

Creating A New Medina – Venkat Dhulipala

At the British Library in London, I stumbled upon a rather unexpected document. It swam into view in the middle of one of the many microfilms containing the private papers of Qaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah. The handwritten document, with its ink fading, was the record of a special séance with the spirit of the Qaid-i-Azam (Great Leader) held at 6 pm on 13 March 1955, nearly seven years after his death and eight years after the birth of Pakistan. The séance was conducted by a spiritualist hired by a government officer, a certain Mr Ibrahim, who was present on the occasion to direct the questions. The spiritualist began the proceedings by politely offering a seat to his esteemed guest. The spirit tartly responded that it was already seated, also reminding him that they had previously met there for another such session. The spiritualist solicitously enquired about the Qaid's well-being since on that occasion the spirit had complained about being 'in a dark and cold place', which it did not like very much. It replied that it was much happier now for it was 'in a very good place' that was 'brilliantly lighted and had enough flowers'. As a final courtesy before the proceedings started in right earnest, the spirit was asked if it wanted to smoke a cigarette since the Qaid-i-Azam in life had been a heavy smoker. On the basis of an affirmative answer, a cigarette was lit and fixed on a wire stand for the spirit to smoke while it answered questions. Mr Ibrahim began, 'Sir, as a creator and father of Pakistan, won't you guide the destiny of the nation now?' The Qaid's spirit reacted testily, stating that it was not for it to guide Pakistan's destiny any more, even though, it ominously added, it often saw 'flashes of evil pictures about Pakistan'. A worried Mr. Ibrahim enquired, 'Don't you think there is a prosperous future for Pakistan?'

None at all is eager to be selfless there.' Mr Ibrahim pressed further. 'What advice would you give to the present rulers of Pakistan?' Prompt came the response — 'Selflessness, selflessness. That is the only advice I can give them now.' The spirit then made a telling remark. 'It is (pg. 1) easier to acquire a country, but it is extremely difficult to retain it. That is in a nutshell the present position of Pakistan to gain which rivers of blood flowed.' (pg. 2)

It has also been noted that while ML rallies resounded with the popular but vague slogan, 'Pakistan ka Matlab Kya, La Ilaha Il Allah' (What is the meaning of Pakistan? There is no god but God), Pakistan was not articulated any further beyond this emotional slogan. An inchoate anti-Indianism, it is presumed. (The phrase that Pakistan was an 'insufficiently imagined' nation-state has been coined by the writer Salman Rushdie) (pg. 3)

The run up to the Partition witnessed osmosis of ideas between the ulama and the ML leadership. (pg. 5)

These heady ideas about Pakistan as a powerful twentieth century Islamic state were bitterly but unsuccessfully attacked by opponents. Most prominent were a section of the Deobandi ulama aligned with the Indian National Congress led by Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani, who himself first utilized the metaphor of Medina to conceptualize a common nationhood of Hindus and Muslims in an undivided India. (pg. 6)

Pakistan, by most accounts, seems to have happened in a fit of collective South Asian absent-mindedness, the tragic end result of the 'transfer of power' negotiations gone awry, hastily midwived by a cynical, war weary Britain anxious to get out of the morass of an imploding empire, leaving unsuspecting millions to face its brutal consequences. (pg. 7)

The picture gets muddled further if one turns to scholarship regarding the ideological moorings of the Pakistan movement. (pg. 10)

If the view from the centre and partitioned provinces of Punjab and Bengal makes the Partition seem like a rather confused and murky affair, there is some consensus that the road to 1947 may well have been paved from U.P. (pg. 11)

As a top ranking ML leader Khaliquzzaman declared, 'Pakistan would bring all Muslim countries together into Islamistan – a pan-Islamic entity'. (pg. 18)

Within the subcontinent, ML propaganda claimed that besides liberating the 'majority provinces' Muslims it would also guarantee protection for Muslims who would be left behind in Hindu India. In this regard, it repeatedly stressed the hostage population theory that held that 'hostage' Hindu and Sikh minorities inside Pakistan would guarantee Hindu India's good behaviour towards its own Muslim minority. (pg. 19)

Gandhi himself raised the issue in a column in *The Harijan* on 12 July 1942, wherein he distinguished the Pakistan demand from separation demanded by Andhra from Madras Presidency. As the Mahatma wrote – *There can be no comparison between Pakistan and Andhra separation. The Andhra separation is a redistribution on a linguistic basis. The Andhras do not claim to be a separate nation having nothing in common with the rest of India. Pakistan on the other hand is a demand for carving out of India a portion to be treated as a wholly independent sovereign State. Thus there seems to be nothing common between the two.* (pg. 21)

