

**LETTERS**

*But what can he do, if helooses his ‘Mother Land’*

**Sir,**

I am giving hereunder are poems on the above subject which has been translated from Russian and published in a Russian periodical.

If man loses his eyes even then he could hear the music himself. On losing cars he could look at the rainbow on his own. Even if he loses his arm he still can dance at all the carnivals. On losing his legs he can hug dearly all his dear ones. Even though at the loss of his beloved you take shelter in his motherland. But what can he do, if he loses his ‘MOTHER LAND’?

—Rajendra Radaz

Tumkur

Karnataka

**Sir,**

I have been regularly getting the complimentary copy of your news paper for quite sometime. Needless to say, I remain ever obliged for your kind gesture to you for my sake.

As an Indian Muslim, I am in agreement with most of your views. I also strongly feel that the Kashmiri Pandits must get justice and should return to the Valley—which of course is their home. They should be given their lost house (s).

Now, I will like to draw your kind attention to the interview of Ir. Aksho Khajuria in your periodical of Nov 16-30, 1998, where in he says that the NC government is a total failure.

I feel that Ir. Khajuria has only tried to defend the BJP, when he says that there is no alliance with NC. NC has failed in U&K and BJP elsewhere. This point has been proved in recent assembly elections! The BJP stands isolated having failed on all fronts.

—Mr Zafar Jung, President Muslim Mainstream Movement, New Delhi

**THOSE WHO LEFT US**

(1-12-98-31-12-98)

Kashmir Sentinel and Panjshir Foundation mourn their sad demise and pray for peace to the departed souls.

4. Sh. Radha Krishner Rawat, presently at Lane No 1, New Nagar Jammu, 24/11/98.
7. Sh. Rashid Nath Mattu, Rio Shyari Sgr., presently at Lane No 1, New Nagar Jammu, 30/11/98.
9. Sh. Prithvi Nath Tikoo, Rio Shalikad, Sgr. presently at 414-C Om Nagar, Ucabada Road, Jammu, 2/12/98.
13. Sh. Raj Nath Nathoo, Rio Thaloo, Sgr. presently at Lane No 2, Zusa Vihar Road, Jammu, 2/12/98.
15. Sh. Suresh Nath Mattu, Rio Karuakat, Sgr. presently at Ballother, Old Guga Near Balcho Balch, Jammu, 2/12/98.

**Condolence**

Smt. Prabha Dhar W/o Dr. Madhusudan Lal Dhar (Eye Specialist) Rio 96-Bal Garden Sinigar expired on 21-12-96 at Chandigarh.

A.K. Dhar

97/3, 27th A, Maj, 9th Block

Jayanagar,

Bangalore-59
KASHMIR SENTINEL

Wishes
New Year Greetings
To Its Readers

Kashmir Sentinel

Printer Publisher  B.N. KAUL for and on behalf of Panun Kashmir Foundation
Editor  SHAILENDR AIMA
Printed at  The Kashmir Times Press, Gagaghi, Jammu
Owned by  PANUN KASHMIR FOUNDATION
Published from  149-Bam Vhar, Old Jammu, Jammu - 180007

KASHMIR SENTINEL

Incomprehension is the enemy

N
ation continues to be indifferent to the continued genocide of Kashmiri Pandits. They are the same people whose contribution in the ancient past and the contemporary present helped India earn the fame of an ancient civilisation and a modern nation. Unlike other ethnic groups Kashmiri Pandits never demanded special reservations or raised preferential autonomy demands. Pandits only expected that they will not be subjected to ethnic exclusion.

Kashmiri Pandits did and continue to do everything that will strengthen the country and its image. When a Congress leader like VN Gadgil feels that continued indifference of all political parties towards the plight of Kashmir Pandits has grave political ramifications for the country, it only implies that there is fundamentally something wrong in the handling of Kashmir by the Indian political establishment.

Why is it that Indian stakes in Kashmir are not being defined in clear terms? Is Kashmir important because it represents the strategic northern frontier of India? Is India fighting the larger battle for the refutation of two nation theory on the soil of Kashmir? The practices of Indian political establishment so far, firmly indicate that it is committed to neither of the two objectives. And in that lie the roots of the destabilisation and continued genocide of Pandits.

Symbolic presence of Pandits in the Valley devoid of any nation building role, has been employed at various times for the expediency of legitimising the slogans of the day. In 1947 Pandits' presence was required to declare Kashmir as the secular crown of India. In later years Pandits were described as 'our guards on borders'. Presently the beleaguered government at Delhi wants the symbolic return to refurbish its image. The national opinion has also linked Pandit return with political legitimacy of the National Conference government. And to the international opinion, a 'symbolic Pandit return' may show that normality has returned.

Neither the State nor the Central Government and the articulate National opinion is prepared to face the basic issues relating to security and ideology in Kashmir. And in the coming days the dangers of further destabilisation of Pandit seem imminent. Kashmiri Pandit community has to be on guard and sensitive to pre-empt the grave plans of forces of destabilisation and internal betrayal.

The continued political and religious persecution over the last six centuries, to quote a famous commentator has "unnamed the Kashmiri Hindus and left him with the most inadequate of spiritual resources". It has also lead to accepting the genocide and destabilisation as a fait accompli by the community and the consequent defeatism or hedonism. The roots of incomprehension of genocide and insensitivity to betrayals lie in this attitude. The incomprehension is reflected in such understanding that mere 'unity of heads' of different organisations will lead the community to redemption from genocide.

Ironically this 'Unity of Heads' argument is put forth by those very adversaries of the community who are primarily responsible for its exclusion from the social polity in the state of J&K. What community needs is not a leader of stature but definite political opinion related to the full comprehension of genocide and the perspective for a long term struggle.

The displaced community would do well to remember the prophetic advice delivered by the great Palestinian Scholar Edward Said at Rajiv Memorial Lecture last year. Edward commented then, "incomprehension and betrayal are the worst enemies of a community battling against genocide".
Wholesale destruction of Pandit orchards

Even Trees were Skinned-off

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<th>Production per hect.</th>
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<th>Total production boxes/kgs</th>
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Shri Shri (President Migrant Fruit Growers Association, Jammu)

Smt Girja Razdan honoured with 'National Award'

Smt. Girja Razdan, wife of Bama Lal, a resident of Anantnag, Kashmir, passed her M.A. in Hindi in the year 1976. After this, she did her B.Ed. from Visvesvaraya College, Rainawari, Srinagar. She first joined as a teacher in Saini Hari Krishan Anand Niketan High School Anantnag, owned by Kashmir Migrant Fruit Growers Association. It was an illustrious Education Institution of District Anantnag. Girja was a disciplined teacher from the very beginning. Largely because of her dedication and hardwork she proceeded on deputation to Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti, Govt. of India, Ministry of H.R.D. in the year 1987 and finally got absorbed in the Samiti in the year 1991. Due to forced migration she was posted in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Ned Sambal, Jammu.

During this period Girja worked tirelessly for improving the qualities of head and heart of the students in the institution. She carved a place for herself in the Samiti. Recognition of her meritorious services rendered in the Samiti, Smt. Girja Razdan was honoured with the 'Best Teacher National Award' at a glittering function organised by N.V.S. at FICCI Auditorium New Delhi on 3/12/1998. National Award was presented to her by the Union Minister of Education Dr Manohar Joshi.

1. Result performer: She has produced 100% results in class Xth & XIIth continuously for the last three years (CBSE).
2. She has been performing duties of house mistres for last four years with excellent performance.
3. She has participated in CBSE course at Kushtwath and theatre work shop held in New Delhi in year 1997-1998.
4. She is also looking after mess management in the Vidyalaya in addition to other duties assigned.
5. She is very much liked by the Vidyalaya students because of her excellent teaching and a very good behaviour. She has interacted herself in each field to assist the administration of the Vidyalaya.
6. Being a godmother to her students, in performing the students for various culture programme.
KS Correspondent

JAMMU, 28 Dec: Kashmiri Pandits observed 28th December as ‘Homeland Day’ along the length and breadth of the country. The main programme on the occasion was organized by Jammu Kashmir Pandit Sangharsh Samiti at Jammu. In a public meeting organised at Ghandi Ithana Jammu on Monday, Panun Kashmiri leaders and prominent intellectuals spoke. They reaffirmed the commitment and dedication of the entire community for a relentless struggle to carve out a homeland east and north of River Jhelum in Kashmir valley with a status of a UT for the rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits. Among the main speakers who addressed the distinguished gathering of Kashmiri Pandits of all shades, were Prof M.L. Kou, an eminent writer on Political History and Culture of Kashmir, Prof M.K. Teng, (Retd) Head of Department of Political Science of Kashmir University, Dr Ajay Choudhary, Chairman of Political Affairs Committee of Panun Kashmir, Sh Raj Nath Raina, spokesman of the Displaced Employees Forum, and Sh Shailendra Aima, Press Secretary, and Editor of Kashmiri Sentinel. In his eloquent presentation Prof M.L. Kou attributed the crisis of Kashmir to the failure of Indian state to respond to the rise of Muslim communalism in Kashmir valley. He said, Indian state has failed to respond to the challenge posed by Muslim communalism in the state. It was this extremist communal ideology that gave rise to terrorism. Muslim communalism in the state continues to be left untreated and unattended. Prof Kou attributed this failure to the “fear” of the Indian Intelligentsia of a ‘backlash’ which they wanted to avoid at all costs. However, as per him this decisive reason for this failure was “not to force Muslims to make a choice between communisation and India as Muslims communalism was never presented as a central issue in the genesis of separatism in Kashmir.” Mr. Kou lambasted the efforts of some overseas Pandit organisations seeking a phased symbolic return of a few thousand displaced Pandit families to Valley. “The shelter as proposed by Indo Canadian Forum is a menace to the nationwide rehabilitation model aiming to create nothing but one more segregated camp in the Valley. Such a camp will not provide normal life of a person,” he said.

Dr. Teng emphasised upon the gathering that it was imperative for Pandits to see their expulsion in this context and not in a very narrow reference frame in which government of India and most of political parties have been trying to address it so far. “Pandits constituted the civilizational frontline in this critical part of Himalayan hinterland and hence became the first target of the eastward thrust of Islamic power,” Dr Teng said. He also confided in the audience that contours of the existing situation in Kashmir valley have changed. “From an initial euphoric stage of terrorism into a highly technical variety and unrelentless struggle to carve out a homeland east and north of River Jhelum in Kashmir valley with a status of a UT for the rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits.
The meeting was attended by a large number of Pandits from all parts of the state. Dr. Teng further said that the Pandits have to continue their struggle for a homeland in Kashmir valley. He said, “The Pandits have to continue their struggle for a homeland in Kashmir valley.”

PK Leader Sh Shailendra Aima provided the vote of thanks and urged the community to “take cognizance of the under-lying consensus and unity on all crucial issues facing the community.” Sh Aima exhorted the audience to stand as a “defiant discourse in the name of disunity of community.” The meeting concluded with a unanimous resolution produced here. Sh Gashmeep Raina General Secretary of Panun Kashmiri Sangharsh Samiti conducted the proceedings efficiently and with a degree of charm.

The proceedings of the function started with the recital of Shaheens by famous Kashmiri singer Vijay Maulla. The audience was held in raptures with his vocal and mastered presentation.

RESOLUTION

28th Dec., 1998

The entire Kashmiri Pandit Community is fully aware and vivid of the inherent social environment within the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The community is aware of the suffering of each and every Pandit in the state by the hands of ‘activist terrorists’ in the state, but also the potential of damage by the ‘terrorist terrorists’ whose number runs at thousands. The entire community is also on guard against certain vested interests within the state, who in the name of ‘retrofitting’ or ‘package programmes’ are only trying to divert the attention from the core reasons which are responsible for the continuing genocide of the Hindu minority in the state. The community unanimously rejects the so-called solution by some oversmug organisations envisaging a phased return of Kashmiri Pandits.

At this critical juncture when the fundamentalist on unleashed its fury on the minorities of the state to effect the surrender of the state from the Indian Union has assumed new heights, we the Kashmiri Pandits once again affirm our commitment to the ideals of Free Jammu and Kashmir state.

1. Declaration of a socio-economic partnership for the rehabilitation of displaced Pandit families is the only alternative to the present humanitarian crisis. The Displaced Employees Forum has made a genuine attempt to persuade the authorities to come forward.

2. Comprehensive National Policy to meet the challenge of internal secessionism, communalism and fundamentalism in the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

3. A national debate on the scope of ‘Panun Kashmir’ concept as an acceptable and viable solution for the Kashmir Pandits, as well as the Kashmiri problem in relation to the rehabilitation of the Northern frontiers of the country.
The number of displaced employees in 1990 was just thirteen thousand out of the total state government employees strength of 2.73 lakh. Till date nearly three thousand employees have retired, and by 2000 AD the number would swell up to eight to nine thousand. Again at this just three hundred recruitments in lower cadre posts, have taken place. Of this recruitment, more than hundred have been cases of commissar appointment of the dependents of victims of terrorist killings. The Kashmiri Hindus thus face gradual elimination from state services.

This situation continued to be denied to the displaced Pandits. As promotions are linked to the annual assessments of the employees, the Pandits had to forego promotion, lose seniority and the monetary benefits. The frustration of the displaced employees has been acute on this score. In many instances, where the government needs trained hands e.g. in higher school education, Pandit employees in advanced years have been posted to the farthest areas where hardship and even transfer norms are not strictly adhered. Many employees have thus had to live away from their family for years together.

Pandit employee have been denied the many routine allowances e.g. HRA, CCA etc. available to a state government employee. The reasoning that these allowances are not admissible in leave-salary is unfair and discriminatory. If salary could be provided, why not other allowances. Pandits have not been allowed to work outside the Valley in secure conditions. If the government is unable to use their services, it is obviously not their fault.

Long stay from their professions and denial of in-service training has led to the erosion of skill among Pandit professionals.

Lastly the Displaced Pandit employees continue to be subjected to intimidation on threat of 'coerced return'. Central government and the public sector undertakings talked the problem of displaced employees right in 1990 but the state government continues to sleep over the restoration of all benefit and timing of displaced Pandits outside the Valley till complete normalcy.

Camp life deteriorates

There are 29074 displaced Kashmiri families registered in Jammu, while 19338 families are registered in Delhi. In addition 2743 families are living in other states in the country. 240 migrant families are living in 14 camps in Delhi and 4674 families in 15 camps in Jammu.

The reasons for such a low percentage (10%) of displaced families living in camps are clear. Unless pushed to desperation, one would explore all the options before shifting to a camp. Camp families mostly include those whose dear ones have been killed by the terrorists, widows and their kids, those or- chardists/agriculturists who have no other source of earning, those who have no one to look after them and lastly that group of rural Pandits who want to live close to their relatives. Not less than fifteen to twenty thousand Pandit families live in one-room rented accommodation, which is worse than camp tenements. The only advantage is that it helps them escape the degradation that accompanies the camp life.

Over the years camp life has not improved. It has, in fact, worsened. The only visible change in the last few months has been a pi- geon-hole. In camps like Batla Ballian, Transport Nagar people do not live a life better than animals. Even poorer among the human beings would prefer to live better. Memory loss, behavioural disorders, prematurity among children are the gifts of the camp life.

Camp people face many hardships. Surroundings are very unhealthy. Heaps of garbage and stagnant water lead to stinking and invite flies, mosquitoes, etc. The foul smell from urinal/toilet have made life of people miserable. Safai Karamcharis are never willing. In Mughalpura brick-kilns are located inside the camp. People inhale the harmful smoke emanating from it. Despite repeated requests authorities continue to sleep over the problem.

Another problem people face is that there is no proper timing for supply of drinking water. At times water supply is not clean. They could not extract their lifetime belongings and left with whatever they could lay their hands.

By the end of 1990, the criminalisation of the separatist movement became a dominating factor with no Pandits around, these criminal elements began preying upon Pandit property. While the government although properly looked, the immovable property became target of arson, forcible occupation and in many cases forged documents were con- trolled to grab the property. The communalised section of administration ensured that no FIRs against damage/loot of the prop- erty were registered. The dis- placed Pandits remained totally unaware about the fate of their property. It has been reported that in rural areas there is large scale tempering of the horticultur-agriculture land in revenue records. The story of the evic- tion of Pandit traders through fraudulent means in absenita is equally a painful one.

