

PARSI COMMUNITY OF INDIA

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Has it ever been heard that a member of the Parsi community is or has been involved in a violent incident of rioting or in any manner of terrorist related violence in India? They are a minuscule of a minority community in India. Has this never occurred to anyone as to how or why it is so? Well, the most significant fact which comes to notice is that the Parsi community **has no leaders who have sponsors abroad** or in any political party in INDIA. They are a community which has been and is making its contribution to the national good in many ways through their whole-hearted participation in all major areas of national endeavors and at the same time they invest a great deal of effort and time to the welfare of their own community, i.e. they have an attitude that is known as enlightened self-interest.

Every incident of such violence only involves members of those communities some of whose selected leaders have sponsors abroad or amongst the political parties in the country. These foreign sponsors are to the north, east and west of India and also amongst political parties and some business houses who control the mass media inside the country. They are known to most of the important people in authority in India as well as to such leaders of all the communities involved in such incidents of violence. Apparently, all that happens suits all such leaders because such incidents of violence please their sponsors who are the first ones to condemn them after each incident. Any invitation to these community leaders by government for a dialogue is spurned by them because it would not suit their sponsors.

What is the solution to this problem? The straight answer is "INDIA HAS TO BECOME STRONG", physically, intellectually and spiritually. Fortunately, India is strong in the last two of these areas and is growing in physical strength day by day. What will make INDIA STRONG? Concerted effort by all right-minded Indians to concentrate on only undertaking creative activities needs to be addressed. They need not waste their precious time in crab-like leg-pulling or making fun of fellow Indians, who may be trying to be creative. The rest may be left to Yogeshwar Vasudev Shri Krishna whose message of the Bhagwad-Gita is for the entire humanity. The prominent feature of his message is 'To action alone hast thou a right, not at all to the fruits thereof. Let not fruits of action be thy motive, neither let there be in thee any attachment to inaction'. Those having faith in the Guru, Lord Jesus Christ or Allah or Ahur Mazda or any other name representing the Divine may leave the results of their creativity to the Divine, since we have no control over the results. There are innumerable instances in India throughout its length and breadth where examples of people engaged in fundamental creativity can be seen to be taking practical shape. The external sponsors of violence in the country must be told very clearly "HANDS OFF!!". All the leaders involved would also understand this language and would decide to withdraw inside their respective cocoons. These are difficult times and one must not lose faith in the inherent strengths of India which have enabled her to survive with dignity, continuously for the past thousands of years. If my readers are looking for some creative ideas they can find plenty of them in our website www.reacha.org

Now let us come back to the Parsi community. Why cannot other minorities adopt the ways of this community? What is the most prominent aspect of the Parsi community? It is '**Live well and let others also live well**' and this dictum seems to extend to all fields of national endeavors, with Parsis excelling in all fields. It has never been heard that any one in India has discriminated against the Parsis. They have never demanded reservation in jobs, schools, technical and other institutions, but have made their way to the top by improving their own abilities. What do the masses of other minorities gain by their selected leaders trying to propagate the falsehood that India is not safe for the minorities and that they are being discriminated against? Why don't these masses stop listening to such selected leaders? These leaders have only amassed wealth at the cost of their respective communities. The minorities who depend on their own strength of mind and heart do not need political leaders to steer the welfare of their masses. The PARSIS do not have any political godfathers, so can other minorities prosper in India without political godfathers.

Let us recollect the names of prominent Parsis in contemporary India. Bharat Ratna JRD Tata stands out as an outstanding Indian who not only was an eminent captain of industries in India, but was also the father of civil aviation, being the first Chairman of Air India International as well as the Indian Airlines. His dream of a prosperous India led him to found what has now blossomed into the Population Foundation of India dedicated to stabilization of India's population. The House of Tata's is the only industrial house in India which has adopted the Gandhian Principle of Trusteeship in its management and has adopted a stringent code of ethics for all its employees so that their conduct does not bring a bad name to their industrial house. Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw is a well known national hero whose exploits in the battlefield are already part of our folklore. Other prominent Parsis who can be named today are General Satarawala, Lt.General R.K. Nanavatty, the Indo-anglian poet Keki Daruwala, musician Pinaz Masani, astrologer Bejan Daruwala, politicians Feroze Gandhi, Minoos Masani and a host of other prominent Parsis whose names I am unable to recollect readily, not forgetting the prominent Parsis in India's history. Suffice it to say that this community has proved what an intelligent minority community can achieve in an atmosphere and environment that India makes available to all its children who care for their motherland. This is not to say that there have not been many national heroes belonging to other minority groups, but these heroes are not the ideals of those selected members of the minorities who are engaged in promoting terrorism and forced religious conversions in India. How can anyone help any minority community whose talented selected members are not hesitating to shed the blood of innocent members of other communities or are using devious means to convert people of other faiths when every citizen of India has total freedom in this regard. The flow of foreign funds for these activities is not hidden from anyone in India. These selected members of the minority communities are the agents who raise such issues as human rights of terrorists and other underground outfits in the media to divert attention of all concerned to the main problems facing the country. They choose to be conveniently oblivious of the human rights of the innocent victims of their nefarious deeds. The distinguished members of these minority communities who are in the pay of external forces have no hesitation in compromising the fundamental issues relating to the basic

