

Misguided youth must now join the mainstream

It is an admitted fact that the backbone of Pakistan sponsored terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir has been broken, some sporadic incidents, targeting unarmed innocent civilians and poor labourers notwithstanding which are acts of heinous crime prompted by sheer cowardice. Those few desperate acts are indirect admission by militant outfits and their sponsors of conceding defeat. Militancy, violence and spilling innocents' blood can achieve absolutely nothing except destruction. The sooner the shreds of absolutely futile militant violence is stopped for ever, the better will it be particularly for such misconceived and misguided youth. Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, as such, has stressed upon the fact that violence had no place in any civilized society. Stressing on the importance of plural culture which got strength by diversity, he conveyed the need to respect it and make it deep rooted in Jammu and Kashmir.

There are two vital things to be seen just in a simple and ordinary manner. One- has violence in any part of the world ever achieved anything? Obviously not, then what can a few infiltrators from Pakistan and a few misled and misguided youth in the UT especially in Kashmir valley achieve, hypothetically speaking, even if they keep up with this nuisance of militancy for another 100 years. Two- a country of which Jammu and Kashmir is a part, is a free, democratic, liberal, strong and a fast developing country where plenty of opportunities are available and where the factor of religion in deciding anything is unheard of as against Pakistan where one regime in power is ousted and replaced by another while a third one is waiting in wings to "takeover" or in other words, where there is perpetual political instability.

Knowing from the people there in Pakistan about the cynicism, frustration and hopelessness they keep nursing about their (failed) country, must open the eyes of these fallaciously driven persons preferring gun as their "mission". The Pakistani youth are feeling proud and not jealous of India making tremendous progress in every field and how it is going to become the 4th biggest economy of the world by 2025 as against their country facing an inflation of 25% and not trusted by any country/institution to lend. These Pakistani citizens when interviewed by their own media personnel about India in comparison to Pakistan, their views must open the eyes of these misguided youth. India is touching new heights of progress and achievements and the youth of Jammu and Kashmir must be partakers of that progress hence renewed urging them by the Lieutenant Governor to shun the path of violence and join the mainstream. Advice and suggestions on similar lines have, on umpteen times, been made by the Government including by even the Army/Police authorities which has definitely had an impact but certain residual and "left over" elements are still oscillating between the options.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha while paying tribute to Gandhi Ji on October 2 reminded the people that when darkest clouds were hovering over the subcontinent in 1947, how Gandhi Ji had seen "a ray of hope" in Kashmir and the assurance of Jammu and Kashmir being "built as per Babu's dreams" must be taken as an opportunity to own peace and order as a way of life than the obverse especially when "every section of the society is being empowered without any discrimination". At the event, prizes for notable achievements were given to different educational institutions from across the UT and Swachh Vidyalaya (Cleanest Schools) awards too were conferred on best performing schools thus inculcating the habits in young students about keeping their environs clean and tidy.

Normalcy is fast returning to Jammu and Kashmir, all routine activities are humming including tourism, trade and commerce, frequent shut downs are now unheard of, developmental activities are on fast track basis and, therefore, it is right moment to shun every grain and remote sign of any violence and instead embrace the mainstream. Let the Bus not be missed, again.

Breakthrough in Udhampur twin blasts

It must be fairly acknowledged that now perpetrators of crimes like the one recently witnessed in Udhampur town and other detestable acts of militancy are nabbed sooner than any later. It is on two accounts that at the outset such acts have drastically come down and the number of enemies of peace and harmony is fast descending and two - the security forces including the Jammu and Kashmir Police are more energised and increasingly alert and getting necessary inputs and the required critical information about the culprits and other suspects.

A "surrendered" militant has thus been arrested who was the "agent" and an operative of the Pakistan based Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) terrorist outfit from whom large quantity of the IED and other material used for such sticky bombs and time devices have been recovered. Like this, not only did the Police crack the case but with the arrest of the main culprit all other diabolical plans and conspiracies by hostile forces from across the border will get fairly known and thus nipped before those could be executed. Needless to add that the assertion that "Pakistan cannot see the development of Jammu and Kashmir" hence indulging in such acts can be termed not something beyond expectations in the sense that a country born against India can hardly be interested in our development as "an enemy once is enemy always".

India's growing defence exports

Asad Mirza

India's defence exports to various countries have increased manifold in recent years, the latest deal is to export Indian rocket launchers to Armenia.

