

**Hafiz Saeed, Lashkar a liability: Pak. Minister**

Mr. Asif said some statements made by Mr. Trump were “blatant lies.” “...no billions of dollars have been dished out to us,” he said. “It was money which was reimbursed for the services we rendered to the USA and its allies,” he said, referring to the Coalition Support Fund (CSF) that America gives to Pakistan for the Afghan war. Pakistan receives American support under other heads also.

Mr. Asif said before Pakistan joined the war against the Soviet Union, it was a liberal country where people of all faiths and sects could live together.

“Sunnis, Shias, Christians, Hindus... all could live together. They were all Pakistanis. Now people change their names...(to protect their identity) This is a tragedy...Please don't blame us for the tragedy that we are in...Share this agony and anguish with us,” the Minister said.

**‘Paying a heavy price’**

He said it was to suit the American interests in the region that Pakistan turned into promotion of jihad. “.. what we did to justify the jihad in 1980, we reversed everything...Because that suited then our friends, the Americans. In that process our ethos was destroyed and the whole generation of my country is paying a very heavy price.” He criticised India for disengaging with Pakistan and added that the targeting of minorities in India would lead to further instability in the region.

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