

Mob justice in city

Indicative of overall lawlessness in society

HERE are two or more versions about the incident at Pallabi in the city on Monday. According to the Pallabi Police Station, angry locals had gouged out the eyes of five suspected criminals before the lawmen rescued them. On the contrary, the hapless five claim that the policemen pinned them to the ground as some Awami League workers carried out the grisly act. Still another version is that the law enforcers arrested the criminals and handed them to the mob. While the police role in the incident has been dubious, the crowd's deviant. Pushed to momentary insanity by ever-increasing lawlessness and police inaction, the otherwise law-abiding residents of one of the most crime-prone areas took the law in their own hands. That is what makes the incident transcend the limit of lawlessness pushing it into the realm of a deeper social malaise, a potent threat to civic life. Coupled with similar acts of mob justice in recent times, the incident leads to a disturbing conclusion: people may have lost faith in the law and the lawmen and feel comfortable dealing with the criminals their way. What happened at Pallabi on Monday could spread fast across the society, touching off a complete breakdown of order thus creating anarchy. For a society to eradicate mob justice, it must ensure equitable enforcement of law for protection of each and every individual, regardless of his or her socio-political-economic background. Unfortunately, in our society, such protection is not guaranteed. People in the middle and lower rungs pay every day for lawlessness. Meanwhile, the elite not only have protection but also get away more often than not for committing even the most heinous crimes. And the people at the helm bend and break the law of the land at will. The criminal justice system, according to a recent United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) report, is virtually inaccessible to the poor and marginalised sections of society. In such a social order, the aggrieved majority could be tempted to take law into their own hands. What happened Monday could be indicative of growing impatience with and disregard for the law and the lawmen.

To avert what seems inevitable at this point in time, the government must take pro-active measures to shore up its enforcement mechanism. People need to believe that it will do whatever it takes to restore law and order in society. It will not happen unless and until the police re-establish themselves at the right end of the law instead of drifting across the line at regular intervals.

EC's request for army

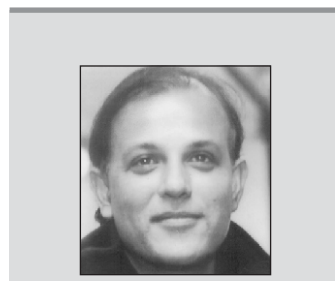
It deserves reconsideration

THE fresh appeal from the Election Commission for army deployment during the rest of Union Parishad polls only reinforces our belief that presence of paramilitary along with police force can't control election violence. The EC was prompted to send a letter to the Armed Forces Division in the wake of widespread violence that reportedly killed four persons and wounded at least two hundred since the polling began four days ago, not to mention the alleged rigging and other problems. In fact, in the letter the EC did not hesitate to express their 'embarrassment' over reports of killing, violence, intimidation and security lapses during the election.

We were astonished by the way EC's requests for army assistance were turned down by the government. We believe EC is the constitutionally designated body to hold free and fair election and if they deemed it necessary to ask for army deployment then they were right in doing so. All that the government said against deploying army during local government elections was that it be an unprecedented act and that the law and order situation in the country had also improved considerably -- thanks to the joint operation. But violence has erupted from the very first day of polling which is going to stagger for several more weeks.

What does the authority have to say now? Will they again pay no heed to the Election Commission? The Chief Election Commissioner himself did not sound confident about a positive reply to the latest request. However we feel that EC was and still is the best judge of what is needed when it comes to holding elections of this magnitude. The possibility of further violence in the coming days can't be ruled out. The executive will have to evaluate the present circumstances very carefully with a long view and make a favourable response this time to the CEC repeat request for army deployment.

CEC: Good luck to you



K.A.S. MURSHID

ACTUALLY, I quite sympathize with our CEC. There he is doggedly hanging on to his mandate, desperately trying to convince THEM of the need to deploy security forces to ensure smooth, and above all, free and fair elections. Unfortunately, despite his passionate and fervent cries of help, he was unable to move their hearts and minds. So he did what any self-respecting man would do in his place: continue to yell his lungs out -- at least then he would be on public record of having asked repeatedly for assistance. Whether he will need to refer back to his cries for help depends on how the local elections ultimately go.

