

## Fear, or fear of the fear?

Once again the memory of that fateful Black Tuesday is upon us. For those who lost their loved one on September 11, the memory is non-erasable. For the rest of us who escaped that day's horror, it is beginning to look - year after year - like yet another day. The compassion that brought us together as it never did before, has all but evaporated. The bonds formed in the aftermath of it have vanished long since.



Before anyone could fathom - even before the families could properly grieve - reasoning was replaced by revenge and the foresight by blinding fear. God knows how many 1000-kg cave busters were dropped in the ravines of Afghanistan since then, but the perpetrator is still alive and happily engaged in his periodic

soliloquy.

Then, there is this wretched engagement called Iraq war, which even after 4-1/2 years of its spectacular launch, still rages with nothing remotely resembling 'end' in sight. After the death of nearly 4000 US servicemen, self-expatriation of Iraqis in millions (not counting the self-internment of millions more in refugee camps in their own country, a condition unheard of even during the long, dark and tyrant reign of Saddam Hussein), the sustained ethnic killing at the rate of 60 per day on a 'good normal' day, and at the modest cost of \$18 million per hour, isn't it divine that only one person on this earth can look himself in the mirror, taste the victory and boast about it?

Sadly, the true lessons of 9/11 have been lost. We lost our innate humanity, compassion and empathy. Its backdrop has been brazenly exploited in shedding more blood, causing greater destruction and spreading more misery- both in Iraq and Afghanistan. The myopia also led to an ever-increasing barrage of anti-Islam rhetoric and anti-Muslim slogans. For me as a Muslim, this anniversary has painful ramifications. Only one benchmark has been successfully achieved: instilling acute fear of Islam, Muslims and now the Arabic language, in the hearts and psyche of the Americans who have been morphed into a herd of depressed and fearful weaklings. Nothing could be more fatal than this fear.