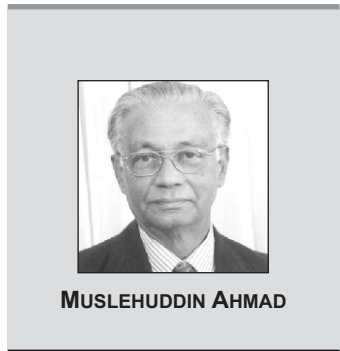


GAZA PULL-OUT

Palestnians to get back land after four decades



MUSLEHUDDIN AHMAD

J EWS against Jews; Jews expelling Jews from their homes in the " land promised by God". Jews burning their own flag -- something nobody could ever think of in Israel. Jews in grief, tears and anger as they lost their homes and many turned violent and they promised to return to "their promised land" one day. Some of the settlers called Sharon a Hitler. This signifies the onset of violence in the future from Israeli side. Indeed, one Israeli settler already shot dead three Palestinians in one of the settlements. Ariel Sharon condemned the incident and called him a terrorist. Earlier one Israeli IDF reservist killed four Israeli Palestinians in a bus in Israel. So violence has begun and it is likely to intensify in the coming days. Israelis must now understand why Palestinians have been so violent; they lost their homes and their ancestral land to the Israelis.

The Palestinians were, however, rejoicing on liberation of a part (about 2% of the total occupied land) of their land. This is what the situation is as a result of unilateral disengagement by Sharon from Gaza, a tiny strip of land (about 150 sq. km) bordering Egypt. The land was declared as the occupied land and as such Jewish settlements there were illegal in terms of international law. Indeed, Sharon was the father of settlements as it is he who, as Housing and Settlement Minister, promoted settlements in the occupied land by giving government financial support to the Israeli settlers.

The world hasn't changed much so far as Sharon is concerned, but,

as it seems, he has been under some pressure from President Bush to do something for the Palestinians as, probably President Bush thought, some progress in Israeli-Palestinian issue may take some heat off Iraqi insurgency. Otherwise, Sharon, a person with long record of butchering Palestinians and ever expanding land expropriation, would not suddenly turn peace-maker. He knows that this ultimately may lead to his political death, but he gambled as at present 70 per

moving into the settlements to distribute the notices asking all settlers to leave by a set date which was August 15, 2005, with a grace period of 48 hours. Only a small number left by the due date and this is why the Israeli army had to start their evacuation operation. However, about half of the settlers left by the grace period of 48 hours, but action had to be taken to evict the rest by force from their homes and finally from the synagogues. The forced evacuation made the disen-

were totally unarmed during the operation -- something the world has never witnessed before in any Israeli operation in the field. They were indeed under strict orders not to retaliate or attack any settler even under extreme provocations. Israeli troops did a marvellous job; they behaved like angels with the settlers during the operation. It was unbelievable that Israeli army who are accustomed to bulldozing Palestinian homes with families within at the dead of night did not

the Western Wall too) were holed up there and most of them were lifted by women troops. One woman from the USA was heavily resisting the troops and apparently rebuking them. But there was no response from the women in uniform.

The most difficult part was the evacuation of those who barricaded themselves at the rooftop of Synagogue by razor wires. This was, however, no problem for the trained Israeli troops. But the

American Jews who came to help their friends and relatives in their fight to stay in the settlement, were most vocal and put up tough fight. Some were really unruly and rebuking the troops but there was not a word from the latter. One settler set himself alight but was later taken to hospital. One settler, while being lifted and carried away physically was praying -- 'Father above, look what they are doing to us'.

The evacuation work from four small West Bank settlements was relatively easier though there was physical resistance there too. The same process of barricading in the Synagogue was also adopted, but they were removed by the Israeli forces and all four settlements were cleared up by the due date.

