

Save education

By

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IN the wake of the devastating countrywide floods, public education faces an existential threat in several places. In Sindh alone, initial assessments جائزوں indicate that almost 16,000 out of a total of 36,646 functional public schools have been badly damaged, either directly by the floodwater or by those who took shelter پناہ in them. School infrastructure was already in tatters تباہ, and the floods have made it worse.

In any given month, student absenteeism غیر موجودگی remains high – between 40pc and 60pc according to some estimates. Dropout rates at the primary level – are massive; reportedly, almost 50pc of children walk out of school before reaching Class 5, and the transition منتقلی from primary to secondary school remains stubbornly طور پر low. Of course, it is no secret that the quality of education continues to be of serious concern تشویش, with periodic متواتر surveys and assessments جائزوں highlighting low scores in language (English, Urdu and Sindhi) mathematics and general science tests. While the percentage share of education in the provincial outlay اخراجات increased from 13.4pc in 2011 to 18.5pc in 2017, the overall

impact اثر on the school environment has been **negligible** بہت کم، نہ ہونے کے برابر.

Meanwhile, the population of out-of-school children is growing. The numbers falling under this category across primary, middle, secondary and higher secondary school in Sindh is estimated at 6.75 million children aged from five to 16 years; the number of children dropping out has seen an increase from 1.87m in 2007-08 to 2.57m. My experience while working on international projects focusing on education in Sindh tells me that these numbers could be **inflated** بڑھنا, as the government, which wants foreign loans and grants, is not prepared to correct them. **Nonetheless** بہر حال, the issue of children dropping out of school remains a serious concern.

Due to these **woes** پریشانیاں, millions of children continue to be **deprived of** محروم their constitutional right to education, while huge urban-rural as well as gender **inequalities** عدم مساوات **abound** بے بکثرت in the province. Half the people live in the rural areas where **chronic** دائمی problems like illiteracy, out-of-school children, a growing population, and poor learning **outcomes** نتائج refuse to **go away** ختم ہونا . For example, according to some estimates اندازے, literacy may actually have **declined** کم ہوئی from 60pc to 58pc. With regard to urban-rural differences, 73pc of the population (10 years and above) is said to be literate in the urban areas whereas in the rural areas, the figure is only 39pc. When it comes to literacy among girls, matters are even worse.

Why has the education crisis remained unsolvable since independence? We have seen many rulers – military dictators

and civilian leaders – come and go but an effective and efficient solution to the chronic ills دائمی مسائل، برائیاں، قابل موثر، قابل that beset گھیرے میں لیا this sector of national life has eluded everyone. Over seven decades, several education policies, five-year plans, and dozens of development schemes have attempted to put the system on track but all efforts have been in vain بیکار میں.

Faulty ناقص planning, deficient غیر موثر governance, poverty, and lack of awareness about the importance of education among parents are commonly cited حوالہ دیا جاتا ہے as the main reasons behind the continuous failure of the effort to boost فروغ دینا، اضافہ کرنا learning. The hard truth is that these problems could have been effectively tackled نمٹے جا سکتے تھے – had the ruling elite demonstrated مخلص مظاہرہ کیا a sincere commitment عزم towards education. For them, the children of the poor and powerless اختیار ہے don't matter beyond rhetoric and cosmetic gestures. Following the 18th Constitutional Amendment, education became a fundamental بنیادی right, but despite that, allocation مختص کرنے in terms of GDP percentage continues to be ridiculously مضحکہ low. Clearly, no priority ترجیح is attached to educating our children.

Sadly, education is no longer a common good but a commodity قیمت شے، only accessible قابل رسائی to those who can afford it. Well-off امیر parents have no interest in the public education system. Market-based solutions have birthed

multiple schooling systems ie English-medium elite schools, private schools, low-cost private schools, religious schools, etc. A **hierarchical** کا درجہ بندی schooling system is **reinforcing** existing social **stratifications** طبقہ بندی and **biases** تعصبات. The government doesn't have a clear policy on how to **tackle** نمٹنا the challenge; it can only come up with **haphazardly** سے ترتیبی prepared education plans and projects, which obviously don't work.

The growing urban and rural and gender inequalities in education cannot be **plugged** ختم unless the whole **paradigm** نمونہ of education planning and implementation is reviewed and radically revised. Business as usual has never worked. The flood not only offers an opportunity to address the chronic دائمی problems listed here but also a chance to make education **resilient** لچکدار to climate change. It is up to the policymakers to turn the challenge into an opportunity and find **innovative** جدید solutions that could **pave the way** راہ ہموار کرنا for change in Pakistan.

