

■ By Karamatullah K. Ghori  
Toronto, Canada

## Getting the Right Perspective on Pakistan

What could be a more appropriate and opportune time than the Independence Day of Pakistan to get your perspective right on its history and genesis?



The marked exuberance and festivity of this, 69th, Independence Day of Pakistan couldn't be lost on anyone keeping a regular watch on the Pakistani scene. It was just unprecedented in its warmth and enthusiastic participation of the people, both at home and abroad.

The news media has, no doubt, been a huge catalyst in the triggering of mass awareness about the importance of the day. On their part, the people, knowing that a news-hungry media will lap up whatever show of festivity is staged by them, haven't disappointed. They mustered the kind of resources rarely seen before to usher in a carnival-like spectacle to underline the significance of the day in their hearts. It was, in a convoluted sense, a team work of the media and the people of Pakistan that catapulted the event to unprecedented heights of celebration.

But while none could, now, have any reason to doubt how positively cued the people of Pakistan—including the world-wide Pakistani diaspora—are on the importance of the most notable date on their national calendar, it wouldn't be irrelevant to pose the question: are they getting the right perspective on Pakistan and its history?

Am I being cynical in asking this question? Has it any reality with the times, or have it just plucked it out of the blue to come up with a rhetorical argument?

Not at all; I stand on solid ground.

What has forced me to ask a ticklish question—which may look odd to many, especially those accustomed to believing whatever is seen by their eyes as the only and whole truth?

Forcing me to wade into murky waters is the feedback I've been getting from the social media on the history and genesis of Pakistan, especially the Freedom Movement of the Muslims of India that ultimately spawned from its womb the sovereign State of Pakistan on August 14, 1947.

Those closely—or, in this case, not even so closely—following the rise of Pakistan's social media, in tandem with the public news media, would agree that the growth of social media is like mushrooms proliferating in the salubrious clime of the desert.

The cyber age has empowered the individual as never before. Gone are the days when even those with a flourishing pen found it hard to tap into the medium of news or information to get their message across.

No more that sense of helplessness—none at all. Anyone with a mouse and cursor, and handy with a tablet, lap-top or a smart phone, is now his own master and free to get on to the scene like a party gate-crasher. No barriers, no censors, no one, absolutely no one, in a position to prevent an internet-savvy person from putting his message across the whole blue world of the cyber age.

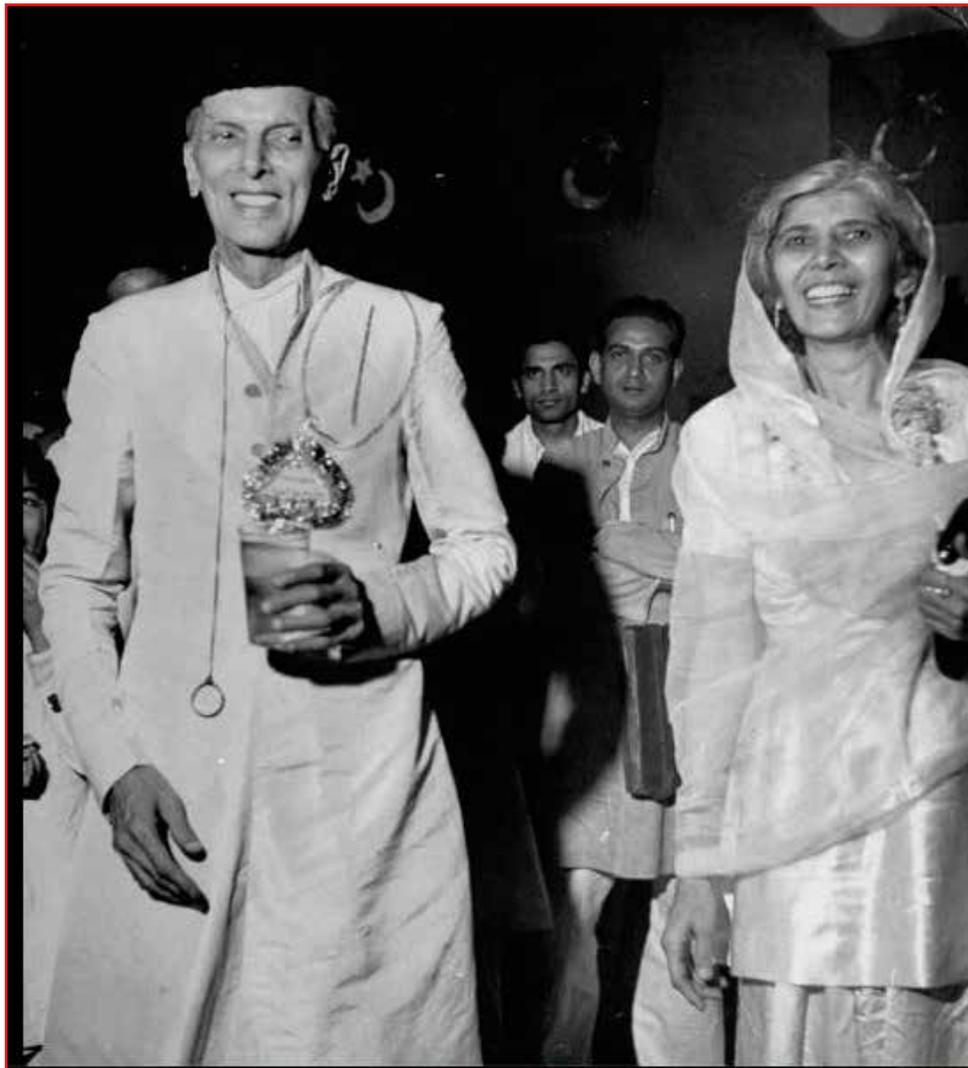
But—and it's a huge but—this unbridled freedom to say what one wants to say is also a dangerous thing. It's dangerous because in the wrong hands—like any other invention of mankind—it can be used to corrupt minds and vitiate their whole thought process.