Thereafter, Israeli heavy bulldozers were in operation to bulldoze the houses, but this time and certainly for the first time, these were empty Israeli houses and not Palestinian ones which they used to bulldoze earlier by the same powerful machines with men, women and children in them. The scenes are worth remembering as these operations were historic ones, never seen before and nobody knows whether would ever be repeated by the Israeli authority. But it is also a fact that without such repeat actions no peace can come to this part of the world. Therefore, the US and the UK should promote those who would be inclined to go for further withdrawals so that the Palestinians can have a contiguous land for the purpose of establishing the Palestinian state (detailed Peace Plan was suggested in my last comment)

Ariel Sharon is reportedly scheduled to go to Washington next week to meet and report his compliance to President Bush. One expects President Bush to ask Prime Minister Sharon to continue the evacuation of further settlements before committing a handsome gift of some three billion dollars to Israel. As Ariel Sharon has one-track mind, may be it is he and not Benjamin Netanyahu, who can do the job. But the bottom line is the US President has to be firm to have it done to live up to his promises of establishing the Palestinian state by 2005. He certainly needs to create a sovereign state to compensate for the state -- Iraq, a sovereign one which stands virtually destroyed.

Muslehuddin Ahmad is a former Secretary and Ambassador.

SPOTLIGHT ON MIDDLE EAST

Ariel Sharon is reportedly scheduled to go to Washington next week to meet and report his compliance to President Bush. One expects President Bush to ask Prime Minister Sharon to continue the evacuation of further settlements. The bottom line is the US President has to be firm to have it done to live up to his promises of establishing the Palestinian state by 2005.

cent Israelis do support Gaza disengagement. For Israelis the reason is obvious: Gaza was indefensible and brought uncontrollable security problems for the mainland Israelis. This is why Hamas tried to take the credit that it is its resistance fight that has led to Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Gaza.

The disengagement was, however, readily supported by Labor Party and that prevented the fall of Sharon government and saved him from going for fresh general election as several ministers, including Benjamin Netanyahu, of his party resigned on the issue. With this background Sharon proceeded with Gaza withdrawal. This was duly passed by the Knesset (parliament) and thereafter it was declared by Israel that settlements in Gaza were illegal. If Gaza settlements are illegal, all settlements are illegal; this is what the international law also says. And Israel is in breach of international law and continues to remain so until it withdraws totally from the occupied land.

After the formal decision of Israeli government, Israeli forces started



Palestinians celebrating Gaza pull-out

gagement process very difficult and painful to the settlers' who have been living there for the last 38 years. It was well known that settlers life was fairly comfortable with good houses with gardens and in many cases with green houses -- something totally different from the Palestinians living on the other side of Gaza, only a couple of yards away, in squalid refugee camps leading practically a gutter life though these are the people who are the real owners of the land in Gaza.

The electronic media continued their coverage of Israeli operation practically non-stop. Israeli troops

even show any harshness towards the settlers who were resisting eviction with all their might.

The scenes of evacuating the settlers holed up in the synagogue at Neve Dekim were extraordinary. The young Israelis, many of them from the West Bank settlements and some who came all the way from the USA to oppose eviction were determined not to leave, but Israeli troops physically lifted them, of course with utmost restraint, carried them to the buses standing nearby for taking them to Israel. The Israeli women who always pray at a separate enclosures (same separate arrangement in

interesting part was when troops mounted on ladder started cutting the razor wires with special scissors, coloured water, sand, construction rubbish, eggs, even toxic chemicals were hurled on the troops. These, however, could not stop the troops from doing their job. They went up and forced the settlers to come down. Ariel Sharon called them hooligans and also used the word criminals and asked them to leave the settlements as it was illegal to continue to stay in Gaza settlements. Earlier he called upon the settlers 'not to attack men and women in uniform'. He said, 'I am responsible, attack me.'

'On this principle, people of all faiths in Britain are agreed...'

-- Tony Blair



BRITAIN is proud of its global and deserved reputation as a tolerant, multi-cultural society where people of all nationalities, backgrounds and faiths live in peace and friendship.

The unified and calm response of the British people to the terrorist attacks in London last month -- in which the victims were of all faiths and none -- underlined the tolerance and strength of our society. While there have been isolated and completely unacceptable acts of religious and racial hatred, the overwhelming response of our population was that these attacks were the work of a few fanatics, not of any section of our society. If a goal of these attacks was to turn our citizens against each other, they failed.

But there is also an almost universal agreement -- among the two-million strong British Muslim community as much as any other group -- that we can't continue to allow extremists to abuse our freedoms and the tolerance of our society to support, encourage, condone or glorify terrorism. Indeed it is the Muslim community who understand more than most what a menace these fringe fanatics are to good relations and to cohesiveness of our country.

