

BOOK REVIEW

Miseries of people have not ended

The book is divided into British era and post British India, with the authors passionately debating that not much has changed since the transition of power



MUBASHIR RASOOL BHAT

Seikh Saadi warned, "Beware the build-up of an inward wound, for it will at last burst; Avoid while you can, distress to one heart, for a single moan can quake the earth."

The book "At War: Four Pillars of Falsehood and Public of Republic" is a never before expose of the prevailing status quo, the inherent colonial legacy. The authors Aridaman Jit Singh and Nayani Singh makes a bold assertion by suggesting that India in real essence never attained freedom from Britain, but covertly transferred the ownership from autocratic British to the colonial pimps.

The term "colonial pimps" is freely used throughout the book to relate to the stalwarts of the freedom movement like Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, and Indian National Congress (INC).

The authors provides food for thought when they dig into the past of Pt. Nehru and MK Gandhi, lays bare the historical narrative and provides conclusive proof with regards to them having been on the side of the British all through the enactment of the freedom struggle circus.

Reader's discretion advised; be prepared to gasp, as the gory truths about deceit and manipulations are let loose in the public domain with undeniable facts.

Gandhi's 'Kaiser-e-Hind' Award for smearing the revolution in South Africa, how Nehru's came to the fore, and how revolutionaries like Baghat Singh et al, their supreme sacrifices were never owned will keep the readers glued to the book.

This well documented and precisely written piece of scholarship is divided into British era and post British India, with the authors passionately debating that not much has changed since the transition of power.

The authors wish to tell the audience that the transition of power from the British crown was to India and not to Bharat. The Bharat suffered under the oppressive regime of East India Company and it continues to do so under the autocratic representatives of the Queen, conciliatory class of intermediaries of INC and Muslim League.

The miseries of the people have not ended, with change of flags and guard. Colonies don't cease to be colonies by getting independence of the sort India achieved.

"At War: Four Pillars of Falsehood and Public of Republic" is a story of betrayal of the gullible Indian population since the dawn of the end of colonial oppression. Empowered with dubious colonial laws and equally ambiguous and indeterminate constitution, that was described as "Waste Paper" by some of the saner souls of the constituent assembly, the country has continued the solemn traditions of the extortionist colonial statecraft; all the while projecting itself as world's largest democracy.

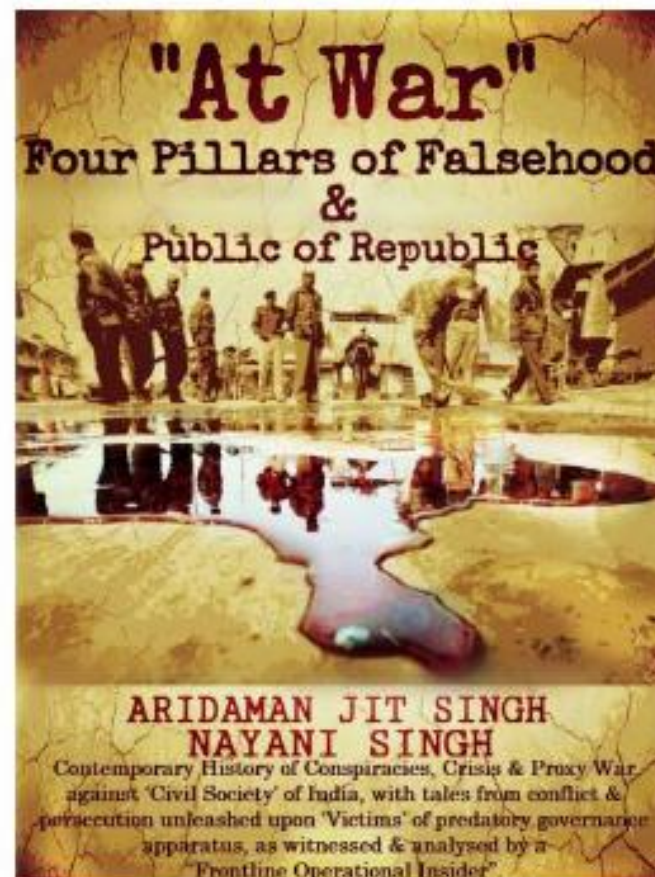
The authors write that executive, judiciary, legislature and press have achieved exactly opposite of what they want us to believe they stand for.

The hypocrisy of the icons of freedom struggle often comes to the fore as the authors unfold the ambivalence and posturing of their whims. The judiciary which Nehru refused to be tried under in 1921, declared it farce, is the same he preferred when "tryst with destiny" speech was belted.

The authors further write that "India awakens to freedom" was a deception galore to lull people into incomprehension. On a lighter note, the authors wants us to know that when the "India awakens to freedom" speech being broadcasted, the only people sleeping were the people of India as it was around midnight and vast majority of rural hardworking Indians were having the much deserved rest.

The authors say that the only people who were awake were the people of England along with their Queen.

