

Impact of Sectarianism on National Security and Society of Pakistan

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Abstract - This paper covers the problems related to religious sectarianism in Pakistan specially its impact on national security and society of Pakistan. It is a fact that Pakistan was not witness of large scale sectarian massacres before late 1970s. The massive violence occurred in the country after the Zia's Islamization, Afghan war and Iran's Revolution and Arab's reaction on it. Many other factors including political instability, refusal of basic rights and social and economic injustice, poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, poor health facilities, inactive local bodies and unequal education system contributed to the aggression. Ideology of Pakistan is above of sectarianism and Islam also condemns the violence but the religious scholars of different sects could not play their effective positive role while some of the religious elements fuelled the violence by delivering hate speech and spreading aggressive literature. Partial acts of Media, interest groups and the sectarian organizations led to brutalities. The sectarianism not only badly damaged the image of the country but also gravely affected the society. The sectarianism today is also threatening national security as the sectarian groups established their links with foreign militant organisations. A comprehensive policy is required for protection of national security by creating a peaceful society, renewal of national unity, guarantee of rule of law, building of the institutions, providing the social justice to the people and maintaining good governance.

Key Words: National Security, Society, literature, Sectarian, Injustice, Violence, Groups, Islamization, Militant, Unity and Guarantee.

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1 INTRODUCTION

For understanding the issue of "Sectarianism and its Impact on National Security and Society of Pakistan", we have to go through its background. We should recognize that the sectarian violence in Pakistan has been rapidly increased since 1970s. Although, the minor incidents linked with sectarian differences had been happened in the country since its independence but severe flames of sectarian violence spread in 1980s as a number of sectarian militant groups grew up in the land. The military ruler gained support of radical groups for continuation of its autocratic rule in the country. The So-called Afghan Jihad against former Soviet Union was backed by then Pakistani authorities. A long with many of the Pakistanis, thousands of Arab nationals stood with Afghan Mujahideen (Fighters) in the west sponsored 'Jihad' (Kumar, 2012). A large number of the young foreigners were motivated and trained for the "holy war" (Jihad) against communist invaders and these jihadi forces also brought their brand of the religion. At the end of the Afghan Jihad, the foreign fighters not only merged into Pakistani society particularly frontier regions of the country but they also expanded their extremist beliefs in the region.

At the result, Pakistan became a home to gateway for the fighters from the different parts of the world. It means, the country turned into a centre for flourishing militant communities, many of whom had a wide experience of fighting against former USSR in Afghanistan. The people could not go back to their homelands due to possible sentence and therefore, they continued their stay in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Some of the writers claimed that the Afghan's jihadi fighters also created ties with those operating in Kashmir. Zahid Hussain believes, "The state-sponsored jihadist culture provided them a safe haven in Pakistan" (Hussain, 2007).

At the same time, some of the Pakistani extremist groups inspired by the specific theological ideology of the foreigners started to term people of other sects as 'Kafir' (Non-Muslim) and declaring their murder obligatory. The religious clergy of some of the sects having specific "Salafi" thoughts played crucial role in spreading the sectarian violence in the society. The circumstances caused a significant increase in the sectarian aggression and today, it is widespread menace in the country. Mosque has been a most important institution in an Islamic society but this religious centre became a key source of the sectarian hate and aggression.

The groups which were usually accused for the sectarian violence in Pakistan are included banned Sunni-Deobandi militant outfits of Lashkar e Jhangvi (LeJ) and Tehrik e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) affiliated with Al Qaeda. The newly emerging group in Iraq and Syria "Islamic State" (IS) also inspired the Pakistani sectarian elements which now are challenging the national identity of the country. A Shia

militant group namely banned Sipah e Mohammad and Sunni-Brelvi's outfit namely Sunni Tehrik have been also blamed for the sectarian aggression.

Beside the hatred among the people of different Muslims sects and physical assaults on each others, the discrimination has been also developed against people of Non-Muslim faiths like Hindus, Christians and Sikhs (the constitutional minorities) and Qadiani/Ahmedis (the constitutional Non-Muslims) in Pakistan in the recent years. Today, it is a fact that the violent groups have been developed as a fundamental threat to the state and society.