The question is why has the government been so inflexible in its position with regard to Army deployment for the UP polls? There may well be an element of truth in the argument that (a) it would spoil the 'festivities' associated with local elections, and may even frighten people from turning out to vote in

large numbers, or (b) that there simply aren't enough soldiers available to do the job. These are good, solid arguments no doubt. Unfortunately however, there is this chirpy little fellow that has just come in through the open window, and she seems to be singing the very same tune! Remarkable, wouldn't you say? I guess they are training these birds well these days.

Well, we all know that even if local level elections are NOT con-

herited the same talent. Now, every political party attempts to ensure that as many of its Rahims and Karims are elected into office as 'member' and 'Chairman' in the UP polls so that what is, in principle, a festive and happy occasion can soon begin to take on the appearance of a battle field. One therefore understands the CEC's sense of alarm in being asked to conduct elections without adequate security measures. At the same time, one is

someone like the CEC. Under the circumstances, this is no mean achievement, and one hopes that there will be others out there who will feel emboldened to speak out, be heard or even be damned! (I know there won't be many of course -- but even one or two more would look really good.)

Now THAT brings me to another question. Am I imagining this or is it the case that people rarely speak out these days? I mean one doesn't

and guess:

λ We have become deaf and dumb: This is a very plausible reason, but the curious thing about the condition is the fact that it is readily reversible. In other words, when it comes to singing the 'right' tune, these very deaf and dumb souls become smooth and melodious, and totally transformed;

λ FEAR: Not so much of losing one's life or even limbs, but of harass-

and simply choose the country where he wishes to be posted! Now, what do you think would happen to the guy who has the nerve to go and ask him to sign a statement? Or take the case of G2: he has played his cards well and has been duly rewarded. He is now looking for greater rewards. What do you suppose he would say about the indemnity Ordinance?

Actually, the case of G1 and G2 are fairly straightforward. The problem lies with a large number of g1, g2 etc (notice the small case) who are not yet GREAT but have serious aspirations in that direction. This large group incidentally includes all of us, I fear, who are unable to decide, at any point in time, whether they should talk or not, sign statements or not, argue for or against or not at all. They generally tend to suffer seriously from delusions of forfeited grandeur for failing to *salaam* the favourite *chamcha* after Friday prayers, for example. It is this group that I really worry about, and for whom I have just one thing to say: "You know what? It REALLY doesn't matter whether you *salaam* the *chamcha* or not or for that matter, whether you speak out once in a while, or not. Really."

I am sure you will now completely agree with me that our CEC is made of sterner stuff. Good luck to you, Sir.

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BETWEEN YOURSELF AND ME

This large group incidentally includes all of us, I fear, who are unable to decide, at any point in time, whether they should talk or not, sign statements or not, argue for or against or not at all. They generally tend to suffer seriously from delusions of forfeited grandeur for failing to *salaam* the favourite *chamcha* after Friday prayers, for example. It is this group that I really worry about, and for whom I have just one thing to say: "You know what? It REALLY doesn't matter whether you *salaam* the *chamcha* or not or for that matter, whether you speak out once in a while, or not. Really."

tested by the political parties directly, there is in fact a great deal of party-political interest in the process. Every villager, for example, knows that Rahim Bhai is a 'supporter' of AL while his cousin, Karim Bhai is a follower of BNP. They will also be able to recall that the grandfather (who is equally shared by the two cousins) began political life as one of Ayub Khan's 'basic democrats' but was able to shift his allegiance quickly and almost imperceptibly with every regime change since. His grandsons, at least, appear not to have

at a bit of a loss in trying to understand the 'fun and frolic' hypothesis of UP polls. Perhaps political parties are no longer interested in their Rahims and Karims anymore? Has something fundamental happened to change their perception about the need for a local support base? Perhaps they will let us know in due time.

