

Restoration of independence: an ideal s

By Maqbool Hussain

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THE restoration of independence and sovereignty is quite an ideal solution. In fact the only lasting solution, which is in accordance with the aspirations and will of the people of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). Our struggle for independence and sovereignty is 425 years old.

It is to be recollected Mughal Emperor Akbar invaded Kashmir, failed to conquer it many times but lastly occupied it with trickery. The innate passion for freedom could not be crushed even by the great Mughals. The people have deep sense of the loss of independence and sovereignty. The Mughal reign sustained for 167 years.

Afghans captured J&K and made it a province of Afghanistan in 1752. Their reign lasted for 67 years. The Afghans were very much innovative in perpetuating atrocities. People disliked them from the core of their heart and continued struggle to ward off the yoke of Afghans.

Atta Mohammad Khan was the only exception among the Afghan governors who was people friendly, justice loving, pious and religious minded. He loved saints of Kashmir. He constructed a concrete retaining wall at the shrine of Sheikh Hamza (RA) and struck coins in the name of Alamdar-i-Kashmir Sheikh Noorudin Noorani. He identified himself fully with Kashmir and severed relations with Afghanistan gave independent status to it.

In 1819 Sikh rulers of Punjab invaded Kashmir and captured it. Sikh rulers proved very much tyrant, communal and biased. They took sadistic pleasure in inflicting cruelties and injustices on the people of Kashmir. Their governors most of them were mentally and morally very much savages. Their two Muslim governors Sheikh Mohiuddin and Sheikh Imam-ud-din were very kind to the people and restored holy shrines and mosques to the Muslims and were felicitated to offer prayers without any fear of Sikh Raj.

People under the leadership of Sheikh Imam-ud-din defeated Dogra army and enjoyed independence for sometime before the British and Dogra army jointly invaded and occupied Kashmir.

British government entered into an agreement with Dogra Raj Gulab Singh

(who happened to be an officer of their army), known as Amritsar Treaty. Dogra Raja had to pay seventy-five lakhs for having the possession of Jammu & Kashmir.

Dogras' were no less cruel, tyrant, despotic than Sikhs or Afghans.

Freedom struggle: The struggle for basic rights and finally for independence was launched many times but was crushed 1924, 1931, and 1946 were important milestones when people resisted the cruel Dogra rulers and offered sacrifices.

British parliament passed the independence Act under which Muslim majority areas were declared as Pakistan and Hindu majority areas India. But 526 princely states were neither India nor Pakistan; they were given the option as either to accede to India or Pakistan or to remain Independent.

Maharaja Hari Singh was interested to remain independent. He entered into a standstill agreement with Pakistan. Lord Mountbatten, Pt Jawahar Lal Nehru, Gandhiji dissuaded him not to think of independence. His capacity to decide was crippled.

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pled. The revolutionary forces of poonch aided by Afridis and Pashtoons reached Srinagar. Maharaja had to flee. His army was defeated and seen nowhere in an organised manner and was in search of refuge.

Government of India claimed Maharaja had acceded to India but historians dispute the authenticity of the accession. When Maharaja himself was in journey how he could have signed the document?

Indian forces landed at Kashmir airport and pitched battles with the revolutionaries were witnessed. Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah was made emergency administrator and then Prime Minister of Indian-held Kashmir.

Kashmir division: UNO imposed ceasefire, which India and Pakistan accepted. The Kashmir got divided Azad Kashmir (Pakistan Controlled Kashmir) and J&K (Indian Controlled Kashmir). Pt Jawahar Lal Nehru and Lord Mountbatten assured the world powers, UNO, Pakistan and the people of Kashmir that future of Kashmir will be decided by the people of Kashmir by referendum under UNO.

Even the UN Security Council passed many resolutions upholding the Kashmiri people's right of self determination. Both India and Pakistan accepted the resolutions

but India, later on applied Chanakiyan tactics to avert the UN pressure to conduct referendum in Jammu & Kashmir to decide the future and fate of the Kashmiri Nation. The popular leader Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah shamelessly and unceremoniously was deposed from the premiership and consigned to various jails for 21 years.

The people of Azad Kashmir raised strong voice in favour of sovereign and independent Kashmir in 1951-1952. Again in 1960's there was strong campaign under the K H Khursheed for the free and Independent Kashmir. In Azad Kashmir JKNLF, Plebiscite Front, Liberation League are continuing struggling for the establishment of free J&K. In this side of Kashmir Plebiscite Front, students and youth league and host of organisations were engaged with the freedom struggle. Now Hurriyat Conference, People's League, Awami Action Committee, Mahaz-e-Azadi, JKLF are engaged round the clock with the freedom movement.

Sacrifices: More than five lakh people of Jammu division were put to sword for

All the participants except Kuldeep Nayar expressed concern over the sufferings and pain of Kashmiris and the cancerous growth of Kashmir problem. His (Kuldeep) was only discordant voice in the conference who presented India's official stated position. He was of the opinion that the status quo could not be changed and the parties to the dispute should accept line of control as permanent border.