2 PROBLEMATIC STATEMENT

The society of Pakistan has been already viewer of many problem and the sectarianism can be provoked under pretexts of various issues in the multifaceted culture. For example, sectarian clashes between Sunnis and Shias, rift between Sunni-Brelvis and Sunni-Deobandis and differences between Muslims and Non-Muslims and etc. The issue of sectarianism can also be used as a tool by some of the local political forces for their specific objectives. Disturbance and disorder can be result of evil designs of the elements. So, the actual problem is that who fuel the clashes and what are the objectives behind that motive. Tussles among communities can be increased because of power struggles of the internal and external forces, and those forces play their role as actors in the scenario.

Pakistan was created by all segments of life. Beside the Sunni and Shia Muslims, the Christians also took part to help in the independence of the country. Today, side by side, the Muslims, other communities like Christians and Hindus are also essential parts of the Pakistani nation. Founder of Pakistan Mohammad Ali Jinnah and his colleagues had not showed sectarian discrimination in their struggle for a separate homeland in the sub-continent. They avoided such acts in their speeches and practices. In Pakistan, people belonging to different sects are living together as they have been tied through decent relationship with each other since independence. Theoretically, the sectarianism is one of serious threats to the national security and society of Pakistan because the sectarian terrorist groups in the country having links with foreign militants organisations believe in supra-state and supra-national character. The trend of sectarianism should be viewed in the context of its effects on national security and society of Pakistan. All important aspects of the issue including related internal and external factors impacting the situation should also be examined and curative measures could be then be proposed. Many regions in Pakistan like Sindh, Punjab particularly Southern Punjab, Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), Federal Administrative Tribal regions and Federal Areas of Islamabad are witness of sectarian terrorist attacks in last three decades.

Though some media reports blame the extremists groups from both sides of Sunni and Shia sects for attacking each other in all over Pakistan but most recently, a number of violent attacks have been committed by Sunni extremists of Deobandi School of thoughts linked with Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) motivated by Al-Qaeda's ideological line of "Salafi" brand of the religion. Thousands of people have been killed in the sectarian violence committed by the violent groups. Though, in most of the cases, unknown terrorists killed the people belonging to different sects but responsibilities of brutal acts were usually taken by the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) and Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

Some of the international media outlets named the sectarian brutalities as clashes between Sunnis and Shias but it is also fact that people from the both the sects of Islam live together peacefully for the centuries. It can be termed "sectarian violence" or attack of sectarian extremist groups on the innocent people or people of other sects. It cannot be called as "sectarian clash between Sunnis and Shais in all of the cases". It is reality that presently the sectarian violence became a severe warning to the national security and peaceful society of Pakistan but people of the country are not hopeless. "Despite these dangers, Pakistan is not a hopeless case. The country is not yet in terminal decline, it only because of its vigorous civil society" (Pakistan: Violence Vs. Stability 2011).

3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Although, many authors have written on the topic of sectarianism in Pakistan but they have less focus on the significance the sectarian issue in the context of the religious harmony in the society particularly furthermore the sectarian serious threats to the identity of Pakistan. The history of sectarianism or sectarian based differences in Pakistan shows that the sectarian differences is not a new phenomenon but almost of the literature available on the subject insisted that the growth of sectarian militancy and sectarian violence in Pakistan is being occurred since late 1970s and early 1980s. The literature emphasized that it happened due to internal transformations like Zia's Islamization, War in Afghanistan and the influence of Islamic revolution in Tehran and response of Arab states to the Iranian uprising but no one logically raised the alarming connections of the Pakistani sectarian violent groups with emerging regional and international extremist groups like "Islamic State" (IS) seeking their rule over the world. Most of the literature highlighted the grave situation in Pakistan but a broad and hopeful endeavour for settlement accordance with current scenario is required as the sectarianism turned into a grave concern for the national solidarity of the country. No, one has clearly indicated that how much it is dangerous for society, national security and national identity of Pakistan. How much Pakistan has prominent position due to its strategic location and how it is an important land as a Muslim

majority state. A book in Urdu title, "Rift in the Muslim Ummah" highlights the reasons behind the sectarianism in Pakistan and emphasizes upon the need of a statesmanship to deal with the issue. The writer explores that though pro-Pakistan intellectuals and scholars have already raised reasons and results of sectarianism but rulers did not give priority to deal seriously with the problem (Akbar, 2012). The main threat for Pakistan came from its eastern neighbour, India and to a lesser degree Afghanistan intermittently became a security concern for Pakistan's strategic interests (Hasnat, 2011). Though, India has been Pakistan's traditional enemy but it has been recognized now that internal militancy including sectarian violence emerged as new threat to the national security of Pakistan. Any how, the state is responsible to protect its citizens from every threat including sectarian violence as it has been pointed out in a book on topic of "Religious Militancy and Security in South Asia".