The book gives a vivid description of how the state machinery inherited from the British was unleashed on people as a source of oppression and it continues to be so. Exploitative taxation under Raj continues in one form or another, pillars of democracy refuse to hold state machinery answerable on account of crimes perpetrated against the average Indian, the executive, the judiciary, the legislature and the press is nothing but



Book: At War: Four Pillars of Falsehood and Public of Republic

Hardcover: 246 pages

Publisher: Nishan Publisher;

First Edition Edition (2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 8193011902

ISBN-13: 978-8193011904

the knight in shining armour.

The authors have also called the Indian constitution as the "Law of the Lawlessness."

One of authors has served in security apparatus of India and was deputed as operational commanders on internal security duty to Punjab, where the Khalistan movement had spread its tentacles and engulfed the whole region.

He articulates the case study where he had his fingers on the pulse with pure rationale and hard hitting facts. The situation in Punjab was exaggerated to satisfy the whims and desires of the ruling elite.

The author writes that the drama was enacted with the state machinery empowered with colonial laws that gave forces the absolute impunity. Hence an era where people could be held without trial, access to lawyers, enforced disappearance, fake encounters, laws like Armed Forces (Special Powers) Acts (AFSPA), Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA), and Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA) ushered in galore. A glaring conspicuous and telling insight is provided when the book discusses how appointments to the offices of highest prominence are carried out. The appointments of President, Governors of the states, and other top ranking officials within the security apparatus are merely tools of the central government to rob people of civil sovereignty dodgy ordinances are passed left, right and centre to execute the gory will of the state against the citizenry.

In conclusion, it would be apt to say that the independence of India has not yet seen its dawn, the same draconian colonial abyss prevails; the political movements of the past that claimed to have worked for the people of India have in reality never reflected the true aspirations of people.

In retrospect, it has become all the more imperative that we hold these corridors of power accountable to their vicious agendas against the very people they claim to represent.

The concept of modern day nationalism has come to blind and divide rather than to enlighten and unite. It is this modern day Frankenstein what Oscar Wilde referred to as "vicious".

The state does what it has to that is to safeguard the territorial integrity and it does so in the garb of democracy.

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Marginalization of Zaskar must end



CHHEWANG DORJE

The much awaited Zojila Pass, which connects Ladakh with rest of the world, was reopened this year on May 28, nearly after five months. Zojila Pass, the lifeline of Ladakh, usually remains closed for nearly half the year in winter owing to heavy snowfall and avalanches. However, as soon as the road opens it brings smile on people's face in both Kargil and Leh. Apart from essential commodities, it brings along a sense of freedom for the people. But little does it change anything in the Zaskar valley.

Zaskar is a sub-district of Kargil district. It is at a distance of 235 kilometres away from Kargil town. Zaskar valley is one of the most remote valleys of the region. It is connected with the rest of world by only a single motorable road that is Kargil-Zaskar road. This road which passes through the Penzila Pass remains closed for seven to eight months every year due to heavy snowfall. Life comes nearly to a standstill as the entire valley remains snow-covered all through the winters, thus geographically isolated from the rest. Winter in Zaskar is very harsh as it witnesses more snowfall than other regions of Ladakh. During these harsh winter months, Zaskar becomes inaccessible with shortage of basic essential commodities. People here fight hard to survive during harsh winters.

Kargil-Zaskar road remains open for only four to five months. Even then it takes almost 11 hours to travel by bus from Kargil, while Srinagar to Kargil and Kargil to Leh which are at a distance of 205 kms and 230 kms respectively, takes only six and four hours respectively. The reason is that the Kargil-Zaskar road is rough and treacherous. It is been badly neglected by the district and state administration. It still remains unsafe and dangerous to travel.

The Zojila Pass, however, remains in news more often. People create a noise when it gets closed early and opens late. Recently, the Ministry of Transport and Highways sanctioned 10,000 Crore and announced for building tunnel at Zojila pass to provide all-weather connectivity to people in Ladakh

region. Needless, to say that every year the political leaders and high level bureaucrats visit there to take stock of the situation, so as to make sure that the road gets close late in winter and opens early in spring.

This year, for example, the Deputy Commissioner Kargil, and several other political leaders from all spectrum visited the Zojila Pass with their cavalcade and media agencies. The Chief Executive Councilor (CEC) of Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) Kargil, himself flew to Srinagar via Leh and travelled back from Srinagar to Kargil on the very first day of its opening along with several hundred passenger vehicles.

But no one from the authorities, be it political leaders or bureaucrats, have so far visited the Penzila Pass which is still closed since early November last year. There is still no sufficient workforce and sophisticated machines in place to clear the heavy snowfall covering the roads. This clearly speaks of their apathy towards Zaskar.

This indifference towards Zaskar valley from both the state and the district has a long history. After being integrated into Jammu Kashmir in 1947, Zaskar was one among other regions in Ladakh to be declared restricted areas and was only opened to foreigners in 1974. It was in 1979 that the only road in Zaskar was built to connect Padum with its headquarter Kargil.