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Exporting Hindutva

Editorial

AS Hindutva ideologues حاملے نظریات کے have moved from the fringes کنارے of Indian society to the centre of power, this anti-Muslim ideology is now being 'exported' to foreign shores ساحلوں. A recent incident in the US state of New Jersey created an uproar ہنگامہ when a bulldozer — festooned سجا ہوا with the picture of the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, who doubles as a radical بنیاد پرست Hindu holy man — participated in an Indian independence day parade. The bulldozer has been used to terrorise خوفزدہ کرنا Muslim communities by demolishing مسمار کرنا homes in India. The hate is spreading, with the latest ugly manifestation مظہر، ظہور of Hindutva in foreign climates فضاؤں occurring in the British city of Leicester. The city has been on edge کنارے since the Aug 28 Asia Cup match between Pakistan and India, when fans of the latter reportedly shouted 'death to Pakistan'. The crisis escalated بڑھ گئے after some 200 men staged an aggressive جارحانہ march in the Midlands city chanting 'Jai Shri Ram'. Indian Muslims are familiar with this refrain سے گریز; what is supposed to be a religious exclamation نعرہ has been transformed by the Sangh Parivar into a battle cry against Muslims. Members of the Muslim community have staged counter protests, and local police say they have arrested 47 individuals in connection with the disturbances. According to the Muslim Council of Britain, an advocacy group, this is part of a "series of provocations

”اشتعال انگیزی“ which have included **chanting** لگانا outside mosques, as well as targeting Muslim homes and businesses.

These **grim** سنگین developments indicate that Hindutva now also **poses** رکھنا لاحق کرنا, a significant threat to **communal** فرقہ how serious the threat is, members of the Democratic Party in New Jersey have asked the American government to investigate US-based Hindutva **outfits** تنظیمیں as “domestic branches” of “foreign hate groups”. Western governments must not underestimate the threat that outfits connected to the Sangh Parivar pose to their domestic security. Just as these states keep a **vigilant** چوکس eye on Muslim **extremists** شدت پسند, pro-Hindutva **fanatics** جنونی must also be watched to stop them from creating communal problems in the West. Moreover, numerous West-based charities linked to the Sangh Parivar need to be investigated to ensure they are not funnelling دینا funds to India that help finance anti-Muslim **hatred** نفرت. Progressive Hindu groups in the US have spoken out against Hindutva **mischief** فسادات in that country. Indeed, to defeat the designs of **fanatics** جنونی, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh community leaders need to work together to prevent the **poison** زہر of **communalism** واریت from further infecting the **diaspora** تارکین وطن.

Published in Dawn,

The **Eighteenth Amendment of the Constitution of Pakistan** (Urdu: آئین پاکستان میں اٹھارہویں ترمیم) was passed by the National Assembly of Pakistan on April 8, 2010, removing the power of the President of Pakistan to dissolve the Parliament unilaterally, turning Pakistan from a semi-presidential to a parliamentary republic, and renaming North-West Frontier Province to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

GDP

Gross domestic product is a monetary measure of the market value of all the final goods and services produced in a specific time period by countries

Hindutva (transl. Hinduness) is the predominant form of Hindu nationalism in India. The term was coined by Chandranath Basu and was propounded as a political ideology by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar in 1923. It is used by the organisation Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and other organisations, collectively called the Sangh Parivar.

The **Sangh Parivar** (translation: "Family of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh" or the "RSS family") refers, as an umbrella term, to the collection of Hindu nationalist organisations spawned by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which remain affiliated to it. These include the political party Bharatiya Janata Party, religious organisation Vishva Hindu Parishad, students union Akhil

Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), religious militant organisation Bajrang Dal that forms the youth wing of the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), and the worker's union Bharatiya Kishan Sangh.

A **diaspora**) is a population that is scattered across regions which are separate from its geographic place of origin. Historically, the term was used in reference to the mass dispersion of Jews from the ancient kingdoms of Israel and Judah

Today's words Synonyms

tatters (noun): pieces; shreds; bits.

haphazardly (adverb): aimlessly; desultorily, erratically,

paradigm (noun): model; pattern; exampl.

fringe (noun): perimeter; periphery; border.

festoon (verb):
decorate; adorn; ornament.

exclamation (noun): cry; shriek; roar.

funnel (verb): channel; guide; convey.

provocation (noun): incitement; annoyance; agitation.

stubborn (adjective): obstinate; mulish; adamant.

Today's Vocabulary and their Use

festoon سجا ہوا : the staffroom was festooned with balloons and streamers.

elude نظر انداز کرنا یا بچنا : he tried to elude the security men by sneaking through a back door.

vigilant چوکس : He warned the public to be vigilant and report anything suspicious.

enigmatic پراسرار : he took the money with an enigmatic smile.