According to reports, India would supply the 'Pinaka' multi-rocket launcher system, which can fire a salvo of 12 HE rockets in 44 seconds to Armenia besides anti-tank missiles and a variety of ammunition as part of a package agreement. The complete details of these armaments have not yet been disclosed. Pinaka saw service during the Kargil War, where it was successful in neutralising enemy positions on the mountaintops.

While the deal's value has not been disclosed, the report claims armament worth \$250 million or INR 2,000 crores would be sold over the next few months. The deal was signed earlier this month and supplies are to be fast-tracked.

It is not the first time that Armenia has received weapons equipment from India. In 2020, India triumphed over Russia and Poland in a \$40 million defence agreement with Armenia providing it with four indigenous 'Swathi' counter-battery radars.

This disclosure comes days after India called on the "aggressor side" in fresh fighting along the Armenia-Azerbaijan border to "immediately cease hostili-

ties" without directly naming Azerbaijan. Latest fighting erupted between the two sides on September 13.

India's defence exports

Meanwhile, it seems the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict has helped India to boost its arms exports. According to reports India recently announced figures for the highest-ever defence export growth that swelled by a staggering 334% over the last five years.

In fact India is chasing an even higher target. In 2020, the Modi government had set a target of Rs 35,000 crore (\$ 5 billion) export in aerospace, and defence goods and services in the next five years. This is part of the turnover of Rs 1.75 lakh crore (\$ 25 billion) in defence manufacturing by 2025 that the government is aiming to achieve.

India's defence exports touched a record Rs 13,000 crore in 2021-22, "eight times" of what it was around five years ago.

Besides the strategic importance of the deal with Armenia, the export order is a boost for the indigenous defence industry with the Indian government keen to increase the value of Indian arms exports.

India had also signed a contract with the Philippines in January 2022 for the sale of Brahmos missiles.

Currently, India exports defence equipment to 75 coun-

tries and these include weapon simulators, tear gas launcher, torpedo loading mechanism, alarm monitoring and control, night vision monocular and binocular, light-weight torpedo and fire control systems, armoured protection vehicle, weapons locating radar, high-frequency radio, coastal surveillance radar among others.



Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict

The issue of the conclave of Nagorno-Karabakh has always been the bone of contention between Armenia and Azerbaijan ever since the two countries became independent republics, after gaining independence from the erstwhile USSR.

The disputed region of

Nagorno-Karabakh lies in Azerbaijan and is inhabited mostly by ethnic Armenians. The conflict escalated into a full-scale war in the early 1990s which later transformed into a low-intensity conflict until four-day escalation in April 2016 and then into another full-scale war in 2020.

A ceasefire signed in 1994 in Bishkek was followed by two

combatants, Baku turned the tide in its favour by overwhelmingly deploying Turkish Bayraktar and Israeli kamikaze drones.

While Armenia has often turned to Russia for support, Moscow's preoccupation with the on-going war against Ukraine has resulted in not a very supportive response, this time.

In the face of rising hostilities and little military aid, the defence deal with India may prove to be a shot in the arm for a beleaguered Armenia.

Azerbaijan-Turkey-Pakistan relationship

India's military assistance for Armenia comes against the backdrop of its regional rival's bonhomie with Azerbaijan. Pakistan has consistently backed Azerbaijan in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and has refused to establish diplomatic ties and legally recognise Armenia as an independent state.

Azerbaijan is seen by many as part of an emerging axis with Turkey and Pakistan. It has used Turkish drones to fight war against Armenia, and is also in talks with Pakistan to buy the JF-

17 fighter aircraft.

In 2017, Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Pakistan had signed a Triateral Ministers Agreement that established security cooperation, and built upon previous bilateral military aid arrangements. These three countries also conducted a joint exercise named 'Three Brothers' last year.

The rise of Azerbaijan with increased Turkey-Pakistan military cooperation is a direct warning to India. Azerbaijan has acquired many deadly weapons by increasing friendship with Turkey and Pakistan in the name of Islam. Indian fears that other countries may also go along this route in the name of Islamic countries are not unfounded.

However, in spite of these developments, an interesting fact is that India has stronger economic ties with Azerbaijan than with Armenia. Indian company ONGC has also invested heavily in Azerbaijan's gas sector. The Indian bilateral trade with Azerbaijan in 2019 stood at \$1093 million, while with Armenia it was only \$48 million in 2020.