There's no argument that cyber age's connectivity is being abused with impunity by those whose message is hate, not love; brain-washing, not the flowering of healthy debate or cultivation of novel ideas.

According to surveys, there are at least 300 websites freely propagating their lethal messages of hate and terrorism in the name of their benighted take on religion. Isn't that a thing much worse than trafficking in drugs?

Likewise there are cyber junkies and cyber criminals pouring out their bile against Islam. Suffering from the now-commonly-prevalent Islamophobia of the West, these hate-mongers are targeting the younger generation of global Muslims because it's easier to brain-wash a young, callow an uninitiated mind than an old and jaded one.

The tool most commonly wielded by Islamophobes is to conjure up fantasies and tales with no relevance to history of Islam. The object



is to sow doubts in the minds of their targets. It's clever, it's disingenuous. Create doubts about the foundations of a building, or its architect, and it becomes easier to induce he target to agree to raze the whole structure. That's why there has been a well-oiled and well-funded campaign in the West, since 9/11 in particular, to target the

as Governor-General of Pakistan on August 14, in the presence of Lord Mountbatten, who had aspired to head both the new dominions but was brow-beaten in his clever and nefarious game by Jinnah. So why shouldn't Pakistanis celebrate August 14 as their Day of Independence? Didn't they say good-bye to the oppressive British yoke,

**Mohammad Ali Jinnah was sworn in as Governor-General of Pakistan on August 14, in the presence of Lord Mountbatten, who had aspired to head both the new dominions but was brow-beaten in his clever and nefarious game by Jinnah. So why shouldn't Pakistanis celebrate August 14 as their Day of Independence?**

Holy Prophet of Islam (PBUH) and caricature him in colours that are, to say the least, disparaging.

Those whose phobia is to tarnish Pakistan and its founder, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, seem to have styled their own, vicious and snide, anti-Pakistan campaign exactly on the paradigm of Islamophobia. Its protagonists are going about their work with single-minded devotion to paint Jinnah as a misguided soul with no sense of history—exactly on the model of Jinnah, the sub-continental 'villain' as portrayed in the Indian and some of the British narratives on the Partition of 1947.

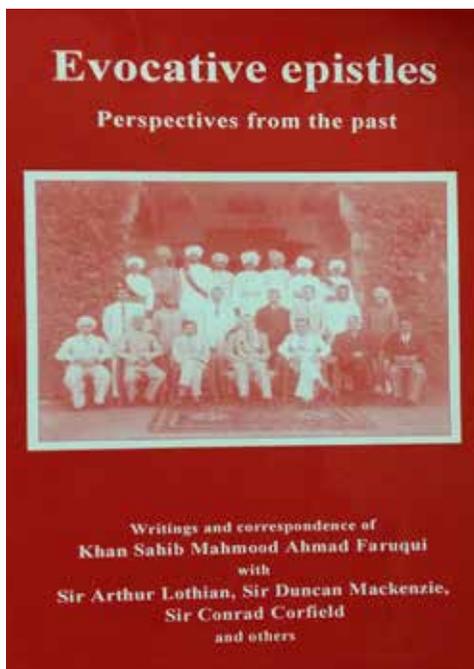
The anti-Pakistan and anti-Jinnah campaign is also subtle, fine-tuned to make it hard for the novice to see through the Satanic spirit of the game.

I was horrified, recently, when I came across a long-winded petty intellectual, claiming to have boned into the freedom movement that spawned Pakistan, and stridently ridiculing the Pakistanis for celebrating their Independence Day on August 14. To him the real date was August 15 of Pakistan's independence.

