

Politics Of Kashmir Issue

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***Delimma's of Kashmir Dialogue**

A workable solution to the Kashmir dispute must begin with an ambience for peace and the two countries (India and Pakistan) cutting down rhetoric, and increasing normal diplomatic and political relations and to involve all shades of opinion in order to get rid of this festering wound or what then P.M. Vajpayee called "headache". To some it is bleeding head wound, and others see it more than that because it will not be an oversimplification to state that Jammu and Kashmir has been shadowing the peace and prosperity in South Asia in general and in India & Pakistan in particular. The duo are equally losers with none of them gaining in the unholy game. But these days, as in the past, both India and Pakistan are giving repeated assurances to each other as well as to the world community on the peaceful settlement of Kashmir dispute. Moreover the issue is making place in media circles particularly print with headlines like: "Quite Diplomacy", "**Kashmir** Dialogue", "Secret diplomacy *and all that". Hurriyat or separatists in J&K are the main players in the game probably without captain and a well defined game plan. The civil society in India, Pakistan seems extremely serious in finding the all time best solution acceptable to the concerned parties. But, ironically Hurriyat is greatly divided on the

subject. Hurriyat, led by Mirwaiz Omar Farooq, time and again expresses their wish to finding a solution making all the shades winner. But, Hurriyat (G) led by Syed Ali Shah Geelani is quite sticking to its ideological guns of accepting no dialogue on 35th subject unless accepted as a 'dispute' by India. Mirwaiz seems to go for getting something out of nothing and making Govt. of India engaged in the dialogue which for him is the only way forward. Mr. Geelani known for his fundamentalist approach won't either go for bargain or anything outside UN security councils' resolutions accepting Kashmir a 'dispute' and finding the much awaited solution by giving the people of J&K including PAK, right to self determination, (to merge either with India or Pakistan), which India has neither accepted nor seems to be in a mood to do so. Though all the quarters want solution but the bone of contention is not only solution but the subject matter, which all parties are looking at through their own spectacles. Praveen Swami wrote in *The Hindu* Friday November 6, 2009 in an article entitled *In **Kashmir** the price of peace is not right*. "Key to the problem is the dilemma so familiar to South Asians who enjoy the art of street bargaining: the customer does not have enough cash and a shopkeeper does not have the right goods. The Hurriyat is willing to settle for an arrangement falling short of independence if it is

guaranteed a share of power and, moreover if the deal is endorsed by its Islamist adversaries within Kashmir, as well as Pakistan and the Jihadist groups based there. New Delhi like Islamabad, which is increasingly mired in a worsening war with Islamists simply does not have the influence to deliver on these demands” The fact of the shopkeeper-customer deal is “no shopkeeper ever wants the customer leave the shop empty handed and no customer can buy a bad item knowingly though neither customer nor shopkeeper can bargain for something more vital.” The dilemma is not just the price and item but both are enmeshed with the irony of pressure, ambition, fear and arrogance. Neither New Delhi nor Hurriyat are out-rightly immune from the danger, crisis etc. if the deal fetches nothing and leaves something substantial. From one side, New Delhi is facing the pressure from the world community for finding a solution to the contentious issue on the other hand India is subject to domestic pressure to find a lasting solution to Kashmir issue. But India is finding herself in a political dilemma and unable to deliver anything. On the other hand dilemma with moderate Hurriyat faction is multidimensional. Firstly they seem to be more enthusiastic and less convinced with the solution acceptable to the concerned parties. Secondly, they are not clear as to what they should accept and what not. Thirdly, they face the grave legitimacy crisis; they are doubtful of being the real representatives of the people of Kashmiri. Fourthly, the Geelani factor. Mr. Geelani, the hardliner, in the sense of holding nerve over one line whether yielding something substantial or not is none of his concern. The recent statement of PDP president and former MP Mehbooba Mufti that whether some one likes it or not but the reality is Kashmiri people have faith in Syed Ali Shah Geelani and his callousness to the dialogue makes the whole process redundant. Fifthly we can't ignore the militants. They too are an entity in the whole set up. The recent Lal chowk incident

makes it amply clear that militants are still there, they can't be taken for granted. Their wish too matters. Pakistan still though foolishly believes that they may get their cake on communal grounds, seems superfluous not only to India but also to the separatists except Mr. Geelani. Lastly, what New Delhi can deliver or what Praveen Swami rightly or wrongly calls: Kashmir secessionists want something New Delhi doesn't have and at a price it cannot afford”. The more important issue still is not dialogue but content of the

dialogue and each party perceives it in the way the other party does not understand or does not want to understand. Should the content be a bilateral * issue* *or internationally acclaimed dispute or an integral part, *Whatever and in what way it is publicized, however, everyone recognises things are not right in right perspective though comparatively better. The renowned scholar Prof. Amitab Matto made it clear in a phone-in-interview on 28th oct. 2009 on NDTV: “What India offers in terms of dialogue is neither secession nor independence but a change in federal relationship between Union and State government”. But we have to delve on it whether such a proposition would be acceptable to the concerned parties? Perhaps not. The things are not that easy. If it were then so much blood wouldn't have splashed on our streets. Our understanding of the subject is that India, Pakistan and the representatives of Kashmir should sit together and everyone should give an extremely patient hearing to others' argument and dwell on the prepositions which are common to all parties. Afterwards the differences should be tried to be sorted out. All these should be carried out of the media glare so that the process wouldn't be hijacked by vested interests. May be no one wins out-rightly, but all of them may win something in the present nuclear era of overkill where this issue may lead to human catastrophe at some point of time in future despite

the famous phrase of “DEMOCRATIC PEACE” which history has failed to sustain and may again if the lion is left free with all claiming him their proprietor but the lion renders all vulnerable. Now, the million dollar question is: would there be any initiative for talks from any side. The question has as many askers as the players directly or indirectly involved in the game. J&K congress president argues that Hurriyat will take part in the dialogue. Confused Hurriyat is confusing every shade or public opinion with regard to the “Quite diplomacy”. Mirwaiz, Bhat and Mr Lone like faces are being observed as the men with one voice for going to take part unlike Geelani. For Shabir Shah, and Nayeem Khan it is violation of Hurriyat Constitution and 2008 agreement. Mr. Yaseen Malik is absolutely different in asking the civil society of all sides to come forward and paint the wood with unknown colour. The religious diversities are perhaps sailing in different boats to different shores and none reaching the destiny. The mainstream politicians are not against the dialogue but, for surely, are equally divided on the subject matter.

National Conference led coalition reveals the vitality of the dialogue but if the power transfer game is played they (NC) won't perhaps be a playball in being buttoned off for a while at least. Needless to say as Delhi did so in 1975 Kashmir accord with Mir Qasim, nor would perhaps New Delhi risk repeating 1953. The hitherto existing situation reveals that 1987 unholy Rajiv-Farooq accord has not only destabilised and questioned the largest democracy but posed a big challenge to democratic hub in Asia to deliver if it can. The diplomacy has failed lots of times and even war has made the mess with the issue but the problem has remained as it was rather went worse. Fortunately for now the land seems fertile to be sown with a democratic and peaceful seeds though ploughing the land stands the biggest challenge ahead. The fairest solution is what every

one wishes, but what does the fairest solution mean. If it means “independence” would New Delhi not totally be a display ball with that in arguing the subject to be the integral part. If it means power transfer like 1953 or 1975, would it be a final solution acceptable to all? The common man dreams of an amicable settlement which he believes to lie behind the sincerity of those in the higher echelons of power. There has to be a show of submissiveness and humbleness which might demand stooping low in ones station and accepting something which though bitter would be in the interest of all.