So we are bringing forward a package of measures aimed at closing the loopholes in our law which these extremists have been exploiting. But these are not crude measures. Part of our long-held and valued traditions of freedom and tolerance is a commitment by any government to consult widely across the breadth of society before bringing forward any new legislation.

I am determined to maintain these proud traditions -- and the reputation which goes with them. None of the new measures will threaten these. But equally, the rules of the game have changed, and we need to respond. Young men, born in Britain, have been

brainwashed by extremists to the point where they blow themselves up and murder innocent people.

The new measures I am proposing are directed against extremism and terrorism only -- whatever form it takes, and whichever faith it claims to represent. In some cases, I suspect there will be surprise abroad that they are not already in place. So we will seek new powers to deport or exclude foreign nationals who foster hatred, advocate violence or justify such violence. This will include clerics associated with extremism.

There has, for some time, been a call for action from within the Muslim community against such clerics. With the help of the community, we will now draw up a list of foreign-born clerics who will not be allowed to preach in the UK and who can be excluded. For British citizens, we will bring in a new offence of condoning or glorifying terrorism in the UK and abroad.

These measures are not aimed at decent law-abiding British Muslims -- or Britons of any other faith. We know that this fringe of extremism does not truly represent Islam. British Muslims have made abundantly clear how they abhor the actions of the extremists and how they fear that the good name of the community will be contaminated by the words and actions of these fanatics.

Many, after all, made their homes in the UK exactly because they enjoy in the UK, like all other faiths, the complete freedom to worship and to make a better life for their families. Their children have been born here. British Muslims make a huge and welcome contribution to our national life.

We will continue to welcome as well those, of all backgrounds, who visit our country from abroad in peace and who understand that the respect and tolerance towards others in which we believe is the surest guarantee of freedom and progress for people of all religious faiths.

But coming to Britain is not a right, and even when people have come here, staying here carries with it a duty. That duty is to share and support the values of freedom and tolerance that sustain our shared way of life. Those that break that duty and try to incite hatred or engage in violence against our country and its people have no place here. On this principle, people of all faiths in Britain are agreed. And it is my job to act on it.

Juvenile delinquency and future citizens

ABDUL KHALEQUE

JUVENILE delinquency is a growing menace to the rhythms of socio-economic and political life in Bangladesh, yet it has not found importance in the education system. The criminological view is that youth crime has posed threat to conventional values so much, so that in advanced countries nearly half of the street crimes like violence, drug addiction, car thefts are committed by boys between 15-17. Marijuana, liquor and cigarette culture and high percentage of juvenile recidivism have posed serious challenge to law enforcement and criminal justice.

We believe that the embryonic stage of human life comes within the domain of human rights of living, growing and development. A child needs proper care for safe upbringing and development of the inherent potentialities.

In this regard, the supreme role of parents in respect of love and affection is supplemented by the school teacher. The home, its quality and composition, environment, economic and social condition etc. largely determine the needed development aspects of the child and shape character traits and value senses.

The huge lots of the homeless, landless and incomeless families of Bangladesh are acutely appalled by poverty, illiteracy and their concomitants which hamper sound growth and development of the children of such families. For them, there is no pre-school opportunity, school-oriented modern facility, proper food, proper nutrition and medicare, sanitary environment and habitat etc. etc. the stress and strain of inadequacies of life largely sensitise the children into a feel of social insignificance which promotes wayward attitude. They do not have urge to go to school and to mix up with the children of socially and economically uncumbered families.

If some of them, however, go to primary school under the lure of benefit provided by the government, they do not like to stay long in school to complete the course of education. They play truant and constitute the band of drop-outs, and then go their

way outside the control of the family, or join the parents in their desperate pursuit of life for existence. At such a stage, many children leave company of parents and incline toward petty thefts, picking pocket, etc. When caught and sent to prison where adults are crowded without any segregation, they come in contact with the criminal and delinquent adults and learn details of the art of crime commission. On return from prison, these children indulge in recidivity or enter upon new domains of crimes. This contagion theory of crime multiplies the growth of the

girls from 6 to 11 or 12, barring those on mothers' lap.