Zaskar has great potential to emerge as one of the finest tourist destination, but due to lack of proper infrastructure, better road connectivity and improved digital connectivity many of the tourists divert their visit to other places.

However, the long sought demand by the people of Zaskar for the speedy completion of Nimo-Padum-Darcha road has never been fulfilled and remains far from its completion. This road, if materialised, would be a safe and quick alternative route for the lone Srinagar-Kargil-Leh route. But unfortunately the continuous negligence by the authorities has kept the completion of this road at bay. Most importantly, this road is imperative to end the despair of the people of Zaskar.

Communication during winter still remains a far distant dream in Zaskar. During peak winter months when all access to Zaskar is closed, the frozen Zaskar River remains the only access route. People travel along the Zaskar River when the ice freezes. This walk through the frozen river is traditionally known as "Chadar Trek" or the frozen sheet to travel in and out from Zaskar to Nimmo in Leh.

Many families from Zaskar valley are forced to walk 45 miles to the nearest hospital in minus 35 to give birth to a child, to buy necessary food items, or to admit their children in schools outside of Zaskar. All this requires is to walk on foot on the frozen Zaskar River, at an altitude of 11,123 ft for eight hours.

For the distressed people of Zaskar this journey is no less than a nightmare. The ailing and critical patients in need of emergency treatment travel through it at a risk for life. Many people have had lost their lives while braving to complete this journey. Thus the suffering and misery of inaccessibility continues to harm the people of Zaskar to this date.

Moreover, the people of Zaskar have no say in their political matters and their grievances are hardly represented anywhere in the political discussions. The pseudo representation of Zaskar in Jammu Kashmir Assembly is clear from the fact that the demarcation of the so called "Zaskar Assembly Constituency" is such that never had in the long political history a person from Zaskar has won and represented the constituency.

It is because several of the villages have been added to the Zaskar assembly constituency from Suru valley, which deprive the candidate from Zaskar from winning the elections. Along with this, Rangdum which is a village in Zaskar has been included in the Kargil Assembly constituency. This gerrymandering of the assembly constituency structurally disenfranchise the whole population of Zaskar from democratic representation process and further marginalise them in the decision making process.

Moreover, the political discourse in Kargil district gets almost no say from Zaskar. As a result, the people of Zaskar feel deprived and alienated so much so that on a social media platform a campaign is being run on a page demanding "Zaskar Demands District and Separate Assembly Seat" with several hundred people following. The page constantly highlights the discrimination and negligence of the people of Zaskar and aims to end the political alienation of Zaskar. This campaign should become an eye opener for both the Centre and the State government to address the concerns and issues towards Zaskar and its people. This apathy and continuous discrimination towards Zaskar must come to an end.

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FEEDBACK

Veterinary profession is facing new challenges



DR. MUJEEB FAZILI

This refers to the write up entitled "Human Liver Fluke: A wakeup call" by Dr. Zubair Ahmad War that appeared in Rising Kashmir on May 03, 2016.

It is true that the veterinarians are primarily supposed to concentrate on animal production (breeding, feeding, heeding and weeding), disease diagnosis, treatment and prevention without ignoring animal welfare. While taking care of animals and birds, they continue to play a significant role in human health.

Author deserves applause for highlighting in an impressive way the major fields where vets strive for human health. In the following few lines I wish to add some details and mention more fields of working. In the Veterinary schools, all the new entrants mandatorily take the Veterinarian's Oath during their fresher's day celebrations.

In presence of their mentors and teachers they "solemnly swear to use their scientific knowledge and skills for the benefit of society" as a lifelong obligation. Thus all their activities as future professionals at fundamental level are directed towards human health.

Veterinarians have always dedicated themselves to the discipline of the comparative medicine. Use of animal models of human and animal disease in translational and biomedical research has revolutionised the health sector. Bernhard Lauritz Frederik Bang, Peter Charles Doherty (Nobel laureate), Daniel Elmer Salmon and Ralph Brinster are some of the veterinarians that have revolutionized both human and veterinary medicine simultaneously.

Animal Assisted Human Therapy (AAHT) is another emerging field gaining importance particularly in the mental health. The physical, physiological, and psychological health benefits are generally noticed following AATH in clients as well as the professionals.

Under the widespread threat of terrorism, alert veterinarians silently play a significant role in passive surveillance of diseases that could be introduced intentionally into any country.

Veterinary practitioners are key to an effective, robust surveillance and early warning system for all new and re-emerging epidemics. To prevent a national or international crisis, vigilance is essential, and so too are veterinarians.

If the war against malnutrition, zoonosis, bioterrorism and drug resistance is winnable, close coordination of medical and veterinary professions are necessary. "One health concept" thus needs immediate attention by all the stakeholders.

The veterinary profession is currently under transformation facing new challenges and responsibilities, despite being biased, ignored and undervalued. The contribution of veterinarians like Dr. Zubair in spreading the awareness among masses is a welcome step and deserves encouragement.

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