**Sensors of Foreign Office and Kashmir Tragedy**

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India is in a state of sin in Kashmir. It continues with the new colonial instinct to aggress against a people, occupy their habitat and imprison them. People of Kashmir have been locked down for the past 42 days. Since 20 December 1931 when RSS sent its militant volunteers to assist the Maharaja against the Muslims of the Valley, the organization waited for 88 years to fix 5 August 2019 and ensure the takeover of a part of Kashmir, using a military strength of over one hundred thousand.

It has not been easy for BJP Government either in the Valley or outside Valley. The constituency of support for the people of Kashmir is growing. Indian action has been condemned not only from within India but the world at large is mesmerized to see that Hindu regime has gone for the blood of the people of Kashmir.

It is 42nd day that the people of Kashmir have not seen the light of the day. We may be taking steps to force India to vacate its military clamp down on the common man, woman, child, an elderly and a sick, but it has not worked so far. The reasons are more than one.

The first and foremost reason is that we betrayed the Kashmiri military resistance midstream and went out looking for out of the box solution. One that everyone had to acquiesce to, was President Musharraf’s four point formula. Even before that Nawaz Sharif’s Government disturbed the ‘core’ position of Kashmir and accepted it as an ordinary item in the eight other outstanding issues with India. Kashmir was lowered down from a position of ‘principality’ and made an ‘include’ with other outstanding issues.

Our foreign office serviced both interests (Nawaz Sharif and Pervez Musharraf) and did not resist in the national interests or in protecting the jurisprudence of Kashmir case. There was no resignation and every one of any good conscience froze in obedience. It even compromised on the sinister move to drop a reference to self-determination and UN Resolutions, from a July 2006 Washington Kashmir Conference declaration. I have known officers of Foreign Office for more than a quarter century (last 29 years) and the men and women of quality and integrity are becoming rare.

*If we want to assist the people of Kashmir, the way forward is to follow the jurisprudence of UN Resolutions on Kashmir. On 16 August we were not helped by any other formula but it was UN Security Council route that was used as a face saving recourse*

I remember that an officer from the Pakistan Desk in Geneva during the Human Rights Commission Session in early 1990s came rushing over to me, unmindful that the world watched him and whispered into my ear ‘sit tight’. Everyone heard the whisper. The Indian Desk had stopped me a third time during making my statement and we were waiting for Chairman’s ruling. The Chair of the session ruled that my statement was not extraneous to the agenda item and allowed me to proceed. I still carry the impression of that officer, who could not resist, and rush to steel my nerves. NGOs would speak for ten minutes and the time has now been reduced to 2-3 minutes.

We have lost men of character and calibre. The service is politicised. They are no more the wisdom and the science laboratory of the nation. The present Kashmir crisis would have been pre-empted or would not have been as gruesome, if the sensors of foreign office would have been working well. It was not only the BJP election manifesto but two alerts flagged by Yashwant Sinha (Minister in Vajpayee Cabinet) and JKCHR on 26 December 2018 and 25 June 2019 were not picked up by the foreign office sensors.

Yashwant Sinha after his return from Kashmir said in a TV interview on 26 December that “Modi Government has abandoned the Vajpayee policy of ‘consensus, democracy and insaniyat’ in favour of a strong state policy in Kashmir, which meant the use of brutal force to kill as many as they could”. He stopped short of revealing the name of the official in Modi Government who had revealed the use of ‘brutal force’ in Kashmir.

The second alert was JKCHR’s written statement released by the UN Secretary General as document A/HRC/41/NGO/115 on 25th June 2019 at the 41st session of UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. Kashmir Desk in the Foreign Office should have seriously considered the two alerts. Unfortunately, anyone and everyone who is associated with Kashmir, behaves as a politician and does not have time and respect for reliable views on Kashmir. JKCHR statement had discussed the UN report and had alerted the UN about the testimony of Yashwant Sinha.

Kashmir Case is not a job – it is a commitment and a dedication. We have sacrificed a generation in Kashmir, 2.5 million Kashmiris have been forced out and are living in various provinces of Pakistan and now India has drawn a dark curtain over our people and habitat. We have rejected with disdain the Indian offer of ‘sky is the limit’. Unfortunately the non-working or poor working of Foreign Office Sensors at home and abroad, are responsible to allow Modi time from 26 December 2018 to 5August 2019. “Sky is the Limit” was a better option than the four point out of box formula of President Musharraf.

It is common sense that officers in the Foreign Office who disturbed the ‘core’ position of Kashmir and made it as an include with seven other outstanding issues with India, those who acted as sales persons for Musharraf’s four point formula and those who were party to the sinister move of dropping a reference to self-determination and UN Resolutions, would have to be re-christened to the jurisprudence of UN Resolutions on Kashmir.

Unfortunately, Foreign Office has hurt the dignity of good work on Kashmir and it has erred to victimise and discriminate against those who defended the Jurisprudence of UN Resolutions on Kashmir. Arrogance and colonial approach is the general sentiment. If one bumps into a Foreign Office official, it becomes very difficult to judge, whether one is speaking to a Kashmiri politician or a Hurriyat representative. I have seen how brilliant and how outstanding their contribution was at UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, at Islamic Summit in Casablanca and at CHOGM-93 in Limassol.

If we want to assist the people of Kashmir, the way forward is to follow the jurisprudence of UN Resolutions on Kashmir. On 16 August we were not helped by any other formula but it was UN Security Council route that was used as a face saving recourse. Someone should be held accountable as to why Kashmir was not discussed at the UN Security Council from November 1965 to August 1996, for 32 years.

We were told that Ministry of Law is working on taking the matter to International Court of Justice. Unfortunately, it has been only a statement so far. Kashmir case requires expertise, dedication and a reliable interest. Prime Minister of Pakistan should broaden the constituency of interaction before he leaves to speak at the UN General Assembly. Emotions or routine address would be a wasted opportunity. Kashmiri input is the key to a way forward.

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