



Betrayal of Occupied Kashmir

The murder of Burhan Wani in Kashmir, the 22-year-old young leader of Hizb ul Mujahideen, towards the end of Ramadan by Indian security forces has unleashed a new wave of Indian state violence. The Kashmiri Muslims' street protests have been met with a brutal Indian response; since the 8th July Wani killing more than 100 people have been killed and nearly 10,000 injured. Many young Kashmiris have been injured through the use of indiscriminate pellet shot guns that have led to terrible eye injuries; hundreds have either been partially or completely blinded.

The internet and social media has been cut by India in an attempt to limit the reporting of such news and curfews have been imposed in Srinagar and the rest of Indian held Kashmir. Yet as painful as this news is from Kashmir for many Muslims around the world, the truth is that Kashmir has been suffering for many years now under the brutality of India's occupation. This situation has been mostly ignored by the world's media and by governments around the world. In fact Kashmir remains unfinished business from the partition of 1947 that divided India into two after the end of British colonial rule.

During partition in 1947 millions of Muslims migrated from what is India today to what is now known as Pakistan; they sought safety with Islam as their way of life. The Hindu Maharajah of Kashmir, Hari Singh, did not own Muslim majority Kashmir when he decided to join India signing a supposed temporary Instrument of Accession with the last British viceroy Lord Mountbatten. India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru declared on 3rd November 1947 in an All India Radio broadcast "*We have declared that the fate of Kashmir is ultimately to be decided by its people. That pledge we give not only to the people of Kashmir but to the world. We will not and cannot back out of it.*" This ploy that was supposed to be temporary, with the final status of Kashmir joining either India or Pakistan to be decided by a plebiscite (referendum) has never been honoured. Indian claims of sovereignty over Kashmir are simply illegitimate and a lie.

India though has never been able to suppress the Kashmiri Muslims who have been under a brutal occupation since 1947. Over a half million Indian forces comprising of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), the Border Security Force (BSF) and the regular Indian army are deployed in Kashmir. The charade of India's supposed political process was torn away when it enacted the *Armed Forces Special Power Act (AFSPA)* of 1990 to try to suppress the Muslims of Kashmir. This act has allowed the Indian state to shoot on sight, arrest and detain without charge, impose curfews and permit house searches at anytime including the night. With Indian security forces' effectively immune from prosecution it has given the Indian security forces carte blanche for unbridled abuse.

The result has been disappearances, torture and extra-judicial killings with bodies being dumped. Houses have been burned and destroyed as collective punishment in an attempt to humiliate and break the resistance of the Muslims of Kashmir. Many tens of thousands of Kashmiris have been killed with more than 100,000 tortured. Under the pretext of fighting a few hundred armed mujahideen at any one time the Indian military has subjugated an entire 12 million people.

This statistical abuse is a fact acknowledged by many; the Indian journalist Arundhati Roy said in March 2013: "*Today Kashmir is the most densely militarized zone in the world. India has something like 700,000 security forces there. And in the '90s, early '90s, the fight became—turned into an armed struggle, and since then, something like 68,000 people have*

died, maybe 100,000 tortured, 10,000 disappeared, you know? I mean, we all talk a lot about Chile, Pinochet. These numbers are far greater.”

The most disturbing and particularly disgusting abuse by Indian forces has been the deliberate rape of thousands of Kashmiri women. Gang rapes by Indian soldiers as punishment for their resistance to Indian rule is the norm; in 2015 alone 3500 cases of rape were registered against Indian troops. The true number will never be known because most cases will go unreported because of family shame and honour. The use of rape by the Indian army is something that has been acknowledged long ago. Humans Rights Watch in a report titled **Rape in Kashmir: A Crime of War** said back in 1993 *“Rape is used as a means of targeting women whom the security forces accuse of being militant sympathizers; in raping them, the security forces are attempting to punish and humiliate the entire community.”*

This abuse continues because Indian forces have a free hand to do as they please. Minar Pimple, Senior Director of Global Operations at Amnesty International said *“5th July 2015 will mark 25 years since the AFSPA in effect came into force in Jammu and Kashmir. Till now, not a single member of the security forces deployed in the state has been tried for human rights violations in a civilian court. This lack of accountability has in turn facilitated other serious abuses.”*

The fact is that life for a Muslim in Kashmir is one of oppression; in conditions resembling military rule there can be no economic prospects where a whole generation has grown up under violence. India attempts to mask this brutality with the veneer of state elections and handpicked puppet governments. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi parroted his predecessor Atal Bihari Vajpayee’s slogan of *“insaniyat, jamhuriyat and Kashmiriyat (humanity, democracy and Kashmiriyat)”* after the latest Kashmir unrest as part of this continuing deceit.