United Kashmir: Learned Kuldeep Nayar! The people of Kashmir are rendering valuable sacrifices for the complete independence and sovereignty of United Jammu & Kashmir. We have not offered sacrifices of 8 lakh people to allow the (so-called) largest democracy to continue the occupation of our sacred homeland. The people of J&K are putting in all efforts to unite their divided Kashmir.

You say that conscious opinion of the participants of Washington Kashmir Conference and the belief of the Indian people is that delay in finding the solution is the real cause for the unrest. Agreed. But you

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have the solution of status quo glamorised with internal autonomy. So-called autonomy was there from 1947 to 1953 but it could not replace sentiment and will for independence. The autonomy of J&K was so diluted as to have now no takers except handful of cronies.

You say mishandling of the situation from time to time have caused eruptions in Kashmir. Learned Kuldeep Sahib! It is a disgrace to a suppressed nation to call its long and sustained struggle as eruptions. Our nation has fought five powerful occupation forces at different points of time. Kashmiri nation is fighting a war of survival and freedom and you sadly and cruelly treat it as eruptions. You have belittled our freedom struggle and thus committed a great blunder and abhorrent sin.

No party or leader is allowed to do any harm to the struggle. The fate of popular leader S M Abdullah is before everybody that how much he has lost his esteem and honour.

The superficial thinking that the people of Kashmir will come around with the Chanakiyan tactics and accept new version of internal autonomy, the beautified and glamorised status quo is never going to bear fruit.

Freedom lovers not separatists: Mr Kuldeep Nayar, you believe that the sep-

arartists do not allow the situation to settle down. The people of J&K are freedom lovers not separatists and fighting for the restoration of independence and sovereignty. The people of J&K have not joined India or Pakistan of their free will. The so-called accession has been manipulated and effected under duress as nicely put forth by Ambassador Yousuf Buch and Prof Bose.

Using the word separatists against the freedom lovers is deliberate denigration of them. The plea that the people have participated in the elections, and have abandoned the freedom struggle or have lost the inherent right to fight for independence and sovereignty is distortion of facts. People voted for better roads, clean drinking water, electricity and employment. Kashmiri people have not compromised their commitment for Azadi. Present ongoing agitation is patent proof of it. People have proved wiser than the available pro-freedom leadership. The people of Sub-continent participated in elections during British Raj. British government never said

that since people and leaders have participated in the elections, their right to fight for independence has been forfeited.

You say Sheikh Abdullah's rant and rhetoric against India in Kashmir used to give vicarious satisfaction to the Kashmiri nation and it did not then cry for freedom and rather ignored it. Nayar Sahib, Sheikh Abdullah chose to become two-time head of the government of Kashmir. The first tenure from 1947 to 1953 witnessed tremendous fall and decline in his popularity and he took strong stand against legal, constitutional, political and moral excesses of the government of India. He was unceremoniously and shamelessly deposed and consigned to jails for 21 years. Sheikh Abdullah formed Plebiscite Front and restarted campaign for freedom. He reached new heights of popularity. Unfortunately he again chose to become the CM of the state and again his popularity graph was touching the low ebb.

Pt Jawaharlal Lal Nehru had chalked out plan to grab J&K by any means. He exploited Sheikh Abdullah to the hilt under the garb of secularism, liberalism and socialism to realise the plan.

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deposed Sheikh Abdullah unceremoniously and consigned him to various jails for 21 years, while deposing and imprisoning Sheikh Abdullah the principles of liberalism, democratic mindset, socialism, secularism and justice proved to be hoax and right pursuance of the Chanakiyan philosophy. At the one hand he appeased the communal forces like Bhartia Jana Sangh, Rashtria Swayam Sehwak sangh and other parties of the same mindset and on the other he installed more pliant person as PM of J&K and through him manipulated constitutional measures amalgamated Jammu & Kashmir with the union of India. The search and selection for pliant CMs is unending.

Sending Sheikh Abdullah to Pakistan without a well chalked out roadmap for the resolution of Kashmir problem was again political treachery. The plan was that sheikh Abdullah was not much liked by Pakistani leadership and the people, landing in Pakistan may trigger protests against him, he will feel annoyed, his ego will be hurt and he will return with a vengeance and he would change his political ideology.

But he was warmly received and even mandated to find support of India for the free Kashmir. Unfortunately Pt Nehru breathed his last and Sheikh came running back to mourn the death of Pt Nehru.

His successors did not bother to know the proposals (if at all any), which Pt Nehru had presented to Pakistan government through Sheikh Abdullah. Even Sheikh Abdullah never talked about the proposals, which he had carried to Pakistan. It again confirms that India does not dare to talk about the Kashmir and its appropriate resolution. The engagement with Pakistani leadership or Kashmiri leadership seems to be buying of time and to give the false impression to the international community about the seriousness and sincerity of India with regard to resolution of Kashmir imbroglio.

Win-win situation: Independence is the only ideal and viable solution to the Kashmir problem. It would not hurt national egos of India and Pakistan. It would provide a win-win position for both the countries. This solution alone would vanish the centuries old deep pain, deep wounds and subjugation and sub-human life of Kashmiri people.

The economic drain on both India and Pakistan would cease and coffers would become rich and fatter. The scope for banishing hunger, disease, illiteracy, penury, want and deprivations would be widened and bright. COURTESY KASHMIR WATCH

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