Broadly this latest defence deal will place India as one of the emerging global powers with rising defence exports capability. In addition it will also allow it to play a significant role in the central Asian republics and regionally, both.

(The author is a political commentator based in New Delhi.)

Karavir Gupta

The public of Jammu is not happy. I think this statement is slowly becoming redundant given the repetitive disappointment for people of Jammu and the current state of affairs. In the last couple of days and weeks, the public has been found protesting vehemently against the yellow lines drawn all over the city in the public places. These spaces demarcated using the yellow lines are being called the parking lots for which the public is being charged for parking their vehicle there.

Considering the given administration setup, these lines have been drawn under the supervision of Jammu Smart City Limited. These Yellow lines of revenue as I would like to call them have opened a Pandora's box of disconnectivity, inadequacy and inefficiency of the system to deliver a solution to the problem that our supposed Smart City grapples with. The availability of adequate parking space across the city.

Let me call this out more clearly. Let's start from the old city from Panjirthi, Mubarak Mandi complex, coming towards the Residency Road, moving on towards the Canal road and Talab Tillo - the spaces are cramped. The vehicles are out there in the wild leaving no space for people to walk where they could enjoy the heritage of the city on which crores are being spent if we go by the twitter handle of Jammu Smart City. As we move to the other side of the Famous Four Bridges (which are now lit up during the evenings), Rail Head Complex on one side, Aquaf Market, Gandhi Nagar (which I think authorities restrict to Apsara road only), Gole Market, the new bling place that is Chhani Himmat to Puhwara Chowk in Greater Kailash - I end up spending more time to find a place to park the car than spending time to do actual work I have gone there for.

The Yellow Lines of Revenue

The Solution? Let's draw yellow lines. To further narrow these places by limiting the public roads and demarcating them with fresh yellow paint that will get washed away by the next monsoon or even before. Thereby causing more public inconvenience.

It goes on to show a huge disconnect between the problem the city faces and the solutions that come by from the helm of affairs. This disconnect is for real. I say so because of repetitive incidents of solutions being distant from the on-ground reality. A few examples being, erecting unmanageable speed-breakers all across the city turning our smooth rides into bumpy ones, not taking into account pregnant women, old-age or ill. Shouldn't a smart city of the 21st century be inclusive rather than whimsical? And see today, within 6 months, those ill-planned speed breakers are being destroyed all across. Such a huge wastage of money and the budget.

Other incidents being delayed refurbishment of the heritage sites across Jammu province, rampant deforestation of the Trikuta hills on the way from Jammu-Udhampur-Patnitop, unchecked dumping of the construction waste, rubble from blasting of mountains and roads into the river Chenab on NH1A thereby risking the Chenab bed and increased instances of flooding in the future, semi-automated money collection at the toll booths, endless delay in kickstarting the Tawi project, and no attempt to re-ignite the Jammu-Haat!

A Smart City is where people, flora and fauna (which is the software) and city infrastructure (the hardware) are intertwined with each other. Alas! The Smart City project in Jammu is a distant

cry from making that happen!

There is a considerable gap between what the public on-ground wants for them to be able to truly call Jammu a Smart City and what is actually happening. A select few projects such as Bicycle tracks, redoing Apsara road (without taking into account the drainage system connecting that road), installing traffic lights (that go on-off on their whims and fancies), cementing of the roads in posh areas of the city (without even thinking if those areas really needed that huge investment), installation of I Love Jammu boards at irrelevant spots do not really qualify to be called as Key Highlights or achievements for Jammu to be touted as a Smart City. Though I would also not shy from admitting that there are three things that have really gotten better with time namely garbage collection from localities, digitisation of the public documents, and installation of the murals along the prominent walls in the city narrating the story of Jammu city.

However, these Yellow lines of Revenue have yet again shown a shallow decision making to start collecting money from the public for the corporation to be EBITDA positive while it being a very temporary solution to a big persistent issue. I will break this further into two parts. Firstly, let's ask the basic question of why there is so much chaos on the roads! Secondly, figure out a solution that could help address the basic question.

