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www.afgazad.com

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Pakistan: The Blood Stream of Minorities

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The massive sectarian targeted attacks against Hazara Community on Thursday evening in Quetta, Baluchistan that initially left behind 93 dead and 120 injured has shocked the world and has been the breaking news headlines of the national and international media reports since Thursday evening (10, Jan, 2013). According to the reports aired by Pak Medias “A majority of the people killed in the Alamdar Road blasts belonged to the Hazara Shia community.” “The banned Lashkar-i-Jhangvi (LeJ) has claimed responsibility for the blasts.” It is not the first massive targeted attacks against Hazara minority which is being claimed by LeJ. The community has been paying the price of sectarian targeted attacks by Sunni ousted militants groups such as JeJ

and Sehae-Sahaba who have got close link with Alqa-eda and Taliban. Jan, 10, 2013 has been reported the Deadly Day in Pakistan. Quetta was not the only stage of mourning, Swatt valley did not end the day peacefully either. As a result of blast in Mingora of Swatt valley, 22 were dead and 70 injured.

Year 2012 was reported the worst for Hazara community which left behind 118 + killed and 100 + injured. Considering the latest incident, 2013 is deemed to be even worse than 2012. Everyone prays to begin the new year eve with the hope for change, the hope for further achievement, the hope for peace and tranquility, the hope for advancement, but for Hazara community, there is no change, they have started the new year shouldering hundreds of their communities members' dead bodies to graveyard and thinking of expending the capacity of their graveyard and hope the government does help this poor community in terms of providing them land for the expending their graveyard as it is expected to burry many more during the year.

It is for a decade that Hazara community in Paksitan has been living behind the walls of misfortunes and the community has occasionally been targeted by sectarian militants during the last decade, but the sectarian targeted attacks crossed the normal range since Oct, 20, 2011, when 40 people from the same community were selectively lined up and gunned down in Mastung, a district 50KM away from Quetta. Following the incident; Nawab Aslam Raisani, Chief Minister of the province, instead of taking action irresponsibly condemned the incident and commented as "Of millions living in Balochistan, 40 dead in Mastung is not big deal. I will send a truckload of tissue paper to the bereaved families to wipe out their tears. I would have sent tobacco if I was not a politician." Since then, the silence of Pak government and irresponsible comments of security authorizes on incidents even more encouraged the militant assailants to target the community members with no fear in any part of the city.

Waves of targeted attacks on minority communities such as Hazara ethnic in Pakistan have raised questions about the nature of these crimes. Some analysts label them as a wave of sectarian violence between Shias and Sunnis while others warn of a systematic targeting of this ethnic minority. The blurred scene on the screen is confusing, because the government officials have been trying to label the incidents noting more than sectarian conflicts, but considering the attack scenes in Baluchistan where the members of Hazara ethnic minority are being selectively distinguished and slaughtered brutally is beyond sectarian conflicts. Because, it is not only Hazaras who believe in Shia sect. So, why are the Hazaras targeted only? And what is the Pakistani government doing to protect minority groups? Despite the clarity of the scenes and claiming the responsibilities of the targeted attacks on Shia communities by the outfit religious armed groups in the country such as Lashka -re-Jangavi and Sepah-e- Sahabeh, the security

establishments of the country have not taken any practical initiations to protect the minorities yet.

The community was long being planned to be pushed behind the walls of misfortunes by targeting them during different occasions. The community had been experiencing frequent attacks during the era of 1998 to 2011, but the targeted attacks on this poor community crossed the normal range since May, 02, 2011, when the leading master mind of Alqa-e-da network (Osama bin Laden) was assassinated in Pakistan by US Special Forces. Following his death, the LeJ spokesman from an unidentified location who identified himself as Ali Sher Haideri threatened to avenge the killing of their leader Osama bin Laden and the poor Hazara community members and localities were the first revenge attacks' victims. The community has lost about 100 of their beloved members as a result of several attacks since May, 02, 2011. The victims of the incidents are mainly women, children, political leaders, civil service clerks, business men, students and teachers.

Since May, 02, 2011, there is no single day which is not the witness of Hazaras shedding tear for losing their beloved community members. The community after finger count of 30 days of resting in peace once again got the featured headlines of the Pakistani Medias. During the last two weeks, the community has lost around thirteen innocent beloved members as the result of different targeted attacks. Recently, there has been reported that as a result of targeted attacks on a local bus, seven vegetarian vendors from Hazara community while returning back to their localities from vegetable market have been selectively lined up and shot dead by terrorists at Hazar-Ganji area on Saturday, 01, Sep, 2012. Saturday's attack was the third targeted attacks on Hazara community members during the last two weeks, after a month of giving them a chance of resting in peace. Sectarian and ideological conflicts have long featured the top headlines of Pakistani Medias. Sectarian insurgencies have long been burning minorities such as Hazara community in fire and unfortunately there has not been any initiation taken by government to protect this poor community of civilian.

Waves of targeted attacks on minorities in Pakistan have raised questions about the nature of these crimes. Some analysts label them as a wave of sectarian violence between Shias and Sunnis while others warn of a systematic targeting of this ethnic minority. The blurred scene on the screen is confusing, because the government officials have been trying to label the incidents noting more than sectarian conflicts, but considering the attack scenes in Baluchistan where the members of Hazara ethnic minority are being selectively distinguished and slaughtered brutally is beyond sectarian conflicts, because it is not only Hazaras who believe in Shia sect. So, why are the Hazaras targeted only? And what is the Pakistani government doing to protect minority groups? Despite the clarity of the scenes and claiming the responsibilities of the targeted attacks

on Shia communities by the outfit religious armed groups in the country such as Lashka –re- Jangavi and Sepah-e- Sahabeh, the security establishments of the country have not taken any practical initiatives to protect the minorities yet.

The scenarios in Pakistan are quite distressing; the leaders instead of forming strategic solutions to get the state out danger are more struggling to defend their seats. Viewing the round tables on Pakistani Medias, we can note nothing else except a sort of political war and participants of the talks have got nothing else rather than blaming each other. The state is burning in sectarian and ideological fire and the leaders are busy of campaigning for the safety of their seats. There is no single part of the country where civilians can feel comfortable free of death threats and every single minutes of civilians' life is being passed in fear.

The failing security arrangements have created fear among the civilians in Pakistan, especially in Baluchistan province which has daily been witnessing deadly civilian targeted attacks. The targeted attacks are particularly done against the minority groups. Despite worldwide demonstrations against the insurgencies in the country, the government of Pakistan has not taken any practical action yet to protect its civilians. The province is burning in sectarian violence, this is what most of the civilians have been reporting to the Medias but it seems like the civilian voice is falling in deaf ears and there has been no government official raising voice to pressurize the state's security establishments for taking action.