

MODI'S SURGICAL STRIKES BEAR RESEMBLANCE TO A GAME OF KABADDI

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Narendra Modi's record in office being quite pathetic and people having neither forgotten nor forgiven him for the economic mess that he created with his 'demonetisation' that caused havoc in the economy and destroyed livelihoods, it is hardly surprising that he has fallen back on faux nationalism as the cornerstone of his poll campaign.

Modi has been pining from 'day one' for a hallowed pedestal in India's history and the single puerile act of Demonetisation ensured that he gets a slot, next to the reckless Muhammad Bin Tughlaq. His hastily implemented GST that he announced at midnight in Parliament in cheap imitation of Pandit Nehru's Tryst with Destiny speech harassed an entire nation for months and years. This half-baked GST and the mindless Demonetisation caused growth to nosedive to such abysmally low levels that he had to let loose his ever-obliging coterie of economists and crafty mandarins to invent new and extremely doubtful new rules of growth measurement.

Job creation has hit the lowest level ever in 45 years and the spate of crude fudging and inventive apologia have failed to cover up the disaster. He is, therefore, pining to display his questionable machismo to deviate public attention from this messed-up reality and we have not even mentioned his failures to deal with agriculture, education, scientific research and many other spheres. In this crisis, the tragic attack at a convoy of para-military forces at Pulwama on the 14th of February that killed close to 50 CRPF jawans was a 'gift' to him from Jaish, as former RA&W chief AS Dulat has said, and the Indian Kashmiri suicide bomber was unbelievably 'made-to-order' for Modi.

As it shook the shocked nation, Modi resorted to his theatrical call to war — “we shall avenge!” and calculated hysterical outbursts like #EndPakistan and #IndiaWantsRevenge rent the air. No discussion took place on who was responsible for this terrible security lapse and hysteria was just synchronised on the media, fed obviously by a Machiavellian establishment. It almost coaxed the great leader to strike back, which he did on the 26th of February at Balakot in Pakistan — a 1.5 days’ war that is in keeping up with India’s great indigenous sport called Kabaddi.

Everything was over in a flash as the genuflecting media announced that an important target within Pakistan had been hit by the Indian Air Force and that 250 or even 300 Pakistanis had been killed. The government smirked in silence and the Air Force refused to give any number, even on repeated questioning.

It was clear that Modi’s regime had outsourced the whipping up of frenzy to a new breed of ever-obliging media. It accused everyone else of not being patriotic enough and branding these who raised common sense questions as anti-nationals. This was most surely the first private public partnership (PPP) of propaganda. The idea was to stun a disturbed nation with calculated overdoses of Goebbelsian fake news and freshly-brewed series of blood-curling hatred.

A game of Kabaddi

A word about Kabaddi — as the hit and run, zip-zap-boom ‘war’ at Balakot is best described. This sole-surviving indigenous game of India and Pakistan, Kabaddi, incidentally, outlasted the domineering colonial sports like football, cricket, hockey, tennis and the lot. Indians and Pakistanis love this very exciting game for the surge of blood that it pumps up and drops, both rather dramatically.

Under the rules, a lone attacker sneaks into ‘enemy territory’ with some aggressive choo-choo sounds and his mission is to simply touch any one of the

players on that side — which then knocks the ‘hit’ person off from the game. The defending side is equally alert and its objective is to entice the attacker deeper into their territory and then grab the raider and pin him down.

It is all over in a flicker, with a lot of sound and fury on both sides, just as the Balakot skirmish was, where an Indian Air Force officer landed in Pakistan and was pinned down. Both sides enjoy that feverish excitement but, unlike Kabaddi, no one could really make out who won at Balakot — as both sides screamed that victory was theirs.

We need to understand that the extreme fundamentalists and the army who monopolise Pakistani politics and dominate society are indeed most benefitted by Modi’s regime. Its pronounced anti-Muslim acts and its calculated ambivalence to the recurring lynching of Muslims heats up a larger section of the Pakistani people, that then supports both terrorism and an anti-democratic polity.

The Pakistani Military-Mullah establishment just love every excess that the India regime indulge in and its uncontrollable paroxysms of anti-Kashmiri detestation, as these provoke reciprocal hatred for India, which strengthens the Pakistani establishment.

The poison that Zia-ul-Haq injected into the body of Pakistan in the 1970s was deeply regretted by secular and democracy-loving Indians until the present Indian government arrived, to match villainy with villainy.

Bitterness, hatred and war help only demented megalomaniacs on both sides and jumping the gun after Pulwama is exactly what the international conspirators desired. Modi appeared just too glad to oblige. It helped him foment dangerous ultra-nationalism on which he feeds, and gave him an opportunity to indulge in demagoguery, the only thing he has mastered.

The war option, however, ran out of steam obviously because it was much too dangerous for the world to permit two nuclear nations to slug it out. Modi soon realised that he would not be permitted to escalate his 'war' beyond a 1.5 day Kabaddi match as China would just not permit its ally, Pakistan, to be hit, beyond this token gesture. Russia was certainly not willing to have either America or China gaining from a war in its backyard. Even Trump must have displayed rare bouts of sense and must have conveyed that he would surely intervene, most forcefully.

Let us remember that Indira Gandhi had to convince every important world leader over several months to obtain their 'no objection' before she sent the Indian army into East Pakistan in 1971. Even so, the US Seventh Fleet came perilously close to intervention but she won the game of nerves.

Modi's constant anti-minority terror techniques and his crackdown on Kashmiri Muslims have worried every important foreign leader, his embarrassing bear-hugs notwithstanding. All, except Israel's Netanyahu — who, anyway, has blood on his hands and is charged for taking bribes. War was soon realised as a non-option and even imagined machismo that followed in lieu has its own limitations.

We need to remember that, under the circumstances, one more option always exists and this is communal riot — that invariably polarise voters.

It must not be allowed to happen suddenly, as it did in Gujarat in 2002 or in Muzaffarnagar in 2013. Well over a thousand people were killed in 2002 but till now no big leader could be fixed for inciting pogroms or for abetting the killers. This frightening option of communal riots is never closed in India and we need to remain on alert.