The public in the Tier II and Tier III cities like ours love to move freely with less regulations and at zero to low cost on tertiary spends such as parking fees. This implies that the public generally parks their vehicle wherever they see an available space thereby causing com-

motion. It goes to the earlier point I mentioned of non-availability of allotted parking arenas or multi-level parking which otherwise would have been a big boon. The public transport also adds to the menace of cramped roads because of them stopping randomly to pick and drop the riders. Despite the fact there are designated stops for the matadors to halve-turn. An erratic traffic light system has added to this pain. More and more shops are coming up in residential areas as well as in existing commercial areas, which need parking space for customers as well as vehicles of shop owners. All of these problems when put together result in a huge mess on the roads.

Pivoting to the solution side of the things, I strongly feel that educating the public on the need of systematic parking for making Jammu a Smart City is a must. It makes the public a part of the movement and the change at large. A strict vigilante on how the public parks their vehicles with lenient or no repercussions with the help of traffic police could go a long way to make the public instill in them a behavioural change of parking their vehicles in an orderly fashion. Construction of multi-level parking in Gandhi Nagar, Talab Tilo, Residency Road and other crowded places would set up examples for the rest of the city. These multi-level parking arenas should be digitised with car-tokens, entertainment halls, QSRs, and digital display of nearby city locations. This in itself could be a great attraction for the public (and then a legitimate source of revenue).

The incumbent matador stops, bus-stands across the city could be a great place to put up I Love Jammu signboards, digitised advertisement zones which is mostly chargeable for local or

non-local businesses to promote their business (for example in Kolkata these spaces are managed by Times group OOH division), and display of temperature, weather conditions, AQI, etc. params. This should motivate people to head out to these public stops and thereby prevent matadors to halt over randomly in the middle of the city. This would also alleviate the whole mess of signboards, sticking paper on the wall across the city. Plus it could be a great source of revenue for the Smart City. Regulating the approval of new businesses coming up in already cramped spaces or residential areas could be a tough but a good move. Also letting shopkeepers know the need to keep space for their customers to park their vehicles, make a provision for the same or raise requests with the concerned authorities before opening the business. This would demand a huge trust in the authorities and seamless execution of the system.

The challenge is we need to accept that Smart City is 70% mindset change and 30% infrastructure development. It needs a thorough understanding of the existing gaps, opportunities available in the given city and making the public very much a part of the movement that is Smart City. Since mindset change is a tougher challenge to solve, we are busy focusing on the 30% and that is clearly not helping the cause. There is a visible gap in authorities' understanding of the Jammu city, their projects and proposals and how they are being executed. The Jammu Smart City project reminds me more of Showbiz than a utilitarian project which it is supposed to be.

Building a Smart City is like building a product, the consumer of which is your public. If we do not understand the consumer, we are most likely to fail with the end product as well.

Peace and Brotherhood: the need of the present world

Dr. Dilip Kumar

At present we are living in a globalized world. The world has been transformed into a village that McLuhan calls the "Global Village". Globalization as a process and flow has fostered interdependence connecting the world to one another. In this era of globalization, war, discontent, depression, migration, environmental imbalance are the major challenges facing the whole world. Therefore, an important need of the present world is to establish peace and brotherhood.

The theme of this year's (2022) International Day of Peace is "End racism. Build peace."

The above theme has been set in view of racial discrimination and harassment across the world. As conflict continues around the world, people are migrating, we have seen race-based discrimination across borders. Today we see hate speech and violence directed at racial minorities. Since everyone has a role to play in promoting peace, tackling racism is an important step towards establishing international peace.

Today's global society can work to break down the very structures that keep racism rooted in us. Today there is a need to support the voice movements for equality and human rights coming from any corner of the world. In this era of democratic decentralization, we can promote anti-racism activities through education and corrective justice. As Secretary-General Antonio Guterres put it: "Racism is poisoning institutions, social structures and everyday life in every society. It continues to be a vehicle of inequality. It continues to deprive people of their fundamental human rights. It destabilises societies, destroys democracies," undermines and destroys the legitimacy of governments... the link between racism and gender inequality is unmistakable."

The present world is facing innumerable problems like war, conflict, migration, epidemic and environmental crisis. Looking at the present world with apprehension, historian Yuval Noah Harari says in his book '21 Lessons for the 21st Century'

that, "We created myths to organize our race. To make ourselves powerful, we have subdued nature. We are reinventing life to fulfill our strange purposes. But do we still know ourselves or will our inventions make us irrelevant?"

