

CYBER CHALLENGES

Among the challenges of the cyber world, another challenge that has arisen since the advent of social media sites is the rapid spread of false or sensitive news capable of vitiating the environment rapidly. Due to these sensitive news which went viral on social media many times, the danger of deteriorating the communal atmosphere of the country has arisen. We have to understand that as we do not leave any stone unturned in our defense budget, in the same way, in terms of security, this too has to be considered as a front, the consequences of ignoring which can be fatal.

Like other vigilant countries, India also needs more institutional efforts to deal with possible cyber attacks and other disturbances related to them, only then we will be able to reach the benefits of digitization with confidence to the wider masses.

PRE-POLL ALLIANCE AND POST-POLL ALLIANCE

■ K.V. SEETHARAMAIAH

Hectic activities are going on for opposition unity with the sole aim of defeating the ruling BJP-led NDA at centre. After Patna, 26 opposition parties are congregating in Bengaluru. Congress closed its rank with AAP and agreed to support the Delhi ordinance. It does not mean that all is well with Congress and AAP. In Delhi election, AAP relegated the Congress to third place and it eased out Congress in Punjab. Therefore, Congress cannot have soft corner at AAP in any case. Quailed at the thought of AAP not joining the opposition group in an endeavour to forge opposition unity against BJP, Congress reluctantly agreed to support AAP in Delhi ordinance in order to avoid the ignominy of taking blame for not supporting the opposition unity. Pre-poll alliance does not guarantee that all the alliance partners hold together if they come to power and form the government. Post-poll alliance also does not guarantee the stability of the government. In the case of pre-poll alliance, what happened in Maharashtra cannot be forgotten. BJP and Shiv Sena were believed to be the natural allies. It is the principle of natural justice that in coalition government, the leader of the largest party has to form the government. BJP emerged as the single largest party in the previous Assembly election in Maharashtra. But the greed for power impelled Uddhav Thackeray to break away from BJP. Thackeray joined hands with the parties that are ideologically opposed to the principles of the Sena to form a government pushing the BJP to opposition benches. The point to be noted is that the pre-poll alliance of BJP and Shiv Sena did not take BJP to the seat of power due to differences of opinion on the issue of Chief Ministership. Thackeray could not complete his full term with Eknath Shinde joining hands with the BJP camp. Even though BJP was in a position to form the government under the leadership of Devendra Fadnis, the Chief Ministership was given to Shinde. It was a sacrifice for mutual benefit even though the BJP members outnumbered Shinde group members. In the case of BJP-Shiv Sena tie-up, Thackeray wrested the power that was legitimately due to the BJP. In Karnataka in 2018, BJP emerged as the single largest party. Congress and JDS together had more seats than the BJP. JDS was in a third place. Yet Congress gave up the Chief Ministership in favour of Kumaraswamy. It was a post-poll alliance to keep BJP away from the corridors of power. The alliance was punctured after a group of MLAs defected to BJP resulting in the collapse of JDS-Congress government. Neither pre-poll alliance nor post-poll alliance guarantees the stability of the government if trust-deficit surfaces. A single party government is best. Barring BJP and to limited extent Congress, all other parties are regional parties. AAP has been declared as national party. But it is only for name sake. Its presence is confined only to Punjab and Delhi. All other parties are regional parties. Regional parties have regional interest and they lack national outlook. Pre-poll or post-poll alliance of all the regional parties would be fragile. With the exception of BJP, no other party grew to national stature. None of the regional parties have wits and guts to contest all the Lok Sabha elections alone. When they are not able to come out of the four walls of their respective states, they can never grow as national party in true sense. Alliances are like joints of too many pieces of threads. The strength of the jointed threads cannot be as strong as jointless thread. Pre-poll alliance is a fence erected around the parties by themselves for short-term gain of stalling the juggernaut of a strong party. Pre-poll alliance stagnates the growth of parties. Going it alone by the regional parties in every state takes long time for the parties to flourish across the nation. It requires patience. BJP has been reaping the benefits of long wait. Because of it, it has spread its tentacles in large parts of India. BJP did not grow overnight. It started from scratches with just 2 MPs in Lok Sabha after the formation of the party by Atal Behari Vajpayee. With all this, the alliance era started from Vajpayee only when he balanced with 13 parties with different ideologies. It was a successful experiment. But single-party government is best preferred to coalition government.