Muslims in India have faced oppression and abuse not just in Kashmir. Discrimination against Muslims is widespread in India. The Babri Masjid demolition at Ayodhya in 1992 was led by the BJP party in power today. Its current heir and ruler Narendra Modi has his hands drenched with the blood of thousands of Muslims slaughtered in the riots he directly instigated in Gujarat in 2002. Yet the truth is that the Indian state has a history of suppression and abuse of not only against the Muslims in India but against other minorities as well. The Sikhs who seek an independent ‘Khalistan’ were brutally crushed in Indian Punjab which culminated in the storming of the Golden Temple in 1984. India today has up to 30 separate armed secessionist or insurgencies’ raging across many of its states including Maoist rebels from West Bengal in the north east including Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura to the Tamil Nadu movement in the South.

It’s not hard to understand the attitude of the Indian ruling elite towards Kashmir when one considers the failure of the Indian state to treat its minorities with dignity and ensure their rights. Indeed the caste system enforced by the top 5% Brahmin caste legitimises discrimination against the majority Dalits or ‘untouchable’ lower Hindu classes. This is coupled with the rampant corruption within India’s democratic system institutionalised by capitalist policies that have enriched the ruling elite with more than 100 billionaires whilst leaving over 800 million people grinding in abject poverty. India’s cultural and political ideology has cultivated socio-economic deprivation built on religious and class segmentation and is a recipe for uprisings and subsequent state repression. So how can any Muslim expect the Indian state to treat the Muslims in Kashmir fairly?

So as Indian forces blind the protesting Kashmiri youth with their pellet guns the world stares on silently. Western governments, usually high on human rights rhetoric, ignore Kashmir’s plight. Yet the most pathetic response has been by the Pakistani political and

military leadership. Despite seeing the harsh and brutal oppression by India, Pakistan's leaders have nothing to offer but two-faced double talk. Nawaz Sharif's boldest gambit was to declare that Pakistan would pay the medical expenses of any Kashmiri wounded by Indian forces; he then simultaneously invited Narendra Modi to Islamabad for a SAARC summit huddle. How can the Indian leadership not interpret this as anything but a continued license for a brutal occupation of Kashmir?

The Pakistani army chief, General Raheel Sharif, who continued his predecessors' pro-American policy in the FATA tribal region by making war with zeal on the very tribes that liberated Azad Kashmir in 1947 also demonstrated his impotence as he gave the usual sound bites for media consumption. General Raheel's much vaunted courage in the Pakistani media deserts him when it comes to Kashmir and dealing with India resolutely. Instead it emerged that the Pakistan Air Force held joint exercises with Israel, an occupying entity that butchers Muslims in Palestine that also advises India tactically over Kashmir. Tomorrow under General Raheel's watch can we now also expect the Pakistan Air Force to hold joint exercises with the Indian Air Force as the Kashmiris continue to get raped and slaughtered?

With the Pakistan-Afghanistan trade transit agreement giving Afghanistan access to India through land routes in Pakistan the truth is that since the time of General Musharraf Pakistan has begun a process of abandoning the Muslims of Kashmir to their fate under US guidance. This is so that India can seemingly close the festering wound of Kashmir in order to divert its resources into containing China. This is why Modi can shrill tongue in cheek standing at the Red Fort that India will now champion the issue of Balochistan; he does so as the Indian leadership fears no meaningful response from a defeatist Pakistani establishment which is more anxious about its own wellbeing and US aid dollars. Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, a former Pakistani diplomat, wrote recently in the Dawn saying "*Pakistan has never cared to develop a longer-term policy or strategy towards Kashmir... support for the 'Kashmir cause' are all rhetorically and symbolically espoused, often with great passion, while our leaders ensure no organised and sustained popular movements for their achievement are allowed to develop. Why? Because the power and class elites fear such movements would undermine the political status quo that sustains them.*"

