

Fissures in Indian society

Indian obsession to see Pakistan as a state torn by internal conflicts and regional insurgencies sometimes becomes so pronounced and grotesque that even a layperson can diagnose the exorbitant pathology of South Asian giant. Indian media people are adept at making mountain out of molehill and especially in the case of Pakistan they fabricate a full-fledged story on the basis of subjective whims and flimsy inferences, which is not even distantly related to ground reality. Recently, Indian journalist Mohan Guruswamy demonstrated this jaundiced vision in an article, "The tale of Balochistan", which is published in Asia Age on 12 May 2003.

The script is blend of black propaganda, figment and brazen confession that Indian government was actively involved in abetting and training secessionist elements working for independent Sindh, Balochistan and Pakhtunistan when Indira Gandhi was Prime Minister of India. Guruswamy projected the dynamics of centrifugal forces in case of Balochistan, which are verily functional in southern and northeast Indian states. It is reality that Brahuies are most ancient people of Balochistan and their language is a Dravidian language which is not related to Indo-European lingual family but due to lingual diversity they are not in confrontation with other Balochi tribes because 99 per

Pak. F. Kela - India
cent Brahuie are Muslims and Islam works as supreme binding force and can neutralise any ethnic and lingual force of polarisation.

On the other hand in India there are many languages, which have no affinity with Indo-European languages and they are acting as the sole plank for regional autonomy. In northeast India, two languages Naga and Bodo are Sino-Tibetan in origin and working as main secessionist force against Indian imperialism. In southern India, Telugu, Kannada, Tamil and Malayalam are four very important Dravidian languages; speakers of these languages defied all efforts of the central government of India to Sanskritise and Brahminise their languages and due to lingual disparity the states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka and Andhrapradesh are forming rapid fault line in the federation of India.

Guruswamy constructed the premise of independent Balochistan on the flimsy plea of projecting the resistance shown by Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmad Yar Khan, to merge his state to Pakistan. It is fact that Khan of Kalat prevaricated on annexing his state with Pakistan but when he joined the federation of Islamic Republic of Pakistan he remained loyal to integrated Pakistan till his death. He was Governor Balochistan when late Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto abolished feudalism and fiefdom from the province of Balochistan.

Mumtaz Muzaffar The F-Post

From 1973 to 1977, the military acted in Balochistan to construct roads and establish educational institutions and pave the way for progress and prosperity of this backward province. After fulfilling its assigned task, the army immediately left the area and there is not a single army soldier deployed in internal Balochistan presently due to security reasons after almost 25 years of this military action.

Conversely, eight lakh Indian soldiers are deployed in Held Kashmir since 1988 and they are committing every imaginable crime with impunity. Almost 80,000 indigenous Kashmiris have been slaughtered by the BSF on the pretext of curbing foreign infiltration, women are raped and religious places are desecrated and burnt and this gory drama is still being played in Indian Held Kashmir with the connivance of Indian government.

Guruswamy, who vehemently denounces the terrorist infiltration in Held Kashmir, proudly admits that Balochi insurgents were trained in the desert of Rajasthan and India provided them with financial and diplomatic assistance when Indira Gandhi was in power till 1977. This was continuation of Indian coercive doctrine, which was used in 1971 to dismember Pakistan.

It is most appropriate time for Guruswamy to expose Indian atrocities in Held Kashmir to satisfy his conscience instead of brooding on

25.6.03
the condition of Balochi people who are not under scourge of slavery like Kashmiri people.

It is unequivocal fact that there is not a single secessionist in movement in Pakistan, which may jeopardise the solidarity of Pakistan in present circumstances. Jiye Sindh, independent Balochistan and Pakhtunistan have become defunct entities when people have enlightened their consciousness with education and exposure. It is vindicated in general election of Pakistan held in 2002 in which so-called nationalist elements are rejected by Pakistani masses in the NWFP, Sindh and Balochistan.

