


BIG CONSPIRACY

The killing spree in the Valley is not the case of increasing crimes but it seems to be the part of larger conspiracy to kindle another spell of terrorism as already fear has surrounded the entire UT with terrorists targeting people at their free will with no fear of law of the land. After killing the lady teacher hailing from Samba and a banker from Rajasthan the terrorists have now fired upon two labourers in Budgam. Reportedly one among the two has succumbed making it amply clear that situation is grim and needs special attention of the government to repose faith of the public which is living under constant fear as no one knows who will be next on target of terror mongers who are selectively killing people like case during the 1990s, when there was an era of terror and tumult. Reportedly two non-locals were fired upon by terrorists in Magrayppora area of central Kashmir's Budgam district on the same day when a bank manager from Rajasthan was killed by terrorists inside premises of bank in Valley. One among the two labourers was killed. The spate in attacks on soft targets seem to be the response of terrorist organizations against the security forces' proactive action in the Valley through which many so-called terrorist commanders were eliminated and places in Kashmir were fully sanitized and made terrorism free. No doubt the terrorists will oppose any move by the government to end terrorism once and for all but this is temporary phase and will soon end paving way for long lasting peace. People have undaunted faith on the Modi Government's efficacy and sooner than later peace will prevail as these tactics of handful of terrorists can never deter government's plan to ensure peace and tranquility in J&K. In many cases of targeted killings the culprits have been eliminated and soon those involved in the latest crimes will also be taken care of by the security forces as no terror monger will be spared because the government has declared war on terrorists with policy of zero tolerance against terror in the Valley.

PEOPLE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES

It will not be inappropriate to say that the quantum of development works, initiated by the present Government led by Narendra Modi during its last more than 8 years, was earlier never witnessed by the people during the regime of earlier Governments. Although all the previous Governments ruled the country as per their policies and agendas but none gave such a prioritized treatment to welfare of people, which the ruling Government accorded while framing development plans and other policies. It has been observed that the present Government, not only claimed to put in place a working system where grievances of people would be resolved on top priority, but also initiated all necessary measures to realize this vision as at present we can observe a sea change in the official system across the country. Whereon home front, the government left no stone unturned for enhancing the socio-economic status of people besides ensuring provision of all necessary facilities at their doorsteps, on the other hand, several new flagship schemes were introduced for providing necessary monetary benefits and other facilities to poor and deserving across the country. For making the process of disbursement of benefits transparent, all the benefits were transferred into the bank accounts of the beneficiaries through Direct Benefit Transfer. As per sources, till date the present Government has provided more than Rs 22 lakh crore into the bank accounts of beneficiaries under several schemes. Moreover, it was also ensured that no undeserving or fake person can avail the benefit by ensuring various checks at different levels. It is due to this dedicated approach of the Government that it has removed almost 9 crore fake names existing in the lists of beneficiaries of various schemes during earlier Governments. With all such developments, it has been witnessed that the efforts of the Government in improving socio-economic status of people especially those residing in rural and hilly areas, has improved a lot thereby bringing a significant decline in the poverty rate, which has also been recognized by several international agencies. The Government deserves all kudos for such appreciable efforts meant for the welfare of people and looking at its working pattern, it is hoped that this massive transformation drive will accelerate further in coming days.



OFF 'D' CUFF

God is not God, but Supreme Immortal Power

Realized.

Where does God live? In a temple or a church? In shrines and places of pilgrimages? Does God live somewhere far away on a distant star? We have been taught that God is above the clouds in the skies. Therefore, whenever we pray, we often look up at the skies, imagining that God is up there. We even refer to our God as the Heavenly Father, who is up in the heavens or Uparwala, the one above. But is God really up there in the skies as many of us believe? No. God is everywhere! Because we don't know who God is and what God is, our beliefs about where God is are also untrue. The seekers of God who truly love their Lord, don't just pray. They go on a quest. They ask questions and they investigate till they Realize the Truth about God. If my God is God, then what about all the other Gods? How many Gods exist? Where are these Gods? The true lovers of God move forward in quest with such questions. They are the ones who realize that God is not God. God is SIP, the Supreme Immortal Power. They realize that while all religions are good, religions can never give us God. We have to evolve beyond our religion and realize the Power of the Divine that is deep within, below our skin. The quest for God is the first step to realize that God is the Supreme Immortal Power.