Another factor is also important in growth of sectarianism or sectarian violence. It is related to the economic situation of the country's remote regions which have been always ignored by the state as it has been indicated in the book, "Punjabi Taliban" by Musa Khan Jalalzai (Jalazai, 2011). Sectarian terrorism is one of the crucial problems in Pakistan facing multi forms of terrorism at the moment. Sectarian related situation in Pakistan can be compare with some of the other countries in the region including Iraq and Syria.

4 CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Pakistan was not much familiar to sectarian hostility before 1980s. Although differences among the different sects of Islam specially two major factions of Sunni and Shia were exist for several centuries but situation in Pakistan and other parts of the world was not much worsened as it is today. If we particularly talk about Pakistan, the country was not witness of brutal sectarian violence until, the Iranian Revolution and Afghan War in neighbours and the Zia's Islamization in the country.¹ Today, the religion which can be a source of massive inspiration for a positive change in the society, is being used for creation of violence in the country. In the current scenario, "Sectarianism is a real threat to the security of Pakistan. It has shaken the basic foundation of Pakistan and has created disturbance, violence, hatred and disorder in society" (Sectarianism, 2012).

There are also some other reasons like carelessness of political leadership and denial of the basic rights to the people at grass roots-level. Reasons behind the sectarianism can be included poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and

¹ Zia's Islamization, the controversial religious rules introduced by then dictator General Ziaul Haque in 1970s.

poor health facilities. These are the issues which may become contributing factors in spreading extremism and sectarian violence.

Role of foreign states and non-state actors in growing sectarianism should also be counted. Both external and internal elements are responsible for the problem and it is vital reality that today, the growing sectarian violence has become a serious caution to Pakistan's national harmony. Though the sectarian extremist groups are not representatives of whole society and even Islam as religious of peace discourages such violence but despite of that, the sectarian groups are able to create panic and turbulence in the state. The trend is subsisted currently that the sectarian terrorist groups having links with other militant groups are involved in the suicide attacks, bomb explosions, murders, target killings and other terrorist activities. Even some of the extremist groups create the worst situation by exploiting their influence and then they misuse the circumstances for their specific gains. It is also reality that despite of the sentiments created by the groups from specific school of thoughts, constitution of Pakistan and the constituent institutions are hurdles in the civil war on the sectarian basis. In its new doctrine or a conceptual change in its traditional position in the recent years, the Pakistan's Army has termed the home-grown terrorism as the "biggest threat" to the state.

It is considerable that the sectarian hate has been a kind of home-grown militancy or of the causes of the militancy. Though, the sectarian terrorist groups have shelters in various cities and remote areas of the country but the current rises of sectarian brutalities can also be found to the rise of the Pak-Afghan borders based terrorist groups like "Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan" (TTP) and as well as appearance of Islamic State (IS) having connection with the sectarian groups in the country. The sectarian armed groups found refuge in some of the Pakistan's tribal territories bordering Afghanistan. This development was mostly increased post 9/11 US-led invasion in Afghanistan and as well post Arab springs era. The main groups involved in the sectarian killings such as Lashkar-e-Jhangvi grew their ties with TTP and other terrorist groups based in Waziristan and other tribal regions. Though, a number of the militants escaped into Afghanistan because of military operations by Pakistan's Army but they still have influence in the tribal areas of Pakistan. Today, not only border areas but in further expansion of their network, these sectarian groups approached "IS" outfit, ruling over some of the border areas of Iraq and Syria.

Now, in response to the question about the answer to the issue, it can be resolved by correct understanding of the situation and through a proper mechanism. For dealing with the issue, two different approaches could be employed both at internal and external levels. Different means and measures can be used to handle the local and foreign elements involved in the sectarianism.

Prior to theoretical framing the issue, we have to understand the definition of sectarianism and national

security. Sectarianism means division in a major faction or a group. It is a multifaceted issue, containing ethnic, religious and political groupings. These groups can be used for political pressure, ethnic and sectarian violence. If we carefully look on the term 'Sectarianism', it is the combination of three words, "sect", "arian" and "ism". To know the sectarianism, we need to identify these words. "Sect" referred to a division/grouping in a major group or a religion, "Sectarian" referred to a its shape and whole word "Sectarianism" means thoughts of a specific sect or a group. According to "Oxford Dictionary" and "Thesaurus" book, the term sect means;

