

# Created tragedy

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**T**he emergence of India and Pakistan in a blood is a sad reminder of the sufferings of two communities, Hindus and Muslims, which could not live together any more. The way "The Great Divide" was implemented was satanic. The British had entered the Subcontinent on a business permit. After ruling for over a century, they left both communities at each other's throat, which proved an unending agenda!

In 1000 years of Muslim rule, there was no forcible conversion. Though rulers, Muslims remained a minority. After the movement to gain independence from the British started, in the joint effort Muslim leaders and their community were suppressed intentionally by Hindu leaders. They formed their own political platform (the Muslim League) in 1906. The Congress was offensive for other communities as it represented Hindu culture. The rift between the communities became sharp and deep which led to the Partition.

World War had eroded the endurance of the British Empire: it could not keep India any longer. The British initiated negotiations with Indians. Congress was right in front as the Muslim League was still building its stature, it also had found a leader, but only one. The Quaid must be seen not as a challenger for any position but as a guardian of Muslims. The persistent hostility of Hindus toward Muslims has been confirmed by the state-organised killing of Muslims in Gujarat in 2002.

## Transfer of power

The Congress wanted the British to vacate leaving the Indians alone to settle their own affairs. The aim of the Hindu majority was obvious and threatening. The Partition was finally agreed upon on communal basis. The stage setting makes an intriguing study:

The first step in the transfer of power was marked by an unusual invitation (16 March 1946) to Pandit Nehru by Lord Mountbatten at Singapore. This was the "first step" by Britain towards building bridges with Congress. Mountbatten took over as the Governor General on 18 March 1947. b. Mountbatten realised that keeping India united was impossible. He got the Partition Plan prepared by his Special Assistant V.P. Menon, a trusted man of Sardar Patel. The Plan was shown to Mr Nehru, who rejected it. It was rehashed till he approved. On 3 June the Partition Plan was announced. The envisaged date of transfer of power to India was changed from June 1948 to 14/15 August 1947. In consequence, the transfer of power resulted in an exodus of ten million people and butchery of half that number. The "Partition Plan" left no room for goodwill between the rival communities.

**Kashmir and independent state annexed by India**

matter be taken up with UNO for settlement through plebiscite. The hawks in India count this misstep of Mr Nehru going to UN as the biggest blunder he committed to spoil the case of Kashmir.

Rajgopal Acharya had said that for Kashmir Nehru had a "block in his mind". His love for Kashmir cost India and Pakistan dear in blood, economy and the distress of the population of the subcontinent and worst: India invested its resources to make itself a great military power. India and Pakistan attracted the attention of the world for mishandling of their issues. After 55 years India as a secular and democratic state has 45 per cent population on hunger-line and Pakistan at 33 per cent. India and Pakistan are torn within but have built themselves into two important military and nuclear powers.

2003 saw India signing \$3 billion arms deals with Russia. India is absorbing of US technical support, advice, and guidance. India took advice from Israel and US on deployment of forces against Pakistan (December 2001-December 2002) to pressurise Pakistan to yield to Indian policy in Kashmir. The US has come close to India's heartbeat. India knows she is being galvanised for an assigned role against China in the US global mosaic. With no threat to her security, India has buried its masses under poverty to build massive military power. Recall Kargil (1999): called a 'fiasco' in Pakistan, it had caused trauma in India. If Mr Clinton had not forced Pakistan to withdraw and observe the sanctity of LOC, India would have remained paralysed for months.

Now there is a realisation in India by many thinkers, leaders, human rights groups and the Press who have realised the damaging policy of remaining on warpath with Pakistan. For 55 years India could not win over Kashmiris. Why 700,000 strong Army could not suppress a popular movement of Kashmiris? Why should India ask America to tell Pakistan again and again to "do more" to stop infiltration? India is faced with a popular Resistance Movement: Kashmiris do not want India in Kashmir at any cost. It must accept that fact.

A brief review is essential for logical treatment or settlement of the Kashmir issue. India took up the case with UN in 1948 with its own proposal of a plebiscite. So the Indian claim of accession to India was negated by India itself. The UN Resolutions of 13 August 1948 and 5 January 1949 had laid down the procedures from the ceasefire till the plebiscite. India having gained respite from active combat, found ways of killing the issue. Threatened by India, Pakistan sought security by joining defence pacts (1954) with US. India paraded one excuse after another only to declare that Kashmir was an integral part of India. The main plank of logic was

Violating the basis of the Partition and without ascertaining the people's wishes, India invaded Kashmir on 27 October 1947. The grand strategy was aimed at linking up with India's foster-child Pakhtoonistan stunt and encircle Pakistan by winning over Afghanistan. India was in a position to control the rivers flowing to Pakistan. It choked on 1 April 1948 waters of the Eastern Rivers and canals irrigating Pakistan. To save Pakistan from destruction through starvation of waters the World Bank sponsored the Indus Water Treaty (1960). Subsequently India violated the IWT by constructing dams and powerhouses on Western Rivers emanating from Kashmir and given by IWT for exclusive use of Pakistan. The IWT was a very nasty conspiracy against Pakistan.