Articles sent in by readers on this issue that were published in the Urdu biweekly newspaper *Madina* in 1942-43. Chapter 7 analyses Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani's vision of Pakistan as a new Medina and highlights his critical contribution to the success of the ML's election campaign during the 1945-46 elections. The Epilogue looks at the aftermath of the Partition in U.P. besides throwing light on how it affected subsequent politics in India and Pakistan. (pg. 23) (Creating A New Medina – Venkat Dhulipala)

पार्टीशन: कैन इट बी अनडन? लाल खान

साठ साल पहले भयानक रक्तपात भरे बंटवारे के बाद मिली आजादी को लेकर पाकिस्तान के शीर्षस्थ बुद्धिजीवी-चिंतक लाल खान की चर्चित पुस्तक 'पार्टीशन: कैन इट बी अनडन?' बदले हुए वैश्विक परिदृश्य में महत्वपूर्ण सवाल ही नहीं खड़े करती, बल्कि भारत-पाक संयुक्तीकरण की तजवीज भी पेश करती है।

जिन्ना कम अंग्रेज नहीं थे। उनकी आदतें, जीवनचर्या, कपड़े और व्यवहार उन मुसलमानों से कहीं ज्यादा अंग्रेजियत भरा था, जिनका नेता होने का वे दावा करते थे। उन्होंने कभी भी अंग्रेजों से अपना नाता नहीं तोड़ा। उन्होंने उर्दू को पाकिस्तान की राष्ट्रभाषा घोषित कर दिया, जबकि वह खुद उर्दू नहीं जानते थे।

माउण्टबेटन को पता था और वह नहीं चाहते थे कि आजादी के जश्न के दौर में यह जाहिर किया जाए कि सिरिल जॉन रेडक्लिफ द्वारा बनाए जा रहे नक्शे के मुताबिक किसको क्या मिलने वाला है। इससे समस्याएं और पेचीदा हो सकती थीं।

पंजाब और बंगाल के हजारों गांवों के लोगों ने 15 अगस्त का दिन भय और अनिश्चय में बिताया। रेडक्लिफ ने लिखा, 'मैं जितना हो सकता है उतनी तेज गति से इस भयानक काम को अंजाम देने जा रहा हूं..... और आखिरकार इससे कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ेगा, जब मेरा काम खत्म होगा, वे हर हाल में एक-दूसरे को मारना शुरू कर देंगे।

बंटवारे के दौरान भारत-पाक के शासकों की चिंता सम्पत्ति के विभाजन को लेकर ज्यादा थी। वे ब्रिटिश राज द्वारा छोड़ी जाने वाली चीजों में से अधिकाधिक अपने नियंत्रण में लेना चाहते थे।

बंटवारा बहुत गहरा घाव छोड़ गया। इसका दर्द अब भी टीसता है। आधी सदी से भी ज्यादा वक्त गुजर चुका है और हर सवाल पूरे उपमहाद्वीप में पूछा जा रहा है, 'क्या इसे अनकिया (एकीकरण) किया जा सकता है?'

पिछले कुछ वर्षों में ऐसी घटनाएं घटी हैं जो एकीकरण पर बल देती हैं। बर्लिन की दीवार का गिरना और जर्मनी का एकीकरण उन देशों के लिए गहरी प्रभावशाली परिघटनाएं हैं जो ऐतिहासिक दुर्घटनाओं के कारण बंटवारे के शिकार हुए हैं।

जिन्ना भी पाकिस्तान को एक आधुनिक, औद्योगिक सेकुलर राज्य बनाना चाहते थे। उनके निजी डाक्टर के अनुसार उस वक्त निजी डाक्टर के अनुसार उस वक्त जिन्ना एक कमजोर और बीमार आदमी थे, जो तीन साल से अपनी इच्छाशक्ति, विहस्की और सिगरेटों पर ज़िंदा थे। पाक का पहला सर्वानर जनरल बनते वक्त जिन्ना ने अपने एडीसी सैयद हसन से कहा था, 'तुम्हें पता है, मैंने कभी अपने जीते-जी पाकिस्तान को बनता देखने की कल्पना नहीं की थी।' 11 सितम्बर 1948 को उनकी मृत्यु हो गई।