

EDITORIAL

In the discipline of History, we are engaged in the pursuit of truth. Truth is often compatible with rational discussion. The mid-April revelation of Satyapal Malik, then Governor of Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir that the Pulwama attack was the result of Indian security failure is such an instance. In the background of this revelation, the joint exhortation to Pakistan of President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Narendra Modi not to allow its soil to be used by any entity to mount terrorist attacks; acquires a bizarre aspect. It was quickly pointed out that Malik had not exonerated Pakistan: “The amount of explosives provided to that fellow, could not be done internally. It was Pakistan only that arranged it. India could not locate the car carrying it”. [*The Wire*, 17 April 2023.] We cite this exchange to bring home the services that History provides. Satyapal Malik is only making a surmise; otherwise, can such a large cache of explosives escape LoC hyper-vigilance? Has India a shortage of explosives? India could not locate the car! Was this too Pakistan’s doing? In such matters the motive matters. Why would Pakistan go on mounting one terrorist attack on India after another, when each attack results in diplomatic discomfiture?

In the backdrop of such accusations Pakistan should press for the urgent repatriation of Afghan refugees. 30 June 2023, the last date of their extended stay simply lapsed, as no arrangements were underfoot for their return home. The refugees do not even recognize the border. Again, it is History that tells us that the demarcation had been initiated by Amir Abdur Rahman of Afghanistan and not by the British. Even the choice of Sir Mortimer Durand as Britain’s envoy had been made by the Amir. The Durand Line 1893 was duly ratified by a Grand Afghan Jirga. After all, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan had admitted that Pakhtunistan was never a reality and it had never helped his people [*India Today*, 31 March 1980]

Of even greater historical import is the last- minute IMF reprieve. This is only first aid. The diagnosis is known, the remedy is available, the virus is resistant. Unless the FBR is overhauled, unless capital is forthcoming as in 1947, unless the tax base is expanded horizontally,

Pakistan shall remain face to face with a French Revolution implosion. We have no Napoleon on the horizon to come after a deluge. Our integrity is in our own hands.

In this issue we offer first, a paper on “Famines and Epidemics in India 1630-1947. A Review of Literature”. Whether British rule was benign or malign remains a controversial topic in both South Asia and Great Britain, thus a survey of the relevant literature has been an absorbing topic which we bring to the reader. The second paper is “Khanate of Kalat in the Light of Ibn Khaldun’s *Assabiya*”. Since Balochistan is largely a tribal society with shifting fortunes of rulers and principalities, it is enlightening to view their historical course in the light of Ibn Khaldun’s theory---the first cyclical theory of History.

In this issue we include an incisive study on the Founder of Pakistan “M.A. Jinnah - The Formative Phase” Some controversies regarding his early life and education in Britain have surfaced and resolving them at this stage has been most opportune. We have not neglected colonial architecture while holding forth article “Condition Assessment of Historic Chamba House, Lahore before and after Conservation” on colonial rule, and the Chamba House, its purpose, structure and the various uses it was put to have been exhaustively dealt with very clear ground plans and elevations. The article on Swat is interesting in view of Sir Sultan Ahmed’s observation made in 1944—during the colonial period-- that; “Some of these frontier rulers are enlightened men with remarkable administrative ability. They have introduced an efficient system of administration into their territories. The most notable example is that of the Wali of Swat”

The matrimonial alliance between the Wali of Swat and the President of Pakistan was fortuitous but had unique effects on the politics of Pakistan. Hence the last paper in the issue “Muhammad Ayub Khan and the Royal Family of Swat” is an engrossing study of Pakistan’s politics.

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