New Delhi's Two-sided New Initiative All Military Solutions Have Lost Relevance Today 21st Century Calls For A Conciliatory Wayout

(I) New Delhi's Two-Pronged Unilateral Initiative

New Delhi's invitation to Abbas Ansari led Hurriyat Conference to come to the negotiation table for a dialogue on the vexed Jammu-Kashmir question, on the one hand, and its offer to hold talks with Islamabad on a 12-point Agenda, on the other, are welcome moves. But they are unlikely to go very far.

Firstly, no ground work has been done with regard to any of the two proposals. New Delhi has not made even a preliminary probe to know the position of any of the two sides concerned. Thus, the proposals are only based on New Delhi's subjective desire or a diplomatic need. No serious proposal warrants such a style.

Secondly, the proposal to Ansari led Hurriyat for talks on Jammu-Kashmir problem is made up of an old stuff with a new (2003) label. It puts forth the same oft-repeated two basic pre-conditions which have earlier been addressed to all those groups who previously had the occasion to enter into a dialogue with New Delhi. That is: (a) the talks will be within the framework of the unity and integrity of Indian Union, and (b) will focus only on the question of autonomy or the decentralisation of power from the centre to the state These very preconditions have also formed the reference points of the recently New Delhi nominated two interlocutors on Jammu-Kashmir—K.C. Pant and N.N. Vohra—who were then boycotted by the Hurriyat Conference.

Thirdly, it further complicates its conditional proposal by combining it with an unrealistic and sectarian style which extends invitation to only one group of the Hurriyat Conference, while ignoring the other, i.e., the one led by Geelani. Besides, it also neglects the high profile Central Command Council of the militants.

As regard New Delhi's proposal relating to Pakistan, it totally leaves out Jammu-Kashmir problem from its list of business, knowing fully well that Pakistan, which characterises Jammu-Kashmir as its jugular vein, will and can, not afford to talk on the question of normalisation of relations with India unless Jammu-Kashmir question also forms part of their negotiations agenda.

Thus, New Delhi's two-sided initiative lacks a rational and viable basis and is not likely to break much ice.

The reason behind such a unilateral or conditional proposal generally rests with the might and power-oriented outlook.

(II) Why A Military-Centric Solution Has Become Unviable Today

The answer to the above question comes form the newly emerged facts of our times. The first fact is represented by the existing environment-human crisis (generated by the existing corporate system) wherein all environmental resources are rapidly getting depleted due to their misuse and overuse, on the one hand, and the human resources are being impoverished (both mentally and physically) through social evils, like inequality, poverty, deprivation etc., on the other. The environment-human crisis is so serious that unless the whole human community stands as one person to confront this danger, the above-stated threat cannot be combated. Obviously, such a dangerously gigantic crisis demands the stopping of all sorts of human conflicts in order to unitedly face the fatal challenge.

The other fact is expressed by the newly-emerged process of globalisation that has turned our planet earth into one unit (both mentally and physically) due to the development of human mental inter-action at the speed of light and the physical mutual connection at the supersonic speed. The

unprecedented human mental and physical action-reaction has integrated the varying nation-states into inter-dependent units and thus forming a loose and vague type of single social formation. This new development has immediately been seized upon by the leaders of the existing world corporate system (mostly comprising the ruling circles of developed countries in general and the US in particular) to extend and tighten their grip over the world human and material-environmental means and to increase their financial wealth at the highest possible speed.

The newly acquired global character of all corporate processes, mainly the wealth generating activities, like trade, capital investment and circulation, technology transfers etc., has even forced the corporate rulers not to resort to military adventures and thus disturb the process of corporate profit maximising. Thus, the phenomenon of military solution has become illogical even under the present war-prone corporate system. This anti-war trend is quite visible from all ongoing armed conflicts, especially the 'perpetual war' pursued under the leadership of George W. Bush (the chief leader of the existing corporate order) which has not only harmed the US cause but also led to the creation of a more dangerous, insecure and unstable world.

(III) A Just Proposal For Resolving Jammu-Kashmir Problem

The foregoing account clearly points out that, in the newly-emerged world scenario, the only wayout for every conflict, including Jammu-Kashmir, lies in taking the peaceful or conciliatory route and shunning the confrontationist way for good. Hence, the present occasion is a suitable time for starting a dialogue on the issue of Jammu-Kashmir between the three related parties, that is, India, Pakistan and Jammu-Kashmir people. The opening, whether bilateral or trilateral, may be decided by the two big parties, India and Pakistan.

