

Pakistan faces challenges of societal security

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SOME essential elements of national security include: human security, economic security, environmental security, military security, cyber security, and most importantly societal security.

However, national security, in the changed paradigm is not only reflective of military security alone, but it remains void in the absence of a sound human security and societal security.

It is the responsibility of the state that its citizens and residents live, strive and thrive in a vibrant society, which gives them a sense of safety, security ownership and provision of equal opportunities to all. Unfortunately, an upward and extremely dangerous trend is seen in this regard.

Be it for the religious hate crimes against minorities or the child abuse, be it for the criminal acts of violence against women or murders of the minors after rape and torture; there is no respite and relief for the society in general and parents of the victims in particular.

These crimes in our country may have been happening for decades but the revolution in social media has made us all aware about these ills of the society.

Unfortunately, successive governments failed to educate the people, and effectively marginalize the criminality from the society. First of the many such cases appeared to shake the society was that of Zainab from Kasur.

A seven year girl who was abducted, raped, tortured, and murdered in Kasur on January 2018.

The entire nation rose to the occasion and called for an immediate arrest of the killer and hanging him publicly.

Imran Ali was arrested and tried expeditiously, perhaps due to immense societal pressure and hanged in Kot Lakhpat Jail, Lahore in October 2018.

Zainab's case had a profound impact on the morale of the society and parents are concerned about their children security. Despite calls for public hanging of the culprit, it did not happen due the certain laws of the land.

Therefore, the deterrent effect on other potential criminals appeared diluted and newer cases, one after the other, of similar nature and more horrific, continued unabated, while government acted on the pressure from the society to punish the individuals without any effort to prevent the recurrences.

In September 2020, another shocking incident of gang-rape occurred on Lahore-Sialkot Motorway, where a mother was victimised in front of her children.

Society was shaken on this heinous crime in which the victim survived and helped the prosecution to nab the culprits.

Malhi and Ali, the criminals were tried in Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) and handed death penalty in March 2021.

This was the first time that all the culprits involved in a gang-rape case were awarded death sentence, and also the fastest culmination of a criminal case, perhaps because it was tried in ATC.

Recently, another heart-breaking tragedy occurred in Capital Islamabad where Noor Muqaddam 27, was brutally tortured, shot, and beheaded by her family friend, Zahir Jaffar.

Since the case is subjudice, therefore, I would not comment on the merit of the case, but it is not a simple murder of a young lady, but a crime against the society.

The narrative has shaken the entire nation and the news that the killer belongs to an influential family, has further angered the people.

The entire society stands terrorized, and parents are extremely worried about their daughters of any age for stepping out of their homes.

I think the brutality, insanity, and the adverse impact on the society demands that this case be tried in ATC and concluded on priority, so as to deter the potential criminals.

Pakistan is under the cloud of hybrid war for the last many decades and a consortium of perpetrators are always on the look out to declare it as an intolerant and extremist society. Such occurrences provide fodder to the enemies' of Pakistan in their efforts.

Moreover, another serious trend that is emerging is that in certain cases either the killer or the victim is a foreign national.

This further complicates the situation and Pakistan suffers on account of being a safe and a secured state for its populace, a serious concern for human security which equals national security.

Pakistan cannot afford to let societal degeneration to hit the level which leaves its populace hold its girls and women locked in their homes to ensure their safety and security..

Pakistan's female population is over 50 percent and is extremely intelligent, hardworking, and result oriented.

From small villages to metropolitan cities, our females are making significant contributions in managing the affairs at home and in offices.

It would be worth-mentioning that our girls have been consistently out-performing our boys at school, college and university levels.

Let our daughters and sisters feel safe and secure when they move out of their homes for education and work and let us as parents feel confident that our society does not only comprise of criminals but compassionate and civilized men as well.

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