

WHY SILENCE ON POJK?

Why are our leaders silent on the atrocities being heaped on the people of occupied part of Jammu and Kashmir? The international media is showing the reign of terror let loose by the Pakistani forces on the locals who have been protesting against their basic rights like subsidized flour and doing away with seats reserved for Kashmiris in the local Legislative Assembly. The army opened fire at the peaceful protesters killing at least 30 persons, triggering more unrest. The talks between the leaders of the agitation and Islamabad have failed as the protests are continuing on the 52nd day. It's shameful for the minister of Pakistan to call people enemies and traitors.. The PoJK people have suffered ever since Pakistan had occupied their land and promised to liberate the rest of the J&K. The PoJK people lived with total disinterest shown by Islamabad in the development of their area. There are no industries, major infra projects in the area. Even tourism potential of the region has not been excploited. The only use Islamabad-based rulers have of "Azad Kashmir" is to grab land and build hotels and luxury summer houses. Pakistan started facing the anger of PoJK people with the advent of internet as technology now showed the development on the other side of Kashmir. The real time reporting from J&K has smashed the lies of ISI about repression and Muslims-in-danger propaganda. People of PoJK are shocked to see the ongoing developmental works in J&K and the level of education and infrastructure coming up there.

However, we wonder why leaders across the political spectrum in J&K are not raising their voice against the killings by Pakistan army in PoJK. Legally and socially the people are parts of the original state of J&K. We always own them. The most plausible reason for the silence probably is that the suffering people are not Kashmiris. Their cultural and familial affiliation is to Jammu region. However, even barring one or two even Jammu leaders are keeping mum.

Ashok K Mehta

*The new British Prime Minister Andy Burnham has two things in common with Nepalese Prime Minister Balen Shah: both have risen from Mayor to PM; and both want a new political and economic model. While Burnham has an experienced and capable team to do so, Shah has neither. Still, Balen has completed his honeymoon period of 100 days with a mixed record, even as his Adidas keds have begun to pinch. While the Balen craze seems to be on the decline, it is not clear who is calling the shots: Party Chairman Rabi Lamichhane, Shah or the PMO. By some reports, it is the PMO led by Balen's political adviser, Kumar Ben, and his team.*

Lamichhane is no Nitin Nabin, BJP's titular head of the party. Lamichhane is a former deputy prime minister and home minister but carries the baggage of unresolved court cases, which do not allow him to hold any Cabinet office. Though he has the numbers in the party and government, it was the Balen craze that swept the elections. Obviously, there is an unspoken conflict between two young and ambitious politicians, which has spurred internal party strife, registering a decline in the Rashtriya Swatantra Party's popularity. The sound of the bell (party symbol and rallying call) is getting muffled.

Yet, according to one confidential source, Balen consults Rabi frequently and their successful spouses, Sabina and Nikita, are good friends, though Sabina Kafle naturally captures the limelight. Balen realises Rabi has stolen a march due to the tumultuous party convention in



Chitwan last month and the red-carpet welcome in India. Balen's focus on domestic affairs and decision not to travel abroad on any foreign visit have lost him mileage, which prompted his confidant Ben to meet NSA Ajit Doval, PM Modi's principal adviser on the neighbourhood, especially Nepal, and discuss a possible Balen visit before he travels to the UNGA in New York in September. IndiaNews Portal

A standing invitation to India for Balen was given by Modi soon after his triumphant victory, but scheduling in September may be a problem due to the BRICS summit fixed for September, unless he is a special invitee. Rabi is due to go to China, where he has sought a meeting with Communist Party Chairman Xi Jinping. At present, Rabi is the unquestioned leader who has managed differences with Balen.

Cracks within other political formations are natural after the Gen Z upheaval last year. GoP Nepali Congress was the first to introspect: after all, it had won a two-thirds majority in 1959, regis-

tering Nepal's first short-lived tryst with multi-party democracy. King Mahendra dismissed the first elected Prime Minister, BP Koirala, which upset India even as its Army Chief, Gen KS Thimayya, was on a tiger shoot at Chitwan, Nepal, at that very time.

