

The Business

Chief Editor

Irfan Athar Qazi

E-mail: editorthebusiness@yahoo.com
thebusinesslhr@gmail.comTijarat House, 14-Davis Road, Lahore
0423-6312280, 6312480, 6312429, 6312462
Cell # 0321-45982581st Floor Ahmed Plaza near Zong Office
Susan Road, Faisalabad, Ph: 041-8555582ISLAMABAD / RAWALPINDI
N-125 Circular Road, Ph: 051-5551654,
5532761, Cell # 0300-8567331KARACHI
3rd Floor Kehkashan Mall 172-I Block II PECHS
Opp Rehmania Masjid Main Tariq Road
Ph: 021-34524550, Cell # 0300-8251534Hitler re-born
in India

Khushwant Singh, a Sialkot-born noted Indian journalist had predicted the break-up India in his book 'The End of India', written after the anti-Muslim riots in Gujarat, and termed Modi as reincarnation of Hitler. Some of his words are worth mentioning. For example: "Every fascist regime needs communities and groups it can demonize in order to thrive. It starts with one group or two. But it never ends there. He has also written, among other things, that "a movement built on hate can only sustain itself by continually creating fear and strife. Those of us today who feel secured because we are not Muslims or Christians are living in fool's paradise." But not many took him seriously then as the RSS kept prospering, catapulting the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) into power in 2014. That was the beginning of the end of so-called secular, liberal, inclusive India. What Modi had done to Muslims of Gujarat as chief minister as prime minister he set about doing the same to Muslims all over India, including the Occupied Kashmir even when it was a semi-autonomous state. Having placed it under his heels he went for Muslims in Assam, and also opened the door to arrival of Hindus who he said faced persecution in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

The entire Indian landscape is rife with protests against his amended Citizenship Act and NRC as conscientious Hindus and members of other religious communities find India lurching to RSS brainchild Hindu rashtra. Over the last one week, the protestors are on streets, to be met with merciless handling by police. If people are on streets protesting the two new pieces of anti-Muslim and anti-minorities laws at least five states have refused to abide by them. Even when Home Minister Amit Shah is insistent that he and his government are "firm like a rock" the Modi sarkar's marriage with power appears to be on the rocks.

That the situation is profoundly grim is a fact that has found its best expression from about a dozen insurgencies that are already raging there. Moreover, there is Occupied Kashmir now seething with post-curfew uncertainty. Externally, even India's close strategic ally, the United States, has asked New Delhi to "protect and respect the right of peaceful assembly". The statement has come in the wake of police violence against students of Jamia Millia Islamia. The US State Department had noted that "religious freedom and equal treatment under law are fundamental principles of our two democracies". It may also trigger outflow of refugees from India to the neighbouring countries, and if history is an evidence Pakistan is going to be their prime destination. Sensing this probability, Prime Minister Imran Khan has already expressed his country's inability to host them. And he has also taken a leaf out of Khushwant Singh's book in this regard.

Anwar Congo and the act of killing



DR NAAZIR MAHMOOD

Imagine a killer – rather a mass killer – being enthusiastic about re-enacting his crimes: kidnappings, tortures, strangulations, and dumping of the dead bodies, and all that with a sense of pride.

That was Anwar Congo of Indonesia, the mass murderer who danced the cha-cha-cha after accomplishing his tasks of targeting mostly innocent people accused of being communists in the mid-1960s.

Congo died in November 2019 at the age of 78 after experiencing both fame and notoriety with his acting, and boastful confessions of his crimes in a marvellous film, 'The Act of Killing' – an Oscar-nominated 2012 documentary. For the film, he climbed stairs to roof terraces where he demonstrated his preferred method of killing people. "A length of wire is best for strangulation", he said while the camera was filming. He loved the wire because beating people to death proved too messy. And after the shot he would insist on watching it. He just wanted to make sure the shot was as perfect as his crimes were.