Whatever the process or the outcome of the UP polls, one thing is certain. In these days of rampant opportunism and the widespread substitution of the vertebral column with jelly, it is refreshing to see

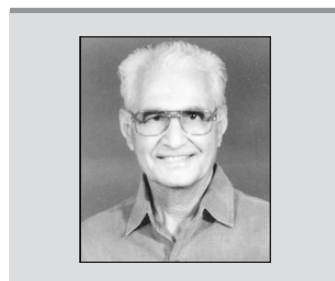
even see that many press statements anymore, e.g. signed by teachers, intellectuals or artists etc. No one seems to want to take a public stand. On the other hand, the moment that there is a statement out, you can bet that there will be another **counter** statement that will be issued the very next day, taking the exact opposite position.

To go back to my question: why do we not speak out (and I am certainly NOT talking about ordinary mortals like you and I here)? Difficult to put oneself in another's shoes, actually -- nevertheless, let me try

ment by e.g. the NBR or the *para* hoods, or even the police (frankly, this type of fear is generally subdued and NOT something that our GREAT men and women would normally worry about).

λ FEAR: One suspects that THIS may be the real culprit. All our GREAT people fear rejection. For example G1 KNOWS he will be made an ambassador 'soon' -- all he has to do is NOT sign statements (or at least THEIR ones), appear on television at well-chosen moments (BIRTHDAYS, DEATH ANNIVERSARIES etc.),

People to be the priority



M B NAQVI
writes from Karachi

A paradigm change in Pakistan's foreign policy has to be anchored in national purposes. Hitherto the main national purpose was to wrest Kashmir from Indian control. Reflecting national priorities the budget structure gave overarching priority to somehow pay for the military that was required to wrest Kashmir from India. India's larger resources have ensured Pakistan's growing inferiority in conventional military strength. By 1971 everyone could see -- and Islamabad tacitly admitted --- that another conventional war would mean defeat.

Post-9171 situation in 1972 demanded a new way of tackling the Kashmir problem. It was required to accept that Pakistan could not snatch Kashmir. Or Kashmir problem could only be solved by non-military means. At any rate, Pakistan's imperialistic design of acquiring the entire Kashmir State was unrealistic. What could still work was to let Kashmiris struggle to shape their own future or Azadi. Main struggle was to be then between Indians and Kashmiris, with Pakistan having no active role.

That did not happen. Z.A. Bhutto stuck to old concepts and purposes. Pakistan tried to compensate for its inferiority in armaments by secretly developing nuclear capability. Formally, by signing the Simla Agreement he had effectively shelved the Kashmir problem. Pakistan stayed quiet for 18 years. Perhaps the Indians got wind of Pakistan's nuclear programme from Americans and carried out their first

nuclear test in 1974. Pakistanis swallowed it, exhibiting no particular alarm. Pakistan announced a breakthrough in 1984 and tension with India mounted. India warned Pakistan through the Brass Tacks exercise. Pakistanists thought India will invade. In the winter of 1986-87 Pakistan threatened to use its Bomb if the Indians crossed into Pakistan.

For a decade Pakistan succeeded in neutralising India's conventional superiority. They became gung ho about nuclear weapons. The Indians did pipe down and

race. Pakistan went bankrupt by Dec'98. Reeling under western sanctions, only the sequel to 9/11 has buoyed up the economy by cash injections and debt rescheduling. It is a temporary relief.

Matters came to a head in 2002. India threatened war if Pakistan does not stop the "cross border terrorism", with all major powers echoing it. President Musharraf blinked and in his June speech agreed to the demand. Although the Jihad has not ended, both Indians and foreigners have realised that

the vast assimilative sea of Hinduism surrounding them wherein they will be at the bottom of social heap. May be they would be punished for former uppishness and for real or imagined wrongs. That explained their demonstrative adherence to Islam, which is what distinguished them from Hindus. Their religious exhibitionism and a superiority complex led to emphases on differences with Hindus and regarding themselves as rulers' kith and kin deserving privileges and safeguards --- the leitmotif of pre-

damaged the Pakistan-American relations. Americans too have taken note that MMA's rise is directly related to their own unpopularity, especially in NWF and Baluchistan. It is growing elsewhere too. Pakistan has thus to somehow work out a new and more equation with US, without forgetting the existing vulnerabilities.