The Government of India's dis- crimination (1990-96) remained totally insensitive. Every Governor tried to escape the responsibility of tackling this crimi- nal vested interest engaged in dispossession Pandits of their property.

They tried to shun the responsi- bility to the civilian government, which would succeed them.

Displaced Pandits believe that immediately after the separ- atist movement was defeated, the Centre would ensure that their lawful property was re- stored. Pandits' passive further emboldened this vested interest. Dispossession of Pandits takes many forms:

1) Fire-fires: There is no prompt notification or details about the arson incident to the fire service. Long delays in FIR registration, similar delays in assessment loss and ex-gratia sanction, under evaluation of the damage, withholding of the re- mainder ex-gratia etc put the vic- tim to a great disadvantage. Withholding of remainder ex-gratia amount and fixation of one-lakh payment is a delib- erate attempt to deprive the suf- ferer of the actual compensation. By linking payment of the re- mainder ex-gratia amount to re- turn, the affected Pandit is frauded of the actual compensa-

As safe return remains elusive, many victims resort to dis- tress sale of the gutted property and forgo the major amount of ex-gratia. For example, if ex-gratia sanctioned in 1990 is five lakh rupees and the sufferer is paid repe at one lakh in 1992. Non payment of four lakh rupees since 1990 frauds the fire suf- ferer of sixty six percent of its actual compensations.

Forcible occupation of prop- erty - The government has not indicated any seriousness in tackling this issue. As displaced Pandits feel that their property could become the target of illegal grab and the chances of re- turn receding, distress sale of property is inevitable.

In many instances old neighbours do not allow the sale to a third party and this fur- ther devalues the property. On an average, displaced Pandits get thirty to forty percent of the actual market value.

ii) Fraudulent occupation:

There are multiple cases of illegal occupation of Pandits' houses pending for years in the courts without any results. The sufferers have been facing great mental and financial burden through litigation in retrieving their properties.

Contriving of fraudulent papers has been the main instrumental- ity in this illegal grab. The role of police in these cases has been patently discriminatory to the displaced people. There are many cases relating to the acc-241 conviviality of the police in force- able and fraudulent grab of the Pandits' property. Cases where a particular police officer has been upright are few and far be- tween.

Many representations were made to the NHRC, Central government, State government, including the Chief Min- ister to set up a special tribunal headed by a High Court judge for summary disposal of these cases. The authorities remain apathetic and indifferent.

Kashmir University

Kashmir University ruling a career of displaced students.

Although the University was not enough, the displaced Kash- miri students continue to face the apartheid at the hands of the Kashmir University and the State government. The students...
Tim Johnson responds to Kaul's plea, writes to A.B. Vajpayee

Points raised in a brief by Dr. Jagan Kaul to the US Senator Tim Johnson on the state of Kashmir Pandits.

The eminent US based Kashmiri Pandit Dr. Jagan N.Kaul apprised the US Senator Tim Johnson on the plight of displaced Kashmiri Pandits in India. Impressed by his presentation, Johnson wrote to the Prime Minister of India and requested N.Kaul to intervene and give priority treatment to the task of resettling the Pandits in a newly created autonomous region. We produce here the brief of the points raised by Dr. Kaul with Mr Tim Johnson, the US Senator to the Prime Minister of India.

the community of Pandits, all of whom have been ousted from Kashmir and large numbers of them were languishing in temporary shelters for a decade or more.

It is alarming to note that now more of them are dying than are being born. The community is the third largest in the Valley of its demise and without the intervention by Premier AB Vagayee it will be lost for ever; every day the community Pandits deserve protection and security so that their uniqueness and historic culture could be preserved.

Based on India’s own experience, smaller and weaker ethno-national communities with unique cultural characteristics, can be protected best, when they have freedom for designing their future in their native habitat and under their own administrative autonomy. On the basis of this principle, several other countries, in numerous states and union territories have already been created in India. Even the BJP government in recognition of the need for providing itself to under and unrepresented citizens, has established three additional states within the Republic.

The American people, proponents of freedom, and believers in democracy all over the world will applaud any efforts by the Indian government for providing the Pandits a self-government where they could live in peace and tranquility. Where, from communal strife, they could carve out their own destiny.

After Tibet, the survival of the Pandit community is one of the most serious humanitarian issues facing South Asia. In view of the value India places on cultural diversity, ethnic plurality, human rights, democracy, and human development, any political parties or political groups should pursue a policy which would benefit the Pandits, and not harm them. The government of India is committed to ensuring the rights and safety of all citizens, including the Pandits. We hope that the government will continue to take steps to address the concerns of the Pandits and other minority communities in India.

Dear Premier Vajpayee,

I am writing to express my concern over the plight of the community of Kashmir Pandits. This community, of the original inhabitants of Kashmir, has been languishing in temporary shelters for a decade.

I am told by trusted friends, constituents, and the United Nations consultant, Dr. Jagan Kaul, that the state of homelessness and abject poverty is having an immediate hardship on the Kashmir Pandits. It is certain that the lack of proper shelter, food, nutrition, medical attention, sanitation, drinking water and clothing have further aggravated their situation. I am also told that thousands have died due to these conditions.

Dr. Kaul tells me that numerous state and union territories have already been created in India, and under your own BJP government three additional states have been created within the Republic. Could a state be created in India for the Kashmir Pandits? I am hoping that the state of Jammu and Kashmir in particular and the Jammu area in particular will receive the necessary attention and efforts from the government to resettle the Pandits in a newly created autonomous region.

Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister, for your time and consideration.

Tim Johnson...

Kashmir Hindu face gradual elimination from state services

(Contd. from page 6)

have been victims of constant harassment and were placed on a regular examination schedule without providing enough preparation time, sudden change in courses, incoordinated delay in declaration of results; near-impossible re-evaluation procedures, all of which have added in making the normal three year degree courses stretch beyond four-six years.

The last nine years of militancy has only produced two batches of migrant law graduates, while the six batches of law graduates were produced by the other Universities of the country in the same period. Migrant aspirants who sought admission in Law in 1995 have till date qualified only two-third of the total semesters while the 1993 batch students are still awaiting the final year results for no fault of theirs.

The students who have been admitted in the three year law course in 1996 have so far qualified only one-third of the total semesters and the students of batch 1999 who had already completed two years of their course, were unable to complete their degree in 1995, which otherwise, would have been possible.

The apathy of the University authorities can be gauged from the fact that even the law students who sought admission in 1991 qualified their degree only last year.

The students blame the University authorities for making the displaced students deliberately the target of their wrath and ability to destroy their career. Given this discriminatory attitude, maximum number of student face the threat of turning over age before the completion of their postgraduation degrees. Another discrimination is in the declaration of results, declaration of the examinations and the evaluation of the examinations. The students allege that all the examination results in the Mathematics of MSc. final and 17 students of MSc. previous were declared this year. Also in commerce final year all the six students were declared fail, the results of which were declared early.

Discrimination is also extended to admissions. The 1997 batch of migrant graduates are still awaiting admission in post graduate courses when the Jammu University in the same period has made two admissions in different departments. As per the students the completion of result process takes six to eight months when it is the job of only two months. To give benefit to the students in the Valley the examination and results of the migrant students are being transferred with them.

The examinations for the Kashmir University are held in the month of November due to the particular climate of the Valley. Even in the Jammu similar provision is made for students of Srinagar, Kathua and Doda. But no such rationalisation has been done for displaced Kashmiri students. These students have already been declared fail and appear for the exams within two and half months. Those who do not appear in the examinations that year, have invariably lose to their session and one valuable year of their career.

Even the change in the syllabi are not communicated to the displaced students, while the displacement of the 1997 students in their examinations then they were intimated about the change of syllabi and increase in the number of papers from six to seven.

Even the complaints of the displaced are not heard by Kashmir University sub-office at Jammu. In the light of its unsatisfactory handling, the displaced students describe it as a "vestigial organ which is there but is defunct".

The biased and discriminatory attitude of the University authorities has generated lot of resentment among the migrant students. They have taken this issue to the KU authorities and they have also put a question mark over the attitude of the government towards the displaced Pandits. This has caused frustration and cynical attitude among the students. The government and concerned officials have failed to understand the serious alienation and a vital human resource is being led astray.

The displaced students and teachers have started mobilising public opinion against discrimination in education. They brought to the notice of NHRD chairman, Justice Venkatachalapathy their tale of woes, recently at a seminar in Jammu. In his presidential address, Justice Venkatachalapathy, while appreciating the anxiety and concern of the displaced students, said: "It is a tone of desperation worn out of frustration". He added that their suffering has been out of the frustration due to academic problems was extremely dangerous.

In the seminar "education in exile", organised by the displaced students, Prof. HN Parimoo and Prof BL Zutshi criticised state government and the Kashmir University authorities for notching the career of the displaced students. They said the government had not bothered to take steps could a state nor problems and rather have done immense harm to them with their acts of omission and commission, which they said is unparalleled anywhere in the world. They demanded a thorough investigation into the systematic and sinister designs of KU authorities to deprive the students of their hard-earned fundamental right i.e. education.

Meanwhile, the displaced students and teachers demanded delinking of KU from the University of Jammu for timely conduct of their examinations.
By Dr. R.K. Bhat

You did not know, who the KPS were. You have, heard of a exiled ethnic, called Kashmiri Pandits. Living as refugees, the history going back to the stone-age, they are the only people who have developed a culture which would easily be classed as one of the best in In- dia. They are the vanguards of the midst of a cultural chaos. With near a 100% literacy that whose base line is not just a knowledge of the three Rs but a high school diploma, they are a frustrated and powerless communi- ty that sees every option clos- ing upon it.

Pamni Wudi Chahani Kanzki Maryam, as they say, a self a hair-cut, goes a famous Kashmiri saying. Kashmiri Pandi- cts have their own unique cultural tradition. Kashmiri Jiyotishis are not only well versed in the a- stronomy but also have developed a cul- ture into a fine, very fine, and precise art. Even Aliburni the 12th century Adhvaryu for his work makes a respectful mention of Jantar (Jiyotishalander) of Kashmir. Kashmiri Jiyotishis have singularly failed to make any worthy prediction, regard- ing the future of Pandits. Kashmiri Jiyotishis are as much at sea as are the thinkers, analysts, com- mentators, and political leaders among the Kashmiri Pandit community. At sea. Ship without a Chart, it did, was to deal a few more subtle blows to this well protected community.

Crisis of leadership:
With about a dozen and a half outfits, all aligned, all eager, to stand at the head of the community, there shouldn’t have been a leadership vacuum in the com- munity of Kashmiri Pandits. If leadership means a band, with a welder and a pliers, and “a fund of diplomacy, a penchant for limelight and arc- lights, a line ready for every event, a plan at hand to cash every opportunity”, yes, if leadership implies all and any of it, there is no dearth of it in the KP community. But leadership, which seeks to inspire and lead, must be sincere and earnest. That leadership is simply not there. The year 1995 saw the centen- nary of those few, those fewer, cre- dentials had begun to concretise, exposed. In the bath-house city of leadership all come through naked as nudity. Probably, it is a blessing to be able to see through the sharply camou- flage. But it is tragic to know that all the roaring lions at the head of the community are only wearing a lion’s hide. Curse the year for that. Curse your com- munity, and curse your leadership.

State wards of community:
Probably KPs would not have surprised the destiny of this fate, had their community produced a single leader. It still may, but hasn’t. There are no single personages in the legislature, one of them a full-fledged cabinet minister. They are supposed to represent the KPs in the ruling machinery. Do they? Handoo, with all reverence to his stature and achievements, remains much less a leader of the Kashmiri Pandits. As for Bushan Lal Bhat not even himself is unbiased. His Ishihara’s from where he hailed him, not to speak of any sizable num- ber of Pandits, not to mention, the claim of Pakistan, to speak for Kashmiri Muslims that is has a sense of importance in representing KPs upon this couple. To be truth- ful I believe, we are better half Sahabs and Samits, that thrive as repre- sentatives of KPs have no magical spell to eliminate the Shrinkage of charters, as much as their prospectus, are made and unmade in a dozen years. The Shrinkage of commu- nity concerns inform such out- fits? Here, the ‘outrage’ is the con- stant feature of a Shrinking community. When the Amphala Sabha called for a a count, it reck- oned just 2000 persons out of a 3 lakh community, not to speak of the wide intelligence network established by the security forces. The news of no recruitment was hush-hush, the returned migrants keep a low profile, and their accomplishments in administration, media and in other opinion-making fora, are at pains to deny the new arriv- als, the returnees, or the ceaseless movement of young men (misled??) across the border into KP camps. The year saw all this maneuvering to good effect, so much so that the KP administration is ready to swear by the non-presence of ‘Taliban’ cad- res in the state. The story of foreign workers, with much of the credo of, pictures with of Laden were getting restless, all over the state, all through the year.

Taliban, who?
‘Taliban’, the personification from the root ‘talib’ is a seeker. Till they find the ‘talib’- a ‘talib-ilm’ seeker after knowledge and ‘talib-i-qa’ the seeker of a good cause. Pakistan, ago Pakistan changed the meaning of this, almost sacred word, into the word of a suit of ruff- rakers par excellence. This ruthless band of fanatics, today rules the most of Afghanistan, their most remarkable feat of the year being the cold-blooded massacre of thousands of Hindus, Muslims in Northern Afghanistan.

If ‘Taliban’ is restricted, as the feel-good apologists want, to the regular battles of these controllers of Afghanistan, marching in full dress, their green-flag held high, then Talib- ban are just the state of Jamma and Kashmir. If Taliban refers, as it actually does, to the intentionally constructed, con- structed in the Valley, at the be- hief of scheming politicians (to contradict the Muslims), marching in full dress, into ruthless fundamentalists, then their cadres have undeserved entry into Kashmir, even Hindu division, and are actively pursuing their marauding objectives. They did indeed filter in large numbers into the state during the year, as their ‘controllers’ vowed. In Wadhana, in Prankot, in Chapnari, in Surakot, everywhere they were. They were included Afgan, Pak, Sudanese and other foreign missionary ele- ments. It was a movement of a re- turn or settlement in the pre- 1990 locales. Forgetting Wadhana, discount the number of killing of non-migrant KPs in the last quarter of ‘98, it is true, but the ‘seekers’ into se was not the target of migrants this year. Actually the strategy has changed as the newly rising militant groups are more in contact with the populace in general. The reason being that the mili- tants want to regain the confi- dence of people, which has been shattered by the large scale loot, rape, murder and other maraud- ing activities of their predecessors during the last ten years. Section of the militants in the wider intelligence network established by the security forces. The news of no recruitment was hush-hush, the returned migrants keep a low profile, and their accomplishments in administration, media and in other opinion-making fora, are at pains to deny the new arriv- als, the returnees, or the ceaseless movement of young men (misled??) across the border into KP camps. The year saw all this maneuvering to good effect, so much so that the KP administration is ready to swear by the non-presence of ‘Taliban’ cad- res in the state. The story of foreign workers, with much of the credo of, pictures with of Laden were getting restless, all over the state, all through the year.

The honeymoon of this understanding extended to the first quarter of the year. Then, DIAC got activated. First, Doda people migrants as well the non-migrant onesthe day after day, so many of them, followed a massacre, the party which had been decrying the rising terror in the region, found that the situation there had sud- denly "normalized." ‘Improvement’ in security was now possible. It did, and from advocacy of full scale war to root out Kashmiri militant groups, the situation there had drastically and dramatically ‘improved’. The only "only" way in Kashmir was pushing back, not the terrorists, but the migrants! The Muslims, who had left the Valley, on the break- down of civic amenities returned much. So did the politi- cians and political workers (Muslim ones, that is in bullet- proof glasses) protecting by the government. Only the Pandits remain, bound by terrorists there, and suffering apathy out- side. In 1998, the Kurds lost ano- ther friend to the exigency of power.

