

Hundreds of children die in Thar area of Pakistan due to neglect of capitalist democratic government

News:

It was reported in various Pakistani newspapers on 5th March, 2016 that two more children died of malnutrition in drought-hit Tharparkar on Friday morning, raising the death toll to 194 in 64 days. Doctors said that two children who were under treatment in Mithi Civil Hospital for many days have died. Dozens of children suffering from various disease caused by malnutrition are being treated in various hospitals of Thar. (Source: <http://www.brecorder.com/general-news/172/22691/>)

Before that the Sindh High Court (SHC) had directed on Wednesday the provincial chief secretary to submit a report containing the names, mandate and working time frame of an 'independent' commission being constituted to investigate the causes of deaths in drought-hit areas of Thar. The two judges passed these directives while hearing three identical petitions seeking judicial probe into the deaths of nearly 200 people, including women and children, due to the drought in Tharparkar district. (Source: [Tribune.com](http://tribune.com))

Comment:

The Thar region of Sindh, faces severe droughts for two to three years in every 10-year cycle. In the recent past, the desert witnessed much severer droughts but those droughts had not affected human population. This year there was acute shortage of fodder for animals, which is a major source of food and livelihood for the Thari people. When animals died in huge number, the situation became alarming. Therefore the main cause of these deaths is food shortage resulting in malnutrition of mothers. The most heart wrenching fact is that these infants are dying due to starvation, premature birth, low weight, pneumonia, diarrhea, cardiac ailments and other medical conditions which are all caused mainly by maternal malnutrition and lack of medical and health facilities. The government of Pakistan has not only failed to provide the basic facilities like food and water to the poor citizens of Thar but is also trying to cover up its negligence and lack of interest. The ministers and lawmakers from the ruling party Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) in the Sindh province, termed it a 'hype created by certain sections of the media' and said the situation is better than previous years.

In a typical Capitalist system, the basic theory is that the stomachs of all the citizens of the state can never be fulfilled because the basic needs of people are unlimited while the resources of the world are limited. So according to their erroneous theory a portion of society will remain hungry and poverty ridden. This philosophy has led the Capitalist rulers of Pakistan to leave the inhabitants of Thar at the mercy of climatic changes. They have not tried to solve the basic issue of provision of safe drinking water and enough food for the humans and animals of the area. They neither provide up to the mark healthcare facilities, medical equipment and treatment instruments to the people; nor do they pay the doctors and other para-medical staff attractive wages. This has resulted in understaffed hospitals lacking medical equipment and medicines. If rain isn't sufficient then the government needs to build enough water reservoirs, channels and explore underground water irrespective of the cost as nothing is more valuable than human life. However according to the norms of Capitalist system, money is more important than the human life, that is why the central government severely objected to over 150 percent increase in cost escalation of Sindh's Thar Coal Water Carrier Project for generating electricity by using domestic coal. The water used for the Thar plant would have been treated by RO (Reverse Osmosis) process which is mostly used for

drinking water. No doubt, Capitalism has resulted in deaths of hundreds of infants and adults, as it is an economic and political system where making profit is more important than saving lives.

Another important reason of the impoverishment of that area is that under democracy the rural and under-populated areas of a country are usually ignored by the ruling parties as they will not get them maximum seats in the national and provincial assemblies, therefore mostly the development is limited to urban centers and populated cities. This is quite the opposite to the Islamic system of ruling i.e. Khilafah, where the ruling is centralized and the small provinces are given equal importance for development and provision of basic needs like food, healthcare and education. In Khilafah, the ruler doesn't fear the pressure of going to election every five years, or any pressure to appease the big multinational corporations or business lobbies to remain in power. The Khalifah can remain in power as long as he is implementing the system of Islam and Laws of Allah. That is why during the 1300 years of the glorious rule under Khilafah, Baghdad, Bukhara, Samarkand and Damascus were as prosperous as the rural areas and countryside, where the citizens had all the basic necessities provided to them free of cost or on the minimum cost.

It is reported that during 640 CE, under the rule of Khalifah Umar (RA) Arabia suffered from serious drought. There were no rains, and as such there was no cultivation. That led to serious famine. He wrote to the provincial governors asking them to send food-grains to Arabia. Camel loads of food grains and other necessities of life came from Syria, Iraq, and Egypt. Food grains were received from Egypt through the sea as well. Umar (RA) distributed food grains and other necessities among the people family wise. Meals were cooked at the State level and all persons from interior of the desert who took refuge in Madina were fed daily at state expense. According to one account as many as 40,000 persons were fed every day. In view of the resources of his disposal, Umar could afford to have dainty food but he vowed that as long as the famine lasted he would eat only what was available to an Arab of ordinary means. His stomach would rumble, but he said: "O stomach you may rumble as much as you like, but as long as the famine persists I cannot allow you anything dainty". Such was the ruler of Muslims who cared more about his accountability to Allah about the affairs of the people. This is in stark difference to the rulers under capitalism and democracy who care more about their own personal gains, profit and benefit. While Khalifah Umar (RA) used to say: "If a camel dies hungry on the banks of the River Euphrates, I fear that I will be accounted by Allah for it".

Prophet Muhammad (saw) said:

«ليس لابن آدم حق في سوي هذه الخصال بيت يسكنه وثوب يوارى عورته وجلف الخبز والماء»

“The Son of Adam has no better right than that he would have a house wherein he may live, a piece of clothing whereby he may hide his nakedness and a piece of bread and some water.” (Tirmithi, Haakim)

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
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