NC has never been fully united-parties within a party, at least three factions - and has split earlier and is on the verge of another split under the same patronage of five-time PM Sher Bahadur Deuba, who is abroad but will return shortly to face charges of corruption. The original NC, led by stalwarts Purna Bahadur Khadka and Shekhar Koirala, has challenged, through a review petition, the decision of the Election Commission and Supreme Court to award the flag and party symbol to rebel youth leader Gagan Thapa, who held a special party convention to be elected as NC party president. From the single-largest party with 87 seats in the last election, it has crumbled to its lowest-ever tally of 38 seats, still the second-largest party thanks to the mixed electoral sys-

tem. Thapa has decided to break with Left parties in the Provincial Councils, where RSP has no representation.

Surprisingly, four-time PM KP Oli, who was the trigger of the Gen Z revolt last year, is still leader of CPN-UML, his health holding despite multiple kidney transplants, proving power is the biggest aphrodisiac. China, which is again recreating political space, is attempting to bring together all Left parties, including four-time PM Prachanda and former President Bidya Bhandari, spouse of legendary Left leader Madan Bhandari, into a grand Left alliance. It may end up in a surfeit of former PMs with few stormtroopers. Prachanda and Oli have allied to form governments in five of seven provinces.

Once kingmakers, the Terai-based parties and monarchists have been decimated by the RSP tsunami, but former Raja Gyanendra still hopes the monarchy, which is on the rise on social media, will return. Home Minister Sudan Gurung has announced a

review of the 2000 Palace Massacre enquiry, when present President Ramchandra Poudel was Home Minister and Prince Gyanendra was in Pokhara. Former Indian ambassador KV Rajan and Atul K Thakur's book, Kathmandu Chronicles, has covered the horrendous event in stark detail. IndiaNews Portal

India enjoyed a fleeting sweet spot in Nepal with back-to-back visits by Lamichhane and Foreign Minister Shishir Khanal, who said his visit to India could be termed 'special', probably referring to India's claim of "special and unique bilateral relations". For 250 years now, Nepal has followed 'balanced diplomatic relations' between India and China in pursuit of the dictum enunciated by the founder of modern Nepal, King Prithvi Narayan Shah. In reality, this balance was always tilted towards India due to strategic geography and religious and cultural factors.

Advantage India has been diminished by the entry of a third power, the US, which two decades ago said it would follow India's lead in South Asia. That is no longer the case. US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia, Samir Paul Kapoor, made a stand-alone visit to Nepal in April 2026, notably not meeting Balen Shah. He warned against Chinese 'debt-trap diplomacy' and asserted that no single power should dominate South Asia — a clear setback for India.

Nepal is India's crown jewel in South Asia, located at the head of Bharat Mata. The blood bonding with Nepal through Gorkha recruitment is likely to be reviewed following a big rally commencing on July 29, from the Gorkha heartland in Lamjung. This strategic nirvana of bilateral relations.

WHY TRUE SATISFACTION BEGINS WITH GOD

Ajit Kumar Bishnoi

There is a logical reason for it. We, souls, are parts of God (The Bhagavad-Gita 15.7). Then, it stands to reason that we can be satisfied only when God is in the loop. A simile of a toddler and his mother will shed light on this matter. Nothing pacifies the child until he is united with his mother. Similarly, God must always be involved in our life in order for us to feel satisfied; otherwise, it is not possible.

Let us examine the veracity of this statement. We have been given gross senses and subtle faculties, which are the mind, intelligence and 'ahankar' (fake ego). Starting with the senses, they always seek sense objects. The tongue seeks tasty food. Does it ever get satisfied? It does not. One must follow God's instructions in this regard. What has God instructed? One should eat what is right for us, and neither too much nor too little (6.16 and 17). How about seeing? Where do we go wrong in this regard while seeking satisfaction? We see wrong content, strictly prohibited by God, because it goes against 'dharma' (highest principles). Thus, we become our own enemy (6.5 & 6).



Similar pleasures are sensuous. They never satisfy. Otherwise, why would anyone indulge in illicit relationships, with big punishments waiting? God has given a safe option, which is to enjoy within dharma, as permitted by the social norm of marriage (7.11). Similar restraint is required in choices made by us in talking, hearing, etc.

Now turning to the mind, does it not

hurt us time and again by being uncontrolled? It does, in the form of depression, etc., and must be controlled to enable us to feel satisfied. Lord Krishna has instructed us to practise mind control by being detached (6.35). And this is possible only with God's active help, as is our experience also. Let us take objects of the mind. We all want lots of wealth, don't we? Does

money by itself ensure proper maintenance? God has to ensure it, and He does for His devotees. How else do sannyasis exist, and quite well too! The only real power is that of empowerment by God; all others are temporary and are taken away sooner rather than later. The same is the fate of fame; it lasts as long as good, pious acts last.