Raging Friendliness:
Democracy thrives upon a balance of interests. The threat of unbridl- ing aspirations are believed to mollify their more prickly ex- tremes. It has a natural enemy, the nat- ural doom for the groups, sects, even peoples, who fail to garner a fullsway number. When the mi- norities come to have a sizable number they get a veritable handle, and are able to ride over a fractionary mass. But when the minority is a miniscule one, its interests and concerns become so many marginal voices. None wants to associate with a cause that does not fetch elec- toral returns, none wants to voice concerns that are not vote catchers, nor does anyone feel motivated to synthesize with the perceptions of this miniscule group. People, even passer by, would pay a lip service but when the words need backing of concrete acts, they back out. This bow as a result to the aborigines of Kashmir, are living as refuges in a land they didn’t want to come to be a friendless people. That is how an MP from faraway Kashmir can say: "I am pleased to see very clearly that their return is an impossibility in the present situation, but given his authorities, nor the State govern- ment, not even the Central govern- ment, can see any ‘interest’, any ‘danger’, in their return. Of course, Erice Averbery has no po- litical interest in bringing the view. Political calculations, have made almost all classes of state politics, exclude it from the dire strait where the Kashmiri Pandits find them- selves.

Ah! The Kurds:
To be sure, the Kurds, that is original Kurds, are an ethnic group even in the declaration of con- conscious, announced by Bill Clinton, that they will only attacks upon Iraq have been called of. A couple of days ago USA came to the brink of invading Iraq when Saddam Hussein mounted an attack on the Kurd tribes. The Indian Kurds-Kashmiri- Pandits are mentioned first when they have come to those that has to counter Pakistani propaga- ganda in international fora. They, the Indian Kurds, are valu- able captives for the Pakistanis, de- plored, when they have to convince foreign mission about the heu- negmoderns, they are not used when ned, either for political mileage, or to cleanse conscience once in a while. For the rest, they ignored, bay positively against them. In 1991, when militants were in full tempo, one of first things that was done was the burning down of the shanty structures at the Shamsah Ghat in Srinagar. That included a temple of Baraev Nakh, and plateform/ideas for cremation. It is easy to guess, why they did so. When you are exposed to the idea of ethnic cleansing, you efface the symbols of that ethnicity just right? Two years ago the Pakistan government enacted two acts to safe-guard minority property in Kashmir. This is an attempt to implement the resolution to “take charge of the properties of minorities.” Therefore, this resolution was not included in these. In 1998, the Shamsah Ghat came to be safe, however the ‘fire’ for the city refuse. On its patches, vagabond boys would in- tereat with the patchwork on a leisurely day. A sign of KPs future? Ah! there are many, more of these hanging symbols around! The year 1998 added, its own quota, to them.

Kashmiri Pandits and the year ’98

Kashmir Sentinel (Dec.16, 98-Jan.15, 99)
Towards Kashimir Pandit Strategy on Kashmir

The displaced Kashmiri Pandit community has felt alarmed about the various moves of the government to initiate their return in a phased manner. Time and again through its leadership in Jammu and Delhi it has voiced the dangerous implications of such an evolvement by the government. Already being borne the tragedies of Sangam, Wassoora, and Kashmiri pandit massacres, the community is being forced to bear the frustration of "Phased returns" as an attempt to bring about its further destabilization. However, what has caused more serious concern amongst the displaced Hindus, is the overt and covert support extended by some overseas Kashmiri Pandit groups like IAKF, ICKF and IEKF to such moves on return by the government. These groups for quite some time appear to have embarked on a concerted campaign to influence some functional Pandit organisations in India to make them endorse their proposals on 'Phased Return'. The documents issued under the heads of 'Proposals for Phased Return' were distributed internally in the board of directors of IAKF sometime back for their consideration. We also produce here the proposal mooted by ICKF and addressed to NHRC on the issue of return.

Background Discussion

This paper is an attempt to assist the community to clarify its fine approach to these negotiations. Its purpose is not to give all the answers, but to help the community reach consensus on a strategy grounded in the realities of the current situation.

The Government of India's (GOI's) current strategy of long term meeting with selected Kashmiri Muslims leaders to start a dialogue on the Kashmir situation. Perhaps the GOI hope to reach an agreement with the more moderate militants and so improve its prospects for wipping out the more radical group, of course, Pakistan (along with other moderate and radical militant organisations) will try to torpedo this strategy by increasing its clampdowns and further harden retaliatory, while publicly providing evidence of success.

If India's negotiations with the moderate groups does not bring the problem to the solution of the Kashmiri Pandit's future, India may be forced to seek cooperation from Pakistan in order to reach a solution. In favour Pakistan will demand negotiations of the Kashmiri Pandit's future. Based on past experience in other hostels, it is unlikely that the United Nations and the major powers will be involved in the process.

So, any strategy that the KP's develop must be based on the long term destiny of Kashmir will be decided in negotiations between the Indian government and the local community.

This means that the national interests of the two countries will be reflected in the negotiations of the future of Kashmir, not the preferences of Kashmiri Muslims community. Furthermore, KMs and KPs will have more say in the resolution of the short term issue, that is, on the establishment of normal conditions in the valley. The Kashmiri Pandit community should, therefore, concentrate on finding ways to normalize the situation in the Kashmiri valley.

Next are the options of the future of KPs in Kashmir are in the community. These are: (1) the return of a few, with Kashinri (PK) enclave and (2) the return of all to Kashmir.

The community supports the establishment of a PK enclave in the Kashmiri valley. Meanwhile, the Kashmiri Muslims would feel secure here and be able to maintain a dignified way of life. However, GOI would probably consider this option, because it breaches the fundamental principles of sovereignty and would deprive Kashmiri Muslims of their right to live.

The acceptance of secular Muslims in the enclave would not affect the community to dismantle between two groups with one religion would be involved. In addition, Pakistan as well as the KMs, fundamentally, finally, there are practical questions. What would the long term economic prospects of such an enclave be? Also, how would a wide-raging opposition to it from a non-secular Muslim for the purpose of residency in the PK enclave?

The Return to the Valley option has the advantage that the Valley would welcome KPs to return, and the Valley would have a more cohesive community. The international community will also like the Valley to return, and the Valley would be more cohesive community. The international community will also like the Valley to return, and the Valley would have a more cohesive community.

The return of the KP community is the most important of the three options. The Valley will welcome the return of the KP community, and the Valley will have a more cohesive community.

The KPs should be able to return to their homeland without any fear. If they don't return soon, there is a possibility that the situation will become permanent, and the bargaining power of the GOI in the negotiations would be weakened.

Essential Elements of A Kashmiri Pandit PK enclave:

1. The main thrust of the KP community should be to ensure an early and safe return of the refugees to the Valley. The urgency of returning the KPs to the Valley should be emphasised and taken into account in every forum, in India and abroad.

2. The KP leadership should be prepared to take a policy concerning the conditions necessary for the safety return of KPs. This policy should be put into consultation with the refugees and community leaders and human rights lawyers.

3. The KP community should be welcome the attainment of establishment of an enclave. The GOI should be an armistice for the fulfillment of the short term goal of the government.

4. The GOI should be given to the proposals advocated by the KP enclave option has another important consequence: it diverts the energy of the people from developing a position on the Valley question.

5. The KP community should resist the temptation to use the Valley as a springboard towards a solution on Kashmir. Such campaigns could increase the influence of militant organisations in Kashmir, weaken moderate forces, and have a negative impact on the Valley, undermine the efforts to improve relations between the KP community and the GOI, and impede the early return of KP refugees to the Valley.

6. The KP leadership should take a positive and constructive role in the Valley. The GOI will make decisions based on negotiations with KP leaders and consultative bodies in the Valley. The KP leadership should make the Valley lives with the KMs as neighbours. It is not a palatable option. But it is the only practical, feasible and viable option. The KP leadership, in spite of their misgivings, should give their blessing to this plan in principle. Many in the community may not be satisfied with this plan. But, in the Valley, it is the only option that can work.

7. The GOI should be prepared to create an inspiring vision of a PK enclave to fill people's spirals and boost their morale during the last few years of deplorability and despair. It should serve as a shining light of hope at the end of a dark and frightening tunnel.

8. The GOI should be prepared to make the basis of a negotiated strategy would be utterly counterproductive. The KP leadership should overwhelmingly awaken people from this comforting dream and bring the Valley back to the harsh reality.

The longer the KPs are left without a solution, the more likely it is that they will have to face difficulties and disillusions will take all the skill, sensitivity and judgment the leadership can muster. But it is a mission from which KP leaders must not shrink and in which they must not postpone.

To soften the blow, the KP leadership could work out a plan to transfer the return of refugees to another camp. The arrangement for this plan was discussed in detail with India's security forces and department officials. The plan, which was a phased return, groups of KP could be sheltered in designated safe havens. Special protective measures would be in place in these areas and only people with a security clearance would be allowed to stay there. In time, as the security situation in surrounding areas improves, these safe havens could be expanded and the pool of people allowed to stay in them would be expanded. In essence these safe havens would be the Valley PK enclaves discussed earlier in the paper.

The result to foster opposition to the establishment of these safe havens from any quarter of the GOI. This will be a temporary measure for ensuring the return of KP during a short transition period.

Essential elements of strategy:

1. The KP leadership should agree to take an undivided Kashmiri valley peace GOI ensures that only a long term and human rights will be protected.

2. The overall strategy of the KP leadership should be to develop a policy to define the conditions which are required for the safe return of KPs.

3. The policy position should be prepared with the help of knowledgeable constitutional and legal experts in India.

4. The KP leadership should consult extensively with the refugees during the preparation of this strategy. They should be fortified with special security measures and where only people meeting strict security criteria can reside. The situation improves, some vacancies can be expanded and eligibility rules can be relaxed. But these restrictions must be considered temporary and must be in force only until the KP can develop an elaborate and enduring system to ensure the safety of return of KPs.

5. The KP leadership should seriously consider a cautious phased return to the Valley. The Valley is fortified with special security measures and where only people meeting strict security criteria can reside. The situation improves, some vacancies can be expanded and eligibility rules can be relaxed. But these restrictions must be considered temporary and must be in force only until the KP can develop an elaborate and enduring system to ensure the safety of return of KPs.
Towards Kashmiri Pandit Strategy on Kashmir

7. The KP community abroad should respond positively to overtures from moderate KM groups and, if necessary, set up inter-communal dialogue. This should not be done in the spirit of soft-heartedness. Rather, a strong show of hard-hearted self-interest. Not doing it would be done with a view to verbal trading of KM in the foreign world, by screaming, depicting, and denouncing each other. Not doing it will definitely benefit from a failure to make an agreement on the reasonableness of KM outside India and the realization that the reasonableness of KM is necessary for an agreement on the issue of the Kashmir dispute and the future of the region.

8. Any talks with the Indian government or any official representative of the government of India are bound to be the same thing as a surrender. The KP community abroad should not have any dealings with the Indian government. It would be better for the KP community abroad to put the issue of Kashmir to the Indian government and let it deal with the issue.

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Dr. Shabir Bhan

On this day seven years back Kashmiri Hindus declared their resolve to struggle for the creation of a homeland for 700,000 Kashmiri Pandits East and North of river Jehlum in the Kashmir valley. Prof. S.R. Bhat, President of the Tibetan Parliament in exile was one of the key speakers, who addressed the historic gathering at the Marga-Darshan conference. Speaking to the displaced Pandits, he remarked that the first ten years of the 25th year were critical to the survival of a group undergoing genocide.

Where are we and where are we heading for as regards the aspiration and the need for survival? Is the community really stagnating? Is stagnation the same as being sacrificed?

Where did we go wrong? Are we the priorities for our struggle? Short-term priorities and the long-term issues are critical to group survival. How do we sustain a community in the face of a major political and constitutional crisis? How do we sustain a community in the face of an ideological and cultural crisis? How do we sustain a community in the face of a military and political crisis? How do we sustain a community in the face of a social and cultural crisis? How do we sustain a community in the face of a national and international crisis?

We have short-term problems of survival and long-term issues of rehabilitation and identity. Short-term problems include: survival, building physical resistance to genocide, developing the human resource potential of the community and achieving victory in the struggle for a homeland for our同胞. Long-term issues include: maintaining a sense of identity and retrieval of our homeland, restabilisation and dis-inflation. All these issues are important and cannot be tackled in isolation. They are interrelated and interdependent. The solution to any one of these issues will not only affect the others but will also affect the overall survival of the community.

The challenge ahead lies in reaching the nation and explaining our perspective on return and rehabilitation.

Deblinkings: In a genocide, the 'problem' of a victimised group is not end with its mere expulsion. It has to be subjected to such processes, which bring to it the brink of extinction. Non-redressal of Pandits' deriva- tions and linking the addressal of these deriva- tions to return is simply aimed at pushing community to passive 'dispersal'.

Handling the issues of fraudulent occupation of Pandit property, employment, education, ex-gratia compensa- tion to victims of ares and loot, compensation to agricultur- ists and the traders besides the day to day problems of employ- ees-all reflect the insensitive attitude of the government on the part of the 'popular government'.

In a situation, where return seems imminent, the addressal of all of the deriva- tions with return in a sinister design. Inability of the Pandit leadership in forming a united front to counter this short-term problems and long- term issues imposed massive litigation on the community. The failure of the leadership in the Pandit community organisations in playing an interventionist role compelled each displaced Pandit to fight his own individual battle. This un- dermined faith in the collective struggle and the stage was set for the emergence of numerous groups. Those groups who lost their faith in the leadership and again the faithful and the fragmented groups.

The failure of the community leadership to play its role in the存量 functional organisations and hijack the agenda. It is a test for the Pandit leadership how it will play its role in the存量 functional organisations and hijack the agenda. It is a test for the Pandit leadership how it will play its role in the存量 functional organisations and hijack the agenda. It is a test for the Pandit leadership how it will play its role in the存量 functional organisations and hijack the agenda. It is a test for the Pandit leadership how it will play its role in the存量 functional organisations and hijack the agenda. It is a test for the Pandit leadership how it will play its role in the存量 functional organisations and hijack the agenda. It is a test for the Pandit leadership how it will play its role in the存量 functional organisations and hijack the agenda. It is a test for the Pandit leadership how it will play its role in the存量 functional organisations and hijack the agenda. It is a test for the Pandit leadership how it will play its role in the存量 functional organisations and hijack the agenda. It is a test for the Pandit leadership how it will play its role in the存量 functional organisations and hijack the agenda.
The tent and the third generation

As if the holy mess of the displaced community were not enough there are some non-displaced members comfortably settled in foreign lands who are making the confusion worse confounded. One of the "experiments" floated by some of them is that a group of "three to five thousand families" be persuaded to settle in a "selected location" in Kashmir with the idea that this model be "replicated" later in other areas. This idea has not come up for the first time but no proposer has ever bothered to work out the practicability, ad- visability and acceptability of the idea. In practice it means that Pandits do not go back to their homes but are herded into a "se- lected location" like in a guarded enclosure or like a ghetto of unwanted people for the gun-crazy militants to prey upon.

It takes a Lord Eric Avebury, Vice Chairman of UK Parlia- mentary Kashmir Group, to sound caution at the present time that it would not be safe for Pandits to go back because "they cannot feel safe." After his recent visit to Jammu and Kashmir and after looking at what he called "utterly appalling conditions of Pandit camps, Lord Avebury said, "you cannot be certain that outsiders (foreign mercenaries) won't single them out."

But who cares for the "feelings" of the community in distress. The men and women of affairs in Delhi and Srinagar may not look at Pandits as mere ballot papers, but they do look upon them as a pinnacle's quest for its brand of normalcy in Kashmir. Unfortunately they are joined in by some members of the community itself.

Rattan Lal's parents are in the twilight of their lives. He himself symbolises the today of Pandits in exile and this "today" is wholly taken up by the community's struggle for honourable and dignified survival. What happens to "tomor- row" of the community? What happens to Rattan Lal?
Return of the Hindu Refugees

Prof. M.K. Teng

The worst that could befall the beleaguered community of Hindus in Kashmir, smouldering in exile, is that its future should be pawned to political interests of small men whose "errands at night" have never served the nation, but have decidedly served its enemies. If there are people in India and the people among the Kashmiri Pandits, who take pride in closing their eyes to the greyish aspects of the reality in Jammu and Kashmir, it would need another Maharataba not only to pull them out of darkness, but also to send them out of the Indian political culture.