welfare of the mass of their respective communities because they owe their loyalty only to their foreign sponsors. They seem to have mastered the art of manipulating the media and political leaders of their dispensation to do their bidding to come out with carefully tutored versions of current events and their fallouts. They would soon have to recognize the inherent strength of the Indian ethos which cannot be misguided indefinitely and they would be compelled by circumstances to let go of their hidden agendas and to stop their nefarious activities so that their masses do not continue to be misled by them.

It would be of interest to my distinguished readers if I were to take them back in history to trace the story of the initiation of the poison of what now-a-days passes for communalism practiced in the garb of minorityism by the ruling establishment which seems to have forgotten the mantra **“Satymaiv Jayatey”** meaning---‘Only Truth Prevails’ inscribed in the logo of the Government of India. This concern relating to minorityism is also practiced by a host of other political parties too to further their prospects in the periodic elections. Even the hated JAZIA TAX imposed by the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb on the Hindus could not provoke a violent response from the local people, but the East India Company had brought about the first communal riot in India within less than hundred years of the Battle of Plassey won by their army without firing a single canon in 1757 AD with the help of their deceitful ally Mir Jafar. This was in 1936 AD on the occasion of mourning relating to Moharram observed by the Muslims during the procession which was passing through a narrow street in a Hindu mohalla and the TAZIAS which are normally carried high above the shoulders and which are not supposed to be lowered while in the procession, happened to get obstructed. That was pretext enough to launch a massacre of Hindus in that mohalla. This was the new face of Islam in India, the WAHABI SECT who had been encouraged to practice their brand of Islam by the East India Company. That has been the story of these riots right till the now infamous GUJARAT RIOTS sparked by the gutting of a railway bogie transporting karsewaks from Ayodha in Uttar Pradesh. Pakistan as a nation has been following the tenets of this sect of Islam as their state religion since its formation and the Muslim League which was encouraged to bring about the division of India to create Pakistan was doing so before 1947 AD. It was the infamous massacre of Hindus of Bengal on 15th June 1947, the day of DIRECT ACTION, a call given by the Muslim League to force the partition of the country when the streets of the city then known as Calcutta were painted red with the blood of innocent people, which convinced even Mahatma Gandhi and Maulana Azad that partition of India was no longer avoidable. It is another story that it is the Muslims of undivided India themselves who are the biggest sufferers of the creation of Pakistan and Bangladesh. Otherwise Muslims would not have been a minority in undivided India by now.

Contemplating that eventuality, keeping in mind the state of terrorism in the name of Islam today which was actively promoted by the British since the twentieth century, would be an interesting exercise for those western powers who brought about India’s partition and who would have had to contend then, with their latest concern for tackling the global face of terrorism (earlier promoted by them only), not to mention the likely fate of the Christian minority, their latest other concern, in such an undivided India. Such are the quirks of history!! Both the minorities, Christians as well as Muslims are safe in

India today in spite of all the provocations that the foreign sponsors of selected members of their respective communities are promoting assiduously ever since India became an independent nation in 1947. In fact, India was and continues to be a paradise for all shades of minorities of all faiths as well as for all its sons and daughters on account of an unbroken tradition of inclusive ideas, religious thoughts and cultural practices going back to over 5000 years of its recorded history and springing from the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Puranas. An average Indian (I do not count the highly educated and very rich Indians as being part of the average) is naturally living the twin perceptions of '**Atmawat Sarbhuteshu**' meaning '**all living beings are like me**' and '**Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam**' meaning '**The World is a Family**'. It is India which has to give to the world an inclusive culture which she has herself practiced and which alone would help create a climate for genuine WORLD PEACE. This has to be the vision of all concerned Indians for India's role, once she becomes a WORLD POWER, the vision 2020 AD.

