

## KASHMIR DAY

5 Feb is observed as solidarity day each year to pledge our resolve to support Kashmiris in their struggle of self determination. It was during Shaheed Benazir Bhutto's term as Prime Minister that a parliamentary Kashmir Committee was formed to internationally raise awareness of the cause of the Kashmiri people and their struggle to have the UN resolutions implemented by India. Kashmir as an unresolved issue has remained the main bone of contention between the two countries and has been the major and insurmountable obstacle in furthering the cause of peace between the two countries.

What is happening on L o C is clear indication that India as the big brother in the region is not serious to live in peace with its neighbour. Our flexibility has harmed more than doing anything good to the country. Apart from Kashmir, Siachin, Sir Creek and water dispute continue to figure out in all bilateral talks but are never bilaterally resolved. Pakistan in spite of stubborn attitude by India had agreed to grant India MFN status needs immediate review in view of grave violations on L o C, our one sided concessions to India at this stage would certainly undermine the efforts of Kashmiris looking for self determination.

This is the day when people of Pakistan get together to highlight and expose to the world Indian brutalities and atrocities being committed on innocent Kashmiris. This is the day when Pakistan appeals to world community to help in resolving the core issue of Kashmir lingering on since 1948. Recent statement of India's Home Minister that terrorist attacks which are sponsored by India and Pakistan is blamed for them should be exploited. Today the time is ripe to refer the matter to United Nations as India has accepted that terrorist acts are initiated from its side.

The Kashmir issue must not be put on the backburner, nor should normalization of relations with India come at the cost of silence on the struggle of our brothers and sisters in Indian Occupied Kashmir. The sentiments of the Pakistani people reflect that they shall continue to support Kashmiris in their struggle till such time India honors its commitment made to UN and shall continue to remain a question of life and death for them.

Mukhtar Ahmed Butt