The world, which has been liberated from the long colonial era, is still facing the serious challenge of imperialism, marketism and consumerism which has given rise to deep discontent. The arms race has now turned the whole world into a house of gunpowder. Weapons manufacturing has now taken the form of an industry whose purpose is to sell weapons by creating global tension. The Russo-Ukraine War is a naked reality of the contemporary world that even today, with the advancement of science and technology, we are engaged in wars.

The problem of migration is arising due to war and internal disintegration, due to which the refugee problem is proving to be a major challenge before the whole world.

Communism and terrorism are the biggest obstacles to global peace. Everyday instability is seen in one or the other corner of the world due to various types of terrorist activities.

Unbalanced economic development is also a major challenge before the whole world. Indiscriminate industrialization has given rise to environmental imbalance which is a hindrance in the establishment of global peace.

So far, countless measures have been taken for global peace. Concepts such as disarmament and arms control are working to end the conditions of war and the arms race. To protect the world from nuclear threats, many important treaties like PTBT (1963), NPT (1968) and CTBT (1996) have been signed so far.

So far, countless efforts have been made to tackle the environmental crisis on a global scale. Continuing efforts from the Stockholm Conference (1972) to Glasgow (2021) are prime examples. Sustainable development is an important effort towards environmental balance.

Given the myriad reasons for discontent, it seems that achieving peace now requires much

more than laying down arms. This requires the creation of societies where all members feel they can develop.

It involves creating a world in which people are treated equally. Today there is a need for coordination among all religions, sects, creeds and groups of spiritual faith in the world. Now there is a need to develop healthy ways of living taking the essence of traditions and principles. Today, there is also a need for the reorganization of the family, the smallest unit of social organization, which has always been the 'first school' of human beings.

India has always been one of the leading countries in establishing global peace. Peace and harmony have been the basic features of Indian culture since ancient times. India is the birthplace of many religions. These religions gave the message of peace and humanity throughout the world. The concept of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" has been a prominent feature of Hinduism. Buddhism and Jainism taught the lessons of non-violence, astateya, non-possessiveness all over the world. During the Sultanate period, the Mughal period and the British period also, India promoted tolerance only.

India also absorbed the cultures from outside. Innumerable sects of different religions have always not only propounded doctrinal ideas in the direction of establishing peace and harmony, but also actively propagated it among the general public. Even in the era of colonialism, India gave the message of peace to the whole world in a constructive manner. Who can forget Swami Vivekananda's speech in Chicago?

Even in the condition of subjugation, the scholars here not only awakened the Indian society, but they had an impact on the whole world. Mahatma Gandhi and his thinking mainly the methods of truth, non-violence and satyagraha are popular all over the world. Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent movement generated the desire for independence in many dependent countries and his means proved helpful in achieving independence for many countries. People like Nelson Mandela got the inspiration and self-confidence from Gandhi to achieve independence.

Today Gandhi's concept of 'Sarvodaya' is an

inclusive model of development before the whole world. Seeing the usefulness and impact of Mahatma Gandhi's ideas, every year on 2 October, his birthday is celebrated as 'International Day of Non-Violence'.

After the Second World War, during the Cold War era, when the whole world was facing an invisible wartime situation, then India gave the message of peace and brotherhood to the whole world.

The policy of non-alignment showed a new path to the newly liberated countries, while the following points of Panchsheel principles contributed to making the whole world peaceful. These 5 principles of Panchsheel, as stated in the Sino-Indian Agreement of 1954, gave a message of goodwill to the whole world-

- (1) To respect each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty
- (2) Not to act aggressively against each other
- (3) Not to interfere in each other's internal matters
- (4) To follow the policy of equality and mutual benefit and
- (5) To believe in the policy of peaceful co-existence.

Even at present, India as the world's largest democracy is striving for the expansion and inclusive development of the democratic system. India, striving to emerge as a superpower in the 21st century, is constantly striving towards establishing global peace.

Today global peace is the need of the whole world. This cannot be possible in a day. For this, the whole world has to sacrifice its personal interests and make humanity an end. Realizing the concept of 'world citizenship', along with human interests, nature will also have to be protected.

Looking at all the aspects in this way, we can say that today the whole world needs to rethink how to maintain peace and brotherhood among themselves. International Day of Peace is a special occasion when we can take new initiatives towards establishing global peace.

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