It is clear after nearly 70 years that Pakistan's rulers are not going to do anything about Kashmir; any negotiations with India are a sham designed to implement the American agenda of helping India become a regional power by relegating Kashmir to irrelevance. The UN is also not going to do anything either; as it is a colonial institute which acts as a rubber stamp for Western foreign policy. Western countries such as the US and the UK are not going to help solve the Kashmir dispute as they are the leading colonial powers of the World and at the moment are engaged in a war against Islam. Moreover they remain more interested in trade deals, partnering with India to contain China and working together to contain any Islamic political revival in South East Asia. Kashmir's accession to Pakistan will strengthen Pakistan something which neither the US nor UK wants. John Kerry, US Secretary of State, on his recent visit to India endorsed India's position on Kashmir saying "*We cannot and will not distinguish between good and bad terrorists... US stands with India on all matters of terrorism, no matter where it comes from. It's crystal clear we are on the same view over it.*"

The Kashmiri groups fighting the brutal Indian occupation also cannot solve this problem. They do not have the resources or capability to do so. The fact remains the only real solution to this Indian occupation is liberation of Kashmir by a state through military action. Pakistan has the military ability and the obligation to help the Muslims in Kashmir but has no political will; India has lost the Muslims in Kashmir and is only tentatively holding on with

brute force. It is a situation that draws some parallels with the formation of Bangladesh when India first covertly aided and then intervened openly in favour of the Bangladeshi independence movement to dismember Pakistan's eastern wing. A state that sanctions raping women and killing children in order to retain control over a territory as India does in Kashmir cannot be considered as anything but weak and cowardly.

Islam does not take the killing and abuse of Muslims lightly. It was narrated that 'Abdullah bin 'Amr said: *رَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - يَطُوفُ بِالْكَعْبَةِ وَيَقُولُ: «مَا أَطْيَبُ وَأَطْيَبُ رِيحِكَ مَا أَغْظَمُ وَأَعْظَمُ حُرْمَتَكَ وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ لِحُرْمَةِ الْمُؤْمِنِ أَغْظَمُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ حُرْمَةَ مَنْكَ مَالِهِ وَدَمِهِ وَأَنْ تَنْظُنَّ بِهِ إِلَّا خَيْرًا»* «I saw the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) circumambulating the Ka'bah and saying: **'How good you are and how good your fragrance; how great you are and how great your sanctity. By the One in Whose Hand is the soul of Muhammad, the sanctity of the believer is greater before Allah than your sanctity, his blood and his wealth, and to think anything but good of him.'** [Ibn Majah] Today we see the blood, property and honour of Muslims in Kashmir being openly violated; yet we see that the so called Islamic leadership of Pakistan remain not only indifferent but seek co-operation with the very Indian leadership that is behind this murderous occupation. How much more shameless can one become than the sycophant Nawaz Sharif when he welcomed Modi the right wing Hindutva zealot to his granddaughter's wedding in Raiwind, Lahore?

Contrast this reaction during the era of Khaleefah Mu'tasim Billah with that when a Muslim woman was attacked by the Romans and she shouted out, *وا معتصماه "O Mutasim"*. When these words reached the Khaleefah Mu'tasim, he asked, *أي بلاد الروم أجمع وأحصن؟ "What is the most insurmountable and most protected city of the Rome?"* When the answer came as Amorium (عمورية Amuriyyah), he sent a jaw-breaking response in the form of a huge army that opened this city for Islam and shook the Roman Empire to its core.

Liberation of the weak and protection of both Muslims and non-Muslims as citizens of the Khilafah State is a legacy of Muslim rule in the World. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) also said *«إِنَّمَا الْإِمَامُ جُنَّةٌ يُقَاتِلُ مِنْ وَرَائِهِ وَيَنْقَى بِهِ»* **“Behold, the Khaleefah is but a shield from behind which people fight and by which they protect themselves.”** A sincere Islamic leadership will not forget the Muslims of Kashmir. India should understand that the Khilafah state will not turn a blind eye to the issue of Kashmir as the current Pakistani leadership does today.

The real unity of Muslims globally is through their Aqeedah which bonds them irrespective of their ethnic origin, colour or wealth, signifying the immense potential that is present within the Ummah that is waiting to be harnessed by a righteous Khaleefah. However, in Pakistan's rulers today we find instead a divisive leadership determined to continue their disobedience to Allah (SWT) with no willingness to liberate Muslims of Kashmir. Only through the return of Khilafah to Muslim lands will the dream of Kashmiri Muslims of liberation from Hindu rule be realized. It is therefore obligatory upon Muslims in Pakistan to work to make Pakistan the starting point of the Second Khilafah Rashidah upon the method of the Prophethood especially by calling upon the armed forces to provide Nussrah to Hizb ut Tahrir for this purpose.

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