The responsibility to initiate the peace process morally falls on New Delhi, having been the main party in the dispute. Here, a three fold initiative taken by New Delhi—that is, to declare a unilateral ceasefire for some months; reduce the level of violence and human rights violations in the state; and sanction additional funds for the development of Jammu-Kashmir—may help in breaking the log-jam between the parties concerned.

The cause of peace demands that the three parties concerned (i.e., India, Pakistan and Jammu-Kashmir people) should undergo a serious review of their respective standpoints and policies which have brought heavy losses to them and terrible suffering to Jammu-Kashmir people, especially the Kashmiris. Giving up the 1947-perspective of getting the whole of Jammu-Kashmir for their respective units, they should now adopt a Nature-Human Centric viewpoint that enjoins upon them to establish a partnership between India, Pakistan and Jammu-Kashmir people. India should prepare itself to abandon its rigid position, which holds Jammu-Kashmir as an integral part of India, while Pakistan should get ready to give up its traditional slogan of getting the problem resolved on the basis of 1948-49 UN resolutions. The Jammu-Kashmir people should adjust themselves to the reality that Jammu-Kashmir is a multi-ethnic unit in which no single ethnic community enjoys an absolute majority and hence the slogans of self-determination and plebiscite have no relevance in this case. All should prepare themselves for a collective answer to Jammu-Kashmir tangle. A change in the respective mindsets of the three parties concerned can work wonders for South Asia and consequently the world.

The cause of peace further demands the underlining of the three-fold social truth—that is, (a) the people of India, Pakistan and Jammu-Kashmir are historically one people, with a common genetic code and ancestry and speak the same languages and follow the same culture, habits, norms and forms; (b) In the present era, they are despite having been two nations, confronted with similar problems, that is, the criminalisation of politics, violation of the rule of law, miscarriage of justice, increasing crime, lawlessness and violence, back-breaking corruption, inequality, poverty, unemployment, houselessness, degenerating cultural norms, worsening environmental resources, like air and water pollution, decreasing availability of drinking water, land degradation, deforestation, threat to bio-diversity etc.; even in this scientific age, India and Pakistan remain among the poorest countries of the world and, financially, both are in ruins whose fiscal deficits have risen to mounting proportions; (c) Now they have entered the phase of a common future with SAARC as their newly-emerging social identity.

Taking into account the above facts, it can be seen that a just and realistic solution to Jammu-Kashmir problem resides in a formula that reconciles the interests of all parties concerned. In our opinion, the following three-point proposal well serves the aspirations and interests of the three parties, that is, India, Pakistan and Jammu-Kashmir along with the world community.

(a) The respective national aspirations and interests of India and Pakistan be balanced by jointly entrusting to them Jammu-Kashmir's sovereignty in the constitutional form of Indo-Pak condominium in regard to Jammu-Kashmir's defence and foreign affairs.

(b) The regional aspirations and interests of Jammu-Kashmir's people, especially Kashmiris, be met by constitutionally accepting Jammu-Kashmir as an independent state, enjoying sovereign power in all matters, except defence and foreign affairs.

(c) The ethnic aspirations and interests of Jammu-Kashmir's different ethno-regional communities be accommodated by giving maximum possible constitutional autonomy to each of them. Jammu-Kashmir state level matters may include: the Head of State, High Court, Election Commission, Human Development Commission, Environmental Commission, Planning Commission etc.

Apart from satisfying the ethnic, regional and global urges of the three parties concerned, the above formula further offers the former (that is, the three parties concerned) and the world human community new development prospects. It delivers to them in many other ways. It suits the world community by defusing one of the most dangerous global flash-points. It benefits the South Asian community by removing the blockades to its socio-economic development, common market, a joint defence, etc.

It further serves India, Pakistan and the people of Jammu-Kashmir by making them equal partners in economic development in which each India and Pakistan provides an equal amount of finance, while Jammu-Kashmir state contributes its share in the form of natural resources. Also, Jammu-Kashmir people get additional advantage by virtue of their becoming the citizen of the two countries and obtaining the facility of trading with them. 07-11-2003