Purely for her security, Pakistan joined CENTO and SEATO. It was the turning point which ultimately found Pakistan in trouble. During the Cold War Pakistan was called by US "an Ally of Allies." During the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan Pakistan played a very vital role. Once the Soviet Empire pulled out of Afghanistan and fell apart, Pakistan was subjected by US to sanctions and pressure to roll back its nuclear programme.

The Partition plan was a meticulous conspiracy. The Boundary Commission Award was changed by the Viceroy to give part of Muslim-majority Gurdaspur district to provide India direct access to Kashmir. What followed was an enduring tragedy: the cause of hostility between India and Pakistan. Thus Kashmir became "a most dangerous flash point of the world". (Clinton).

The whole phenomenon of accession and the Indian claim on Kashmir can be crystallised in one sentence: *could the Maharaja or Sheikh Abdullah alone, without ascertaining the wishes of the people, make a decision regarding the fate of 12 million people?* After the forced marriage, India could not win over Kashmiris in 55 years till now. Indian genocide of Kashmiris is well known the world over. If Kashmiris were treated as Indians, would they be hunted and killed in thousands? During all these years, absence of the Red-Cross cannot be explained away. Out of 584 princely states, only Kashmir has been forced into the wrong arms.

Another sign of conspiracy: when the Quaid ordered his C-in-C on 28 October 1947 to move troops to Kashmir, after the Indian forces had landed there on 27 October, the latter refused to obey his orders without the approval of the Supreme Commander at Delhi. Mountbatten accompanied by the Supreme Commander (Mr. Nehru feigned illness and stayed back) visited Lahore to dissuade the Quaid from sending troops to Kashmir. The logic offered was that the British government did not want war between the two dominions especially when Kashmir had acceded to India. Mountbatten had no authority from the Indian Government to enter into any commitment, but he suggested that the

that "Pakistan's joining the defence pacts had changed the situation." This prank does not have logic to deny the right of self-determination to Kashmiris: the commitment was made by UN, India and Pakistan.

In 1957, out of vengeance for Pakistan's joining US Defence Pacts, the USSR declared Kashmir part of India. After the Cold War, the US and UK and others also declared the UN Resolutions "outdated." They also favoured farcical elections in Kashmir under the Indian constitution. The US called the Resistance Movement which erupted on 2 December 1989 an "indigenous movement" for the right of self-determination. But after India had moved into US orbit as a 'natural ally,' Kashmir's freedom movement was labelled terrorist activity. When Indian forces could not (Jan, 2003) control the activities of the Freedom Fighters, America demanded Pakistan "do more." The US Ambassador in India openly said that in case of a clash between India and Pakistan, American interest lies with India. Indian state terrorism has been provided sanctity by the great powers and their affiliates. The coordinated conspiracy is visible to the naked eye.

In April 1997 a Kashmir Study Group of US professors visited Pakistan. The interesting and shocking points of their views were that Indian forces in Kashmir are not violating Human Rights, they are forced to react to militants, that India and Pakistan should jointly organise a security arrangement to prevent infiltration into Kashmir. With this tainted approach, Kashmir problem had become too tangled. India, assisted by other powers, made Kashmir problem insoluble. Now it is the problem of the world, not just the subcontinent. American now seems to take *more interest in this dispute. With the latest strategic setting US is most likely to favour India and impose status quo on Pakistan (LOC imposed as the border), leaving India to exercise control on at least two of the Western Rivers. India has already violated IWT. It may scrap it and as a de facto control power can prevent interference by any world fora.*

There is another window opened recently by Russia. The President of Pakistan was invited to Russia (4-6 February). Russia has been the stoutest friend of India and supplies 70 percent of its defence requirements. After the 1965 war, Russia had mediated between India and Pakistan and hammered out the Tashkent Accord: During that war, US had become neutral, hurting Pakistan more seriously, as it was entirely dependent on US military hardware. Russia will not disappoint India but may not mind establishing its own relations with Pakistan.

It will be horrible for India and Pakistan to see America's permanent presence in South Asia. This will be inevitable if India and Pakistan do not learn from the past. Let the natural boundaries of hearts, minds and honest dealings prevail. There is no need for two-track diplomacy or third-party mediation.