



## Visionless Pakistani Government Intensifies Secularisation of its Education System to Please its Western Masters

Out of the many issues faced by the Pakistani Education system, the most dangerous is the secularization of the middle school because polluted ideas, can cause irreparable damage to the future generation. The roots of the secularization propaganda lie in the missionary invasion of the Muslim lands which took place before the fall of the Caliphate. In the Asian sub-continent it started earlier than the Arab areas, as soon as the Mughal rule finished. Lord Macaulay's statement of replacing India's old and ancient education system which was based upon Islam, to kill the people's pride in their Islamic culture and heritage, so that they engender a love and acceptance for the English language and culture till it is followed as a holy scripture. A report from the "Center for Research and Security Studies" highlights what the colonialists view as the problem with the Pakistani curriculum. It states: Class 4 and 5 books 'are bursting with anti-Hindu and anti-Sikh themes. By Class 6, anti-Christian, anti-British and anti-European indoctrination begins. Children are taught that the "*Christians and Europeans were not happy to see the Muslims flourishing in life.*" Anti-Jewish postulations are introduced in Class 7. In Classes 9-10, the 'importance of Jihad' is cultivated. Relevant text it quoted, says that mentioning the 1965 India Pakistan war portrays India as evil, also the separation of East Pakistan is taught as an Indian conspiracy.

In Pakistan, the secular agenda is working in two different ways; one is in the government/public sector where a specially designed syllabus to control and enslave the minds of children with secular ideas to serve the interests of the government's US masters is imposed on the students and they are supposed to take it as a necessary medicine, whatever the effects. Curricula in Pakistan have always been played with according to the rulers' political interest at the time. For example, in the period of Zia ul Haq, the need of the time was to play with the Islamic emotions of the people to fight the USSR, so he made Islamiyat compulsory from primary school to University level. Arabic language from class 6 was introduced in the public schools and was stopped later without any explanation. In the Musharraf era interests changed as Pakistan joined America in its War on Terror against Islam and the Muslims. Hence American instructions were followed, this time to remove jihad from the syllabi. Musharraf also announced an Education Sector Reform (ESR), aimed at modernizing the education system through curriculum reform. One of the major objectives of the ESR was the setting up of a more secular education system, amidst increasing international pressure and concern about so-called Islamic extremism in Pakistan. After 9/11 US President George Bush said: "*President Musharraf has shown great leadership*" but there were occasions when he had to talk to President Musharraf to remind him of the need to change some of his policies, particularly Pakistan's education policy.

Over many decades, Pakistan's education system has been subjected to continuous de-Islamization agendas and programmes at the hand of Western colonial governments and institutions. However, the country's involvement in the War on Terror has intensified this agenda to colonize the minds of Pakistan's children. Now it is portrayed as a battle against the so-called fundamentalists who the Western colonialists and their puppet regime claim have an Islamic mindset and are the biggest enemies of education. This is used as an excuse by the Government to further eradicate the teaching of Islamic history and Islamiyat texts. A selective version of history is taught and our glorious Islamic heritage is ignored. And chapters on Malala Yousufzai, the golden-girl of the West, and Arfa Kareem have been added in the social studies book for Grade 4, while chapters on the western-serving rulers, Benazir Bhutto and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto are going to be a part of grades 5 and 6, respectively.

Furthermore, Islam and studies of Islam should be the core of all knowledge for a Muslim. However, in 2004 during a National Assembly session, Education Minister Zubaida Jalal in reply to a question from Laiq Khan (MMA, Sindh) about whether and why Quranic verses had been omitted from biology books for the intermediate first year stated, "*The inclusion of Quranic verses is not a requirement of curriculum.*" In 2006, certain changes were made to the primary syllabus and Islamiyat-related content was omitted from all other subjects. In 2006 the government

announced another series of reforms and a Pakistan Education Task Force (PETF) was set up to reduce and reverse the level of Islamization of the education system by keeping Islamic instructions restricted to specifically Islamic studies and out of other general subjects. A revised curriculum guide was formulated whose provisions included, the reduction of Islamic instructions, the introduction of “the role of minorities in Pakistan” for grades 8-10, emphasis on the role of minorities in the creation of Pakistan and pre-Islamic history.

69 percent of educational institutions in Pakistan are public, thus under government supervision. The federal Ministry of Education is responsible for curriculum, syllabus, planning, policy and standards. Then there are provincial curriculum centers working on studies schemes based on the national policy, market demand and global issues. Market demand and global issues are often defined by NGOs, which are foreign-funded and act according to their interests. Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar last year admitted that several NGOs in Pakistan are backed by the US, India and Israel and the NGO, “Save the Children”, was asked to leave the country for its involvement with the CIA and the tracking down of Usama Bin Laden.

Last year, the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), in consultation with a local Pakistan-based NGO, Peace and Education Foundation, issued a report recommending further review of Pakistani textbooks. The report, entitled, “Teaching Intolerance in Pakistan - Religious Bias in Public School Textbooks” recommended that in the name of so-called ‘Religious Tolerance’, overemphasis on Islam as being the “*only correct*” faith should be eliminated from school textbooks. It also criticized the prominent trend in school books of glorifying Jihad and war heroes, particularly the Islamic conquest of Sindh by Muhammad ibn Qasim. In addition, it aimed towards the mention of other Islamic beliefs in the education curricula. One example quoted as being problematic was that, “*The Islamic religion, culture and social system are different from non-Muslims...*” The report also recommended that secular international norms on religious freedoms be reflected in textbooks’ contents and that absolutely no content should be taught that celebrates one religion at the expense of another. Furthermore, it argued that the curriculum should inculcate a sense of constructive patriotism and that heroes from all religious minorities should be included in textbooks. According to the USCIRF, a majority of their so-called “examples of religious intolerance” (equated to basic Islamic beliefs) published in their previous 2011 report, “Connecting the Dots: Education and Religious Discrimination in Pakistan” had already been removed from textbooks by local authorities.

In the Private sector social and moral values are attacked by creating doubts about religion in the name of debate and discussion. Exposure to western culture through textbooks and extra literature and videos in the name of interactive learning is common. History books taught in middle school include chapters on Islamic history, which many students have complained are taught so as to show the acceptability of taking disbelievers as close allies and friends, even though the Qur’an in Surah al-Maa’idah, verse 51 prohibits this. In literature, the western view on love and romance is introduced through poetry and novels from a very young age. For example, Romeo and Juliet is taught in grade 8. Non-Islamic doctrines are being taught under the guise of Islamiyat, including details about all religions such as Judaism and Hinduism. There have even been cases of non-Muslim teachers teaching Islamiyat and daring to mock Islamic history and insult famous personalities of Islamic history, including the Companions of the Holy Prophet (saw).

As many private schools offer O’ and ‘A’ Levels, their syllabi and books are imported from Britain because these exams are conducted by boards in the UK which demand that curricula should meet their standards. This shows the old link between our education and our colonial masters who ended the madrassa system and introduced the formal secular education system in the country. Islamiyat and Pakistan studies for O’ level students were made compulsory in the time of Zia ul Haq so that their certificate would meet the college requirements. Earlier they started missionary schools and right now all public and private schools are knowingly or unknowingly playing the role of those missionary schools. In literature, the fine arts, history, and even in the sciences, for example, children are exposed to material that goes against their Islamic beliefs. For instance, children of grade 6 would spend months studying about Egyptian civilization and making clay models of mummies, while Islamic rule over Egypt will be completely ignored as according to their view it has nothing worthy enough to discuss.