■ VIVEK KOUL

The Hon'ble Prime Minister's Employment Package, formulated in the year 2009, for internally displaced Kashmiri Pandits which is more often known as "Return and Rehabilitation package" has proved out to be a total failure & disastrous as nothing concrete has been done by the government with regard to the betterment of the community youths selected under this package. Only fake promises and false assurances have been given to them by different governments in connection with their dignified return and rehabilitation to Kashmir. The most complex and complicated question about the Kashmir imbroglio is the Return and Rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits. Till date no government showed any sort of positive intent of bringing the whole KP community re-settled back in Kashmir. However, it was in the year 2009 the then Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh announced and framed an economic package for the recruitment of 6000 youths of the displaced KP community. The KP unemployed youths were offered jobs under this job package but with dire conditionality so as to exploit and humiliate these Package employees. The government treats PM Package employees as if they are second class citizens and making them hostage groups in the valley situations. Further the government fails to chalk out any tangible policy/roadmap for the dignified return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri pandits. Various governments/regimes in J&K have implemented this Job Package on wrong lines which ultimately resulted into total exploitation of the helplessness of PM Package employees at large. Government though called this PM's package a "Rehabilitation Package for displaced

Kashmiri Pandit migrants" but very unfortunately nothing that sort has happened on ground zero. This so called rehabilitation package has lost its credence and primarily objective because the government has completely failed to rehabilitate even these PM Package KP employees back to valley.

The successive governments and regimes always spoke in volumes about the dignified return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits but the harsh fact is something different. As per the available records not even a single KP family have rehabilitated back to Kashmir since the inception of this job package. However, the reality is that this so called Rehabilitation Package has now become a Package of Separation/alienation from parents and families for these unfortunate Package employees. All this boils down to the fact that the government has been insensitive and insincere towards this hapless community. The government has always exploited the need and urge of these PM package employees and made them to work in Kashmir as bonded labourers with dire conditionality. One wonders as to why the government puts harsh conditionality for KP package employees of signing the bond to serve in Kashmir valley alone for whole of their life time. Such bond or judicial agreement with regard to the PM's Employment Package seems to be irrational and unreasonable on all counts. It is totally beyond one's comprehension as to why these PM package Pandit employees have been subjected to this kind of humiliation in terms of signing the bond before getting job. In India nowhere an employee is asked to sign a bond before getting a job except this PM employment package. This is total discriminatory, unlawful and unconstitutional bond. Thus this arbitrary bond

■ G.L. RAINA

The J&K administration is "bringing the people from outside under the garb of land for landless and home for the homeless to change the region's demography", alleged Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) President and former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti few days earlier. "The move will open floodgates for the settlement of outsiders and this could be an attempt to alter J&K's demographic composition", she added.

This bogey of demographic change is not new in Jammu Kashmir. It has been, for years, a mischievous catchphrase to actually change demography of the state inversely.

The genesis of its latest manifestation dates back to 1931, the year that saw The British colonial power using some ambitious Muslim Youth to ferment trouble to destabilise otherwise popular rule of Maharaja Hari Singh. These young who had returned from Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) had started a Reading Room Party.

Maharaja Hari Singh had annoyed colonial rulers by his speech in Round Table conference. Also The British wanted to get control of Gilgit agency. Radical Muslim preachers were infiltrated into Jammu and Kashmir to breed discontent. Mobilisation was purely on narrow religious and sectarian grounds.

Non-Muslim religious minority was demonised and painted as villains. The spirit of camaraderie that guided both Hindus and Muslims to fight together barbarians like Afghans was lost and seeds of animosity were sown sufficient into pursuit of selfish individual objectives.