Pakistanis have to cut the umbilical chord with the Indians and start behaving as a separate and independent nation by treating India as another country. Remember there

has no locus standi. That releases Pakistan from illusions. Let Pakistanis forget the pre-natal quarrels with the Hindu-dominance and work out a new normal relationship with India. Pakistanis and Indians should be cooperative friends. Both can profit from free trade, economic cooperation, cultural exchanges and a regional framework of economic development that SAARC could become but is not. An eventual (political) entente should be the aim.

Things will become easier for all if only they can counteract the mischief that nuclear weapons by their very presence do. So long as Pakistani nukes exist no Indian government can trust Pakistan and similarly the Indian Bomb's presence automatically negates India's good intentions. Pakistani Bomb has not helped Pakistanis get either Kashmir or security; Indians were threatening to wipe out Pakistan no matter what its capability. The Bomb has not enhanced India's stature; no one respects it as much as in Nehru's days. Both are finally deadlocked with only one exit.

Nuclear Restraint and Nuclear Safe South Asia are vacuous schemes, mostly hot air; there has no relevance to India and Pakistan, with their present mental baggage. Peaceful ties require basic trust in each other's intentions which is absent. The only way out is through simultaneous and mutually verifiable nuclear disarmament. Only a Nuclear Weapons Free South Asia makes sense.

If free of Jihad commitment, Pakistan can give India MFN status, open up, start implementing SAPTA and SAFTA agreements, sign a non-aggression pact, engage in cultural exchanges, restore communications, dramatically relax visa restrictions and make SAARC a vital and vigorously growing reality. With these the stature of both will dramatically rise and others will show a different visage.

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PLAIN WORDS

Pakistan can do something about India's attractiveness: to develop itself. That is blocked by military's control over politics. A military-run Pakistan cannot make development, especially human development, the top priority. It will never understand that national strength cannot be borrowed; it has to be developed. Only the people can make Pakistan strong, not the Army. Defence preparedness, not backed by domestic economic strength, is sure to be inadequate and brittle.

remained quiet till 2002, when they threatened war against Pakistan's abetting of Jihadis. Confident behind the nuclear shield, Pakistan started a proxy war to help Kashmiris' struggle by arming and training them. Pakistan's precise aims could be inferred. At first the idea was to tire out the Indian Army by a constant haemorrhage in Kashmir and Pakistan Army would then inflict a coup de grace. Later it shifted to just keeping the Indian Army pinned down --- thereby making Pakistan secure.

Indian Army disregarded its own and Kashmiris losses. It was clear by 1998 that India resigned to a long proxy war and did not mind the price. It cost over the 1990s' decade 60,000 to 70,000 Kashmiri lives. And it was Pakistanis who felt the resource crunch: they had to run two arms races: conventional and nuclear. The nuclear race, once mutual deterrence is achieved, requires an expensive command and control system, constant technological updating of all equipment and a whole new conventional arms

there are limits to what Musharraf can do; there are other powerful forces that can defy him and have. Hence the withdrawal of Indian Army October last year.

Two conclusions emerge: the Jihadist Kashmir policy has failed and has imperiled Pakistan. Kashmiris are as far from Azadi as ever and Indian hold on Kashmir is as firm as ever. Kashmiris realise Pakistan cannot go on sustaining Jihad and time has come to wind it down. Pakistanis had bankrupted themselves for a policy that eventually forced Pakistan to choose between a pointless proxy war and fighting a nuclear war that neither side will win. It is not a sane choice. The Kashmir policy is senseless.

This policy was the logical culmination of policies based on inherited assumptions and attitudes --- the characteristics of Muslim Separatism --- that were about identity and self-image. Historically the majority of Muslims, originally low-caste Hindus, affected a superiority complex, especially in Northern India. They feared being falling down into

independence Indian Muslim politics.

Others' refusal to accept Muslims' demands, calculated to preserve imagined privileges, angered them and an adversarial attitude vis-à-vis Hindus developed. Muslims thus demanded weightage --- actually equality of treatment with Hindus --- reservations and separate electorate. These came from, and strengthened, two traits: first, not to accept democracy's implications, especially the equality with Hindus. The second was to depend on a ruling or hegemonic power to get them their due. Pakistan politics has actually reflected these traits: democracy soon collapsed and a new ruling elite, civil and military bureaucracy, continues to usurp power. The second trait of depending on the US hegemon to keep India (Hindus) in check gave an illusion of equality. This dependency syndrome that produced the ever readiness to hitch Pakistan's wagon to the American star survives.

