

Inherent Causes for the divide between hindus and muslims that go beyond partition

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Abstract:

The abrogation of Article 370 has ushered in a new dawn in the relations of India with its citizens. Will this bring everlasting peace is a point in question. Although it has provoked some thought in the Kashmiri mindset, the matter would remain unresolved if one does not solve the root of all conflict which is the Hindu-Muslim divide. Unless this issue is sorted out, peace will remain a distant dream. My research article contemplates on this aspect of the relation and seeks to understand from the historical times what caused this gap.

We have heard a lot of stories from both sides of LOC. There are people on the one hand talking about the atrocities being done on the Kashmiris as in Basharat Peer's novel "Curfewed Night" and on the other side we have people who say that Kashmir is and will remain an integral part of India.

In the quest for peace, what one has forgotten are the aspirations of the common people. Can we let on rioting to go on indefinitely? If in any part of India protests take place, does the police resort to shooting and massacre as in Kashmir? Yes the demands may not be of the same level but are we not supposed to appease the people to not to become violent?

There is this other side of the nation which feels that India cannot give up Kashmir at any cost because this would mean other states too asking for independence. But then this question needs to be asked. What wrong is in the system that makes it vulnerable to division? Why in the past certain sections of the Sikh community ask for a separate homeland? Why are the Naxalites fighting with the establishment?

All these questions have got one answer that is the resentment among the masses which is because of the multicultural, multi-religion nature of the Indian subcontinent that makes it difficult to appease everyone (Reference: Kashmir the case for freedom by Arundhati Roy, Pankaj Mishra, Tariq Ali, Angana P. Chatterji).

How did this all start? We know that the dispute of Kashmir started way back in 1947 when Maharaja Hari Singh was indecisive to stay with India or Pakistan. But what led to the general hatred between the two religions. If we take the case of Jammu and Kashmir, it was in fact the policy of the Britishers after the revolt of 1857 to create pseudo powers in the princely states. One such pseudo power was that of Raja Gulab Singh of the Dogra empire for whom the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir was created to be ruled. Jammu and Kashmir was never a united province but actually made to look to be one by the Britishers in order to continue its rule in the country. Raja Gulab Singh actually neglected the condition of his Muslim citizens. And so the Muslims got alienated from their Hindu ruler. This finally led to the massacre of 1932 when several Muslims were killed and protests were held throughout the state. So when finally in 1947, the British left it to the races of the state to determine their allegiance towards Pakistan or India or if they would like to go independent, the majority Muslim population thought of it to be a better chance to get rid of the Hindu ruler. But this did not happen and Raja Hari Singh signed the instrument of accession with India.

The root cause of the discord between the hindus and the muslims was also the fundamental difference in the way of living and the cultures and traditions of the two communities .But the question is why can't we accept people who are somewhat different from us.This happens in the case of racial discrimination as well where people from the minority community like those of the north east are looked down upon by their fellow countrymen from other parts of the nation.They are sometimes referred to as the Chinese because of their small eyes resembling that of the latter.Too often we have heard of people being called as biharis So the question arises why are we intolerant towards a minor population?

As in the case of Kashmir and kashmiris,there was a general harmony between the Kashmiri pundits who formed merely 5 % of the population and their muslim counterparts.Since Raja Gulab Singh had received Jammu and Kashmir from the Britishers for a sum of Rs 75 lacs,he did not actually represent the state but was mostly focused on the Punjab region like Hoshiarpur,Lahore and Kapurthala.He even gave huge donations for setting up Universities in Lahore. In this way,Kashmir got somehow neglected and it was not until the 19th century that Kashmir got its due.But it was too late.The resentment had begun .So there was also this tendency to allocate work, administrative or otherwise to the pandits as they belonged to the hindu community.This can be seen as favouring one's own type of people rather than in its entirety.But a king should treat his followers equally without distinction on the basis of cast ,creed or colour.This turned into a mass uprising when the muslims were not allowed to pray at a mosque in Srinagar in 1931.

Even if the Cultures of the two communities were totally different,there should have taken place an amalgamation of the two religions which happens in most cases and considering that muslims ruled over India for more than three centuries.

It is said that the root cause of all troubles is poverty and misery among the people. Similar is the case over here.The Muslims as in case of Bengal were peasants whereas their hindu mates were landlords.

When the Muslims tried to become entrepreneurs,there were obvious clashes with the hindus that led to animosity between the two.

How are the hindus and muslims fundamentally different? Why a middle class hindu family would never marry their daughter into a muslim family?

There is this perception that Muslims are generally war mongers and that they first increase their population and once it is done ,they take the entire area under their control.Their food habits are different.They feed on the cow considered as sacred among the hindus.These are bottlenecks on the road towards establishing a long lasting peace.It is often said that not all muslims are terrorists but all terrorists are in fact muslims.This leads us to the point about the genuineness of these statements.

All these inhibitions need to be shed if we are to end the discord.Accepting the plurality of Society is of paramount importance today.Tolerance towards each others views ,understanding that "yes,people can be different from you" is at the heart of solving this crisis.Listening to other's viewpoint is all the more crucial in the present times.

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