India longs for the Christianity of Lord Jesus Christ, whose message of love and service was adopted by Swami Vivekanand to start the Ramakrishna Mission. His Master as the Swami used to call his Guru Shri Ramakrishnadev had described Christ as Krishna Chetna and had himself done his sadhana as a devout Christian also. The intensity of missionary activity in India during the last 200 years can be gauged by the fact that as early as by 1820 AD the Holy Bible had been translated into 27 Indian languages. Even the Indian Constitution framed in 1950 has only 16 languages which have been scheduled. The poor of India are not starving to avail Christian charity but need assistance to stand on their own feet while keeping intact their self-esteem. The Christian charity of the missionaries would have them eat out of their hands for ever to make them dependant, in return for converting them to their faith. Here lies the rub; this attitude is what sows the seeds of conflict; this is how misrepresentation of Hindu deities and subterfuges of various kinds generates violence attributed to the Hindus of the area concerned. Even Mahatma Gandhi had cautioned the missionaries of various faiths of his day regarding their techniques. The Methodist Bishop Fischer of USA who had invited Mahatma Gandhi after the Round Table Conference in London in 1931 AD (which invitation the Mahatma declined due to pressing calls from India) and who was later to marry the lady who became famous as Mrs. Welthy Fischer for her work in India in the field of adult literacy, gave up his church on the issue of conversions in India. The Bishop contended that India was a country where people were naturally religious and don't need to be converted. This was also the view of the German Philosopher Max Muller who contended that the missionaries in India need to understand that India was not the same as the African Continent because people here are instinctively religious philosophers.

Similarly, India longs for the Islam of the Prophet Hazrat Mohammed, as brought by the Sufi saints Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia and his disciple Amir Khusro and later carried forward by Sheikh Farid and his disciple Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti of Ajmer right till the time of Aurangzeb. While the deposed President of Pakistan, Mian Musharraf was prompt to offer a chadder at the Muslim Shrine, the Dargah of Khwaza of Ajmer when he came to India to attend the Indo-Pak conference at Agra on Prime Minister Vajpai's invitation, he had no qualms in regard to the cross-border militancy that he had sponsored like all his predecessors as a proxy war against India, at the behest of his patron ally the

USA who had played an active role in enabling Pakistan to acquire a nuclear arsenal enough to destroy all the cities of India. It was the same USA which decided to befriend China in the decade of seventies of the last millennium, when Henry Kissinger was actively engaged in scheming on how to encircle India. I am sure my readers would be a little wiser by now as to who all are behind the mayhem that takes place periodically in India when serial blasts or Naxalite or ULFA related underground activities take place all over India killing innocent people, and the government of the day pledged to “SATYAMAIV JAYATEY” continues to be a silent spectator, and only confines itself to condemning the violent incidents from the highest quarters and announcing cash compensations which are seldom disbursed to their real victims. I feel a further peep into India’s history would be of interest to my readers who must be wondering that, after all from when and where did the story of India’s misfortunes begin.

Dealing with this matter chronologically backward I must take my readers to the times of Mughal Emperor Akbar who made a determined effort as an article of state policy known by the name of “SULAHKUL” to bridge the Hindu-Muslim divide perceived to be the most pernicious of divides in India right up to the present times, since the arrival of Islam in this country in the seventh century AD initially and later in strength in the eleventh and twelfth centuries AD. It may be of interest to know that it was in the reign of Akbar that Hindi as a link language of India came into its own in addition to flowering as a language of literature to which both Hindus and Muslims and still later, the Sikh Gurus made valuable contributions. Akbar’s favorite Subedar Abdur-Rahim-Khankhana who was a close friend of Goswami Tulsidas had described the famous literary creation of the latter, based on the life of Lord Ram and known by the name of Ramcharitmanas as equivalent to the Vedas of the Hindus and the Koran Sharif of the Muslims. Right to the present days the illiterate folk both Hindus and Muslims of east UP sing the verses of Ramacharitmanas while going about their daily chores nonchalantly. One would like to know the fate of the grave of Abdur-Rahim-Khankhana in old Delhi today. It is neglected with no one to care for it, not even the Archeological Survey of India under the government of India which is supposed to look after such historical monuments of the Mughal period. Why is it so? The self-styled leaders of Muslims in India right since the days of Emperor Akbar have not forgiven Rahim for his alleged blasphemy by calling Ramcharitmanas as equivalent to the Koran Sharif.