No people must be ashamed of their past, however gory it is. The Hindu community of Kashmir is smeared with "blood and tears". It is a past which has left a memory of remorse for its posterity to bear. The burden of the usurpation and the long persecution which followed along the centuries, after the ascent of the Muslims to power in Kashmir, has always been too heavy for the community of Hindus in Kashmir.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who wrested Kashmir from the Durani Pathans in 1819, and ordered a census of the local population, found to his dismay, that the Hindus of Kashmir, which constituted a population of around eight lakhs at the time of the Muslim conquest, had been reduced to less than twenty-eight thousand souls. The few hundred Muslims who had insisted the Hindu-Kingdom had added six lakhs of its towns to their strength by conversion.

That the terror and high turmoil that defaced the social culture of the Hindus of Kashmir, should have been applauded as the heritage of tolerance and communal harmony is a tragedy, which is bound to evoke retribution, for all who have been "sponsorable to white-wash" who have kept the Hindus in Kashmir take pride in the religious agrarianism which destroyed them and which is now legitimized as a liberal theology that sought to spread peace and save people from hatred.

Throughout the history of the Indian National struggle, the Indian leaders refused to comprehend the character of Muslim communism and its subcontinental expressions. In the end inspite of their intentions to save the unity of India, not only Gandhi but Patel and Nehru, were driven to accept the partition of the British India and the Pakistanisation of the Indian States. If Indian leadership failed to learn any lesson from the hollowness that followed the "Direct Action" campaign no one would come to rescue the wrongs which finally followed.

Nehru handed over almost half of the State to the Muslims of whom he himself half that remained, to the Muslims of Kashmir in perpetual possession. That he and the other Indian leaders should have agreed to the exclusion of Jammu and Kashmir from the Indian constitutional organisation, when they planned that the new rulers of Kashmir were waiting for a chance to Muslimise the State and create a separate identity, reveals the calumny the Indian leaders refused to open their eyes even after the nation was divided. The four decades of Indian freedom witnessed the total Islamisation of the State, fundamentalisation of its society and the consolidation of the Muslim commitment to unite it with Pakistan.

The theoretical precepts, that the composite culture of Kashmir was inseparably homogeneous and characterised by a traditional commitment to inter-community coexistence, which was used as a frame of reference to legitimise the political process of Islamising that State and which came to be used as a frame of reference to conceptualise communal, fundamentalist and secessionist content of the Muslim insurgency in Kashmir, is sought to be used as a frame of reference to rationalise the return of the Hindu refugees in a situation far worse than that which overtook the State in 1990.

There is a measure of pathos in the blindness of the Indian nation, which believes that it would not survive except by recognising the right of the Muslims to a place of precedence wherever they are in a numerical majority. That the Indian State should have learnt that despite the fact the art of the crooked and the world could not be hoodwinked into accepting that all was well with secularism in Kashmir by pushing back a few thousand Kashmiri Pandits broken by poverty, destitution, disease and despair into concentration camps, proposed to be laid out somewhere near the Indian army cantonment in Srinagar, evokes surprise.

For eight years, the Hindu refugees were left uncared for, in the refugee camps, to smouldler in sub-human life. Why should these unfortunate, maltreated and forgotten people be condemned as the scapegoats for another experiment to prove the veracity and substance of the Indian secularism as well as the content of the traditional toleration of the Muslim society in Kashmir? Why should they be used as a surrogate population to prepare the ground for another unholy demand to buy peace in Kashmir?

There are several fundamental questions which require to be answered by the Government of the Hindu refugees, is taken up for a serious consideration. Why was the first offensive of the Indian Pandits engaged in Kashmir aimed at the genocide of the Kashmiri and the communal animosity, which accompanied the Hindus of the Hindu refugees, reached its end? What purpose would symbolic return of the Hindu refugees to the Valley achieve in Kashmir? Apparently the return of a few thousand Hindu refugees would not yield any reprise for the Government of Kashmir and enable it to build a new offensive against the Muslim militants, unless the Indian "government" pleads for the Pandits who go back.

However, if the Indian government believes that the symbolic return of the Hindus would not serve to undermine the Muslim society or provide the Indian leaders a new platform to woo the Muslims, its optimism is misplaced. For the Government of India should realise that Muslim communism is far formidable a menace which could neither be camouflaged nor be tamed by accepting Islamisation as a part of Indian secularism.

Neither the political motivation for general solidarity and their ethnic extermination, nor the animus against it has ended. In the security zone the refugees would be subjected to the enemy attack, for the terrorist regimes would make no mistake about the motives of the Government of India in achieving the symbolic return of the Hindu refugees to Kashmir. No one would believe the symbolic return of the Hindu refugees was not aimed to yield diplomatic and tactical advantage for India.

Who in the state Government; the Governor or the Chief Minister or their errandmen in the administration, would convince the militant regimes that the concentration camps, inhabited by Kashmiri Pandits, were kept temporarily to be used as a base and from where the zone and excluded from it? or would the Indian Foreign Office register in Secretary to convert the Kashmir "dead ? In the next round of Indo-Pakistan talks that the Kashmiri Pandit enclave would be immuminized from attack? Consider the symbolic return of the Kashmiri Pandits, another surraptitious attempt to use them as cannon fodder in the war of attrition going on in the State? To believe that the militant regimes would spare them, tantamounts to seek clemency from the hangman. That they would not attack the refugees for the simple reason that the latter were hostages to secularism clouded in concentration camps is to put too much of a premium on their credibility. The militant regimes do not need the support of secularism to fight the war which was the victory of Islam in Kashmir.

Why would the Kashmiri Pandits allow themselves to be used as scapegoats to legitimise the ricky Indian stand on the State? Agreed that with the sense of patriotism they have, the Kashmiri Pandits can go out, as they always did, to provide overt and covert support to the Government against Muslim secessionism as well as the Islamisation of the State, what measure of political advantage would India derive from their symbolic return. If accords and agreements or the gimmicks like the symbolic return of the Kashmiri Pandits, could retrieve the situation in Kashmir, then Indira-Abdullah accord should not have been followed by the rise of Muslim fundamentalism in the State and Rajin-FITFOOG accord should not have led to the militarisation of Muslim secessionism. The token return of a few thousand refugees will not save anybody's face, at least not the face of the Muslim separatist forces in Kashmir and if there is a belief in any quarter of the Government of India, that the token return of the Kashmiri Pandits would bail out the Muslim separatists for their responsibility for the Muslim crusade, the belief is misplaced.

The tragic part of the sordid drama which is being enacted, is the role played in it by a section of the Kashmiri Pandit community which, by sheer weight of numbers and sheer weight of numbers and sheer weight of numbers, could dominate the situation in Kashmir. In that attempt to make a judgement, on the basis of the reports, circulated by the many miles in the Indian foreign press abroad, commissioned by various intelligence agencies, to spread disinformation, the overseas Kashmiri Pandit organisations need to be seen carefully. A misnomer - onment, leading to a wrong decision may be the greatest betrayal the Kashmiri Pandit community may face in history.

The basic issue is that neither the approval of the Muslims of Kashmir, the so-called 'confidence-building measures' underlined, nor the protection of the concentration camps, can prepare the ground for the return of the Hindu refugees to their homes. The minorities do not live in India, with the approval of the Government of India, a few Indian political parties, a few Indian Pandit organisations in India. Indeed the ball rolled so fast, that the National Human Rights Commission, set aside its rightminded work of investigation and adjudicating for justice and universal human rights in the numerous entreaties filed with it by the refugees, shifted its task to work in the return of the refugees. The petitions of the refugees pertaining to genocide of Hindus, deprivation of their homes and demolition of their temples, forced exodus and their exclusion from the economic activities - all these political processes, all violations of human rights, are pending before the Commission for last several years. Why does the Government make public the Sanker Sen report on Kashmir refugees, which could possibly provide back drop, for any deliberations on the feasibility of the return of the Hindu refugees? The Kashmiri Pandit organisations, overseas or here in India, must make public the reasons for having lent support and participated in the formulation of any plans for a symbolic return of the Hindu refugees to Kashmir. A recent state of affairs involved the Kashmiri Pandit functionary of IAKF, in a local newspaper, that the refugees who came from rural Kashmir to Jammu and Kashmir, but the refugees with he urban, background were reluctant, is a travesty of history. Which Kashmiri Pandit organisation would say that the Hindu refugees go to in their villages, and who would protect them against the widespread violence, prevents in the cities as much as it does in the villages? Such a sweeping generalisation should not be risked without an empirical basis, by spreading disinformation and spreading relevant data about the situation in Kashmir. If the attempt was to make a judgement, on the basis of the reports, circulated by the many miles in the Indian foreign press abroad, commissioned by various intelligence agencies, to spread disinformation, the overseas Kashmiri Pandit organisations need to be seen carefully. A misnomer - onment, leading to a wrong decision may be the greatest betrayal the Kashmiri Pandit community may face in history.

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The Hidden Story

Definition of Status

Generally known as ‘migrants’ or ‘displaced persons’ the victims themselves have so far resisted from calling themselves as refugees for ‘patriotic’ reasons, though a growing section of them have often desired to. Taking shelter behind the international law, it has been said that after all, the forced migrants from Kashmir have not crossed the international boundary and they have been merely made to leave one area their ancestral home since times immemorial, to another part of the Indian territory. So, it has been argued that the use of the label of refugee in the specific case of the ‘internally displaced’ (Zetter, 1991) persons from Kashmir is problematic, in terms of the strict letter of the international law as enshrined in the Geneva Convention of 1951 and the Protocol of 1967. Keeping the common law norms and a definitional exercise becomes imperative to understand this problem of unprecedented nature. One possible key to the understanding is to go into the causation of refugee movement. As Olson says: Refugees differ from other spontaneous or sponsored migrants, largely in the circumstances of their movement out of one area to another — refugees are forced to leave their homes because of a change in their environment which makes it impossible to continue life as they have known it. They are coerced by an external force to leave their homes and go elsewhere.

Thus ‘coercive conditions’ at the place of normal residence is another definitional clue. The Hindus of the Kashmir Valley had been pushed to the brink and were faced with the Hobbesian nightmares of a life nasty, brutish and short. Recent researches in the domain of refugee studies in the west have shown that any definition of refugees is essentially hinged to cause of their migration. Hence Zollberg’s concept that those people who are forced to leave their countries of origin due to violent conflicts or ‘unsatisfactory living conditions’ comes handy in finding a suitable label for the Kashmiri refugees, once the technicality of international boundary or country of origin factors are taken in the correct spirit. Again by virtue of support from the borders-Pakistan, in their nefarious designs. It may be stated that the Kashmiri refugees are continuously manipulated by the orthodox religious elements to create communal tension and perpetually discord the state and its subjects. They had external support from across the borders-Pakistan, in their nebulous designs. The northern Command of the Indian army is reported to have conveyed to the civilian authorities as early as 1985 of a Pakistani plan of massive subversion and infiltration. Mark Tully, the BBC correspondent in India also noted during 1980s the conspicuous absence of Islamic fundamentalism in Kashmir. He also found fundamentalist parties which openly supported Pakistan in its dispute with India over the status of Kashmir to have forged an alliance to fight the elections there. Despite all such developments and growth of anti-Indian feelings and Islamisation, the Hindu minorities somehow carried on, refused to be swayed by Christian and atheist Christians still do in Egypt. The minorities had been getting out of the Valley all throughout. In 1985, some 56,000 more than a fifth of the members of the community had migrated to various parts of India and abroad. The communal, economic and political discrimination and communal violence of the local leaders. An undercurrent of fear of the mixed Hindus had always loomed large. Factors such as these have been attributed to the obvious and visible preponderance of the Muslim community in this area.

Having been a reduced in a small minority in six centuries of Muslim rule, the Hindus of Kashmir also called Pandits, a vibrant and dynamic community started feeling insecure and uncertain of Future. As said Studdert Kennedy, has pointed out: ‘Long oppression had unmanned the Kashmiri Hindus and left him with the most inadequate of spiritual resources’. Growing discrimination and frequent instances of forcible movement forced the Pandits to leave their ancestral homes and seek shelter elsewhere, where a more hospitable environment prevails. In this case it meant the Hindu majority areas elsewhere in India.

Background

To understand the roots of the problem one has to keep in mind the following facts. After India secured independence from the British colonial rule in 1947, Jammu and Kashmir (hereafter J&K) along with about six hundred princely states of the Indian subcontinent (held so far in sub-normal partnership with the imperial government in India) merged with the Indian Union. The state of J&K then ruled by the Hindu Maharaja Hari Singh signed the instrument of accession. It is to be remembered that India has a quasi-federal constitution. In fact the state was given special status through the Article 371 which prevented Indians from other parts of country to settle down and buy property there. Certain other privileges were also granted. This was indicated by some as peculiar state for either maximum autonomy and by some as precursor to total independence. Still others thought this was to pave the way for its merger with Greater Pakistan.

Certain aspects of the Kashmiri society were continuously manipulated by the orthodox religious elements to create communal tension and perpetually discord the state and its subjects. They had external support from across the borders-Pakistan, in their nebulous designs. It may be stated that the state of J&K has an overwhelming Muslim majority with Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs and Christians forming a small minority. The then leader of the premier political party of the state-The National Conference led by Sheik Abdullah also who became the head of the new administration had refused to join Pakistan. The separatist-necrophobic elements however backed up Pakistan to continue growth in strength. This was serious threat to Gandhi Nehru vision of secularism and pluralism.

An air of despondency and fear among the Hindus also came to exist in the Government, which began to threaten the ‘dire conseque of the minority community. They came to elements in the were actively patronising such the Pandits, the expressed their out of the Vail with a ‘design to secure their minority’.

Riots of 1986 and the Exodus of Hindus

A large number took place following the riots of 1986, in which the Hindu community, was subjected to all sorts of atrocities. These included burning of their houses, shops and temples. The Union Home Ministry had cause to inform the government that it was time in bers in this way. This was described as the ‘air of despondency. This paper rived from a pas to an -
Kashmiri Refugees


Collective Psychology

The nature and extent of the exodus of the vast num-
ber of predominantly civil population may be explained by what
the psycholo-
gists call 'the \"will to war\" mentality of their
peo-
pule. They find it difficult to be-
lieve, much less accept that
the familiar ambience had under-
gone such a horrent transfor-
mation. The marauders had rap-

didly assumed what Ellul calls a
'psychological crystallization', that
left many of their
victims very little opportunity to
organize. The flouting of a sense of commonality or
unity, is not always \"made or imagined\" as Anderson had ar-
gued. The orchestrated terrorism of the无辜 victims is the inexcusable
consequences of a mindset, and the not
sudden irrational aggressiv-

e, as fashionable history or literature would try to convince

The accentuation of commun-

tional solidarity and the uniformity
of behaviour over far-flung re-

cusals is explained by the histo-

rical memories of past domination of defeated people by the
\"ma-
ters\". The autonomy of

country forcefully displayed by one

segment of the population was

brought about in anticipation of the

breakdown of the law and

order machinery. The message

was clear, as it was in West Pak-
in the period 1948-48 or East

Pakistan/Bangladesh through-

out. It was part of a tradition

of intolerance. Some societies

always refuse to learn from their

sufferings that they always tend
to suffer. The victims admitted as

philosopher and sociologist

and administrator

people did rise their accus-

ing fingers at the administra-

tion. Except for brief periods, no one
cared for the common man. But
then, this is a grievance true of

common man everywhere.

Some people did blame spec-

ific problems like corruption at all

levels of administration and half

hearted measure of land reform.

But the latter is also cele-

brated by the findings of

scholars.

Land reform in Kashmir has
clearly been a long story from

the jags, and has weakened the

position of all the great

lords. It has distinctly benefited

the agriculturalists who, at the

tillage level, were already the most

important and substantial people.

It has done least for the farmers and landlords in

bourgeois, these two categories

being the largest in the country-

and have many lacktressed statistics of so

few, many hundred thousand acres
taken away from the big land-

holds can be quite misleading.

It's most-publicized land re-

form has not even succeeded in improving the eco-
nomic lot of the Kashmiri peasan-
t.

Disintegration, on the basis of religious, frequent intimation

was a common complaint. Much of this, they held could have

been avoided and some disaster

But that was seldom done.

It is this failure which emboldened the militants to assert more

and demand a larger slice. It is the

subservience of the administra-

tive machinery to every rea-

sonable faction which they found too powerful to be ignored or
deviation from secularism that plunged them.

