

## Headlines:

- **Russian Bombardment on Syria restarts**
- **India's Currency Crisis**
- **US wants Pakistan Textbooks Changed**

## Details:

### **Russian Bombardment on Syria restarts**

This week has seen Russia restart its bombing campaign alongside the regime on Eastern Aleppo. This was after a break which according to Russia acted as a gateway for aid but in reality was for their latest aircraft carrier to arrive and the arrangement of subsequent campaigns. This week has seen the bombing become relentless with the last few remaining hospitals bombed to the ground as the regime tries to retake and damage the morale of the rebels. The US continues to remain silent with outgoing President Obama telling Putin in a meeting on Sunday to be more responsible in their airstrikes. However, the US position on the rebels is clear as Trump's phone call to Putin encouraging him to continue taking out rebel groups just vocalises US policy all along. Only time will tell whether or not the rebels can turn an increasingly deep situation around.

### **India's Currency Crisis**

Earlier this week, Modi implemented a ban on Rs 500 and Rs 1000 in order to combat corruption in India's growing black market. The abrupt decision to remove high-valued currency from circulation has been met with public outrage. Most people keep cash as opposed to storing it in a bank account, furthermore, as the ban is on higher valued rupees, it has become very difficult for the poor to break what currency they own so as to purchase basic goods and services. This has led to exhausting cues outside of banks, which are endless and almost always slow to move. Many are currently angered by such a decision that was made with absolutely no consent, and although it may be to combat corruption, it has only done damage to the poor in India. Although these higher valued rupees will be replaced with new currency, in addition to more security features, it is clear that the notorious corruption within India is a systemic problem, one that will certainly not be solved by monetary and fiscal tinkering.

### **US wants Pakistan Textbooks Changed**

In the name of "curriculum development," the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) in consultation with a local NGO has recommended further review of the Pakistani textbooks insisting that overemphasis on Islam as being the "only correct" faith must be eliminated from the school textbooks. In its report "TEACHING INTOLERANCE IN PAKISTAN- Religious bias in Public School textbooks", the USCIRF report also said that the foremost reoccurring trend in textbooks from all grade levels is an overemphasis on the glorification of war and war heroes. "In particular, the conquest of Sindh by Muhammad bin Qasim and 17 famous attacks by Sultan Mehmood Ghaznavi are included proudly in every textbook. Highlighting these two events as the beginning of civilization in the sub-continent, while ignoring the evolution of art, architecture, and culture, remains a key problem in textbooks," the report said, adding, "In post-independence history, wars with India are emphasized and examples of peace initiatives are largely ignored, resulting in an unbalanced historical discourse focused on intractable conflict. This narrow nationalism only fulfills the task of educating Pakistanis in the most superficial way."