Such has been the intolerance of the so-called leaders of this minority community after Akbar the Great. All the successors of Emperor Akbar not only reversed his policy of “SULAHKUL” but even adopted a policy of persecution of the Hindus of the day. The persecution of the Sikh Gurus who were initially only propagating harmony amongst all faiths was carried to such an extent that by the time of the Tenth Guru Govind Singh Sikhism had become the KHALSA which was dedicated to defend the faith of the faithful by violent means if necessary. It was the first war of independence in 1857 AD that for the last time the Hindu-Muslim divide was forgotten under the leadership of the last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah ‘Zafar’ when all the people of India were united to fight the forces of East India Company. Even a formula for resolving the Ram Mandir dispute of Ayodhya was hammered out by an agreement for handing over the whole complex to the Hindus after the conflict was to be over. That was not to be. The first war of

independence was lost and Bahadur Shah 'Zafar' was banished to die in captivity in Rangoon in the then Burma in the Mandalay prison. The British saw to it that the Ayodhya dispute would continue to fester by not allowing the agreement to go through.

The story after that is almost contemporary history. India became an independent nation dedicated to secularism in 1947 AD, though in the process it suffered vivisection which is now regretted by the Muslims in India. My complaint against the Muslim leaders who bravely decided to stay back with India is- 'Why did they not do enough to mainstream the psyche of the Muslim masses when the going was good and India was being led by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru for 17 years after 1947?' Panditji was a staunch secularist and was an undisputed leader of India in whom Muslim masses had implicit faith. Even in the time of Pandit Nehru Shri Ram Manohar Lohia, a prominent socialist politician and a firm adherent of the policy of secularism, had asked Panditji to issue a statement that India will not tolerate any mischief from a small section of Muslim leadership with links with some countries in the Middle East, which was still busy in their divisive game, a game which had earlier created Pakistan; and Pandit Nehru did do so, but it appears that the same was not followed up seriously enough by the majority of Muslim leadership which was with the ruling Congress party. The result is what we see today in India, with this small minority of Muslims who have the slogan 'Lar ke liya Pakistan-Lar ke lenge Hindustan' on their lips, which small minority then leads the Muslim vote-bank by the nose. It is only the Muslim clerics of the Bareilly School who have since disowned the extremist Wahabi sect of Islam. The Taliban claim their allegiance to Darul-Ul-Uloom of Deoband (in Saharanpur district of UP) though Deoband now denies this for obvious reasons. So the hard-core of Muslim clerics are still wedded to the Wahabi extremist sect in India and this mindset continues to hanker for the reign of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb as their role model; they support the terrorist activities of their lunatic fringe while outwardly denouncing the same and at the same time utilize the unsavory fallouts of such terrorist attacks to further their separatist designs. This is from where the foreign sponsors of terrorism and the Muslim leadership of the day pick up their inspirations from time to time and the major political parties banking on Muslim votes fall in line. They would have to change their attitude if peace has to return.

There is no political solution to this problem in sight now, so terribly are the issues mixed up with petty power politics where capturing power any how is the order of the day. Those in power want to make as much money while in power and their sole objective is to save for the rainy day, for they have no hope of winning the next elections. Those out of power are busy scheming their moves to come to power. The politicians of the day have no stomach for reforms, political, electoral or administrative. People are fast losing faith in the politicians. The only solution lies in what I have hinted already in the suggestions made in the earlier paragraphs of this article i.e. adopting a corrective and creative process by which the best elements of all concerned groups including all the minorities, begin to get together in a nationwide effort to give the right social values to the younger generation which is still free from the weight of past history. This is going to be a long and tortuous process for which honest efforts would have to be made by all concerned in a spirit of genuine camaraderie. The cream of Indian genius, which is on the verge of retirement or has retired from their active carrier-oriented lives in the recent

past, need to put their heads together, for they have the time as well as energy enough to pull India out of the morass in which our politicians have landed her during the last 60 years. This they must do for the sake of their next generation, which would not forgive them if they fail to do so **RIGHT NOW**.