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Hazaras are Targeted Indiscriminately in Pakistan

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On Tuesday, October 16, Gunman on motorbikes shot four people from Hazara community in a busy scrap market in Quetta, Pakistan. However, no one has claimed the responsibility but the attack bears the hallmarks of sectarian violence. Hundreds of people from Hazara community have been killed in Balochistan.

Based on reports, thousands of people escaped to neighboring Afghanistan or risked their lives in the way towards Europe and Australia. Yet the government has no plan to persecute those who are behind such attacks. Sepah-e-Sahaba and Lashkar-e-Jhangavi are terrorist organizations that mostly take the responsibility of such attacks.

Quetta can be labeled as worst place to be Hazara in current situation. On Monday, June 18, Hazara students aboard a bus going to university came under severe firing by unknown militants. In the incident four students were killed and 54 people were injured who were mostly university students. Sure, as you know, it was not an unusual incident instead it was an addition in the lengthy series of target killing of Hazara community.

Mariabad and Hazara Town, in Quetta, where Hazaras live, would be the next target. But no doubt, the collapse of Taliban regime and escape of militants to Pakistan is not much unrelated to mounting targeted killings. Before 2001, however there were incidents but could not be linked to targeted killings. But after

that time, no matter, how much experts and analysts tried to notice other reasons for apparent sectarian killings, they failed to present very concrete and logical reasons.

Finally, the only reason behind assassinations is sectarianism and communal violence. However, ethnic and religious tensions are interlinked with the very partition of Pakistan and India, but frequency and intensity of attacks on Hazara community has gone far away. 2012 would be record year for past eleven years. Still a single month has not passed without shedding of blood of members of this community. Previously, government employees and key communal figures were mostly attacked, but presently no one is safe. Common people, including women and children, are targeted and shot dead.

But the problem lies with inactivity against or unserious persecution of culprits. Lashkar-e-Janhgvi openly claims to be behind killings. Yet government has led its leaders to remain out of prison, while it is hard to believe that Pakistani security establishment is unaware of their hideouts. And the only way to pull situation back to normality is persecution and punishment of culprits; otherwise the progressive instability can prove highly political and economically consequential for the entire country.