In a sustained and pervasive manner religious minority of Kashmir, in particular the Kashmiri Pandits were demeaned individually and collectively. Such was the threat and fear that one Prithvi Nath Bhat; Vice-President of All Jammu

Kashmir Kissan Conference had to resign from the party. His resignation letter said 'In the interest of life and property of my relatives and myself, I wish to retire from politics.... Repeated threats of Mirza Afzal Beg against me have struck terror in the hearts of my kiths and kins and I have no right to be the cause of their destruction. It is really a misfortune to be born in Kashmir as a Hindu.[Kashmiri Pandits Now and Then by A.K. Parimoo. Page 88]

This diatribe against religious minority particularly Hindus came from highest ranks. For example

On 24th April 1940 on Eid day Sheikh Abdullah criticised Hindus and passed some ugly remarks on Hindu religion. He did not hesitate to make that infamous remark, "Islam is the sun and other religions are stars" that became reason for Pandit leaders like Kashyap Bandhu ji to leave National Conference, notes A.K. Parimoo in Kashmiri Pandits Now and Then Page 63.

This deceitful sentiment was institutionalised as a scheme post 1947 and was designed and successfully implemented by;

a) Prohibiting Non-Muslims including Hindus & Sikhs) from Muzaffarabad and adjoining areas of POJK to settle even temporarily in Kashmir as refugees during painful days of partition,

b) Mount pressure on local religious minorities to leave Kashmir -a process that culminated in 1990 with forced Mass exodus. And

c) Make overt and covert efforts to help more and more Muslims to settle down in J&K particularly in Jammu province.

The Jammu and Kashmir Grant of Permit for Resettlement in (or Permanent Return to) the State Act, 1982, which gave legal cover allowing J&K residents and their descendants who had moved to Pakistan to return to the erstwhile state was an attempt in same direction.

Exploring Ramban- Shaheed Jyoti Parkash Waterfall Digdool

■ ROBIN KOUL

Introduction: A majestic waterfall imposing the landscape on the NH 44, just at a distance of 14 KM from Ramban towards Srinagar, appears more breathtaking when we explore it intimately. Situated in the outskirts of a small hamlet, Digdool one can easily find a place to lose oneself in the natural burble of this magnificent waterfall. Locals have named it after Shaheed Jyoti Parkash, the son of the soil, who was awarded Sena Medal (SM) posthumously for his act of valour in operation Meghdoot -23 Sep 1987, Siachen Glacier.

J P Waterfall: Waterfall is well connected to Digdool by an iron bridge over the river Bishladi which is a tributary of Chander Bhaga (Chenab) River. The water fall is physically divided into two parts. The upper portion is around 160 meter followed by a rocky base covered with damp moss. To reach there one needs to climb the rocky cliff to its left adjacent. The view there is mesmerizing. The place is dominated by the thunderous sound of the cascade, you cannot listen to the voice of the person standing next to you. And the winds blow the sprinkling of the water, making it feel like heavy rain. The next half portion below the rocky field is around 50 meters which offers a cool white milky cascade to the spectators.

The place has a tremendous potential for adventure activities. While exploring with the experienced team of Leaf Monkey Hiking Club- Ramban we were able to do waterfall rappelling for the height of 50 meter stretch, which in my knowledge has happened for the first time in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Experience of which was thrilling and stimulating.

Digdool Valley: Digdool itself is an ideal place for tourism, besides it has some historical evidence of Stone



Horse Riders and War Hero Stone sculptures too. The relative temperature in the area is less than the nearby places. Bishilladi River creates an opportunity for water sports adventure. Bank of the river has a stretch of long plane area which can best accommodate the camping

area. Also the very place is full of rock face cliffs top suited for technical rock climbing and bouldering. The place has a great deal for Wildlife enthusiasts too. One can watch the Wild Goats (Piggeds) jumping on the rocky cliffs treacherously. Also other animals like Leopard, Fox, Poreupine, Rabbits, Bears, Kalij Pheasant, Wild Pheasant, Rock Dove, Barn Swallow, Himalayan Bulbul, Yellow Billed Blue Magpie, Russell Viper and a number of other species have habitat in the area.