Last October's election and this January's bye-elections have

are no free lunches. Other nation states, including the US, have no obligation toward Pakistan vis-à-vis India and see India as a rising power and an attractive market thanks to its size and state of development. It can also be a useful strategic partner to great powers. No power will prefer Pakistan at the expense of India. Pakistan can never run an arms race with India with others' aid.

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Other policies follow. Kashmir is for Kashmiris and they have to make their destiny themselves; Pakistan

Dossier on America

An account of violations of international norms, common morality, and human decency

BILLY I AHMED

IN the spirit of the "Dossier on Iraq" published by the U.K. government Divesh Kumar of Global Issues Institute presented a "Dossier on America". Global Issues Institute is a research and policy centre focusing on issues of peace, human rights, environment, and development, from a progressive political perspective, based in Seattle in the United States. It aims to promote and increase activism on the full range of global issues. The working draft is analysed below:

Foreign aid (development assistance): U.S. gives 0.2 per cent of GNP for foreign aid, the lowest amongst all donor countries. Internationally agreed-upon target is 0.7 per cent. A mere 0.5 per cent tax on America's millionaires, whose combined wealth equals \$8 trillion, would be sufficient to allow America to fulfil its foreign aid obligation.

Seventeen million people, including 11 million children, die every year from easily preventable diseases and malnutrition; 800 million people are hungry or malnourished; 2 billion people live in poverty (on \$2 a day), 1 billion in absolute poverty (on \$1 a day); 2 billion people lack access to proper sanitation, and 1 billion do not have safe drinking water; 275 million

children never attend or complete primary school; 870 million adults are illiterate. If the U.S., along with rich donor countries, fulfil their aid obligations, there would be enough to addressing many of the above issues. Estimated cost of achieving the Millennium Goals is \$100-150 billion a year.

War on Iraq: Up to 500,000 people could die in a war with Iraq. A U.S.-led war against Iraq would be a pre-emptive, large-scale invasion, without evidence of an imminent threat to the security of the United States, says a recent report by Medact/International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. Over 500,000 children (under the age of 5) have died from UN imposed economic sanctions on Iraq since the Gulf War. Some 100,000-200,000 Iraqi soldiers and civilians died in the U.S.-led Gulf War.

War on terror: Some 3000-5000 Afghan civilians were killed in the campaign against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban regime. Guantanamo Bay prisoners were held without trial or the standards of safeguards of "prisoner of war" status, violating international standards.

Civil rights and liberties in America: The rights of Americans are being diminished, restricted, and violated, through mechanisms such as the Patriot Act. Over 1,000

detentions and deportations of mostly Arab men in America without any terrorism charges testify this. Maltreatment and violations of rights (including proper access to attorneys, contact with families, etc) during detention were reported in many cases. Added to this are fingerprinting and photographing of visitors from Islamic countries including Bangladesh, support for a policy of covert assassinations/killings of suspected terrorists abroad. America's stance on many international treaties places it in the company of some of the world's most vile regimes and worst human rights violators.

World summit on sustainable development: UN sponsored international conference aimed at addressing some of the biggest issues pertaining to the environment, poverty and economic development ended almost in failure, with very few concrete comments and timetables. The U.S. was "the biggest obstacle toward achieving progress", refusing to agree to any substantive commitments and goals.

International Criminal Court: An historic achievement in human rights, the court's aim is going to bring to justice perpetrators of crimes against humanity, genocide, and war crimes. The court aims to

prevent repeat of some of the greatest crimes and atrocities committed in the 20th century including the Holocaust, the Khmer Rouge genocide in Cambodia, and the Rwanda genocide. U.S. took unprecedented steps to undermine the new court, including planning to 'unsign' the ICC treaty and pressuring other countries to sign bilateral immunity agreements.