The logic for August 15 being the real date of independence is that the so-called Instrument of Transfer of Power, from the British Govt. to the new Dominions of India and Pakistan, became effective from mid-night between August 14 and 15. A clever logic, its proponents might think and give themselves a pat on their back because it can't be refuted on technicalities.

But Mohammad Ali Jinnah was sworn in

as personified by that mischievous Mountbatten, on that day, August 14? Why should anyone dispute or ridicule their right to mark the anniversary of their country on the day they got their



Quaid proclaimed as their leader and ruler?

Back at the core of this 'intellectual' offensive against the citadel of Pakistani belief in their history is to sow doubts in their mind about the

very genesis of Pakistan.

Imagine, you make a person diffident or doubtful about his date of birth and a train of questions sets off in his mind about a lot of other things related to his life. It opens up myriad avenues for his critics and detractors to knock the bottom out of his faith in life.

The persona and character of Jinnah has been in the sights of these rogues for some time. Jinnah not walking into Mountbatten's trap on the issue of GG hurts these mealy-mouthed partisans of the Raj a lot. Instead of complimenting Jinnah for standing up to Mountbatten's shenanigans, they have been slinging mud on him for being 'obstinate' and 'unbending'.

Jinnah wasn't obstinate; he was resolute and firm because he had the vision to see through the British game. What a mockery of sovereignty of the new state it would have made if the last standard-bearer of the heinous and exploitative Raj were its first head. Jinnah was far too astute and upright to be led down the garden path by the likes of an Indian National Congress-aficionado Mountbatten.

A similarly snide and vicious vilification campaign has also been on against the rulers and denizens of the Muslim-majority Princely states of British India, which were technically free to decide their own future under the law that had subjected them to the British Raj. But, as known to all, the rulers of those states whose political leanings were a matter of doubt had their arm twisted by Nehru and Mountbatten to bend in favour of Hindu India. Character-assassination of those working for these princely states has been fodder to the grisly cannons of these detractors of Muslim Pakistan.

It was serendipity that led to me a wonderful book, *Evocative Epistles*, which, in its historical contents, forcefully nails this persistent canard of perceived perfidy committed by the princely states. The book is based on letters exchanged between Khan Sahib Mahmood Ahmad Faruqui and some ex-British civil servants in UK who, during their illustrious careers, had served in various distinguished capacities in the administration of the Raj.

MA Faruqui had served on commission in the Royal Indian Navy but made his mark as a civil servant. He was Development Minister in the princely State of Tonk on the eve of the 1947 partition, whence he moved to Pakistan and served in the Foreign Office with dedication.

*Evocative Epistles* is a compendium of letters exchanged between MA Faruqui and mainly three retired British civil servants in India—Sir Arthur Lothian, who had served as Resident of the Raj in Hyderabad State, the largest of India's Princely States but later acquired great fame as author of *The Kingdoms of Yesterday*; Sir Duncan Mackenzie, who was Resident in Jodhpur, among other prominent assignments; and Sir Conrad Corfield.

Corfield had the distinction of being Political Advisor to Mountbatten but fell out with him with regard to the uncouth last Viceroy's openly pro-Congress shenanigans that crudely twisted the arms of many a prince to fall in line behind Nehru. The most blatant abuse of the Viceroy's exalted position was witnessed, of course, in Kashmir—the poisonous fallout of which we are still saddled with.

MA Faruqui distinguished himself in the letters he wrote his former English superiors and colleagues—by then comfortably nestled in their retirement groves in England—as a forthright advocate of Pakistan's position in regard to the tangled issues of the partition, especially the palpably unjust and dishonest deal given to Pakistan.

Faruqui had a powerful pen, no doubt. His crystal-clear and lucid English prose is delightfully evocative of the mastery civil servants in India had acquired, through their brains and dint of labour, in the alien ruler's language.

But what should impress any student of Pakistan's history, especially its formative phase of the Freedom Movement, is the boldness of Faruqui's conviction that Pakistan was dealt a very rough deal in the garb of the Boundary Award of Cyril Radcliff. He doesn't mince words or pull any punches in hammering the disgusting cloak-and-dagger tactics deployed by Mountbatten and some English civil servants to tailor the award in favour of India.

PAKISTAN, P8

■ By Syed Kamran Hashmi  
Westfield, IN

## Shuja Khanzada's Death

To avenge the death of its leader Malik Ishaq in police custody, Lashkar e Jh-nagvi (LeJ) perpetrated a suicide attack on the interior minister of Punjab, Shuja Khanzada last week that killed almost twenty people along with the most outspoken critic of the sectarian organizations.

Upon the news of Malik Ishaq's demise, the media at first reported the supporters of the militant leader, while he was being relocated, had attacked the police convoy to set him free. Six police officers were wounded in the ambush and fourteen detainees lost their lives, one of them being Malik Ishaq himself. But afterwards, Shuja Khanzada clarified the stance of the government.