But he didn't consider himself a criminal; he was doing all this to help his army save the country from communists, who were infidels and wanted to take over Indonesia. If you watch the film, 'The Act of Killing', you find Anwar

Congo a thin man with white hair who confesses to have killed at least a thousand people. Just a thousand! Out of around a million killed in 1965-66 by the army of Indonesia led by General Suharto, the gangs of petty criminals turned into hardened murderers, and religious fanatics who wanted to defend their faith against a purported enemy. Anwar Congo tells the camera, "I have tried to forget all that", but while saying that he dances cheerfully and adds, "Feeling happy, a little alcohol, a little marijuana", and he begins to sing. 'The Act of Killing' is full of striking scenes that shed ample light on one of the worst massacres that took place in the 20th century, but since the US itself was the major collaborator and supporter of the Indonesian army, the atrocities are mostly forgotten. You need to remember what Stalin did in the 1930s more than what Suharto did with American help in the 1960s. That is the reason the Indonesian massacre remains largely lesser known. A political purge beginning in 1965 eliminated around a million people accused of being communists, leftists, and anti-religion. Most of the killers didn't know their victims; they received lists of the accused from the intelligence agencies that claimed to be protecting their country against anti-state elements. A failed coup was used as an excuse so that the military could go on a rampage and target suspects across Indonesia. How could millions of people be suspected? Well, if state officials decide even a whole country can be seen as suspect.

'The Act of Killing' shows precisely that – by following Anwar Congo who was a petty criminal in his youth, re-selling movie tickets for profit and extorting money from the Chinese minority in his area. When the army decided to purge anyone it considered a threat to its power, they drafted hundreds or even thousands like Anwar Congo, who could be intoxicated with a dose of patriotism and a slug of religious fervour. That tipsy feeling of being a defender of the country was good enough for them to go off on a

killing spree. When you are a criminal, you just need an excuse to kill in the name of your country or your faith. That's what Anwar Congo did, leading a notorious death squad that executed thousands of suspected leftists, and after 50 years he was willing to re-enact the killings for the camera. He was proud that he was hired as leader of the assassins by his army. The director of 'The Act of Killing', Joshua Oppenheimer, did not find it difficult to persuade Congo to recall his first attempt at murder. "It was a failure", Congo recalls.

More disturbing than Anwar Congo and the film he acted in, is the narrative that has portrayed the victims as deprived and vicious. The failed coup was blamed for inflicting dreadful suffering on the six generals who were killed before the massacres started. General Suharto usurped power by sidelining the popular leader, Sukarno, who had used the slogans of nationalism, religion, and communism. Just like Z A Bhutto later did with his Islamic socialism. Be it communism or socialism, they were not acceptable, even if they were just slogans. They had to be purged, and an American-backed army was the best tool to do that.

The Suharto doctrine painted all leftists as evil, atheistic forces that could sweep over the country if people were not vigilant. Doesn't that remind you of the Jews being victimized by Hitler, or the Muslims being targeted by the BJP in present-day India, or even some minorities in Muslim countries including Pakistan? The degrees of violence are of course different; in some countries it is state driven, in some others it is inflicted by jingoist, nationalist, religious, and sectarian groups supported by some state institutions just as it was done over 50 years ago in Indonesia.

Such measures justify authoritarian regimes, irrespective of their credentials that can be monarchic as in some Arab potentates, pseudo-democratic as in India and Pakistan, or even outright military dictatorships led by generals such as Suharto

or Zia, or in today's Egypt or Thailand. Sometimes they promise to introduce a New Order, as General Suharto did; but that new order was there just to reinforce his own power that he couldn't have wielded under a truly democratic dispensation. He was supported by his army in his so-called New Order because the army itself benefitted from it.

Under General Suharto it was impossible to talk freely about any human rights violations. Even after Suharto, younger Indonesians would ask their parents but would get only silence in response, because the army is still dominating and does not want its former dictator to be exposed, as it would open a Pandora's Box and people would start challenging the army's narrative. That's why those atrocities are projected as patriotic deeds that should be honoured and respected. The Indonesian army in addition to mass killing, also detained and imprisoned hundreds of thousands without trial. Why without trial? Because if you have a trial you need to present some evidence, which is hardly available, so you just keep them under detention for years, or kill them and dump their bodies. The bodies may be found, but then you pretend that you know nothing about them. They may have been killed in a family feud or they may have just committed suicide as Hassan Nasir was reported to have done during General Ayub Khan's regime or Nazeer Abbasi during General Zia's dictatorship. In 1966, General Suharto forced Sukarno to hand emergency powers to him and appointed himself as President Suharto. Just like General Musharraf did, not long ago in Pakistan – but hush, we must not talk about that. So how do you protect Anwar Congo? You create a narrative that lionizes criminals who violate laws and even mutilate and suspend the most supreme law of the land – the constitution. If your Anwar Congos are safe, you are safe too. You call a spade a spade at your own peril. The Congo is dead, long live the Congo.