"A body of the people subscribing to religious doctrines different from those of an established Church from which they have separated", and the whole word sectarian implies "of or concerning a sect; bigoted or narrow-minded in following the doctrines of one's sect" (Oxford, 1997). Merriam Webster dictionary says: Sectarianism is relating to religious or political sects and the differences between them.²

According to another definition, the Sectarianism means different sects or variations between sections within a group, such as between various offshoots of a religious faith, class and divisions of a political party or faction. Apparently, the sects in Islam are being justified due to the different interpretation of Quran and Sunnah but basic version of "Quran" insists on unity among the Muslims. The Muslims' holy book says, "And hold fast, altogether, by the rope of Allah, and be not divided among yourselves."³

In this verse of Quran, there is twice emphasizing upon the Muslims, first to have a united grip to the cable of God (referring to the holy book) and secondly, not be divided into different sects.

The expression of sectarian divide or sectarianism is connected with conflict and clash among various religious groups. Sectarianism or sectarian violence can be occur from some sections of the major religion and these sections can be called a negative mind-set from the major religious structure. Sectarianism can also be expression of negative thoughts or dispute due to lack understanding on the social and religious issues.

It is a reality that the sectarianism creates an intolerance, discrimination, or hatred and differences among the sections within a group. The religious sectarianism can often be found in varying forms and degrees. In Christianity, there are major examples of Protestant and Catholic but now most of them exist peacefully side-by-side in different parts of the world.

² Merriam Webster, A searchable dictionary and thesaurus and a vocabulary reference source.

³ Al-Qur'an, the Islamic holy book, Sura 3, Verse 103.

If we talk about Islam, despite of emphasis in Quran for the unity, it is reality that there are many sects in the religion but sectarian variation does not means sectarian violence. Religious sectarianism in the Pakistan branches out several sectarian beliefs of non-state armed groups (militants). This religious-sectarian extremism assumes as a main attracting source behind the current armed uprising in Pakistan as major militant group Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is from Deobandi school of thought of the religion. The main sectarian terrorist group 'Lashkar e Jhangvi' is also from same faith. "There is a tendency among the policymakers to presume that ideology is a key motivating force behind the insurgencies in Pakistan and Afghanistan and that extremism has its roots in particular version of Islam" (Mufti, 2012).

Sectarian violence can be considered of the challenges for security of country, which is usually, a concept of pursuing freedom from the danger. Management of the security can be understood by this phrase, "the citizens of a state or a state want to exist in a free of threat atmosphere".

The "National Security" of the country needs to uphold the continued existence of a state by using economic sources, diplomacy and political influence and military persuade. "National security is the aggregate of security interests of all individuals, communities, ethnic groups and political entities to guaranteed safety and security, prosperity of individuals and institutes within a nation" (Ushe, 2012). Economy is most important pillar of the national security and economic prosperity of a state can not be achieved in the environment effected by several threats (IDSA, 2013).

As for the theoretical part, the theory of constructivism basically looks at core aspects of international relations, "The relations are collectively constructed, that is, they are given their form by ongoing processes of social practice and interaction." Alexander Wendt calls two gradually more accepted essential beliefs of the constructivism "That the structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces, and that the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature" (Wendt, 1999).

In case of sectarian violence in Pakistan, beside, the constructivism, some time theory of neo-realism can also be employed. Neorealism defines the character of the international formation by directing its rules and using the disorder and anarchy within the international system. The anarchic situation of the world means that international system has no central command and every nation-state has equal status and these states work to protect their interests and don't wish that their interests to be dominated by the interests of other states. It has been established from Kenneth Waltz's theory of International Politics, in which Waltz argues, "The anarchical structure of the international

system encourages states to maintain moderate and reserved policies in order to attain security".⁴

5 ANALYSING SECTARIANISM AND RELIGION OF ISLAM

The religious sectarian division can often be found in varying forms and degrees and it usually uses as a negative aspect of the different sects. People believe that it is sectarianism that creates an intolerance, discrimination, or hatred and differences among the subdivisions within a group.

The sectarianism in Islam can be called a significant division in the religion. Actually, the differences between Muslims started after the death of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) as they had controversies on the appointment of a caliph (Khalifa) as a new head of the state. The differences including different perceptions and versions in Islam increased with the passage of time and even after fourteen centuries not only it is exist but some time it also changed to much violent form.

It is despite of that there is an apparent warning in Quran and Sunnah against the division in Islam. Prophet (PBUH) had himself clearly emphasized that the guided sect will follow the path of Quran and my traditions. Such narration stressed that if they don't follow the teachings of Quran and Sunnah, no one can stop division in the religion. It is fact that the violent groups have widespread impact and connections at lowest level of religious seminaries and these are the aggressive groups which create threat to national security, society and ideology of the country.