Air Atman In Ravi

Situation in Kashmir reverting back to 1990

■ OMKAR DATTATRAY

Unfortunately the situation in Kashmir today resembles the hey days of terrorism of 1990 when terrorism was at its peak and in fact the situation today is more grim than 1990. It is a cause of concern to the government, political parties and the people at large. Sincere steps need to be taken to tackle the grim and precarious situation in Kashmir so that it can be brought to normal, but it is a very herculean task and the government machinery and the security forces should tighten their belt and combat the deteriorating state of affairs with a new and multi pronged strategy so that the situation will limp back to normalcy. The terrorism should be dealt with strong hand and fought to the finish. The targeted killings of the Pandit package employees, other pandits, Hindu employees from Jammu posted in Kashmir and the non local labourers is taking place continuously and socking the land of Sufism with the innocent human blood and giving a bad name to Kashmir.

The Kashmiriyet and the communal harmony for which Kashmir was famous in the past is now a part of history and the Kashmiriyet today stands damaged perhaps beyond repair.

It is a matter of great introspection and soul searching and ways and means should be found out to reinforce the pristine beauty of Kashmiriyet and communal harmony and Hindu-Muslim unity. It is a matter of grief and sadness that the terrorists resort to the killings of the soft targets and are indulging in targeted killings to show their presence. Day in and day out the terrorists carry out dastardly crimes of killings of the soft and injuring even small children without any remorse. No day passes without the targeted killings of the Kashmiri pandits, package employees, Hindu employees posted across Kashmir and the non local employees and the labourers and the situation is worse than that obtained in 1990 and sincere efforts need to be taken to arrest the dangerous trend of killings and mayhem in Kashmir and to restore much needed normalcy but for this concerted and coordinated efforts should be taken to normalise the situations. There is the environment of fear and fear psychosis prevails in the valley and in the people feel insecurity and uncertainty of living. Innocent people of the minority community and the police

personnel and all those who stand for India and are nationalist are being liquidated and killed by the terrorists. The Hindu minorities, Kashmiri Pandits, package employees, police personnel, nationalists, non locals Hindus as well as Muslims are being targeted under a well nit plan to engineer ethnic cleansing in Kashmir so that the residual Pandits and other Hindu minorities are forced to migrate to safer places for their survival. In Kashmir the situation resembles the militancy of 1990 as the people are fear stricken and feel threat to their lives as the soft targets are killed under a definite plan to force migration of all the residual minorities still living in Kashmir. The modus operandi has been changed by the terrorist organisations and they are now resorting to targeted killing of the people belonging to Hindu minorities, Kashmiri Pandits and other non locals working in Kashmir.

The killing of the Bank Manager Vijay Kumar inside his bank in Arreh village in Kulgam district is an abominable crime and this is very condemnable and is a slap on the face of Kashmiriyet and communal harmony for which Kashmir was famous in the past. But now the atmosphere of fear and insecurity grips the Kashmir Valley and the people feel frightened and are panic ridden especially the Pandits, Hindus, non locals, people, policemen and all. Thus the minorities, nationalist people and the policemen are caught in an envelope of fear and are forced to live under perpetual fear and uncertainty.

The situation in Kashmir is very grim and precarious as the environment of fear and insecurity prevails and the soft targets are killed to force them to leave Kashmir like the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits in 1990. Therefore the ground conditions are akin to the situations as it obtained way back in 1990. Like the exodus of 1990 of the Kashmiri Pandits, the minorities have started their migration to Jammu and other safer places outside Jammu and Kashmir. There are reports that the government has sealed Kashmiri Pandit locations- colonies and are not allowing them to migrate to safer places. The Kashmiri Pandits and other Hindu minorities are being made hostages by none other than the LG administration. It is the worst kind of the human right violation committed by the government. When the minorities are leaving Kashmir for the

safety of their lives, they should be allowed to move from Kashmir and the government should not become a tool for the harassment of the minorities.

The Jammu employees posted across Kashmir valley are subjected to brutal attacks and a women school teacher Rajani Bala belonging to Samba in Jammu division has been killed near his school and this incident created scare and fear in the minds of these minorities and all the employees belonging to Jammu have fled the valley for the safety to their lives.

They are agitating and demanding their transfer and posting to their home districts. Likewise the Pandit package employees are agitating and demanding their relocation outside the Kashmir to Jammu division and other nearby states in order to save them from the bullets of the terrorists. The LG government of the UT and centre BJP government is not paying any heed to the genuine demand of relocation to Jammu and other states of the package employees. Hence the package employees have left the Valley for the safety and security to their life and limb and they have come to Jammu and other places for their safety. The ground conditions in the Kashmir valley are very dangerous and fragile as the innocent people belonging to minorities, Jammu employees working across Kashmir, non local Hindus and non Hindus, nationalist Muslims and above all the policemen are killed by the terrorists mercilessly and without any remorse by the terrorists.

It is very unfortunate that the common people feel scared and fear stricken and the government fails to come to their rescue and instil confidence among them. Majority of the package employees and all employees belonging to Jammu division have left the valley for Jammu as their colleagues were killed by the terrorists.