Conclusion: Digdool Valley can be transformed into a national level tourist and adventure destination with some initiatives from the administration and the locals. The waterfall bottom can be altered into a small lake, surrounded with a tiled platform for a concrete base. Rock climbing, bouldering, trekking, waterfall rappelling and white water rafting are the growing adventure sports globally nowadays. And this place provides an ample opportunity for those kinds of sports. In future the avenue for Bungee Jumping and Zip Line can also be explored in the area. I request to the administration to take necessary steps to promote this place which simultaneously will draw the locals well as tourists visiting Kashmir through Ramban. Also we can introduce a camping site/ rest point in the vicinity, for Bikers and Cyclists who ride through Ramban towards Kashmir without a stoppage here.

I am sure development in the area and promotion by the Tourism Department J&K under the aegis of District Administration will encourage the travellers to halt there for a night and so, as it is very close to NH 44. It will also help to boost the income of the local population by creating avenues of self employment in the area.

Remember brute majority in J&K Assembly was used to pass this Bill resisted by the then union government headed by Smt. Indira Gandhi. However It was one of the 153 state laws and Governors' Acts abolished under the J&K Re-organisation Act 2019 permanently.

Coming back to demographic change bogey, Kashmir centric politicians even raised hue and cry over increase in number of Hindu families from some 70 odd to few hundred in early eighties owing to their shifting from down town areas of Srinagar to Baghat Barzulla, Channpora , Natipora etc. areas that till recently was part of Budgam District.

During the same period an Urdu monograph was published but withdrawn within hours that was titled "Kashmir mein Aksariyat ko aqaliyat mein badlne ki saizish".

This however has been now translated & published in a book titled Contemporary Kashmir Politics Some Insights Based on Reshi Dev's Political Diary by very eminent and well known scholar Dr. K.N. Pandita. It is an annexure to the book and translates as

IN KASHMIR : THE CONSPIRACY OF CONVERTING MUSLIMS INTO A MINORITY.

In this monograph the author Ab. Rahim Rather, then an M.L.A has ridiculed almost every one in particular Dogra Rulers for whom Kashmir politician are exhibiting a lot of political love these days;

He writes under "Reasons of conflict and confrontation "Theywant to change the demographic complexion of the Muslim majority State of Kashmir by changing the ratio of population so as to transform the Muslims (of Kashmir) into a helpless destitute minority. The pages of history stand a witness to the repeated conspiracies of denuding Kashmir of its Muslim population and upsetting the balance of (existing) population in Kashmir."

A.R. Rather alleges, "Ranbir Singh gave

a new shape to the old scheme of colonisation. He laid out Maharaj Ganj and Maharj Bazar and allotted shops to the Hindu traders and Khattris from outside the state in these localities.

There was double purpose in bringing these Khattris one was to tilt the population ratio of Muslims of the valley and the second was to put the lever of Kashmir business and economy in the hands of non-Kashmiri's. (Page 177)

Again he retorts "Maharaja Hari Singh ascended the throne after the death of Pratap Singh. With that the sentiment of reducing the Muslims majority to minority was rekindled".(Page 181)

How were these traders helping national Conference? Here is an example

" A reception committee for Jawahar Lal Nehru was framed under Prem Nath Bazaz and G.M. Sadiq. Hindus particularly Punjabi traders contributed lavishly, twenty five thousand in three days. Not a penny was contributed by Muslims." A.K. Parimoo in Kashmiri Pandits Now and Then Page 64

The question arises if this monograph was published why was it withdrawn within hours? If NC at that point of time was targeting Congress party, how have both joined hands now?

The conscious people of Jammu Kashmir must understand, if nothing like demographic change happened since 1947 , how will it happen now? It is pure political opportunism and vote bank politics of raising emotional issues to divert attention from their internal strife a, incompetence and disregard for hard work. These politicians want power without any effort and have no respect for poor and underprivileged population and homeless people for whom the Narendra Modi government is trying to provide historic help.