He said the leader of LeJ was strategically eliminated as a part of the National Action Plan, explaining that there was no place for extremists like him anymore in society and the government was determined to go after anyone and everyone who had been involved in terrorist activities. His statements in a way confirmed what many of us were suspecting: that there was no attack on the police convoy and the infamous sectarian leader was killed in a 'fake encounter'.

Now after the suicide attack on the prominent member of the Punjab Cabinet, analysts have raised questions about the not-so- fool-proof security provided to Shuja Khanzada even when his name had popped up in the hit list, about the competency of the Punjab police which failed to protect its own boss and also about the accuracy of the intelligence information that the state institutions share with each other. Sure, all these questions raise genuine concerns about our readiness to deal with the terrorists blowback. But, what they do not ask - which they must - is how these organizations still are so powerful after two years of country wide military operations including the North

Waziristan Agency, once known as the epicenter of global terrorism. Did we not reassure that we have broken the back of these outfits and congratulated ourselves? Have we not proclaimed that all the 'miscreants' were on the run hiding from the law enforcing agencies? That their network did not exist anymore because their headquarters had been bulldozed to the ground? That they had suffered heavy casualties, and had lost the capability to hit us back?

None of these claims seems to be true after the death of Mr Khanzada who was first warned by the terrorists weeks ahead of the tragedy and was given enough time to take precautionary measures. My fear is that we could not have taken enough precautions anyway, even if the police had done everything right. With the current strategy of pounding all the suspected terrorists with artillery fires and striking their hideouts with jet bombs, the state is still not fully prepared to take on the vast network of these organizations and eradicate the nuisance altogether. Its apparatus is too weak. The enemy sits way too deep under cover and is far beyond the reach of gun power. The use of sweeping force alone in such circumstances can work for some time and at some places; it does not guarantee a good outcome. On the contrary, the indiscriminate use of force can create more problems than it can solve. Remember the US invasion in Iraq? Did it yield the outcome one hoped for?

Let me explain a little more why I say the state is too weak to handle the crisis by asking a simple question: Why did the state prefer to kill Malik Ishaq instead of prosecuting him? The reason is not difficult to reckon: Everyone knows we did not have enough evidence against Malik Ishaq to keep him in custody. And without the evidence, he was bound to get out on bail and may eventually shed off all the charges against him. You see, this is where lies our weakness: the incapability of various institutions to gather evidence and build an effective



case against the suspects.

My second point is: upon the killing of Malik Ishaq, the response (or lack thereof) of the liberals was lamentable. They had to stand up against the policy of extra judicial killings. But, they kept quiet as if they did not exist. Even the most outspoken human rights activists felt so exhausted that they did not protest against the way the LeJ leader was executed.

Honestly speaking, a state cannot behave like the terrorists do, that is, to capture, torture and then eliminate the suspects without giving them the opportunity to defend themselves in a court of law. If the state gets its hands dirty and behaves irresponsibly, it exposes its weaknesses and loses its moral superiority. No war can be won without having that moral conviction; we have to keep that in mind. As far as guns are concerned, terrorists have guns too, they have soldiers who can die for their cause as well. They may also have an ideology to keep

their men energized. What they do not have is justice, law, and the system which guarantees a fair chance to everybody, a network of organizations in place to hold the powerful accountable and force them to abide by the rules.

One argument in defense of extra judicial killings could be that the US did not try many of the Guantanamo Bay inmates or the known terrorists like Osama bin Laden in a court of law. True, but Al Qaeda did not operate in the USA, nor were its members US citizens. And most, if not all of its seminaries, financiers, supporters, operatives stayed outside the country. Essentially, the US was/is fighting a war of terror that is not homegrown while Pakistan is fighting a homegrown enemy. In fact, we face a Frankenstein that we thought would never enter our homes while it tore down the peace in our neighborhood.

PAKISTAN FROM P9

What the deadly-duo of Nehru and Mountbatten—who were in an unholy axis and, more than that, in an immoral partnership—pulled off with success at Pakistan's expense is history too well known to need any repetition here. But kudos to Faruqi that he boldly pointed out to his British friends the abiding shame Mountbatten, in his lust, had brought to the traditional claim of British fairness.

Credit is due also to Faruqi's interlocutors that they conceded his masterly expose of Mountbatten & Co's unholy shenanigans, though doing so with characteristic English trait of understatement.

Books like Evocative Epistles should be read with scholarly interest by those keen to refresh their knowledge, or memories, of the Pakistan Movement and the birth of Pakistan as a sovereign state. If nothing else, they are useful in seeing through the mischief of those whose mission—inspired by their pay-masters—is to heap scorn on Jinnah's sterling character and make light of the historic struggle of Muslims of India for their own independent state. - K\_K\_ghori@hotmail.com (The writer is a former ambassador and career diplomat)



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