In South Asia epicenters of polarisation and centrifugal forces definitely exit as Khushwant Singh indicates them in his remarkable book "End of India" but probably Mohan Guruswamy cannot scan this apocalyptic book. It is appropriate to quote a paragraph of another seminal fictional work "Passage to India" composed by E.M. Foster 75 years ago.

"The fissure in the Indian soil are infinite; Hinduism, so solid from a distance, is riven into sects and clans, which radiate and join, and change their names according to the aspect from which they are approached."

The fissures in Indian society might be considered unrealistic in the era of Foster but their existence has become a stark reality in India under the sway of proponents of Hindutva.

Peace initiative and CBMs

Dawood
26.6.07 By Mahdi Masud

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IT is noteworthy that the plethora of comments in Pakistan on Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee's change of direction, as reflected in his Srinagar speech of April 18 and in some of his subsequent utterances, have all focused on perceived Indian interest in having peace and normalization talks with Pakistan and on the possibility of US pressure as an underlying factor.

What has not received much public attention in Pakistan but has been reflected in the Indian media is a sense in that country of Pakistan's vulnerability in the wake of the invasion and occupation of Iraq, the enhanced US and western intolerance of Islamic militancy in any form and the public threats of preemptive strikes by the Indian foreign minister a few days prior to Vajpayee's speech of April 18.

India may have concluded that the general helplessness of the regimes in the Islamic world in the face of the US offensive against Islamic targets worldwide may have also affected the strength of Pakistan's commitment to the Kashmir liberation struggle. However, the thaw in Indo-Pakistan relations is welcome irrespective of the mix of factors accounting for it. In the words of a UN Human Development Report, South Asia has emerged as "the poorest, the most malnourished, most illiterate, least gender sensitive, in short the most deprived region in the world".

Endowed with abundant human and natural resources, the region continues to suffer from self-inflicted wounds.

towards the resolution of the Kashmir issue, confidence building measures in economic, cultural and other fields, would achieve only marginal results, their efficacy blocked by the intermittent repercussions of the core conflict. For the CBMs to get off the ground, a significant improvement in the ground situation in Kashmir would be required. If positive steps in other fields are neutralized by daily killings of dozens of freedom fighters in Kashmir, the desired improvement in the atmospherics would not be possible.

The CBMs in the human, cultural, trade, travel and other fields, some of which have recently been taken by the two countries, cannot be an end in themselves but can certainly help create a climate of trust and understanding, once the core issue is also taken in hand. It is inconceivable that a confidence-building scenario that leaves the heart of the problem out can prove durably useful and effective.

Pakistan faces a difficult dilemma in reconciling its need for peace, stability and economic development with its commitment to the rights of the Kashmiris. The predicament would be eased, if not resolved, provided the present peace efforts on both sides lead on to meaningful negotiations on all issues of difference, including Kashmir.

In the event of the proposed peace talks failing to materialize or failing to yield the desired results, Pakistan should continue its diplomatic and political support for the Kashmir cause without contributing to any military escalation with India and without abandoning the desired drive for economic and social development.

In a nutshell what is proposed is priority for peace and econom-

short the most deprived region in the world”.

Endowed with abundant human and natural resources, the region continues to suffer from self-inflicted wounds. Instead of treating history as a guide, the states of the subcontinent continue to carry it like a burden on their shoulders, severely restricting their manoeuvrability and freedom of action.

It is no use blaming the people for the continuing problems between the two principal South Asian countries. If only the leadership in the two countries would learn not merely to reflect prevailing trends but also to lead public opinion into more constructive channels, the ground would gradually be prepared for a reconciliation.

The consensus of opinion in Pakistan supports the concept of a composite negotiating mechanism, as envisaged in the Lahore agreements, on the understanding that progress in trade, cultural exchanges, travel or other fields would clearly be linked with progress on the issue of Kashmir. The idea floated in India that Kashmir may be put on hold pending improvement in the atmosphere through cooperation in other fields is a non-starter.

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