6 SECTARIANISM AND IDEOLOGY OF PAKISTAN

Mostly Islam came to the Indian sub-continent in numerous waves beginning in the late seventh century. Muslim rulers and preachers both contributed to broadening Islam in the region. "Muslim traders and Sufi saints introduced Islam to various parts of the region even before Muslim conquerors from Central Asia who established their power base in northern India. Islam's early proponents in South Asia were quite tolerant of local cultural traditions like poetry and music, and encouraged assimilation and co-existence" (Ernst, Lawrence, 2002).

Sufi saints also stood above sectarian identity as they neither proselytized and nor confronted others on matters

⁴ Kenneth Neal Waltz, the American political scientist and one of the most prominent scholars in the field of international relations.

of religious discourse.⁵ Love for humanity was their message and inclusivity was their method. Most of the Sufi traditions originate their religious roots to Prophet Muhammad through his son in law and cousin Imam Ali. Sufis have faith that Ali took the perfect spiritual authority known as "wilayah", which makes potential of spiritual access to Allah. In Sufi teachings, "Hazrat Ali is often referred to as the 'patron saint'."

Shia Muslims performed important role in the history and political affairs of the Muslim Sub-continent and in creation of Pakistan as well. After the independence of Pakistan, many of the Shia were among the Muslims shifted from India to Pakistan. They also brought their religious traditions with them as they are mostly settled in the major cities of Pakistan like Karachi, Lahore, Multan and Peshawar. The struggle for Pakistan headed by Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League, started gaining popularity in 1940. The History's record shows that Jinnah was a Shia Muslim but a moderate and non-sectarian in his thoughts about religion (Khan, 1983). Phillips Talbot, a U.S. naval officer who worked in British India as a journalist, wrote in 1948, Intense political zeal was more characteristic of Jinnah's career than personal religious practice (Talbot, 1948).

The presidential speech of Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah on 11th August 1947 at launching ceremony of Pakistan's Constituent parliament, was one of the most momentous declarations in the early history of Pakistan. Jinnah Says, "We should begin to work in that spirit and in course of time all these angularities of the majority and minority communities – the Hindu community and the Muslim community – because even as regards Muslims you have Pathans, Punjabis, Shias, Sunnis and so on and among the Hindus you have Brahmins, Vashnavas, Khatri, also Bengalese, Madrasis and so on – will vanish. Indeed if you ask me this has been the biggest hindrance in the way of India to attain its freedom and independence and but for this we would have been free peoples long long ago" (Jinnah, 1947).

"You may belong to any religion or caste or creed – that has nothing to do with the business of the State, you will find that in course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the State."

In his speech, the founder of nation underlined, "You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of worship in this State of Pakistan."

Actually, the founder of Pakistan wanted the citizens of the state to promote Pakistani nationalism instead of their sectarian identity. By putting a side sectarian identity, Pakistanis can uplift their nationalism and it could be a country where followers of all of Muslim's sects can live side by side other religious minorities. Present shape of sectarianism is against the ideology of Pakistan. If some people follow supra-national identity as some of the extremist groups believe in sectarian identity above the Pakistani identity, the country would have uncertainty and disability. It is totally against the ideology and basic principles of creation of the country, which helps to know the identity of Pakistan.

7 MAJOR FINDINGS

- It was Zia's regime which introduced controversial religious rules in the country and also added western border of Pakistan into national security concerns by supporting a supra national militancy in order to fight against USSR and Pro-Soviet Government in Afghanistan.
- Rising of Iran's revolution considered as a danger to the Gulf States and particularly tension between two sides also effected Pakistan and it became a cause of sectarian confrontation in the country.
- Creation of Taliban, as a religious fundamentalist political movement, which spread into Afghanistan and also created its affiliated groups in Pakistan like TTP.
- Pakistan's Alliance with US in War on terror after 9/11 further fuelled terrorism and sectarian violent groups made association with the foreign terrorist organisations based in tribal regions of Pakistan.
- The foreign supported and local terrorism became home-grown militancy which caused a crucial internal threat to the state and non-violent society.
- Having links with the groups like "IS" and Al Qaeda, the militant groups in Pakistan seek supra-national and supra-state agenda.
- Some of political circles misused the religion as tool for political objectives and some of the religious clerics exploited the religious beliefs of the masses for their specific designs.
- Provocative decrees issued by the some of the religious leaders against other sects resulted into sectarian hatred and aggression.
- Political instability in Pakistan caused less attention of the state machinery on the issue of sectarian violence.