The writer holds a PhD from the University of Birmingham, UK and works in Islamabad.



India has been divided - Shah Mehmood Qureshi

Politics of bloodbath

MURTAZA SHIBLI

On New Year's Day, Kashmir will complete 150 days of siege – the longest ever in any place along with the world's longest-ever internet blockade.

Although the curfew-like siege that started at midnight on August 4 has been considerably eased, the withdrawal of the cordon remains entrenched and determined to activate with a wild vengeance whenever Kashmiris display any potential for resistance. So far, the only reason Kashmir has been spared a bloodbath is the strategic restraint of the population from taking out any large demonstrations that would have allowed the authorities to commit mass murder on a much larger scale than what was done in the aftermath of Burhan Wani's killing when nearly 150 youth were brutally killed and tens of thousands injured or blinded. Earlier, in 2008 and 2010-11, similar massacres were carried out to quell mass uprisings. In the current iteration of the crisis, absence of any large-scale murder of people does not absolve the conduct and character of New Delhi or suggest it has weaned herself of Kashmiri blood. There are credible reports that Governor Satya Pal Malik had prepared a large-scale contingency plan to deal with the mass public massacre that it envisaged to control the public reaction in the aftermath of the abrogation of Article 370.

From New Delhi's point of view, absence of large-scale public battering does not bode well for its future predatory engagement with the people and the region. Had a few massacres happened, the total ban on communication would have masked it well and in a world of fast-changing priorities, it would have even been forgotten by the world by now – leaving Kashmiris exhausted to mourn all alone, as they've done in the past. Therefore, there is a fear that a public rebellion is lurking around in the very presence of a prying security bandobast. The pro-India Kashmiri political groups like National Conference and People's Democratic Party also stand baffled. Two days before the abrogation of Article 370, Omar Abdullah issued a general appeal to the public to come out on the roads to block the impending Indian move. A public response would have certainly caused a justification for

brutal violence as the state's choicest response against any peaceful protests since 1931. Prime Minister Imran Khan, in his extremely long and passionate speech on September 27 at the United Nations General Assembly had issued a chilling warning that "there would be a bloodbath when India lifts its curfew". Although there is still extreme coercion and threats, with little respect for public safety and security, the curfew in Kashmir stands lifted.

The bloodbath has been avoided, at least so far. Pakistan looks strained for want of a meaningful and credible reaction to the Indian moves in the region. True, Prime Minister Imran Khan, in his televised address to the nation in late August, vowed that "Pakistan will go to any lengths to support the cause of the oppressed Kashmiri people". All that it has managed so far is a lot of rhetoric that also seems to have run out of steam as the situation progresses into a new year. Before the Indian elections, Khan, in his off-the-cuff spirit to trivialise every issue of import to a reductive terminology of sport, had batted for Narendra Modi's re-election suggesting there may be a better chance of peace talks with India, a lazy view that fails to explore anything beyond the confines of a cushy workplace environment. While Khan's nature as a peace-maker is commendable, his naive optimism has led him to a dangerous blind – as demonstrated by the aftermath of Modi's re-election. When the abrogation of Article 370 occurred, it came "out of blue for Pakistan" as one senior politician from Azad Jammu and Kashmir told me. With time, the dread of the unknown might have settled a bit – but failed to generate any credible and actionable response. So far, all that has been done from the Pakistani side is letters to various regional and international forums and cyclical statements of impending doom and exhibiting concern of various degrees. However, placing the blame on the current government alone would be inappropriate. This is a natural outcome of a sustained official policy of three decades. But that also seems to have boomeranged, since there was a failure to gauge the Indian mood exposing deep structural flaws in her engagement with India and Kashmir. This should have called for a serious review

Social protection



FAUZIA WAQAR

Child Study Group establishes that the services of nutrition-sensitive programmes with iron supplementation through social safety networks have a major impact on the nutrition indicators of women and growing children.

