

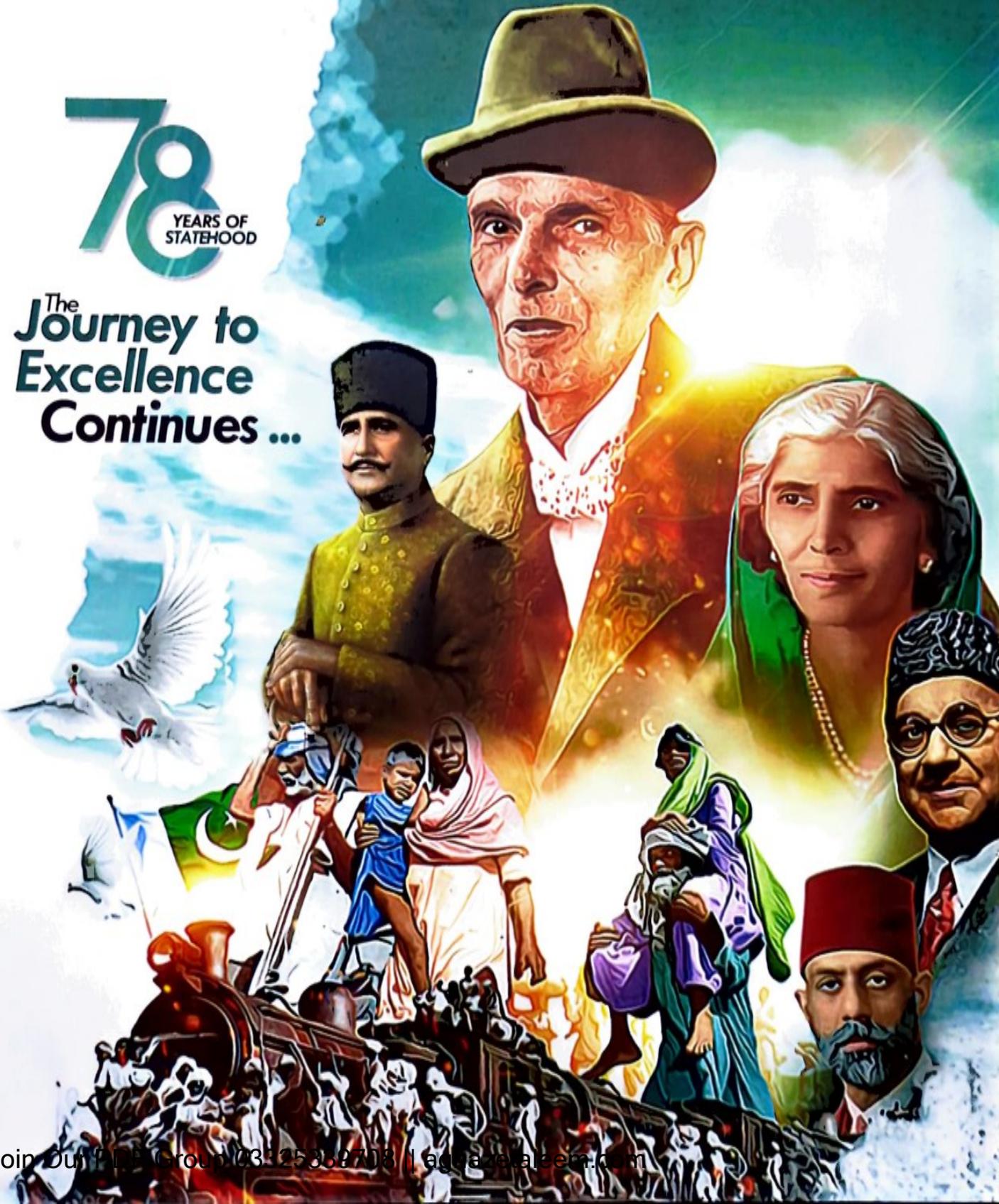
JAHANGIR'S

VOL 18 ISSUE XI AUGUST '25

WORLD TIMES

78
YEARS OF
STATEHOOD

The
**Journey to
Excellence
Continues ...**



Emergence of the Fourth Reich in INDIA

During the recent conflict between India and Pakistan, one thing the world noticed so conspicuously was the false and fake news as well as the feverish pitch on which those were spread by the Indian media. Many Indian television channels looked like animated video games, with graphics and crude sounds. This situation felt as if a month's worth of misinformation bombarded media within the first few hours. Fake news was spread with so much impunity that even the government agencies began issuing fact checks on their official X accounts. However, it was also not so surprising for many that the Narendra Modi-led Indian government never tried to rein them in. Indeed, this is an era of "propaganda" and in this era, when one lies, one should lie big and stick to it. In the instant write-up, the author has elaborated on the negative role of Indian media that it has played while toeing Modi's line.



In the aftermath of the Pahalgam incident, and the four-

day war initiated by India against Pakistan, Indian media widely practised deception through fake news, propaganda and disinformation. Their anchors, reporters, analysts and politicians acted like disciples of Goebbels, Minister for Propaganda and Public Enlightenment in Nazi Germany, who disseminated Nazi ideology through mass media and manipulated information to control public opinion. Goebbels famously said, "Repeat a lie often enough and it becomes the truth". Just as Goebbels glorified Hitler and his Nazi ideology through propaganda, Indian media has glorified Modi and his Hindutva-driven extremist ideology. Nazis used the concept of "Three Reichs" to frame their regime as the peak of German history. The First Reich referred to the Holy Roman Empire (962-1806), the Second Reich to the German Empire under the Kaisers (1871-1918) and the Third Reich to Nazi Germany (1933-1945). Fourth Reich is commonly used to refer to a hypothetical successor to Adolf Hitler's Third Reich and the possible resurgence of Nazi ideas. Some scholars believe that India's inclination towards fascism and Nazi-style propaganda techniques under Narendra Modi are akin to the emergence of the Fourth Reich in the 21st century, with Hindutva replacing Nazism.