It is interesting to notice juvenile boys and girls in the metropolis running in the traffic-jam points from vehicle to vehicle with foreign and native sensational books and magazines, miscellaneous stationery articles, kerchief pieces made of remnants of garment factories, bottles of mineral water etc. requesting purchase of their merchandise. After such missions carried up to midnight, these boys and girls retire to footpaths, slums and miscellaneous spots for sleep and rest. The

According to surveys, many of the street boys and girls run away from parents after the death of father or mother or both and because of torture and harsh treatment in the family. In course of time, many of them particularly the boys grow into thieves, extortionists, kidnappers, terrorists and murderers etc. and some of the girls mature up into immoral activities.

underworld.

We may turn to the sight of mothers in prison with innocent children. Such a child remains in prison environs as long as the mother passes her days over there. The prison administration in Bangladesh is horrid in respect of accommodation and facilities of diverting criminal attitude of the inmates. The countryside lack of attraction, employment opportunity and, on the contrary, the flash of development and attractions in towns, particularly in Dhaka city have created a drive of the rural poor families towards town for a possible prospect of economic foothold. Even begging in towns and Dhaka is much more attractive than in the village.

A recent press report shows the existence of thousands of street children of the age 3-17 in Dhaka city. We find these homeless, property-less boys and girls in metropolitan mazzars, traffic-jam points, graveyards, railway stations, court premises either singly or with mother or father or with both invoking alms and help. Some of these wretched humans crowd the market places and offer service to carry the load of things purchased by the affluent. These destitutes always search for shelter, food and livelihood. The boys amongst them generally range in age from 6 to about 16 or 17, and the

olders among them often assemble with phensidiyl. Many of them earn approximately Tk. 300-500 per day. They spend the money in ways they like -- usually in misc. food, clothing and smoking etc. and share remnants with parents (father and mother or either as the situation stands out).

Perchance, if we ask anyone to agree to work as domestic help, hurriedly comes out the word 'No'. They do not like long hours of domestic help, occasional torture for slight mistake, and other abuses. They feel they are enslaved in domestic service whatever may be the economic benefits offered including prospect of education at the instance of benevolent employers. Some girls of the street fall into the clutch of traffickers who usually bring them into immoral life at home or abroad.

According to surveys, many of the street boys and girls run away from parents after the death of father or mother or both and because of torture and harsh treatment in the family. In course of time, many of them particularly the boys grow into thieves, extortionists, kidnappers, terrorists and murderers etc. and some of the girls mature up into immoral activities.

According to psychological and psychiatric criminologists, the juve-

niles we have categorised hereinabove develop mental conflicts or non-satisfaction of fundamental needs of life, and a desperate way of thinking and acting, and seek relief in criminal activities. When the early formative life faces deprivations the propensity toward anti-social activity increases sharply. We have noticed broken homes present considerable risk of delinquency for children. In case of divorce of mother which is very whimsical in our society of the poor, the adverse effect on children is pronounced. Statistics confirm high rate of broken homes in

JANMASHTAMI

Hinduism and Srikrishna

PREM RANJAN DEV

T HE Hindu culture and tradition does not derive from any one prophet or founder. It has neither a uniform creed nor any organised church. Its history and prehistory are ageless. The Vedas, which are the scriptures of the Hindus, are unique in character. We find in the Vedas a great variety of subjects and a great flexibility of doctrines.

Everybody knows that there is no single human authority accepted by all the Hindus nor has there been any movement to create such a central authority. There is also no ecclesiastical or hierarchical binding authority in Hinduism. In spite of all the above considerations, there is a definite body of knowledge and common themes that can be clearly identified as Hinduism. This core of knowledge and practice that is common themes can be clearly identified as Hinduism. The Risis or Vedic seers function as a binding force. Authority resides in the Risis, and there are several of them. Rather than vie for a complete monopoly on wisdom, these Risis respect one another and work collaboratively. Rishihood in Hinduism is knowledge-based, and such knowledge can be cultivated. But methods of science and logic may be applied here. This knowledge is progressive and dynamic, capable of continuous development. The Risis can also cultivate supernormal faculties and are very important in Hindu tradition.