Many developing countries show success stories in enhancing the nutrition status of women and young children by using social protection platforms to initiate conditional or unconditional cash transfer programmes or health insurance models and address poverty and malnutrition. India adopted the model to provide fortified wheat flour through social safety network programmes (SSNP) among beneficiaries to overcome micronutrient deficiencies.

According to the WHO, the programme is "highly cost-effective". After the success of fortified wheat, the country is now introducing similar reforms to eliminate iron deficiency in the early childhood through the SSNP. In Pakistan, the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) is the most significant social safety net programme with clear objectives of pacifying the negative impact of slow economic growth, food insecurity and inflation on marginalized communities, particularly women. Though the advancement of the programme is slow, the platform keeps on introducing new interventions to address malnutrition issues. It conducted many training workshops for its BISP Beneficiary Committee (BBCs) to create awareness and information regarding iron deficiency in early childhood.

However, there is a need to disseminate the concept of the first 1000 days, starting from conception till a child's second birth-

day, offering an irreplaceable window of opportunity to form healthier futures. It is the time period when the foundations of maximum health, growth, and neurodevelopment for the upcoming lifespan are laid.

In developing countries, these foundations get weakened due to malnutrition hence it is quite significant to focus on this time period to achieve optimum health, growth, and neurodevelopment across the lifespan. Provision of iron through weaning food; which should be essentially started at six months, can surely enhance growth in early childhood development. A great initiative by the government is the Ehsaas Programme. The aim of the programme is to reduce inequality, invest in people's welfare and upgrade lagging districts. The platform can be utilized to reach marginalized communities to overcome iron deficiency, one of the most prevalent and alarming micronutrient deficiency in the country. Cash transfer programmes for vulnerable groups, provision of subsidized iron fortified food and awareness sessions should be made an integral part of the programme for the welfare of the people. Moreover, using this forum for national preparedness plans and guidelines for incorporating nutrition objectives and interventions into emergency relief programs can have a huge impact. The capacity of health systems and other stakeholders including women should be developed so they can be effectively utilized to provide appropriate nutrition care to children and their families.

Evidence suggests that the nutritional situation in Pakistan has made little improvement over the decades. Even the lat-

est National Nutrition Survey 2018 does not reflect any hopeful indicators for women and growing children.

Around 58 percent of the population in Pakistan is food insecure; per capita availability of calories and commodities is insufficient with limited availability of nutritional food including vegetables and fruits to the poor. The prevalence of anaemia has been consistently high and showing an alarming situation in infants. With all these prevailing situations, it has become imperative for the government to explore different perspectives to address the issue and strongly link social protection platforms with nutrition interventions. Moreover, the government should explore opportunities for public-private partnerships and extend its support to the private sector by providing subsidies in the production of fortified food like cereals as a weaning food.

A recent study by the Aga Khan University on the cost-effectiveness of price subsidies on fortified infant food reveals it as a major intervention to overcome iron deficiency in early childhood. The need is to focus more on the poorest households with low social and economic status (SES), as iron deficiency is highly prevalent among them. Platforms like the Benazir Income Support Programme under the Ehsaas flag-ship, Bait-ul Mal, and the newly established provincial level social protection programmes should be utilized to provide marginalized communities with a cost-effective weaning diet in the form of fortified iron food for early childhood development to eliminate the social and economic burdens of malnutrition in the

Widespread under-nutrition, especially iron deficiency, determines a range of negative consequences impacting the welfare of individuals and families as well as the economic and social development of the nation.

This economic, social and human burden is clearly inevitable and can be considerably reduced by adopting evidence based, affordable and effective interventions. The underlying household and community causative factors are mainly attributed by poverty along with less education, awareness and knowledge.

As these factors are related to human, economic and organizational resources available at the household level, they reflect the degree of social justice in society and the status and autonomy of women. A recent study by the Lancet Maternal and