The UT government and the centre NDA government has failed to provide full security to the vulnerable sections of the society and the government is parroting the normalcy narrative while the fact is that there is no sign of any normalcy in Kashmir as the innocent people including women and children are being killed to create fear and scare in the society. The centre government has failed to restore normalcy in Kashmir as the soft targets are being killed without any respite and the Hindu minorities are becoming cannon

fodders before the guns of the terrorists. The terrorists are striking at their sweet will and killing unarmed civilians and then mingling with the people and the terrorists remain untraced and unidentified. There is no fear of the law enforcing agencies as the militants kill the soft targets continuously and they remain untraced.

Every time we hear that the unknown terrorists have killed innocent men and women and brought pall of gloom in the valley. The government should change the strategy of fighting terrorism and should combat terrorism with the coordinated manner and all the security agencies should work in coordination and cooperation and give a tough fight to terrorism.

The zero tolerance towards terrorism should be strictly followed to crush terrorism and no leniency should be shown to the terrorists and the soft approach towards terrorists should be shunned and proactive approach should be practised to quell terrorism.

There is no scope for the soft approach towards terrorism and what is needed is the hard approach and hard decisions to fight the terrorism.

One fails to understand that when the government conducted the Balakote operation and what prevents the government to launch Balakote like operation in Kashmir to give a befitting response to terrorism.

The security forces should be given freedom to crush terrorism with iron hand.

Otherwise the terrorists will continue the dance of death and destruction in Kashmir.

In short the situation in Kashmir has reverted back to 1990 situation and steps should be taken to restore the much needed normalcy in Kashmir.

The posting of the package and Jammu residing employees in the headquarters will serve no purpose and it cannot make the life and working of these employees safe and secure and therefore only requirement is that these employees should be relocated to Jammu division and other nearby states so that they can live and work in a secure way. All that can be said is that the situation in Kashmir has reverted back to the peak days of terrorism of 1990 and concerted steps should be taken to restore much needed normalcy in Kashmir.

(The author is a columnist and social activist).

PROGRESSING J&K

Adventure tourism holds big promise for mega tourist footfall in J&K

A major fillip to tourist arrival in Kashmir continues to be adventure tourism and treks with adventure sports activities like mountain biking, paragliding, hot air balloon rides, river rafting, trekking and camping are picking up in Jammu and Kashmir.

The eco-friendly adventure tourism not only provides a new option for adventure lovers to test their adrenaline rush at various adventure destinations in J&K but also helps in the well-being of local population by providing them new employment options.

The idea of conceiving and strengthening new Development Authorities by the government was to have systematic development of tourist locations and exploration of new destinations. The Tourism Development Authorities focus on adventure tourism and keep adventure equipment available at the tourist locations for hiring by the tourists interested in taking up excited activities.

To provide a unique experience to tourists and increase their footfall, the J&K government has prepared a comprehensive plan for promoting tourism sector in the UT and identifying

new abundant natural beauty and breathtaking landscapes at unexplored tourist spots.

The tourism department has developed various tourist circuits across J&K, laying special focus on adventure tourism, trekking activities, pilgrimage sites, water sports and other popular ventures.

The tourism department is emphasizing introduction of innovative measures for promotion of tourism sector by tapping its immense potential to the fullest.

Concerted efforts are being made to promote sustainable destinations and developing unexplored places of tourism potential while branding J&K in the international tourism circuit, an official said.

Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, recently while launching J&K Tourist Village Network under Mission Youth, maintained that "We should never forget that every tourist destination has its own strengths and all we need to do is to focus on involving local communities, creating sustainable tourism and addressing the needs of tourists".

The initiative is aimed at transforming 75 villages of the UT known for his-

torical, picturesque beauty, and cultural significance into tourist villages.

LG said that the youth led sustainable tourism initiative will strengthen rural economy and community entrepreneurship, empowering youth and women by providing direct and indirect employment opportunities.

Apart from promoting Eco and Agri Tourism, Traditional Performing Art and Adventure Tourism for creating a rural tourism circuit, LG called upon all stakeholders, government departments, PRIs, and local communities to work as a single unit for seamless implementation of the ground.

LG suggested four broader areas for promotional activities including Farm Stays, Eco-Tourism, Wildlife Tourism, and Tribal Tourism. Simultaneously, there is also a need to train the youth in public-private, community partnership models, he added.

According to an official, these 75 offbeat locations will provide adventure seekers, trekkers and international visitors with an experience of nature's wilderness while also creating a livelihood in villages in the forest

environment through homestays, nature guides, trek operators, food stalls, and forest souvenirs.

