Murder, he wrote B Y Z A R R A R K H U H R O | 3/2/2020

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| IN his seminal worl(, The End of India, which was published a year before his death, Khushwant Singh recalled the carnage of Partition with these words: `I thought the nation was coming to an end.  Decades later, Khushwant was forced to watch the same kind of carnage unfold, by design, in Narendra Modi`s Gujarat during the 2002 pogrom against Muslims. Like a latter-day Cassandra, he warned that `with a triumphant Modi as their mentor, they will repeat the Gujarat experiment all over India, unless we stop them.` And as with Cassandra, no one listened and so, years later, we see the Gujarat model repeated in Delhi itself.  And why not, given that it has and always does worl( so very well? Talce the demolition of the Babri Masjid and the ensuing riots, which catapulted the BJP into the limelight and, perhaps more importantly, forced the political `mainstream` to fight on the BJP`s ideological turf ... a battle they could never hope to win. And then come the Gujarat riots, which cemented Modi as a warrior for Hindu supremacy, a mythical king reborn who would avenge centuries of humiliation and save the Hindus from extermination in their own land. To an outside observer, that belief seems ludicrous.  How can the overwhelming majority, one that controls all levers of state power, be threatened by a largely powerless and under-represented minority? But it is this snalce oil, poisonous to the very touch, that sells and sells well. The credit goes to the RSS, which has worked diligently and with great patience, sowing the seeds of a toxic Hindutva that has now grown into a festering forest, its roots choking all other life and its canopies blotting out the sun itself. It is under this shade that a slow-motion genocide flowers.  Hate, fear and murder are good for the vote bank, it seems.  And, as in Gujarat, it is aided and abetted by the very police force that should be preventing it. In countless videos we see the police escorting mobs of Hindutva extremists who proudly boast of the police`s support. In another we see uniformed police officers smashing CCTV cameras to allow the mobs full rein without fear of identification.  In another video we see several young men, all Muslim, badly beaten and bloody, lying on the ground as triumphant policemen stand over them forcing them to sing the Indian national anthem. `Do you still want azadi?` asks one of the policemen as he strikes his victim. `No,` the helpless man replies. The other, a man called Faizan, who was too badly injured to respond to his torturer`s jibes, later died in a local hospital.Speaking to NDTV his mother said, `He and the others were beaten up badly. He was beaten with iron rods. His legs were broken. His entire body had turned black because of the beatings.  The judiciary, what we would assume to be the last line of defence here, is busy either ignoring or indemnifying Modi`s actions and those who defy that trend are punished. Take Justice S. Muralidhar, who heard petitions on the Delhi violence and slammed the Delhi police. He was transferred on the same day that a bench headed by him expressed `anguish` over the Delhi police not registering FIRs against incendiary hate speeches by three BJP leaders.  This then, is what complete state capture lool(s like when the state is fascist to its core.  But how is all this possible in an age where the media is watching and camera phones are omnipresent? Well, first one makes the media itself an ally, and the majority of India`s electronic media are now staffed by the harlequins of hate, the jesters of genocide who have ranted, raved and liedtheir way into creating the grounds for the pogrom we saw in Delhi, and which we will see repeated, however sporadically, across India.  Forget Amit Shah and Kapil Mishra, it is on Tahir Hussain that the media focuson, because how dare anyone resist a mob out to lynch them and theirs? On social media, which too is dominated by Sanghi supporters, victims are blamed, genocide is cheered and fake news proliferates making it seem as if those being slaughtered are responsible for their fate.  Much of this propaganda is then picked up and amplified by the mainstream media in an effort that would make Radio Rwanda proud.  Here then is the Gujarat model for the modern era, and it is replicated time and again simply because ... it works. Many Muslim families, their homes and livelihoods burned to ashes, are leaving the neighbourhoods in which they have lived for decades. The message has been receive d and it is that we can do whatever we want, whenever we want, even with the world watching. And for every heart-warming story of coexistence, there are dozens more of hate and carnage. `The avalanche has started, and it is too late now for the pebbles to vote.` The writer is a journalist.  Twitter: @zarrarkhuhro |