Intelligence of the material kind can only help one earn a living. Real intelligence lies in being wise. For this, one must be connected to God — the Omniscient. He guides, and one succeeds 100 per cent (10.11). The remaining faculty of 'ahankar' is entirely harmful unless one gives it up and takes active shelter of God, as Arjuna did (18.73). Contrarily, what happened to Ravana and his over-bloated ahankara?

Therefore, if we are really keen on having satisfaction, we have to take shelter of God and remain there. The senses will be satisfied, the mind will be peaceful, intelligence will become wisdom and ahankara a dear friend. Ask me, who is enjoying a very satisfactory life in the shelter of my Lord.

*The writer is a spiritual teacher; Views presented are personal.*

Beyond policy: Putting mothers at the heart of child care

Sumanta Kar

When we discuss how we can better support vulnerable children, the conversation often centres on policy and infrastructure. While those are necessary, they are only the skeleton of a solution. The heart of any child care system, the part that actually brings it to life, is the mother. In our country, we have a long and beautiful tradition where the family is the foundation of everything.

For a child who has lost that foundation, the world becomes a loud and terrifying place. You cannot fix that with a dormitory or a rotating shift of staff. You fix it with a person who stays. In these cases, a foster mother who provides a strong and caring presence is the only thing that can truly make a difference in their lives.

A mother is a representative of stable relationships. She provides a protective setting where a child does not just exist but has a real opportunity for holistic development. It is through her that a child learns to trust again.

This is not just about basic caregiving. It is about the security, love, and stability that every human being needs to survive. One of the most incredible things to witness is how a mother builds resilience in her children through her own inner power. She does not just shield them from the world. She prepares them for it. She plays the role of a teacher, a friend, and a mentor all at once. By building a close and individual relationship with each of her children, she creates a caring family environment where they feel safe enough to take risks.

She is the one who encourages participation and confidence, helping a child find their own voice. She acts as a guide to ensure they have every opportunity to thrive rather than just get by. She is always ready to go the extra mile, often sacrificing her own comfort for the well-being of her children. There is simply no substitute for a mother. For children who have faced the hardship of being alone, the role of motherhood becomes even more crucial.



They do not just need a roof. They need a parent who is ready to sit by the bed at three in the morning or celebrate a small victory at school.

What makes this bond so powerful is that she is not just fulfilling a duty. She is enjoying the journey of mother-

hood herself. This mutual joy is what transforms a house into a home. It is in the quiet moments like shared meals, evening talks, bedtime stories and a steady presence that a child's trauma begins to soften and their potential begins to bloom. Let us recog-

nise that for a vulnerable child, a mother is not just a part of their life.

A mother can transform a childhood memory into a happy memory, transforming children into self-reliant individuals and ensuring they grow up with the strong bonds to become their strongest selves. If we want to raise a generation of healthy and confident citizens, we must ensure that the mother remains the heartbeat of our care systems.

If we cannot provide a child with a hand to hold and a heart to lean on, are we really giving them a future or are we just providing a place to stay?

If we really want to honour mothers and give her the rightful place, we should remember that the greatest gift society can offer a vulnerable child is not merely protection but belonging. Policies, funding and institutions are indispensable, yet they achieve their true purpose only when they create space for loving human relationships. A child who has experienced loss does not simply need food, education and healthcare. They need

someone who knows their fears, celebrates their milestones, comforts them after failure and believes in their potential even when they cannot believe in themselves.

That unwavering presence is what a mother, whether biological, adoptive or foster, uniquely provides. The strength of a nation is ultimately measured not by the size of its institutions but by the quality of care it extends to its most vulnerable citizens. By nurturing children with love, stability and emotional security, mothers help shape resilient, compassionate and self-reliant individuals who go on to strengthen society in return.

Investing in motherhood within child care is therefore not an act of charity; it is an investment in the country's future. If we aspire to build a compassionate and confident India, we must place mothers at the centre of every child welfare system, ensuring that every child grows up not merely with a roof overhead, but with a hand to hold, a heart to trust and a family to call their own.