It is important to mention that reputed travel brand Thomas Cook (India) and its Group Company, SOTC Travel having identified strong pent-up demand for outdoor and adventure travel, have curated a distinctive portfolio, India Trekking Tours - timed perfectly with the onset of the country's trekking season.

The company's product range captures India's diversity of breath-taking mountainous terrain, Sikkim's dramatic landscapes, turquoise alpine lakes of Kashmir, arid desert topography of Ladakh, lush valleys of Himachal and Uttarakhand awash with vibrant flora-fauna, mountain springs and the source of her mighty rivers, quaint picturesque villages, temples, monasteries to the highest summit of all the Everest base camps. The 26-year-old Bollywood actress, Sara Ali Khan, took to Instagram to share a series of pictures of herself against the most natural backdrop of mountains, clear skies and greenery, as she went out trekking. The caption read,

"Kashmir Ki Kali Is back to your Gali Now trekking par Main Chali (sic)". The Atrangi Re Actor was also spotted cooking greens at a camping site in the cold of the mountains.

Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, recently showed the green flag to heartening adventure activities of the Tourism Department that started in Srinagar from the Zabarwan hills at Harwan.

Among these adventure activities are Paragliding from Astanmarg top to Chandpora ground. The flight included a vertical drop of 2000 feet which is a hit with adventure lovers and tourists.

Dr. Mehta said that J&K has a lot of prospective in adventurous activities and it needs to be fully utilized for overall benefit of all stakeholders, especially the weak sections of the society who are often unnoticed due to detachment.

Adventure tourism, it may be mentioned here, has been flagged by the department as an added attraction for the tourists and many new trekking routes thrown open for trekkers by the government last year were welcomed by adventure lovers.

YOUR COLUMN

Decreased sweetness in relationships

Dear editor,

In today's materialistic age that sweetness in relationships is like losing that familiarity. People used to understand the meaning of love and relationship and today property and money are predominant in relationships. Today, for the sake of money and property, brothers, brothers, sons, fathers, even mothers kill their children for the sake of money and luxury, which is a big stigma on Manta's relationship. Every second or third day, after reading such disgusting and criminal news, the heart goes out. A couple of years ago, a retired Air Force flying officer, his wife and sister were stabbed to death by his own engineer son in a mansion in Chandigarh's Sector-34. Not one such news is being read on the pages of newspapers on a daily basis and by reading such news, the mind becomes distracted from blood relations. The race for money has left relationships and love far behind. The only relationship I have found that is true is one in which there is no greed or selfishness. There is only love and compassion, that is friendship, true friendship. In a relationship, God does not discriminate between money, high, and low. In friendship we do not have to show off while bloody

relationships are entangled in pretenses and formalities. Money is everywhere. Love cannot be seen from afar. Money is the only thing left. People are breaking up with their parents, siblings for money. Only a few lucky people will understand the importance of bloody relationships. The number of such families is like salt in flour. People are forgetting the identity of bloody relationships. The one who gets fame on four paise does not look at the poor brothers and sisters and is in cahoots with those who have money. Today, relationships have become meaningless. The love and respect that our elders had for us is gone. Today's relationships are based on more hunger and greed. In this fast-paced world, the only love I have found is friendship and today our children have no time for parents. Nor do brothers and sisters have time to spend two moments of love and empathy. There is a friendship that gives strength and courage to face every difficulty. In every relationship whether it is mother-daughter, father-son, husband-wife relationship or any other relationship it is very important to have friendship because where there is friendship there is love.

The only relationship is the meaning. Even in this fast-paced life of friendship with the little ones, love is experienced, the name of which is disappearing from the world. Our relatives consider friendship as foreign and kinship as their own. It is true to some extent that

relationships are based on blood but in today's materialistic age the color of friendship is darker than the color of blood. Of course, some of the relationships we inherit have to be maintained and should be maintained. In these relationships we also have to deal with the good and the bad. Often the habits and ideas are not found. However, true relationships are where your mutual thoughts come together. This is called friendship. Even though some relationships are very close, distances remain.

If you have one good friend, you are lucky. There are some relationships in life that we can't even name but they have affection, sympathy, happiness, feelings of sadness, sharing of sorrows, mutual secrets of each other, trustworthy, some of them.

There is no greed of any kind, no selfishness. Those souls who have friends full of such qualities are fortunate. Due to the love, respect and pride of such good, virtuous friends, man considers himself two feet high in this society.

This is not what I am saying. I am thankful to God that Vidhata has given me such friends in life who have little to be proud of. Today's generation is the master of new thinking. Let's preserve our heritage so that we can maintain the dignity and love we had before. "The mustache of Yari Jatt, never breaks in the middle."

Vijay Garg.