Questions were asked on the role of the security forces too.

A near unanimous finding was the respect in which they are

held by the refugees. Of all the institution of the state, the Indian

armed forces, (including the BSF and the CRPF) are seen as the

frontline agents of the Indian state, non-partisan and yet

very patriotic. People are not ready to accept and believe any

complainances of Indian Army.

And it is the armed forces which is the

given credit for keeping Kashmir within India, and keep-

ing in check all the inimical forces.

This is generally seen as one of the most remarkable achievements of the political

administration in Kashmir which

had been keeping the armed forces immune from

the unhealthy influences of the external world. Oral testimony

on this score would thus neutral-

ize the offensive launched by

the so called civil-rights activists

who are known to be very sym-

pathetic to the militants.

The oral testimony also suggested

insufficiency and inade-
quacy in the relations of

job being undertaken by the gov-

ernment machinery. On the con-

trary most of them felt that it was

the best way to keep the state

controlled television network (Door Darshan) to the infird

movement of the Pakistanis which

genuinely inspired the Kashm-

ir militancy to raise the ban-

ner of revolt and indulge in hate

mongering.

Besides this, the government

did not only fail to highlight its impar-


tiality, and publicise its toil,

but also incited communal and

liberal movements, not withstanding occasional devia-

tions. As against this, the mili-

tants got by far including the

religious laws, educational

system, state patronage, frequent

demonstrations and slogan-

shouting, goad the government in

their messages and recruit more

supporters. This suggests effective use of symbols and past memories.

Some feel that the modern state with its tremendous re-

sources could have done better.

Present sufferings

Since the existing literature on

Kashmir is incommensurate to the extent of being non-existent,

it was considered necessary to record their perceptions of the sufferings,

All of them, without exception cannot

ever forget the beautiful

land, comfortable homes, and

prosperity they were left behind in

the Kashmir valley. This is typi-

cal of most of the refugees. Even

after fifty years, refugees who fled East Pakistan in 1947 or West Paki-

can not brush off the sweet memories of their ancestral

homeland. But the refugees from Kashmir have the unfortunate

usufruct of sharing the same fate with a scarse minority who are well

settled and would like to stay on. This also explains their trauma-

s, especially of a part turned
dole-dependent refugees.

Yet what makes them bitter

is the general apathy of country's fellow citizens. Some of them feel

that their return is possible only if they have a separate

homeland carved out from

within the Valley and a firmer

military action against the mili-

tants. They also made it clear

that their repatriation can be only voluntary and nothing else.

Towards a conclusion

The theme of man's inhumanity against fellow human beings reveals how cer-

tain ideologies work. Any attempt to explain this in terms of the

breakdown of the centre

state relations, quantum of au-

tonomy and purely socio-economic

matters would be meaningless. It also shows the state apparatus
collapses and a quasi state emerges without legit-

imacy. For the safety of its citizens, the state has to remain
ever vigilant. Failure to exercise sovereign authority can never be

rationalized.

What all of them agreed about was the apathy of the bulk of the

media and the political
community. In fact, they firmly held that the Indian media have done much
to publicise the activities involving the Pakistanis and our
diyik (marriage) with a

converted British woman than the
tragic story of Kashmiri refu-
ges.

Moreover, there is an urgent need for the international com-

munity, especially the humanitarian

organisation to take greater care

to the victims of forced migra-

tion; this is best achieved by a

tighter collaboration, for all political
disruptions to prevent any man

make disasters. It is impor-

tant to create and nurture an am-

bience which smoothes the

permobial tendencies and en-

courages the finer qualities of

humanity and non-otherwise

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Kashmir So.-f.ial (Dec.18, 18-Jan.15,(9)

It was that a n migrated to the outskirts of the Udhampur. The villagers

were that they went un-no-

when the Gover-

nment dismis-

sed the State. He had

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The Kashmir e-member fac-

teer to the af-

ard. The vic-

hat, they were

were an

or the sort

lamented led to places of the State and they also found

Camp

ings, some of and their repatriation etc.

Causa of Ouster

Most of the victims confessed that they put the blame on the

Jamaat-i-Lashkar which was founded by Saayid Abdul

Mauludi in 1938, which developed the concept of Nizam-e-

Mustafa, i.e the Islamic system and polity. Post merger political and

administrative developments also contributed to the emergence of such an atmosphere. The younger elements were gradually indoctrinated. Catering to the less affluent classes, petty officials gradually succeeded in sending its followers in every rung of the administration, the educational institutions and the professions. Thus even without any representation in the legislature, Jamaat could influence both action and policy.

Bull of them blamed the Urdu press of the Valley (since 1984) for its virulent anti-In-

dia and hate Hindu propaganda. People who take reference to the media greatly responsible for ignoring them; coverage of their problem was at best a tokenism and not substantial. They felt that many hundreds thousand acres

taken away from the big land-
Sarada pilgrimage—its socio-historicity

By Dr. Ramesh Kumar

Sarawati Mahamaya Kamruparajya Sarodores from Sarawati Mamumano (We bow to Sarawati who is the great Maya of Saradashree and also the great sage Sarawati residing in the neighbourhood of Sarada). Also during Yagnopavita cer- timony; some Sarawatis in Narayana cross move seven steps towards north and Saradhabai. Sarada is also the home to Nysaya school of Hindu philosophy. Sahijan (ancient Tewaja) a place in the vicinity of Sarada, on the bank of Kisan Kangana has been described in Mahayana tra- dition as the residence of Goutama, founder of nysaya school. It was at Goutama’s re- quest that Sarada was titled Durga. The shrine was also directly associated with Sarawati in the Mahayana tradition of Bheda and the river Sarawati. This river, known in its earlier existence as Kisan Kangana, has its origin in the hills of Chilas. It enters into the Kisan Kangana near the village of Sarada. At Bheda (Bhedgadi) the goddess Sarawati is believed to have shown herself as a swan in a lake (Ganghodoba spring) situated on the summit of a hill. Outside Kishmir, the 3rd Magha (Magha-tritya or Gauri- tritya) is a feast for the women and sacred to Gauri (Parvati). In Kashmir this day is celebrated as the day of initiation in learn- ing. The priest writes hymns of the goddess Sarawati on elabora- tely illuminated paper, which he gives to the youngsters. In re- turn, he has to give an amount of money. The day of the dark fortnight of Baisakh (Shrī Panchami) month is observed as dedicated to the goddess Sarawati by the Pandits of Kashmir.

Sarada shrine: The shrine of Sarada is situated in the Keran-Krnskangana valley at a hilltop across the Krnskangana river on the bank of Madhumati, which joins it near the shrine. Surrounded by the snow-capped mountains and dense forests, it commands a panoramic view. The gateway to shrine is through an imposing staircase with two flat wings of massive construction. In 64 big steps and three hundred small, now faded steps. Each big step is twelve feet long, two feet wide and 1½ ft thick. From the height of the staircase an extensive view.

The shrine: occupies roughly four kanals of land, out of which 3½ kanals are stone-floored. In the centre of this floored portion is the stone temple. Around it is a dharamshala. The roof of the temple is made of wood. In me- dieval times, Rajas of Karnah used to store gunpowder at the top and by explosion blew off the original stone roof. The name of the village housing the shrine is derived from the presiding de-ity itself. From ancient Saradavan, it is presently called Sarada.

The backside of the temple opens out to the terraces on the side of the hill. Some what higher on this side is a spring called Amar Kunda. It was from this spring that the legendary Buffalo earing King (Muktsukad Raza) re- gained his life with riddance of Buffalo ear.

Shila Worship: The object of veneration at the shrine is a slab in square in shape with a rough surface. It is 8 ft x 8 ft, one and a half feet thick. The slab has a broken surface. In the last century Raja Manvrat of Karnah had dug a small well in attempt to extricate jewels and diamonds from it. It is said that lot of diamon- ds and jewels were used in the preparation of the shila.

The shrine covers what could be explored in one day. Since as per tradition Khalma Sarada does not look at the springs believed to be the abode of the Sakta goddesses as they had their origin in the hills of Chilas. It enters into the Kisan Kangana near the village of Sarada. At Bheda (Bhedgadi) the goddess Sarawati is believed to have shown herself as a swan in a lake (Ganghodoba spring) situated on the summit of a hill. Outside Kishmir, the 3rd Magha (Magha-tritya or Gauri-tritya) is a feast for the women and sacred to Gauri (Parvati). In Kashmir this day is celebrated as the day of initiation in learn- ing. The priest writes hymns of the goddess Sarawati on elabora- tely illuminated paper, which he gives to the youngsters. In re- turn, he has to give an amount of money. The day of the dark fortnight of Baisakh (Shrī Panchami) month is observed as dedicated to the goddess Sarawati by the Pandits of Kashmir.

Sarada Mandir ( Fateh Kadi), it is said that a person who looks at the springs will turn blind.

The shila has a Shri Chakra and a few other figures marked on it. It is said that there is a time with the noontime mixed with and sheen red, evol- ving a panoramic view. The gateway to shrine is through an imposing staircase with two flat wings of massive construction. In 64 big steps and three hundred small, now faded steps. Each big step is twelve feet long, two feet wide and 1½ ft thick. From the height of the staircase an extensive view.

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The whole saffron belt of Kashmir is presently a riot of colour, flattered by the purple petals and red stigmas. The sweet smelling saffron flowers are lending an intoxicating charm and ethereal enchantment to the environment. However, this very charm has been despoiled by the fundamentalists, who have once again misused Ugrandhi to make him attain his wish. Orders were given to send 200,000 dirham and presents of a similar value to Kashmir, to be distributed among those who studied the book of his master. Randan did the trick.

The book was approved. Such was the prestige of scholars at Sarda that the book became the fashion and highly prized.

During Sultan Zainul-Abdin’s reign in the fourteenth century, Ramanand Sanyasi, a renowned Valmikana reformer (of Ramavat Sect) and author of Bhaiya-Vyayika came to visit Sarda. He belonged to Kerala. A manuscript of Rajantarangini in Persian, records his visit in these words:

“Ramanand Sanyasi dar samamul pada shud, he’d azan ki Sultan bha wai matul kurt sahrud ki danish biser darud wa ki kiran mubaksh ra ki dir ilmi bayakaran ast khubd-anstill. Jnani Pandit gifu ki sharda devi dar peshi life, wari fari bayakaran azj wa hairan bud”.

Translation: In his (Zainul-Abdin’s) age there appeared Ramanand Sanyasi. After he had audience with the King, it was found that he was endowed with much learning, and that he was an adept in the Mahabharat, which treats of Bayakaran (grammar). Jnani Pandit (Jonaraj) says that even Sardar Devi, the goddess of learning, was perplexed to cope with him in the intricacies of Bayakaran.

It is also said that Ramanand smuggled a manuscript from the library attached to the shrine. He was caught near the Kotbush and the manuscript was recovered from him.

PRABHAVAKA CARITA, composed in the middle of thirteenth century narrates an interesting story related to the well-known Jaina scholar Hema Candra. He composed the great grammatical work, SIDDHAHEMACANDRA.

The author was commissioned by King Jayasimhan of Guzarat to compose a new grammer. He was requested to be supplied with the necessary materials in the shape of the eight older grammers, which could be found only in the library of the goddess Saraswati in Kashmir. Jayasimha’s envoys came to Sarda and offered prayer at the temple. The goddess was pleased and commanded her own attendants to transmit the desired works to her favoured disciple. The manuscripts were therefore delivered to the King’s envoys and brought by them to Hema Candra. After perusing them he composed his own work.

SARDA Temple: The Legends

When and who built the grand temple at Sarda remains a mystery. It is also not known, whether the present structure was a new construction or a restoration on the ruins of an old one. In style the cella of Sarada temple has some resemblance to the ruined cells at KAPATASVER KOTHER (Acchabala). There is an indirect evidence, which indicates that probably the builder of the two shrines was common.

The Hindu temple architecture developed during the period between c.12th and the thirteenth century A.D. It was facilitated by the close contacts with the Gandharan Kingdom in the preceding centuries. The high prosperity and the political stability that Kashmir witnessed during the rule of Karkota Kings, particularly Lidittaditya, came to the aid of Kashmir architecture.

The name of King MUKTSAND is associated with the foundation of the temple of Sarada. This King was cursed with a pair of ‘Saffron eyes’. Anxious to rid himself of this curse, he could not achieve his purpose by any means at his disposal. King MUKTSAND was a turban that could devour his ‘abnormal ears’. He would kill every barber after getting a haircut, lest he be liable to lose his secret. Many barbers met death this way. Ultimately one barber begged mercy and requested to employ him as his permanent barber. He promised not to divulge the secret.

One day, this barber fell acutely ill. For nearly four months there was no relief. Some priests were summoned to suggest a remedy. They attributed his illness to the withholding of some secret. It was suggested to the King that the barber be sent to a forest, away from the watchful eyes of his army. The barber was advised to speak out the secret he was withholding. The unfortunate man narrated the story from the twig of a tree. Then the barber pulled through it a hair of horse and shouted. “Muktsand mantra marubhumi han” (King Muktsand has buffalo’s ears). Meanwhile, the priests suggested to the disturbed King that he order the temple (near Sarada temple), to be rebuilt.

Species was valued at Rs 20 to 124, as recorded by Francisco Pelsaert, the Dutch Factor at Agra.

The Kashmir University premise is hoist on its own peard! The Italian saffron is the most inferior in the world. Even in various regions, the low quality of the Italian variety was known.

The Kashmir saffron, says the royal dramatist, Sir Harsha (606-48), in a telling comment in the Railway, is preferred to the herb from Iran, which he calls the land of the Pishsakhs and Bahilikhs. The Valley variety is the top-grade of all, parallel with the Spanish product. In the middle ages, it was rather difficult to clone a better variety from an inferior one. A note (about 200 gms) of it fetched Rs (Akkhri) 28 to 32. On the contrary, the Pampur species was valued at Rs 20 to 124, as recorded by Francisco Pelsaert, the Dutch Factor at Agra.

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Dr. Jetinder Singh

The decade of trial and turmoil in a period long enough to bring out the best or the worst in any community struggling to come to terms with the physiological mental pangs of homelessness. The same also holds true for the displaced Kashmiri Pandit community. While the physical soil has been taken by the summer heat of plains couples with a sudden upsurge in the number of diseases associated with diabetes, the mental well-being stands shaken by the ruthless sevling of less from the native Kashmiri ethos. Bodily drained out and psychologically confused, the displaced community members are confronted by an uninhabitively visible identity crisis cum persecution complex which may also be an extent responsible for their contradictory responses to any proposal mooted for their return to the Valley. And, upon this, as morbidly infected by Jammu’s characteristic market place optimism, some of the displaced KP leaders living in Jammu have developed strong personal interests which far outweigh the KP community’s collective interest.

So, this, in a nutshell, today is the unfortunate born of a highly enlightened, awakened and literate KP community whose cerebral skills had always remained either absolutely unmatched throughout the country or were spuriously compared with only two other exception-

ally intelligent communities—the Malaysians from the South coast and the Bengalis from the East coast.

Over the last eight to ten years, a number of diverse sections of opinion have emerged among the displaced Kashmiri Pandit community. This is not very unusual considering the long years of exile compounded by the stress of homelessness and uncertainty through which the uprooted KPs have had to go through. From time to time, it is also alleged in certain quarters that the KP leaders have developed vested interests in denying the migrants’ return to Kashmir. Although this charge has never been convincingly refuted, it is reasonable to believe that even those of the displaced KPs who have managed for themselves sufficiently good accommodation in Jammu or elsewhere feel suffocated living away from the natural environs in the Vale of Paradise.

What is saddening however is that, of late, some of the KP migrant organizations and their leaders themselves have started hurling charges against ex-tenants members of their own community accusing each of other of allegedly harbouring a vested interest in resisting any such move which is aimed at bringing about the return of the KP migrants to the Valley. To any sincere sympathizer of the displaced KP plight, such public utterances would sound disheartening. First, because these are not just a blow to the bottom of the KP migrant cause and second, because these are quite avoidable if only the different KP migrant spokesmen refrain from working at cross-purposes and instead sit down to jointly work out a mutually common strategy for securing mutually common dividends.