⁵ Sufism, a version of Islam believes in peaceful aspects of the religion.

- Inactive local body system in the country also caused disengagements of the people in political and society activities at lowest level.
- Lack coordination and cooperation among the law enforcement agencies and governmental departments at regional, provincial and central levels has been causing opportunities for the sectarian violent groups.
- Less economic and social opportunities in the country also caused frustration among the masses and brain drain of the society which created room for the sectarian terrorist groups.
- Minor efforts took place in order to uphold national identity and develop national harmony in the country.
- Islam has different schools of law and every sect has different interpretation of the Quran and Sunnah but all of them have some common beliefs including believe in Allah, Prophet of Islam and Quran.
- Islam as religion of peace, tolerance and harmony, rejects hate on sectarian basis. Quran and sayings of Prophet of Islam emphasized on brotherhood and unity while condemned the sectarian based division and violence.
- Pakistan is the country which was created through a mass movement of the Muslims of Sub-Continent under the leadership of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of the nation. It was an ideology that Pakistan would be a country of Muslims but other religions would also be respected and every citizen would be allowed the religious practices according to his/her religions in the county.
- The Pakistan's movement in British India was supported by whole Muslim community including Sunnis and Shia leaders but people forget the objectives of the great struggle of Pakistan and its ideology today.
- The objectives of a land for the Muslims on Sub-Continent were above than a sect or sectarian thoughts and founder of Pakistan also had a broad and widen vision of Islam.
- By liberation from British rule, Pakistan emerged as a Muslim state but sectarian based divisions came later on in Pakistani society.

8 CONCLUSION

There are many example of the conflicts at the individual level, in family relations and in society; having differences over the issue, does not matter but having a violent clash

over the differences is a problem. This is a serious question for all of the human being to think and learn about and to resolve it. The sectarian differences between the two sects have strong roots in the history and today, a sectarian based serious threat has been appeared in many of the Muslim countries including Pakistan. Though, it is threatening the national security and national identity of Pakistan but violence can be prevented through comprehensive measures. It has been proved that the situation in Pakistan is much worsening as thousands have been the victims and much more got injured in sect based violence over the past few decades in the country. It is yet to be resolved as it is going on to no end.

Sectarian groups and their activities increase day by day but lack of efficiency and less interests has been observed from the government and civil society. The problem can be managed and the level of sectarian hostility can be reduced through proper wide ranging efforts. Beside the government, it is also duty of the civil society to play encouraging role and insure its participations for reduction of sectarian tension.

Situation in some of the cities like Karachi and Quetta is much critical and level of violence is much higher as anyone who go out for earning his family, don't sure that he will come back, because any one can be killed any time on sectarian issue.

The study finds that there are many reasons and many factors contributing to the sectarian problem in Pakistan. It has many external and internal aspects including many motives and elements contributing to the issue and the system has so far failed to manage the problem.

The sectarian violence has been enlarged from Karachi to Khyber and Quetta to Gigit-Baltistan. It has been provide that the sectarian groups have managed their connection with the regional groups and foreign elements having supra-state and supra-nation agenda.

The recent contact of "IS" with Pakistani sectarian organizations is a serious matter and needed to be addressed on priority. Travel of a number of the people from different areas of Pakistan to tribal areas, Afghanistan and Syria and Iraq showed that many of the people have been inspired by the sectarian groups and the groups misuse them for their objectives.

The short term solution can not help to overcome the issue. The issue has been increased in last three or four decades and it needs broad based remedy. This is not a minor pain while it is an epidemic infection which needs accurate treatment.

The state and civil society altogether including influential political, social, religious and cultural figures should think collectively, how they can bring peace, unity and harmony in their homeland? How they can deal with local and foreign elements and states and non-state actors involved in sectarian violence and proxy war in Pakistan. Government must ensure that the security agencies are working efficiently to curb the extremists and sectarian terrorists. There is need of improvement of judicial system and law

enforcement departments on technical, moral and social grounds.

Economic crises, unemployment, poverty and social injustice are also causes of violence which are required to be settled on long term basis. People should have easy access to the resources and basic facilities like education, food and health.

Training of teachers specially teachers in religious schools should be conducted on non-sectarian basis and an exceptional subject for national unity and harmony should be introduced in curriculum of the schools.

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