Hindutva shares doctrines, belief systems and a radical mindset with Nazism. Hitler believed in the concept of *Lebensraum* - a policy of Nazi Germany that involved expanding German territories to the East to provide



Safia Malik

land and material resources for the German people, while driving out Jewish and Slavic people - which was primarily developed and popularized between the 1890s and 1940s. The concept gained prominence around 1901 and became a geopolitical goal for Imperial Germany during World War I.

Fouad Hafeez in his book 'Hindutva: The Rise of the Fourth Reich' mentioned that Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, in his 1923 book 'Essentials of Hindutva', advocated for the application of *Lebensraum* as part of the concept of *Akhand Bharat*, which envisions a Pan-Indian empire with the inclusion of present-day Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar - almost all of South Asia. There are a number of similarities between Nazi Germany's Schutzstaffel (SS) and the Indian right-wing Hindu nationalist volunteer paramilitary organization Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). The SS was formed in April 1925, and the RSS was founded a few months later in September 1925, possibly drawing organizational ideas from the SS. The SS was originally a paramilitary organization that provided security to the Nazi Party. Later, it expanded to become a deep state in Nazi Germany, responsible for enforcing Nazi racial policies and persecuting political and other opponents of the Nazi regime. Initially, the RSS presented itself as a cultural and apolitical organization promoting Hindu unity, but gradually evolved into a key driver of Hindu nationalist ideology in India. Since the 1980s, the RSS and its

affiliates have been increasingly involved in communal violence in India, culminating in the 1992 demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya and the 2002 Gujarat riots in which about 2000 people were killed, mostly Muslims. These events marked a clear shift in the RSS's role from cultural advocacy to active involvement in shaping a majoritarian political narrative that has marginalized and brutalized religious minorities in India.

The establishment of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the political face of the RSS, in April 1980, gave Hindu nationalists a license to abuse Indian minorities with impunity. Like the SS, RSS is also involved in systematic violence against minorities in India, echoing the organized persecution of minorities seen in Nazi Germany. Nazi Germany's model of an Aryan majority and the extermination of minorities finds its application in Modi's India, where Hindu supremacy and majoritarianism is being promoted alongside

targeting of minorities, particularly Muslims. In February 2025, a Washington-based research group mentioned that instances of hate speech against minorities in India, including Muslims, increased by 74 percent in 2024. The Nazi-Hindutva ideological alignment is not new: as early as 1938, Hindutva ideologue V.D. Savarkar stated, "If we Hindus in India grow stronger in time, these Muslim friends will have to play the part of German Jews." This mindset is unmistakably reflected in the policies and actions of the BJP government led by Modi and his ilk. The Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) of 2019, for instance, provided a path to Indian citizenship for

non-Muslim refugees from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, explicitly excluding Muslims and, thus, institutionalizing religious discrimination. Human rights abuses by Indian forces in occupied Kashmir further exemplify the targeting of Muslims in areas under Indian occupation. The use of bulldozer justice, crackdown on dissenting journalists and restrictions on international media's access to Indian-occupied Kashmir reinforce the pattern of state-driven suppression and terrorism. Collectively, these actions prove that India is pursuing a governance model increasingly aligned with the ideology and methods of Nazism.

Controlling the media and spreading disinformation was a central strategy of Hitler's Nazism, and this approach is being fully replicated in India. In view of its systematic propaganda campaign against other countries, the World

Economic Forum's Global Risks Report 2024 identified India as the most vulnerable country to disinformation among the 34 nations they studied. Furthermore, according to the 2024 World Press Freedom Index, India ranked 161st among 180 countries in terms of press freedom. The report noted that Indian media had fallen into an unofficial state of emergency since Narendra Modi came to power in 2014.

During the recent four-day war with Pakistan, to keep the Indian people in the dark and unaware of facts, the Indian government sent executive orders to X, demanding that the platform block over 8,000 accounts in India. As per the platform's statement, the orders included demands to block access to accounts belonging to international news platforms and prominent X users in India. Notably, accounts of Chinese state-run media outlets such as Xinhua News Agency and Global Times, as well as Türkiye's TRT World, were among those restricted on X. These actions were part of India's broader efforts to control the narrative and limit external influence during the heightened tensions with Pakistan following the Pahalgam false-flag operation and hide losses suffered during Pakistan's counterpunch in response to Indian attacks between 7 and 10 May 2025.

India's military aggression against nuclear-armed Pakistan in February 2019 and May 2025 and Pakistan's befitting response under its Quid Pro Quo Plus policy have heightened tensions between the two nuclear-armed neighbours. It is pertinent to recall that the Nazi invasion of Poland in 1939, which triggered

World War II and led to the death of an estimated 70-85 million people worldwide, serves as a reminder that any Indian miscalculation and irresponsible action could escalate into a nuclear war with catastrophic consequences, not only for South Asia but also the entire world. The global capitals must, therefore, be alarmed at India's irresponsible behaviour as a nuclear weapon state. ■

The writer is a Research Officer at Center for International Strategic Studies Sindh (CISSS). She has an MPhil degree in International Relations from the University of Karachi, and has worked as Research Assistant with a faculty member of Prince Muhammad Bin Fahad University, Saudi Arabia. She can be reached at safiactss@gmail.com