Equally disappointing is the needless public expression of misconceived apprehension that local populace of Jammu may rise against the KP migrants who have settled here. Such statements amount to abusing the traditional hospitality and sense of accommodation demonstrated by the people of Jammu who did not react even during those tumultuous years of 1989-90 when they were loaded with sudden unexpected influx of KP migrants. Moreover, the people of Jammu are most capable enough to tolerate the presence of blandly anti-India elements in their midst, will they not tolerate the presence of committedly pro-India KP migrants in their midst?

Be that as it may, this is not a game of scoring points nor a match of populist rhetoric. The issue is much more serious than it appears to be. And, there is much more to it than meets the eye.

The displaced KPs, by and large, certainly wish to return to their homes albeit honourably and visibly. Economic resettlement is as important to attract them back to the Valley as a sense of security both physical as well as psychological. When such conducive conditions return, the displaced KPs would themselves start trickling back as is evident from the periodic trips to the Valley undertaken lately by many a KP migrant to check the status of their houses and other property back home. Meanwhile, it is ridiculous to suggest that the displaced KPs have a dubious interest in staying away from their ancestral homes and hearts in the Valley. More than the well-guarded men at the helm, the predicament of the displaced KPs can be better appreciated by the unguarded common man.

Unapologetic understatement of this sort of all and the cue comes from the poetic expression: “Bashubh Log Badalate Nahan Mansukh Aaps’ Tunme Dekha Hai Jalsa Hua Kashmiree Apaan!”

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II-Sarda University and Legends

(Cont'd from page 17)

Who was this King Manukundu? In his account of Lalladitya’s reign, Khanna refers to certain followers of a King of Ganda or Bengal, who had come to Kashmir under the pretence of visiting the shrine of Sarda, but in reality to avenge the murder of their king by Lalladitya. He writes:

“...They had secured entry into Kashmir, under the pretence of visiting the goddess Sarda, and having thus arrogated to the abode of the god, who had been the surety...”

The legend of King Manukundu is also associated with Kaptesvara temple. It is interesting that the legendary King Manukundu was associated with the foundation of those temples in Kashmir, where the builder remains unknown.

Sandal-devotee of goddess:

This legend is narrated in Sarada Mahayana. It says Muni Sandhyana, son of Matanga was a great devotee of the goddess Sarada. He yearned to have her sight. It was as per Divine advice that he proceeds to SYAMALA MAHAARASTRA, present SAMALA, adjoining Saradi, to have darshana.

At Gus, which is also the starting point ofysters, he gets darshana of Mahadevi. The devi tells him that he can see her in true form as (Sakti) only in Suravaswam and varishes from his sight at Hayohom. Next, Muni takes bath at Kranaga, the source of origin of Kranaganga. There his half body turns golden. Since Drag is the village, where this spring is located it has been named Sun-Drag, the ‘Gold-Drag’ (Suvaramdhangaka).

Sandal-devotee then ascends the mountain and sees the dance of goddess in a forest called Romuni. The muni next proceeds to Tejahan via Guthaman Marg. Crossing the Ganes Gatti he reaches Sarada. The Goddess reveals herself and invites him to her residence on Sri Sata. Pits (the dead) approach Sandhyana for performing their last rites. On his taking water from the Mahisindhu for the purpose of the tarpa rite, half of his water turns into honey and forms the stream known as Mahisindu. The Bath and Saradhas at Sangam of Kranaganga and Mahadumati help, it is believed, in complete remission of sins. 

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(Kerala)
Sonala -- A witness to Sarada Yatras

Sonal Thakur is perhaps among the few living Krishnamurthy Pandit who have been witness to Sarada yatra. Originally a resident of Lidderdwar, a border village in the Kishanganga valley of Kashmir, Sonala is living as a displaced person in Sadgurupura village (Marib Block) of Jammu. Age has not betrayed Sonala. At 85, he is physically fit and retains his sharp memory. Sonala and his family had been running provision store business in Saradi and the adjoining village of Lidderdwar since 1961, till this part of the state came under Pakistan occupation in 1947. This summer I had an opportunity to read impressions of Sarada yatras. Excerpts of the interview are reproduced below.

You had been running provision store business at Sarada and Lidderdwar. In 1944 we constructed a new shop building, close to the staircase of the shrine. Our old store was rented out from the Pujari building.

There are many traditions which relate this region to Vaishnav culture. Nag and Sakti worship. What are your impressions?

SL: Lidderdwar and the adjoining villages abound in nags i.e. natural springs. There are as many as sixty springs in Lidderdwar. Villages like Zirtama (40), Mirzama (20), Avura (15) have also many springs. These springs are also old temples in Lidderdwar. Maharadra's nag and Mukhar are other two springs of veneration here. On Sapta Bhasi day, water comes out in the form of pearls from the Mukhar (ancient Mukhar). This spring is 8 feet 3 feet deep. It has a stone embankment on all sides and the face of a stupa as an old inscription of Lord Rams. Sonala is believed to have taken a bath here. At Avura there is a grove, having great sanctity, Richthwar. Many Naga here have old stone idols. Similarly close to Daulia there is a place called Rishinak. Many Rishis in old times offered penance in this jungle. Near the hill we would see groups across old pottery and Havans items.

RK: How big were Daulia and Sarada villages?

SL: Daulia was a bigger village, having four hundred families. In Sarada there were just a hundred families. Ethnically, they belonged to Afidi tribe with fair sprinkling of Kashmiri speaking Muslimes. Besides them, there was a small garrison stationed in the State government did not make any special arrangements for the yatras. Maharadra Thakur Singh had kept two Pujaris Nandial and Ganesh Das for helping pilgrims in conducting Puja. They were well known in the region. Nandial was from Nandikeshwar. A building was constructed for them. Some land had also been granted to them and they monthly granted. These Pujaris also made some money from the Puja Divas sold by them.

RK: What were the arrangements made by the state government?

SL: She visited Sarada shrine in 1933. Once she met my father, Tika Lal from Nag Nag and told him, "I have to perform many yatras". He told her, "you just go to Sarada". My father volunteered to take her on this pilgrimage. Maharadra Thakur who had earned a name for conducting long meditations ranging twelve hours lived only on milk and singhara. One month prior to Gongozavan, my father got her in bus from Srinagar to Sopore. From Zempur-Bomali to Saadmalini I arranged palanquin for her. The first halt was at Zeenur and the next day we stayed at Saadmalini. On the third day we reached Lidderdwar. The track from Zempur to Saadmalini along the Kishanganga river was not good.

On way to Lidderdwar, Maharadra Devi visited Ram Takh. There were two springs of Ram and Sita here and at the foot of the mountain is Ram Takh. It is believed that in olden times there used to be a big lake here and the boats would be tied to a pole on the bank of the lake. The spring is 8 feet and three feet deep. There is kitchen-chhata of Sita here.

When we reached Lidderdwar, Ramkooji Khasa, a renowned parshuram from Habakkadal was already there. He was the family priest to many Pandits in Waterkhan, Bomali and Lidderdwar. At Sarada two tents were pitched for the stay of Matha Devi and Ramkooji Khasa. During her stay with us, my wife, Bhanwari dhadhi Matha Devi in milk. She stayed at Lidderdwar for one month every month. Matha Devi strongly objected to the animal sacrifice on Ashwani day. She got red tippet tied around her body, and held a trident (shamsher) in her hand. Dressed like Kali, she stood at the gateway to the shrine. Matha Devi rebuked pilgrims engaged in animal sacrifice on the day of Ashwani and later retired to her tent. Soon hundreds of waps surrounded her tent. Pilgrims believed it was a curse sent to Matha Devi by the goddess Sarada. Everybody thought she won't survive the attack of waps. Ramkooji Khasa said, "I had told her not to take cudgel fight. She always takes cudgel fight. Half an hour passed and all the waps had disappeared. Matha Devi emerged unscathed. She again came to the gateway and told Punjabi pilgrims that they could continue the practice but on the Naumi day.

RK: Where is Narda located. Does every pilgrim go there during pilgrimage?

SL: Narda is just few miles away. Nobody can reach its top i.e. Kashiher. It is said there is a spring to be used in a spring house. Since the path from Sarada to Narda is very dangerous, not many pilgrims venture to visit Narda. Tradition says that the huge stones, which even three hundred people cannot lift, for the Sarada shrine were specially carried here.

RK: People say goddess Sarada has miraculous powers. What have you to say about it?

SL: In 1940, a lady abdus lost her way while going from Daulia to Sarada via Tejan. It was already dusk and she was frightened as the road ahead lay through gorge and cliffs. Goddess Sarada appeared, dressed in a Gagra, and guided her right up to the fort. Then she suddenly disappeared. Not only Hindus but also Muslims venerated the goddess. In the sixty kilometre belt from Kuma to Kashiher along Kishanganga river abdus swore by the goddess, "Man Ki Kaazam". They would offer Chadda-Habba.

RK: Do you miss the old days of Sarada?

SL: Yes, very much. Even today people of Daulia and Sarada will give me the same love and respect. I can go to Sarada but not Lidderdwar. People of Lidderdwar hate me. They talk about our Chakki and the four houses. As per reports till 1988, the shrine of Sarada was safe...
Ali Mohammed Lone

Recreating memorable moments from Kashmir's past

Lone did not live to see the dark days that engulfed Kashmir in early nineties. A dark era descended on the hapless valley, as the rest of the world sat poised to step into 21st century. Ugly forces of terrorism, religious obscurantism and fascism raised their head, with open foreign connivance and backing, to obliterate Kashmir's past, its culture, heritage, traditions and its way of life, and to obliterate Kashmiri identities dating back to thousands of years.

Ali Mohammed Lone prided himself on being the inheritor of Kashmir's civilizational past. It is not difficult to think of the agony he would have suffered under the new cult of the gun that put shackles on minds, tongues and pens of intellectu- als and ordinary men alike. One wonders how much he would have suffered to see the entire Pandit community, the most powerful symbol of Kashmir's ethos, being hounded out of its land of ancestors. Most of his close friends and colleagues came from this community.

Lone died in a road mishap in 1987 when the auto rickshaw he was travelling in met with an accident, some distance away from his home in Srinagar. That fatal event left the Africa at Regal Chowk telling his friends that he wanted to rush home to listen to a radio play of a recent play—a wish that he never reached home; his dead body did instead. By that time Bharati's play had ended.

Kashmiri Samiti demands white paper on relief

NEW DELHI, Dec 25: Pandit groups at a meet convened by Delhi Kashmir Samiti urged the government to come out with a white paper on the money the government claims to have spent under the "relief fund" on displaced migrants. They also alleged that some government agencies had even siphoned off relief funds. The groups also demanded the Centre's government from releasing any funds to the State government in the name of relief funds. They said the State government was "befooling" the Centre about the law and order situation in the Valley.

The meet called for Rs 1000 crore special fund for rehabilitation of Kashmiris in inaccessible regions and for establishing townships on major cities. The demands listed included. Rs 5 lac as compensation to traders for_estimators their business, and of raising of relief to Rs five thousand per month, reservation quota for admissions and jobs, compensation for damaged property at prevailing market rates, restoration of religious shrines and cultural institutions of religious shrines and cultural institutions etc. It urged for revoking all the distress sales and demanded setting up of a special statutory body directly under the Ministry of Home Affairs to ensure safe custody of Pandits' property. The demand was also raised for immediate restoration of property to rightful owners within one month.

ITBP Director General Gautam Kaul also spoke at the meet. He said the community was preparing to welcome Kashmiris in the local level to solve its small civil disputes. "This will help the community to save money in contesting cases in civil courts", he suggested.

Page No. 24

FALSIFYING HISTORY WAS NEVER INDEPENDENT

By Prof. M.L. Kou

Prior to its incorporation into Mughal empire Kashmir as per historical evidence had a history of being a part and parcel of the empires built by various indigenous dynasties and foreign aggressors. The Buddhist work titled as Angutara Nikaya contains the history of sixteenth Mahajapadas in the sixth and seventh century B.C. The fifteen on the map above the words in Gandhara, which included Kashmir and was known as Kashmir in then literature.

According to Kahana, Gomukh, Srinivasa, Sridhar, Jaarsand, the king of Magadha. During the battle that he fought with Krishna, Gomukh at the head of an army besieged Krishna in a fortress. Though he and his men put up a valiant fight, he got killed and his kingdom was annexed. Dandamata was enthroned and burning with revenge, he launched an attack on Krishna and in the process got killed. His pregnant wife Yashovati was made Madah in front of the behest and advice of Krishna as it was the land of Sati, sacred to the memory of Shiva.

Achaemenian monarchy under the stewardship of Cyrus (558-30 BC) subjugated Gandhara and Kashmir was an integral part of the territory. Gandhara has found mention as one of the regions of the empire built by Darius the Great and evidences found by the Seistan expedition of Darius Herodotus, a colossus of Greek history, has made an explicit mention of Kasaparyos (Kashmir) as a city of the Gandharitans. All the available notices and evidences go to a long way to firmly establish that Kashmir formed a part and parcel of the older and growing empire and framed by the Achaemenids.

As per canonical, Indo-Greeks had their hegemony over Gandhara which among other territories included Kashmir too. The same has found corroboration and concurrence by the board of coins that has been recovered from various parts of the land in Kashmir. Again under the Mauyran emperor, Aeshik, Kashmir grew and flourished as a principal and vital centre of the Buddhist Church and Buddhist thought and learning. Kahhan in his Rajatpana credits him with the foundation of Srinagar as the capital city of Kashmir with "ninety-six thousand beautiful houses resplendent with prosperity". Aksoka built not only viharas and stupas through the length and breadths of Kashmir but also built a Shiva temple at Bhitrabad, a centre of Hinduism that may be closer to a recovery from the site that is a standing testimony to his exemplary sense of tolerance and coexistence. Maharajanka, a great leader of the Gualtanis heading an evangelistic mission was, deputed and sent to Kashmir by the Gualtanis of Haran-Hasor and Hum-Tisang and Ou-Kong, two Chinese travellers, testify to the fact that Asoka had settled not fewer than 5,000 monasteries in Kashmir, thus turning it into a great Buddhist centre.

There are ample and varied archaeological evidences available that firmly establish Kashmir as the land of Buddhism. A notable figure of this period was a monk named Sengupta, who ruled over Northern India for more than a period of 100 years. This monk was a great person in the field of literature and writing particularly the establishment of the Sangha and the two pivotal centres of literature, which was a strong base for the other prominent religions during Harsha's reign. Though he was a devout Buddhist and a great scholar, he contributed significantly to the spread of Buddhism in the region and also contributed to the strengthening of the Buddhist influence in the region and its spread. His contributions to the field of literature were immense and his works were popular among the people of Kashmir, not only among the people of the region, but also among the people of other parts of India.

Kahana has made minute mention of his contribution to the spread of Buddhism in the region and also of the contributions of Sengupta to the spread of Buddhism in the region. He has also made a reference to the contributions of other scholars and writers of the time to the spread of Buddhism in the region. His contributions to the field of literature were immense and his works were popular among the people of Kashmir, not only among the people of the region, but also among the people of other parts of India.

The political history of the Northern India became blurred with the dense clouds of chaos and disintegration from 647 AD onwards started looming large in its horizon. Despite periodic snows guarding its frontiers, the external dangers threatening the empire, the scenario of Kashmir was even more adverse. Efforts made to stem the tide of Arab expansion in Central Asia and in its periphery were thwarted by evidences by the annals of Tang Dynasty, Candrasura, a ruler of Kashmir, sent an embassy to the Chinese court to build and organise a united resistance against the Arabs, who through their expansion were deemed to pose a threat to Kashmir as well. Lalitaditya, a son of Karkota dynasty, built a garrison empire by conquering territories beyond the borders of Kashmir including Tibet, Badkhshan, Punjab and Kanauj, thus materialising Kashmir's dream of 'tyrants with empire'. He also defeated yashovarman, conqueror, without let or hindrance, and established the sphere of his influence, not the direct annexation of the territories of the empire. At various stages of its chequered history, Kashmir as such preserved the same saga of expansion and contraction of its borders. There were rulers who extended the sphere of its influence and sway beyond the borders of Kashmir and again there were many weak-kneed kings, who lacking in guts and qualities, were defeated shrunken within the recumbent figure of their land. As is known to his followers, Lalitaditya was a formidable conqueror and the territories he led his armies into were not annexed to his well defined domain and were held by the subjugated rulers acknowledging their vassalage to the conqueror by paying him tributes and offering him gifts. It never implies that he did not enjoy over the territories he had conquered and subjugated.

