th year of Independence is a time to introspect, work and live for the nation in line with the vision highlighted by our forefathers.

December 15 marks the death anniversary of the great 'unifier of the nation', Sardar Vallabh Bhai.

The people of India will remain forever indebted to him for his leadership during the freedom struggle and his vision, wisdom, and statesmanship in the post-Independence era.

Patel began his public life as a municipal councillor in Ahmadabad and went on to become the Home Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of India.

He had a granular understanding of the various stakeholders in governance and administration and their relevance, roles, and responsibilities.

His steadfast approach while handling the complexities of the country made him a responsible voice of the masses. He actively strengthened the freedom struggle by mobilising people to fly national flag at public places in 1922-23.

The non-violent Bardoli Satyagraha turned out to be a matchless victory for peasants against the mighty British Empire.

His role in it led women to bestow him with the title of 'Sardar'. As an uncompromising disciplinarian and advocate for unity, he made remarkable contributions to the 1937 provincial elections, individual Satyagraha, the Quit India Movement.

For this, he spent considerable time in prison. As chairman of the Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights, Minorities and Tribal and Excluded Areas of the Constituent Assembly, Patel piloted important sections in the Constitution related to fundamental and minority rights.

He even emphasised that rights and duties are two sides of the same coin.

His meticulous handling of the integration of the princely states in a short time bears testimony to his zeal and steadfastness. Patel's diplomatic manoeuvres secured the 'accessions' of princely states and provided shape to the nation, bringing these areas in line with the constitutional framework.

The internal power struggles and sheer lack of democratic values in the Congress were visible while choosing the first prime minister of independent India.

It is pertinent to note that 12 out of 15 Congress Committees preferred Patel as leader. Nevertheless, Nehru was selected prime minister at this crucial juncture.

Sardar Patel's letter to Nehru on November 7, 1950, clearly highlights his vigorous criticism of Nehru's handling of Tibet, China, and Kashmir. Nehru's orientation resulted in the India-China and India-Pakistan wars in later years.

The 41-year delay in posthumously awarding the Bharat Ratna to Sardar Patel is another matter that underlines the Congress's reluctance in giving Patel the credit he deserves as a nation builder.

He was denied his due thanks to Nehruvian and leftist historians.

In addition to taking on the mammoth task of unification, the Iron Man of India was instrumental in strengthening the steel frame of India - the All India Services.

In November 1947, he decided to culturally connect the shared heritage and ethos of Indians by reconstructing the demolished Somnath temple that would depict the story of India's resurgence, the victory of construction over destruction.

The current government, under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has undertaken several initiatives in line with Patel's ideals and example.

The steel frame of India is being further strengthened to prepare future-ready civil servants through Mission Karma Yogi.

This capacity-building programme aims to overcome the challenges of a technologically-connected world, facilitate ease of living for citizens, provide the best governance, and make India's the world's best civil services.

The repeal of Article 370 was a well-thought-out move of the Modi government to correct a historic blunder. The government is also fulfilling Patel's dream with the overall development of Somnath, apart from making the temple complex more attractive.

On Patel's 143rd birth anniversary, the Statue of Unity, the tallest statue of the world, was dedicated to the nation.

From 2014 onwards, his birth anniversary, October 31, is observed as 'National Unity Day'. The Ek Bharat-Shreshtha Bharat initiative further strengthens the sustained and structured cultural connection between different regions. It is worth realising that the society we inherit owes everything to our forefathers. They worked hard to institutionalise the framework that empowers individuals to grow, attain their potential and scale new heights for the nation as a whole. As a part of the ongoing Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the death anniversary of Sardar Patel is an opportune moment to pay homage to the supreme sacrifices of the countless known and unknown individuals who made this possible, and pledge to achieve the goal of building a New India as a tribute to them.

(The author is Union Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs & Culture).



Mool Raj, Doda.