Kyoto Protocol on global warming: The treaty is the primary international instrument aimed at curbing greenhouse gas emissions in order to prevent global warming. Global warming is expected to increase the earth's temperature by 3C (5.4F) in the next 100 years, resulting in multiple adverse effects on the environment and human society, including widespread species loss, ecosystem damage, and flooding of populated human settlements. The U.S. is the largest greenhouse gas producer in the world. The U.S. is the only main country not to ratify the Kyoto Protocol.

CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women) is the main international treaty designed to protect the rights of women worldwide, and ending the exploitation of and discrimination against women. The only countries

that have signed but not ratified are the U.S., Afghanistan, Sao Tome and Principe.

Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty: U.S. officially withdrew from the landmark arms treaty, December 2001.

Landmine Ban Treaty: Landmines maim or kill approximately 26,000 civilians every year, including 8,000 to 10,000 children. U.S. refused to sign the treaty, along with Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Vietnam.

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty: U.S. failed to ratify the ban on nuclear testing. The treaty is ratified by 89 countries including France, Great Britain, and Russia.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species: U.S. announced support for the renewal of the ivory trade, November 2002.

Convention on Rights of the Child: Only two countries in the world have refused to ratify this human rights treaty -- Somalia and the U.S.

Child Soldiers Protocol: There are 300,000 child soldiers today. The U.S. has yet to ratify the treaty.

UN Agreement to Curb the International Flow of Illicit Small Arms, July 2001: Small arms and light weapons are responsible for the majority of casualties in modern

day conflicts, of which 3 out of 4 casualties are civilians. The U.S. was the only nation to oppose it.

Durban conference against racism: U.S. withdrew from the international conference aimed at combating racism around the world.

Global AIDS crisis: Three million people die of AIDS every year; 70 million will die of AIDS by the year 2020. The U.S. gives much less than its fair share (in relation to America's wealth to the Global AIDS Fund, the primary international body established to fund global AIDS prevention, treatment and care projects around the world). The Global Fund is calling for \$10 billion a year from donor countries. The U.S. is also trying to block the manufacturing of inexpensive generic medicines which are readily available in the developed countries, but are far too expensive for most of the world's AIDS patients. These drugs can dramatically increase the quality of life and life expectancy of AIDS patients.

United Nations Population Fund: November 2002, U.S. threatened to withdraw its support for a landmark family planning agreement that the United States helped write eight years ago. July 2002, U.S. withheld previously approved aid of \$34 million to UNFPA.

Embargo against Cuba: UN

General Assembly passed a resolution in November 2002, for the 11th consecutive year, calling for an end to the U.S. embargo. The resolution was passed 173-3, with the U.S., Israel and the Marshall Islands opposing. The Cuban government estimates the negative effect of the blockade at more than \$67 billion.

One-sided support for Israel in the conflict with Palestinians is in violation of several UN resolutions.

US nuclear posture review: The principle of deterrence has guided international security since the Cold War. The U.S. is now rejecting the policy of deterrence in favour of using nuclear weapons as instruments that could be used in fighting wars.

National Security Strategy 2002: The U.S. stated its aim of global military domination incorporates first-strike, pre-emptive war; calls for development of new low-yield, earth-penetrating nuclear weapons. Believeably 10,000-20,000 nuclear warheads remain in the U.S. arsenal. U.S. is the only country to have used a nuclear weapon.

Military spending: U.S. has the largest military spending budget in the world.

Arms trade: America is the largest supplier of arms and provider of weapons to countries. The arms trade is a major contributing factor to armed conflicts around the

world.

Missile defence: The U.S. is planning an expensive missile defence system that threatens to destabilise global security.

America's wealth compared to world's poor: Average income in America is over 100 times greater than that of the poorest one billion people on the planet.

Domestic prison population of two million is the highest incarceration rate in the world.

Analysis: This harsh dossier of Global Issue Institute reveals US in a manner that we all are the victims of American violations of international norms, common morality, and human decency. In disguise America has its strong grip over the economic, political, sociological development of almost every country of the world. With spreading wings all over and at times even by denying the basic rights of the people in these countries, the Americans are ruling unilaterally. We need to realise the very fact that often America is seen as "the single biggest obstruction toward achieving progress". The dossier appears to stress that it is as if high time that we take an insight into the 'real' America.

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