It is very important to note that despite a few exceptions the whole of Kashmir had the uniqueness to stand out as one entity, not because of the presence of one people but might be the case else where, but because of the spirit of India that brought about a deep-seated and lasting union in a unified form and pattern. As is well understood by the clearness of the country, Kashmir through its history has been a vital strand of the broad and variegated mosaic of Indian culture and civilization and has been an intense political changes and upheavals in its routes though embedded in the Indo-European languages lost touch and contact with the total cultural ambiences pervading the nation with the cultural and territorial links that existed between the two, formed through ages, have proven too strong and tenacious for any political barrier to sunder the twin for an permanent rupture. Even the Mughal rulers did not find a way to the destruction of the native cultural and civilizational developments of its peripheries acknowledge both despair and defeat in snapping the ties of Kashmir with the empire, which was a continuous and coherent historical tradition and the development and gradation development. As it is, independence of Kashmir prior to the Mughal annexation is a myth and falsification, contrived to strengthen and provide a rationale to the separatist movement launched by the Muslim secessionists aided and abetted by the enemies of India. The Shaik and Chak periods of Kashmir history were dominated by the Mughals, and Kashmir was annexed for over 200 years. The sepatist ideologues try to view the entire period of Kashmiri history through the blurred lens of Sultanieh period. But the subversive fact remains that Kashmiri has a composite history of 5000 years of which the Sultanieh period constitutes only a small fragment. A disciple of Khalil in his autobiography, Aakhir-e-Chinar, has also chosen to uphold the claim of Kashmiri independence on untenable theory of independence of Kashmir prior to its Mughal occupation.
Displaced Hindu Fire Sufferers

Perseverance & Persuasion has been the key

The experience, however, no way rationalises the gross discrimination meted out to disqualified Pandits. The displacement of the insurance claims for damaged properties continues to be an extremely laborious procedure for the displaced persons. Muslim victims living in Valley have got ex-gratia relief through proper intervention by the government and also because they are living in the Valley and can expedite their claims easily by approaching the concerned officers in charge of the areas.

Displaced Pandits have been provided half of the assessed amount to the maximum of one lakh rupees as the ex-gratia relief. Setting such a criteria has been highly discriminatory and only points out a communal bias. In case of fire-victims of Charar-e-Sharief tragedy, the State government paid the victims, all of whom are Muslims, one lakh rupees for each family, on a war footing. These Muslim fire victims also got an additional amount of one lakh rupees from Prime Minister’s relief fund, besides free food and subsidized construction material for the construction of their new houses. For settling their claims special committees were constituted who made payments within days. Hindu fire sufferers had to wait for years to see their claims settled.

Interview

Q: What has been your experience since the making of Fire Sufferers Forum?
A: We have a sense of satisfaction that our organisation has been able to decisively intervene on behalf of displaced Hindus and bring some relief to them.

Q: How did you approach the problem of fire victims?
A: We needed to present our case properly. There was a need to impress upon authorities to simplify the procedural wrangles which had led to widespread corruption in the department. A displaced victim whose property had been destroyed by fire and whose insurance claims had been rejected by the insurance companies. He had been without any relief from the insurance companies.

Q: How did you approach the problem of fire victims?
A: We presented our case properly. There was a need to impress upon authorities to simplify the procedural wrangles which had led to widespread corruption in the department. A displaced victim whose property had been destroyed by fire and whose insurance claims had been rejected by the insurance companies. He had been without any relief from the insurance companies.

Q: What is your estimate of the no. of houses burnt in Valley which belonged to Kashmiri Hindus?
A: I can safely say that 98% of the insurance claims of Hindu fire victims have already settled.

Q: What about the total attitude of the government?
A: It has been blatantly discriminatory. Sealing of cases of Muslims fire victims of Charar-i-Sharief is the most appropriate example to explain this discriminatory attitude.

Q: What about the future plans or your organisation?
A: We will continue with our non-violent protests to help fire victims.

Q: What about the present status of handling of the problem of fire victims by the Insurance Companies?
A: Present-status is generally of some satisfaction. However the efforts are on to corrupt the system. Reports that assessing authorities from Valley frequently come to Jammu and approach the fire victims offering them better assessment in lieu of hefty bribes are disturbing.
Mountbatten & Kashmir

By Mohan Kishen Tiku

A s it was, during the reign of the Dogra rulers, a stream of every victory-off India visited the Vale in the middle of the worship of the Ruler. It is but natural that Lord Mountbatten would have been eager to see for himself the beautiful Vale. Thus one can easily imagine with what rapture Mountbatten must have received the invitation of Maharaja Hari Singh. Lord Mountbatten knew Maharaja Hari Singh, who was on the Prince-of-Wales' staff, with him during his Royal Highness' tour in 1921-22. The Viceregal now accepted a long-standing invitation from the Maharaja of Kashmir to pay an early visit. At the Viceroy's House in New Delhi, a great bustle and bustle was going on. The Viceregal was discussing the policy of the Government of India with regard to the accession of the Indian States to the Dominion or the other while the discussions were going on in the Viceroy's House, Mountbatten became particularly concerned about the Maharaja of Kashmir and his State. Subsequently a thought came to his mind to kill two birds with one stone. He announced his intention to pay a private visit to Kashmir in the third week of June 1947. The Maharaja was intimated about the programme.

'Gulab-Mahal' Palace, Srinagar was to be the Guest House for the August visitors. The Palace was immediately renovated. The rooms were tastefully decorated with fine walnut furniture, silk-tapestry and soft woolen Kashmiri carpets of the craftsmanship of Maharanis. Maharaja himself supervised the arrangements which were going on day and night.

D. N. Dhar, the then Chief Architect of the State (assisted by the Palace-works-Manager, V. N. Tikoo), under the orders of the Maharaja, was to find a proper place on the roof of the Gulab-Mahal Palace, for hoisting the Union-Jack Flag of the Viceroy. He was instructed by the Maharaja personally to do the job without making a hole or so on the roof of the Palace. The job was done so as to the entire satisfaction of the Maharaja. Finally, the Viceroy along with Viscount Mountbatten, the Minister Pangali and some members of the staff arrived at Srinagar airfield on 18th June 1947. They were received by His Highness and high officials at a simple and impressive ceremony.

Accompanied by His Highness the party drove straight to Gulab-Mahal Palace. There Her Highness, and Yuvaraj Kanan Singh, the Prince, received the Viceroy and the party. A fine lunch was served. Taking some rest, the party visited the famous Moghal Gardens Shalimar and Nishat on the same day in the afternoon. Mountbatten had some car drives with Maharaja Hari Singh and during this course some conversations took place. It is understood that he gave some advice to the Maharanis with regard to the new set-up of the Indian Union and the States. The Viceregal wanted to repeat the same in presence of Prime Minister Kak with George Abel and Resident in Kashmir Col. Webb in attendance at a meeting. The Maharaja avoided this meeting by informing the Viceregal that he was in bed due to colic pain.

Their excellencies viewed the famous Kashmir arts and crafts at the exhibition grounds on 31st June. Prime Minister Kak and some high officials received the party at the exhibition grounds. Viscount Mountbatten took keen interest in the arts and crafts of Kashmir while going round the stalls.

Her-Excellency also paid a visit to Maharaja Hari Singh Hospital on the same day. She was received there by Wazir Gangra Ram the then Home Minister of the State. She was very much impressed by the service of the hospital. In the course of a letter to the Home Minister, she paid a tribute to the efficient medical and nursing facilities provided in the hospital. Her excellency said, "The hospital is indeed a very fine one, and I was most impressed by the efficient running of it by the excellent medical and nursing staff. I know fully the difficulties experienced in obtaining supplies and you have my sincere admiration and congratulations for the fine work which is being done despite these obstacles." The opening of the hospital had been done by Lord Wavell during his short private visit to the State on October 11, 1945. The foundation stone had been laid by Lord Linlithgow earlier in 1940. On the same day i.e 21st June, an Afternoon Reception" was held in their honour at Rajgarh. The Viceregal invested their Highness with G.C.V.O. and C.I.E. decorations. After four days stay, on the fine morning of 23rd June, their excellencies and the party left Srinagar for New Delhi. Her Highness and high officials of the State bade farewell.

Alan Campbell Johnson of Lord Mountbatten's staff records that Viceroy left Srinagar in a very disappointed manner due to the Maharaja's reluctance to meet him before his departure.

Sardar Patel got very anxious about the affairs of the Jammu and Kashmir state. On 3rd July 1947, he wrote a letter to Maharaja from New Delhi, "I fully appreciate the difficult and delicate situation in which your State has been placed. I was greatly disappointed when his excellency the Viceroy returned without having full and frank discussion with you on that fatal (fatal) Sunday when you had given an appointment which could not be kept because of an odd exception or two, has been marked by insensitivity, bordering on sheer callousness, to the crisis of the Pandit. Indian politicians view people only in the shape of ballot papers which they want in their pockets. Kashmir Pandit hardly has any utility in this regard, so why bother? Indian nation's insensitivity is appalling too. It can bring down government for the sake of an onion, but it appears to be helplessness in the case of a three-lakh strong community, hounded out from its land of ancestors, rendered homeless and made to live as refugees in this great democracy of the world.

What adds insult to injury is the state of the community itself! A people who cannot think and act unidly in adversity, can never do so, and a people who cannot help themselves, will not be helped by God either. All these years the so-called leadership has been pulling in different directions, and often pulling another's leg. The result is that as far as its own initiatives and action are concerned, the community stands precisely and pathetically where it did eight years ago. No genuine leadership has emerged during this time and there isn't hope of any emerging now. Even during their halcyon days, it was said of Pandits that each one of them is equal to "two and a half Congress parties." It continues to be so today. As if the holy mess of the displaced community were not enough there are some non-displaced members comfortably settled in foreign lands who are making the confusion worse confused. One of the "experiments" floated by some of them is that a group of "three to five thousand families" be persuaded to settle in a "secluded location" in Kashmir with the idea that this model be "replicated" later in other areas. This idea has not come up for the first time but no proposer has ever bothered to work out the practicability, advisability and acceptability of the idea. In practice it means that Pandits do not go back to their homes but are herded into a "selected location" like cattle in a guarded enclosure or like a ghetto of unwanted people for the gun-crazy militants to prey upon.

It takes a Lord Eric Avebury, Vice Chairman of UK Parliamentarian Rights Group, to sound caution that at the present time it would not be safe for Pandits to go back because "they cannot feel secure".

After his recent visit to Jammu and Kashmir and after looking at what he called "utterly appalling conditions of Pandit camps, Lord Avebury said, "you cannot be certain that outsiders (foreign mercenaries) won't single them out." But who cares for the "feelings" of the community in distress. The men at the helm of affairs in Delhi and Srinagar may not look at Pandits as mere ballot papers, but they do look upon them as pawns in Delhi's quest for its brand of normalcy in Kashmir. Unfortunately they are joined in some by members of the community too.

Rattan Lal's parents are in the twilight of their lives. He himself symbolises the today of Pandits in exile and this "today" is wholly taken up by the community's struggle for honourable and dignified survival. What happens to "tomorrow" of the community? What happens to Madhumati?"
Reshuffle for the worse

Corruption Soars High in Relief organisation

JAMMU Correspondent

The eviction drive by the Relief Commissioner’s Office at Parkhoo camp and seizing of 32 room tenements has once again raised many questions about the murky business going on in the organisation. On Dec 22, 1998 officials of Relief Commission—evicted by a contingent of police swooped on the Parkhoo camp and started forcefully evicting the displaced families from one room tenements (ORTs) constructed recently. The occupants who claimed to be genuine claimants for the camps, resorted to court. Recently, the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir granted an ex-parte order of eviction from the ORTs

The agitated Kashmiri Pandits pushed up the intelligence and security agencies to take stringent measures to prevent the eviction of all the tenements. The Pandits have been forced to live in makeshift rooms in the camps. The authorities have been pressing for the rehabilitation of the displaced families, but the authorities have failed to provide them with proper accommodation.

The New Delhi government has been reluctance in providing required facilities to the displaced families.

The Relief Commissioner’s office has been evicting the displaced families from the ORTs, but the authorities have been unable to provide proper accommodation.

The New Delhi government has been reluctance in providing required facilities to the displaced families.

Wanchoo’s killing

You fought for them but got killed in the end

Special Correspondent

JAMMU: The conduct of symbolic visits to Hari Parbat Temple and Khier Bhawan by the Jammu and Kashmir government has led to the forced eviction of Kashmiri Pandits from their houses. A number of Pandits have been forced to leave their homes and move to other parts of the state.

The government has been pressure to make the eviction of the Pandits a success, but the authorities have failed to provide proper rehabilitation to the displaced families.

The New Delhi government has been reluctance in providing required facilities to the displaced families.

The New Delhi government has been reluctance in providing required facilities to the displaced families.
The grim tragedy of Kashmiri Pandits is compounded by the equally grim irony that one of the most intelligent, subtle, versatile, and proud communities of the country is being virtually reduced to extinction in free India.

By Jagmohan Ex. Governor (A&K)

Over the years, Kashmiri Pandits migrated to different parts of Northern India. This was largely due to the combined effect of occasional persecution at home and opportunities available in the Mughal capital at Delhi, the Sikh Darbar at Lahore, the kingdom of the Nawab of Avadh, and the five States of Central India and Rajputana. Destination, consequent upon the famine of 1831, which resulted in reduction of the population from 800,000 to 200,000 in the Valley and the famine of 1878, in which three-fifths of the population perished, played an insignificant part in their migration. The tradition of going on pilgrimage was another factor, though the pilgrims moved from the Mandir to the Darbar in search of a possible opportunity. Pandit Kishen Das, the great grandfather of Raja Narender Nath, for example, went from the temple along the Gang in the fort of the Jamuna and ended at the Mughal capital.

In respect of Kashmiri migration, Bhavanishankar Rama Rao, former.....

The Pandits had to learn a new language, new customs, and new habits and they had to give up their new identity and way of life.

The Kashmiri Pandits who migrated had little in common with the Brahmins of Northern India. While the latter were highly cultivated and very intellectual, the Kashmiri Pandits were meat-eaters, villagers, and were not as educated as the former. They were not only backward but also uncouth. The men of the Pandit community were regarded as being reducible to the lowest sphere of society.

The Kifis and Khith and their kin, their own high-placed stalwarts, too, have forsaken them. Where are those influential Kallis and Nehrus and Khiths and Dhars? Why have they not come forward and provided solace and moral support to the ingident and resourceless migrants? I have seen tears from the eyes of these hapless migrants, and also perceived the sentiments they harbored in their hearts, and I know it is only possible to the present-day Kashmiri Pandits, they would not have remained mute spectators of the tragedy of their country. They would have helped in countering the disinformation spread by the sinister agencies of those who only wanted to see the happenings in Kashmir that were truly one of the greatest tragedies of mankind.

The deep crisis through which the Kashmiri migrant, or for that matter the entire Indian migrant, is passing is really the crisis of Indian values—the perversion, in fact, of the traditional, moral, political, and social norms. The core of the refuges and they try to extract the heart and soul of the community in distress. Theเชื่อมต่อ of cash doles, the migrants get more, the emigrant servants should be given a salary of Rs. 100. The demand of the widow of a person brutally killed by the terrorist is the payment of a house on payment, you become communal, a ‘known anti-Muslim’, about which you and every member of the community would be published in the press, and who would, even when in the position of strong and influential people, be branded as the ‘bleat falsehood in Parliament, but on the other hand, your family would be persecuted by the Indian Army and Governor’s administration of the Indian society as in the case of the school boards above, if you assail the Administra primary” for giving inducements through provision of plots and grants to the landlords or to the tenants in these plots or to the tenants, your accusations get published in the press as they are flouted in national and international forums and are copiously avoided in Parliament, and you are labeled as secular and progressive and a champion of human rights and what not.