Festivals, ceremonies and rituals are integrating and uniting force in the Hindu tradition, pilgrimages and temples play the same role. There is a huge literature of stories, mythologies and legends that affect the imaginative man. There is also integration at the conceptual level. At this level, many systems of philosophy are developed. The classical philosophies like Nyaya, Vaishesika, Samkhya, Yoga, Mimamsa and Vedanta come under this category. "Again, there is no conflict over holding the single, universal truth. Rather, each system is recognised and respected by the others."

Hinduism encompasses an entire civilization and way of life that has evolved since the dawn of human civilization. The Vedas, the Upanishads, the Bhagavad-Gita and the epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata play an important role in the development and practice of Hinduism. These, the ancient holy scriptures of the world, uphold the eternal truth of the eternal existence of the supreme Lord Srikrishna. "Owing to the eternal will-to-communicate the God descends on earth to re-unite His Joyful Self with His created beings." Essentially God manifests Himself in human form to crush and annihilate worldly vices and revive eternal values. Lord Krishna has bound Himself to



man and to that consists the greatest glory of human existences. He came down with His full divine manifestations and raised human civilization to a celestial plane. Thus came Sri Gauranga and brought a heavenly unification of mankind irrespective of caste, creed and races. The Bhakti movement of that time, espousing whole hearted devotion to God in one aspect or another, opened up what was previously esoteric knowledge and practice for large numbers of people. Means were made available for everyone to realise God, to reach the goal, with no conflict between knowledge and practice.

Sri Krishna focused on the unity of religions. His Gita is a deep reservoir of knowledge. There is also a wide range of spiritual disciplines and practices, such as Karma-Yoga, Bhakti-Yoga, Raja-Yoga and Tantra. These disciplines are significant to Hindus as well as practical and beneficial to all of humanity. The meanings and intention of the Gita have historically found elaboration and explication in the Smritis, the two great epics and various major and minor puranas. Sri Krishna attracts all beings towards Himself so that they may realise the depth of His infinite mercy and love. He maintains an existence of concrete bliss. The entity of the creatures of the cosmos is part and parcel of Lord Krishna. There is a chronological order in the manifestation of the supreme Lord.

Modern civilisation is now in a state of transition. If we are to survive shall have to we brace through is a moral and spiritual revolution which should embrace the whole of the world. In this context, a penetrating thought and look into the totality of Lord Sri Krishna alone can save the cosmic existence and sanctify the coming world. Philosophy of Sri Krishna can contribute so much to life and its fulfillment not only for the Hindu community, but for the emerging world community of the 21st century and beyond. Hindu ancient wisdom continues to be a catalytic force in the transformation of the universe.

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there are Young People's Advisors attached to police stations and CID maintains specialised teams for prevention.

In the United States, Juvenile Bureau, Youth Bureau etc. exist as independent branch of the municipal police force and they run youth clubs or holiday camps.

In India, Bombay established Juvenile Aid Police Unit in 1952 to deal with pre-delinquents, delinquents, socially handicapped juveniles and victimised children. Under the control of this unit, Police Boys' Club operates in low-income-group labour areas. The Juvenile Aid Bureau of Kolkata works under the Deputy Commissioner of Police of the Detective Department. Juvenile Aid Bureaus and Police Boys' Club have been functioning in many other states of India.

In Bangladesh, recently the editors of leading papers underscored the need for extensive coverage of news on children in the print and electronic media for establishing the rights of children. The UNICEF has shown interest in letting children speak. Bangladesh has reformatory schools, and probation units to deal with juvenile convicts. The Retired Police Officers' Association in collaboration with World Vision has been doing good work to reform juveniles into sound thinking and acting.

The brief discussion on juvenile delinquency landed us in the realm of several child-related matters which could not be incorporated in this brief write-up. Just the issues are mentioned which are broadly as follows: The Children's Act of 1974, definition of child in various statutes relating to penal offence, custodial security and right, marriage, contract, deserted and illegitimate child, child labour, child rights, child abuse, trafficking in children. Elaborate research at the instance of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Universities on these subjects would bring to focus the rhythms of life of our future citizens.

Abdul Khaleque is a former IG, Police and Secretary.