

The Deadly Peril of Bulldozer Justice!

-Virajee

Under the rule of BJP at the centre and in the states the bulldozer justice is being implemented with impunity by demolishing houses, shops and establishments for more than one and a half year in our country, under the pretext of the occurrence of communal disturbances or riots. This heinous practice started from Khargone in Madhya Pradesh, has spread to Khambhat in Gujarat, to Jahangirpuri in Delhi, to Nagaon in Assam, to many other areas and presently to Nuh and Gurugram of Haryana state. It is clearly apparent that the BJP has sanctioned imposition of such inhuman justice on the dwelling places of economically marginalized and vulnerable people particularly on the Muslim community soon after any riot or communal disturbance.

In all the above mentioned instances, though the people belonging to both the Hindu and Muslim communities are involved, it is particularly note-worthy that Muslim community alone is targeted and imposed with the bulldozer justice of demolishing houses, shops and establishments. Their livelihood is being ruined and is coerced into untold misery and destitution.

From the time of demolition of Babri Masjid in Ayodhya, a pattern of provoking the communal hatred against Muslims by Hindutva forces in the name of religious processions like Ramanavami and Hanuman Jayanti or immersion processions of Ganapati idols, the processionists carrying exposed weapons, marching to the accompaniment of high-decibel music and provocative slogans leading to violence, followed by targeted attacks has evolved and the Hindutva forces with the ardent support of BJP rulers and governments have institutionalized their riot system.

With the governmental support of the BJP rulers Hindu majoritarianism has successfully penetrated in to various domains of state and society. Emboldened Hindutva forces become rampant and are playing havoc with the lives of the other religious faith, particularly of Muslim faith. Even the BJP government pursuing the agenda of building a Hindu state, with its patriotic lies and Hindutva nationalism has firmly chosen to inflict collective punishment on the Muslim community in the form of 'bulldozer justice'.

This is exactly what happened in Haryana. Nuh is Haryana's only-Muslim majority district with around 80% of its population of Muslim faith. At this place Viswa Hindu Parishad (VHP) started a religious observance called Braj Mandal Jal Abhishek Yatra announcing the

participation of a notorious cow vigilante wanted in Rajasthan since February for the murder of two cattle traders, but moving around with impunity under the active protection of Haryana police, provoked the Muslims resulting in violent clashes. The Nuh violence spread to Gurgaon speedily leading to mob attacks on a mosque killing its Imam. Only two months ago a Muslim group had won a case in the Supreme Court to refurbish and expand this mosque. This seems to be the background of the attack on the mosque killing its Imam.

As a consequence to these communal clashes, Haryana state government chose to punish Muslims collectively through 'bulldozer justice' instead of moving to restore law and order, maintain peace, arrest the culpable and commence the legal process of charges and prosecution. Though there has been loss of both Hindu and Muslim community, the state has targeted the houses of the Muslim community selectively and exclusively. The houses and buildings are razed with utmost vengeance. Even personal belongings and inventory are not allowed to be removed before a building is demolished. Haryana state that inflicted and imposed such a ghastly extra-legal punitive collective punishment on Muslims provides a false justification of removing "illegal structures" or "encroachments". On the other hand politicians, administrators and police stated the true purpose of demolitions is to target the homes of alleged rioters and to teach them a lesson.

But neither the legal justification of 'removing illegal encroachments' nor the moral justification of 'teaching a lesson' holds water.

It is a well-known fact that a good part of Delhi's most affluent neighbourhoods are been built in violation of zoning regulations. But none of these colonies faced the bulldozers. But the demolitions happened predominantly in Muslim neighbourhoods only in the aftermath of communal violence.

On the other hand the state has not provided any clarity on what evidence the buildings belonging to the alleged rioters are identified ascertaining whether those not involved are also using the premises. Moreover it is not explained why the alleged rioters belong exclusively to Muslim community, while the clashes occurred between both Muslim and Hindu communities.

It is clearly evident that these demolitions are carried out by the state governments of Haryana under the rule of BJP to gain electoral advantages in the next general elections with hate politics of teaching a lesson to the minorities.

But surprisingly even the Supreme Court of India which is supposed to protect the common people in accordance with the law of the constitution against state impunity of basic constitutional principles has been allowing this brutal 'bulldozers justice' of imposing collective punishment on Muslims to happen, remaining silent choosing to 'reject the evidence of its eyes and ears'.

Such has been the situation of grave danger of deadly peril of 'bulldozer justice' looming in our country.

No doubt though this peril may presently do the 'ethnic cleansing' of Muslim community, but it inevitably creeps to not only to the other religious communities but also to the Hindu community and its people when they dissent, disagree and oppose the reactionary dictates of the Hindutva forces – the base force of BJP rulers and their governments.

This peril has to be fought out and defeated with the strong unity of marginalized, poor and common people of India fighting through their united movement against the beastly peril!