A few other basic questions in regard to the plight of Kashmiri Pandits have often been on my mind. How are these unfortunates of your own community, closely connected with the commissions and reported by me in my book ‘The Lucknow Talks’, etc., titled ‘Roots’, ‘Nature and Pattern of Suffering and Terror’ and ‘Warming Signals’? Why do they have to suffer the consequences of the treacherous sabotager? What is the real ‘Operation Babar’ as detailed in the chapters “Approach, Attack, Counterattack, and Treason” on ‘Upper Hand’? The only answer I could to these questions is that is the quintessence of the Kashmiri Pandits’ destiny that they have to suffer for the sins committed by others?
Kashmiri Seetival (Dec. 16, 1931 - Jan.

Chronicle of Events

Dec. 1st to Dec. 31st

11/12/31: Army smashed a militant headquarter and a civilian was killed in a small battle in the area of Pandit Ram and Rajauri areas. A NC leader survived a bullet to his head and his PSC was shot dead in Jammu. 3 civilians have been kidnapped and subsequently gunned down in Baramulla. Two civilians got injured in an explosion near Sopore. Security forces operated in the area.

12/1/31: Army killed a notorious militant Major Gul district commander in a fierce battle in the area of Srinagar. One US soldier and an unidentified militant were killed in an ambush in Martand.

12/5/31: Militants marched down an NC leader in broad daylight in Srinagar. A group of three people killed in Srinagar, an anti-Indian militant and two civilians in Anantnag.

12/13/31: Security forces eliminated 2 HM militants near Kokernag. Militants shot dead 2 members of pro-India Ikhwan cadre in Anantnag. A body was recovered near Kokernag. 2 civilians got injured in an explosion near Sopore. Security forces operated in the area.

12/18/31: Army killed a notorious militant Major Gul district commander in a fierce battle in the area of Srinagar. One US soldier and an unidentified militant were killed in an ambush in Martand.

12/19/31: Militants marched down an NC leader in broad daylight in Srinagar. A group of three people killed in Srinagar, an anti-Indian militant and two civilians in Anantnag.

12/21/31: Security forces eliminated 2 HM militants near Kokernag. Militants shot dead 2 members of pro-India Ikhwan cadre in Anantnag. A body was recovered near Kokernag. 2 civilians got injured in an explosion near Sopore. Security forces operated in the area.


12/23/31: Militants killed one person and four others killed in an explosion in Lalchowk. Three militants were killed in an explosion in Anantnag. Two militants were killed in Baramulla district.

12/23/31: Militants killed 2 special police officers alongside their fathers in Kulgam. 3 militants were killed in Anantnag and Anantnag. A body was recovered near Kokernag. Two civilians were killed in Srinagar.

12/24/31: Militants gunned down 2 special police officers alongside their fathers in Kulgam. 3 militants were killed in Anantnag and Anantnag. A body was recovered near Kokernag. Two civilians were killed in Srinagar.


12/29/31: Militants killed one person and four others killed in an explosion in Lalchowk. Three militants were killed in an explosion in Anantnag. Two militants were killed in Baramulla district.

12/29/31: Militants killed 2 special police officers alongside their fathers in Kulgam. 3 militants were killed in Anantnag and Anantnag. A body was recovered near Kokernag. Two civilians were killed in Srinagar.


12/31/31: Militants killed one person and four others killed in an explosion in Lalchowk. Three militants were killed in an explosion in Anantnag. Two militants were killed in Baramulla district.

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Vajpayee Disappoints at Jammu

JAMMU, Dec 7: The high hopes which Vajpayee visit had raised amongst the residents of the border town of Hiranagar, were drowned in the 13 minutes of eloquent oratory by the Prime Minister unadorned with political rhetoric.

Prime Minister declared that there will be no compromise on Kashmir and said the areas of PoK and those handed over to China by Pakistan are also a part of India. Mr Vajpayee declared that his government stands by the resolution of Parliament which declares the nations resolve to liberate areas occupied Kashmir.

Hiranagar witnessed the biggest ever rally to be ever held in the town and addressed by the Prime Minister. Prime Minister Vajpayee reached 4 hrs late to the venue of the rally. However, the packed stadium waited till the last to listen to his speech.

The Chief Minister of the State Dr Farooq Abdullah and BJP leaders of the State Chaman Lal Gupta and Davinder Khanzidar shared the dias with the Prime Minister. The garland meant for the mehtabday was occupied by BJP and NC leaders including MLA's and office bearers.

Mr. Vajpayee, who had to stand on their feet and cover the rally were seen sans the underscience of the state political parties.

Even though the oratory of Vajpayee drew repeated applause from the audience, his inability to declare a package for the people of Hiranagar who had witnessed worst damage during the intensified firing by Pakistan recently, created lot of disappointment.

Mr Vajpayee assurance to the people of Valley with regard to the commitment of the Central government to Article 370 had already raised many an eyebrow amongst the intellectuals in Jammu Vajpayee's subtle hints towards strengthening the autonomy of the state and promise to consider favourably the demand of ST status for Paharis is seen as major shift in the BJP's policy on Jammu and Kashmir.

Thus spoke Vajpayee in Srinagar

Srinagar: Following is the text of Prime Minister’s statement released at a press conference in Srinagar on Dec 6, 1998.

“This is my first visit to Jammu and Kashmir after assuming the office of the Prime Minister of India. On this occasion, I convey my sincerest wishes to all the people of the state, belonging to all the communities and regions, for their happiness, progress and prosperity in an atmosphere of lasting peace. This is the wish which I share with all the hundred crore people of India, my government has been doing everything, and will continue to do everything, for the translation of this wish into a reality.

“The people of Jammu and Kashmir have suffered immensely for the past many years. The state has been converted into a theatre for a proxy war by those who have hatched an evil design to take Jammu and Kashmir away from India. Their conspiracy will never succeed. Nevertheless, the people of this state have had to bear the brunt of this war of subversion and secessionism, sponsored from across the border and conducted by militant and extremist groups within the state. Mothers have lost their sons, wives have lost their husbands, children have lost their parents and a large number of families have been uprooted from their homes and hearts. Thousands of them, belonging to both Hindu and Muslim communities in Kashmir, have been forced to leave the state and seek shelter in other parts of India.

“I wish to tell my brothers and sisters in Jammu and Kashmir, I share your pain and grief and sense of loss. Your suffering is my suffering and the suffering of all our fellow Indians. Together let us resolve to create a new tomorrow for the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

“Congratulations to the people of Jammu and Kashmir for already achieving considerable success in bringing the state on the path of peace, normalcy and democratisation. After a long time, a popularly elected government is in place in Srinagar. Against all odds, the developmental process and administrational functions are being restored. The Central government has been working in closest cooperation with the State government, and I am deeply and eternally grateful for this.

“Our first priority is to consolidate the return of peace, normalcy and development to the state in recent months. The youth of Jammu and Kashmir want opportunities for employment. Students want their schools and colleges to run unobstructed. The villagers want roads, transport and power situation to improve. Businessmen and traders want to see their business grow, my government shall spare no efforts to work together with the State Government to fulfill these genuine needs and aspirations of the people of Jammu-Kashmir.

“Our jwawans and member of other security forces have done a commendable job in countering the activities of subversive and secessionist forces. Many of them have laid down their lives in defence of the unity and security of India. I place my deep appreciation for patriotism and dedication to duty.

“From the soil of Kashmir, I have a message today for the rulers of Pakistan and the people of the world. Kashmir is not merely a piece of land for sale. It is an integral part of India. It is important to us from only a strategic point of view. Rather, Kashmir is one of the best symbols of peace, democracy and justice in the world. It is the strongest refutation of the communal basis for the two-nation theory. Kashmir proclaims the multi-faith and secular character of India, which, irrespective of whichever community has a numerical majority in whichever part of the country, they all belong equally to India.

“For fifty long years the rulers of Pakistan have failed in their design to break Jammu and Kashmir away from India. They have not succeeded. They never will succeed. Yet, the fact of the matter is that Pakistan has allowed this issue to cloud our bilateral relations and multilateral cooperation in South Asia as a whole. Even today, although we have resumed bilateral talks on a range of issues, Pakistan has been creating tension and provocations along the border. This must stop, for this is a futile exercise. Equally futile are the attempts to bring in a third party to intermediate between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir issue. The Kashmir issue can and must be resolved only within the framework of Shimla agreement.

“My government is prepared to engage Pakistan in a constructive dialogue on the entire gamut of issues of peace, confidence building, cooperation and development. Today I express the hope that, together, India and Pakistan can create a new chapter of peace, good-neighbourliness and collective prosperity in the next century.”
Reiterate Margdarshan and dilute the demand

Kashmir Sentinel (Dec.16, 93-94, 15, 99)

By Ajay Chhangoo

When the ‘Margdarshan’ was framed it was framed in order that the resolution as a whole encompasses not only the perspective of political vision but also the general principles of the struggle to be waged for it. Such a resolve by Kashmiri Pandits was also a statement of the extent of exclusion and intensity of genocide to which Kashmiri Pandits were subjected. This was very clear, during the historic ‘Velaskar Committee’ which led to the formation of the draft resolution of Margdarshan, that the resolution has to be read and adopted in totality. The operative part of the resolution which speaks of an exception of a Union Territory in Kashmiri valley east and north of Poonch of the rehabilitation of 700,000 Kashmiri Pandits, could not be visualised divorced from the context laid out for the demand. The unambiguous declarations made by Kashmiri Pandits in this resolutions as critically important as the demand itself. The attempts at undermining the Margdarshan resolve are aimed at both modifying the operative part of the resolution as well as diverting it apart from the context laid out for it.

The Margdarshan resolution stated, “The secular facade, which Kashmiri Pandits have worn all through the last forty three years, has been provided mainly by Kashmiri Hindus. They have not reacted to Muslim communalism, instead they have faced the rigours of Muslim dominance with the fervent hope that the threat on universal education and scientific progress in the state would pave way for the free flow of knowledge, thought, recognition of the humanity rights, the genuine urges and aspirations of Kashmiri Hindu minorities, religious tolerance, equity and justice...This hope is now shattered. Neither his Muslim brethren in Kashmir nor the Indian government in which they serve by secularism came to the rescue of Kashmiri Hindus...And then the resolution makes an unequivocal declaration as, ‘with their deep and firm commitment to social unity, religious co-existence, democracy and secularism they will not accept a society which is communalised, obscurantist, intolerant and mediocrity... They will not submit to any authority in the state which does not recognise their right to life, equality, faith and position against discrimination...’

The resolve of Pandits’ now known as ‘Margdarshan’, was and continues to be the unanimous view of Pandits about the existential reality in Kashmir valley. And through the above quoted declaration Kashmiri Pandits very clearly stated that they will not become any longer, will not even be a part of any instruments of providing a facade to the Muslim communalism in Jammu and Kashmir States. The Pandits in the resolutions put it very clearly, that their struggle for survival will be aimed at creating a green secular and democratic state for their survival and not a space within Muslim communalism.

The recent off at time of Pandits not only attempt at waging away the existential reality of continued genocidal attrocities on the beleaguered community but also decide the wear and tear of the community with the parties to the delibrations during which Margdarshan resolution was finalised.

“We cannot wait for the last gun to silence,” said the political affairs head of Agnihotra group Somnath Bharti in a TV interview while advocating for the participation of the Pandits. The same argument is now being quoted quite often by the government to imply that the people have to move towards the establishment of a secular India. But in the present climate, it means taking sangampanna and Wandoora massacres, as not normal happenings in the future. Because such tragedies can be enacted even by a soli- tary terrorist with a gun in his hand and commitment to kill.

Kashmiri Pandits general meeting at London in June 1997 not only undermined the political resolve of Margdarshan in the name of pragmatic politics and unity but also tried to pave way for surrender of Pandits to Muslim communalism on the pretext of “unfreezing the situation”.

The main focus for the Pandit struggle, which the Margdarshan had crystallised, was subjected to a subtle process of dissolution in this summit. The primary aim of the political declaration adopted in London, was now only to make a bid to "return to Kashmir with honour, dignity and safety. These same cliches are being used not only by the leaders of main political parties in the state and the country but also by the militant Muslim leaders of Kashmir valley, when confronted with the issue of rehabilitation of displaced Kashmiri Pandits.

Trampling with the spirit of Margdarshan resolution became more obvious when the director of Political Affairs of Kashmiri Pandits Political Steering Committee, publicly welcomed the dialogue with the ruling National Conference All the Pandit organisations, since the forced exodus in 1989, through numerous resolutions and press statements. The Pandits always clearly amply the role of National Conference in growth or communal separatist politics in the same context of the genocidal ‘East’ of Kashmiri Pandits. Margdarshan resolution has decided to place Pandits will not be a party to the present struggle launched against secular and democratic India...with the history of having lived and died for freedom and their open espousal of the cause of tolerance, peace, amity and brotherhood between various ethnic, social and religious groups, we cannot accept the pre-eminence and predominance of any single religious group at the cost of this.” This unambiguous community was flouted with impunity, when a section of Pandits chose to negotiate with a party which they held highly responsible for the growth of communal separation in the state as well their exclusion and genocide. The Steering Committee thus chose to accord legitimacy to Muslim sub-nationalism. The conclusion which has now led to some organised organisations openly approaching the Government for a phase-wise rehabilitation of few thousand displaced families, was set in 1997 at London and subsequently ratified in the so-called, “World Conference of Kashmiri Pandits”, organised by Agnihotra group. In this conference, for the first time the operative part of the Margdarshan resolution was tampered. The original resolution entailing a human component to the provision as—‘The Kashmiri Hindus, therefore demand:’ a) the establishment of a homelands for Kashmiri Hindus in the Valley, comprising the regions of the Valley to the east and north of river Jhelum. b) that all the seven lakhs of Kashmiri Hindus, which includes those who have been driven out of Kashmir valley, and years to return to their homeland and those who were forced to leave or account of the hisoror violence in 1989 and 1990 to settle in the homeland on equitably basis with dignity and honour.’ The new resolution adopted by the group very sub- tactly tried to change and dilute the geographical contours of Margdarshan resolution. While symbolically betraying the Margdarshan, 1991, this resolution said, “Pandits have already identified this locality as South- ern Kashmir along the national highway.” The original resolution endorsed for the establishment of a homeland of ‘East and North’ of Kashmir valley. The final resolution enunciated some areas of Southern Kashmir in the national highway. The proposal by India-Canada team to NIRC for creating a security zone has to be seen in the context of the continuing efforts of all the parties, against the Palestine, for the continuation of a continuing effort of all the parties, against the Palestine, for the betterment of the Kashmiri Muslims as well. The government should work out a system of phased return of refugees.” This concept also undermines that the dialogue between Kashmiri Muslims and Kashmiri Pandits should focus on the relations with Pakistan, how to normalise the situation in Kashmir to enable KPs to return. Exchange of opinion on the roots of the Kashmiri problem for the long term future of Kashmarr should be avoided.”

The Pandit Kashmiri Muslims has sup- port of the overwhelming major- ity of Kashmiri Pandits not only because it generates a ‘false hope’, which had a soothing impact in a situation of despair. Pandits support Panam because they believe that it has concretised not only their problem but also taken a decisive step towards shaping their vision of survival. Panam Kashmiri is not a bargaining chip. But an imperitive necessity if the situation in Kashmir is to be salvaged. Panam Kashmiri concept has given political stature to the community because it has brought the community from a position of non-opinion to a position of opinion. The Indian nation, over the years, has been nurtured and legitimised in its production. It continues to present Kashmir as a symbol of refuta- tion of the concept of democracy. In Kashmir, Indian Nation has in fact accepted the principal of two nation theory. Kashmiri Pandits are no longer prepared to provide a cover to this contraduction which has become a fostering sore on the body politic of India by accepting the slav- ery of a de facto Muslim state and go on with their flat accomplish.

Attempts to modify the ‘Margdarshan’ to undermine it are nearly aimed at pushing Pandits again to a position of non-opinion, so that they can be used as a pawn to provide a fa- nose of normalcy to the problem ridden Kashmir. That some sec- tion, within the claim to hold ‘Margdarshan as sacrosanct are finding with the essence of the resolve by either modifying its content or the time limit it is a matter of serious concern.

Author is the chairman of Permanent Affairs Committee of Pandit Kashmiri Muslims

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