(The author is a former Member of the Legislative Council of Jammu and Kashmir).

Impasse of PM Package Employees

should be abrogated in future if the government is really interested in safeguarding the interests of Kashmiri Pandits. A comprehensive transfer policy must be framed for these KP Package employees as they haven't signed any death warrant under this employment scheme. The erstwhile state of J&K is now a Union Territory so all the state laws are replaced by the central laws and in this perspective a new dimension and look should be given with regard to the terms/conditions of their job under this much talked about PM's package. It is not understandable that if an employee of Delhi or some other UT can be transferred anywhere in India then why PM Package employee of JK UT is restricted to serve only in Kashmir valley? This is a moot question.

The PM Package for displaced Kashmiri Pandits is basically an economic package and therefore it should not be linked with any rehabilitation program/plan or something like that. The government claims it is a Rehabilitation package and if it is so then where is the rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits? Rehabilitation doesn't mean forcefully coercing PM Package Pandit employees to work back in Kashmir against their will discretion and making them sacrificial goats at the alter of secular democracy. Forced rehabilitation of KPs will not serve any purpose. Thus it needs to be clarified that the re-establishment of the whole KP community back in valley need not be confused with this PM employment scheme. However, out of 6000 PM Package employees, only around 1800 employees got accommodation and the remaining 4200 employees are living at scattered rented accommodation across Kashmir without any security. Initially this Employment Package which was announced in the year

2009 comes with no conditionality but very cleverly the then state government of J&K amended the advertisement with condition of serving a judicial agreement by the employee. All these things happened under a well knit policy so as to exploit the urge and needs of these Package employees. It is very sorry state of affairs that the present government is also treating these KP package employees as a separate category employees.

The fact of the matter is that these employees are also the part and parcel of state establishment and thus should be treated as such. It seems like that the government is least bothered about mitigating the sufferings of the PM Package employees in particular and Kashmiri pandits in general. Due to this suppression and mistreatment by the administration, they have lost total confidence now and most of the employees are getting frustrated and depressed day by day due to this lackadaisical approach and rigid stance adopted by the government.

Without secured accommodation these employees can't live and perform their duties in Kashmir with regularity and punctuality. Their families and old age parents are in Jammu and thus cannot leave them alone at Jammu. The situation in Kashmir is unprecedented and uncertain for the living and working of the PM Package employees as they have become soft targets for the gun toting terrorists. The landlords/house owners have stopped giving rented accommodations to PM package KP employees owing to security threats. The police and armed forces are advising and directing these minority KP package employees not to venture outside unnecessarily and to remain indoors due to security reasons.

The targeted and selective killings are happening in Kashmir unabatedly and therefore these KP package employees have become more vulnerable under the current precarious situation of Kashmir. So under the fear of gun, these hapless and helpless employees are unable to attend their offices. Despite knowing the fact, the Kashmir centric bureaucrats and DDOs are stopping the salaries of these employees and choking them financially. This is the height of harassment and exploitation that these unfortunate sons of soil are facing continuously in Kashmir. No one is listening to their miseries, woes and pains as if they are childrens of lesser God. These package employees are entangled between life and livelihood. The LG administration must immediately provide Work From Home (WFH) option to all those PM Package employees who are living at rented places till proper secured accommodation be given to them. By giving an option of Work From Home will provide succour to these employees and in this way the office work may not hamper. But in Kashmir the administration is treating these package employees as if they are "Prisoners of war" and this package now proves out to be a "Punishment Package" for these unfortunate sons of mother India. They are in total confusion, chaos and dilemma & many employees under this scheme have already submitted their voluntarily resignations out of frustration and depression. Still the government is unmoved, unnerved and remains in dormant state as far as the issues of PM package employees are concerned. Their issues always remain unattended, un-addressed and un-resolved for the best reasons known to the authorities concerned. Is anybody listening is the million dollar question?.