

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION UNPRECEDENTED

Israel's pounding on Gaza witnessed a very strong reaction in Kashmir where hundreds of thousands of agitating people particularly youth faced Indian army bullets resulting in mortalities and leaving scores injured. Out of the whole Muslim world Kashmir bled because it understands what occupation, persecution and atrocities committed on civilians effectuates.

Whereas Nehru mesmerised then Kashmir's popular leader Sheikh Abdullah, Gandhi with his magic kept Begum Abdullah and family in good stead. Mahatma Mohan Das Karam Chand Gandhi through the prism of occupation saw a colourful ray coming out from Kashmir and played a role to make job easy for Pandit Nehru and the caucus around him.

Washington Post.com reported (April 14, 2014) that in a 20-hour gun battle Indian troops killed two militants and wounded also two army men. It also reported that "about 68,000 people have been killed since 1989 in an armed uprising and subsequent crackdown by Indian armed forces. While the armed rebellion has largely been suppressed, Kashmir sees frequent flares of violence as demands for independence or Kashmir's merger with Pakistan gains momentum".

The number of people unofficial sources recorded exceeds one hundred thousand excluding thousands disappeared or consumed in Indian torture chambers. The number of women and children raped is unprecedented and property razed worth billions. Indian army perpetrator of 60 Battalion of the Territorial Army was arrested by local police while fleeing from house of a Kashmiri woman after committing the crime of rape. Such unabated situations a routine never see the light of the day after sham investigations are ordered.

Thousands have perished in fake encounters and one glaring example of April 2010 an eye opener and a significant event when a Court of Inquiry recommended that six military personnel, including a Colonel, were to be court-martialled. The heinous crime of fake encounters ended the lives of Shahzad Ahmad Khan, Riyaz Ahmad Lone and Mohammad Shafi Lone who had gone missing in April 2010 after they went looking for an army job. The outcome of the court-martial was never known or sentences, if any, never carried out.

Over five hundred Kashmiri families of missing persons filed cases before state Human Rights Panel seeking that DNA tests be conducted on thousands of unmarked graves discovered. Army opposed any such move and the government refused to exhume bodies found in the graves to ascertain their identity. The explanation given by authorities that the buried in the graves are all 'terrorists' was a futile attempt of crimes committed malevolently. In a brazen manner, as usual, government did not come forth with any proof or evidence to corroborate their conclusion. Over the years thousands have disappeared, eliminated after taken into custody and buried as anonymous and unknown.

The civil court case instituted against army for raping fifty Kashmiri women in 1991 resulted in unending misery as traumatised families looking for justice braved harassment and intimidation of army who frightened inhabitants with the pretext of allegations of arms and ammunition dumps reported in the area. Abdul Samad Dar, a village elder, told Anadolu Agency. "The army told us that they had information that guns and ammunition were present in our village and they would need to carry search operations".

Xinhua News Agency reports (July 15, 2014) that a New Delhi based journalist, Ved Prakash Vaidik kicked up a row stating that "India and Pakistan should stop fighting over Kashmir and make it an independent nation". It is noteworthy that the journalist held a meeting with Pakistan's Hafiz Saeed a hard-line religious group leader considered by India to be the mastermind of 2008 Mumbai attacks that claimed 166 lives. The allegation has since been refuted by Saeed challenging India to provide any evidence for the claim.

Many in India & Pakistan believe that such feelers are made public to gauge the reaction of people on both sides as the international pressure to find a solution to Kashmir problem is mounting. A lot of blood has already been spilled and sixty six years of unending struggle for independence by people of Kashmir goes on involving future generations with vigour and commitment. Kashmir being a nuclear flashpoint is worrisome for the international community as ignoring the situation can undoubtedly be devastating and catastrophic.

The right thinking philanthropists of India and Pakistan consider peace as vitally important for the two countries to live like friends and brothers creating an atmosphere at least on the pattern that exists between US and Canada. The benevolent also believe that Kashmir problem needs to be resolved as per the wish of Kashmiris. The question asked is that how long anyone can force maintenance of the political status-quo in Kashmir ruling it with the barrel of gun?

Kashmir, as we know, is going through difficult times, and the going seems tough as again speaking out the truth becomes real hard and at times impossible. In a democracy, freedom of press and right to information professed allows running of normal day to day affairs smoothly to a reasonable extent. On the contrary, the unpleasant issues like human right violations, indiscriminate killings, house searches backed by draconian laws, adds humiliation and resultant psychological problems for the effected populace, which can become an embarrassment, especially under the watchful eyes of the international community.

The general public wholly depends on the information allowed for consumption and policy directions formulated to be followed by the media circles in the broader national interest. People of India, unfortunately, are fed with information that is far from truth and it is expected that an established vibrant democracy gives people the right to know everything about anything that happens on local or international level. The problem of Kashmir as projected and given to understand to people of India can be based mainly on the following arguments which, in fairness to public in general, is understood to be the gospel truth.

Kashmir has its share of writers, academicians and intellectuals who, under the prevailing circumstances, compulsorily prefer to maintain a low profile. There is no dearth of talent. But writing or expressing oneself in a free and fair environment makes the job easy. This is especially when one does not have to go through trauma and fear of facing reprisals in the form of arrests under preventive detention and or fear of dreaded disappearances culture as the law enforcement agencies are immune as empowerment through draconian laws means that no one is answerable.