

Banning festivity

EVERY year, as the winter chill gives way to the arrival of spring, a centuries-old tradition is suppressed by the state in the name of public safety. While Basant has been an established rite of spring in northern parts of the subcontinent, particularly Punjab, nearly two decades ago, the state banned kite-flying during the festival on public safety grounds. The reason given was that kite strings in many cases are coated with glass, and can be deadly, though it was suspected that the ban was enforced to please conservative elements in society. There indeed is a problem with glass-coated string, but this is something that can be addressed without cancelling Basant itself. On Friday, revellers in Rawalpindi defied the ban by flying kites, though the authorities were quick to pick up over 100 individuals selling kites and flying them. A number of people were also injured by stray bullets in the garrison city due to aerial firing to mark Basant. Unfortunately, on all occasions of joy — Eid, Independence Day, victories in cricket matches, New Year's Eve, etc — this barbaric 'custom' claims lives and causes serious injuries.

There are ways for the authorities to make Basant safe for all, while addressing the negative aspects. For example, the manufacture of hazardous string should be curtailed, while the menace of aerial firing must be ended across the country on all joyous occasions. This can only be done if those who indulge in this irresponsible act are penalised. But overall, the state should lift the ban and let people celebrate Basant as per tradition. As it is, Pakistan is a joyless country due to a variety of reasons. Why take away the few joys people have left? Instead of cracking down on kite-flyers, the state should encourage the celebration of Basant as a marker of cultural identity, while taking reasonable precautions to ensure public safety.

DATE: ___/___/___

Banning Festival : Not an Encourageable move

Each year; in the name of people safety, centuries old tradition is banned by state. In Bassant festival, for public safety kite flying is banned by state.

The cause of ban was kite string coated of glass can be harmful for people.

Authority have different ways to make basant safe for everyone, while considering the negative impacts. It can be done by penalized those who are involved in this irresponsible act. State should encourage Basant celebration instead of cracking down on kite-flyers and take measured solution to ensure people safety.

Total Words = 300

My Words = 95