

Kashmir Sentinel

INSIDE

FOCUS:

Hurriyat gives twist to Pandit Return.....Page 3

COMMUNITY NEWS.....Page 4

NEWS BRIEFS.....Page 5

OPINION:

Kashmir in Threes.....Page 6/7

PERSPECTIVE:

Indo-Pak Talks.....Page 7

MEDIA SCAN:

Can Pandits Go Back.....Page 8

CULTURE:

Kashmiri Shaiva-Monism.....Page 9

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State Congress heading for crisis Mufti may float a regional party

Special Correspondent

JAMMU: If reports emanating from State Congress-I circles are any indication, then the PCC-I is heading for another round of crisis. The stalling of the list of PCC office-bearers, coinciding with the elevation of Mr Ghulam Nabi Azad as AICC general secretary has sent Mufti camp sulking. Mufti's supporters have also not taken kindly to Mr Ahmed Patel being put in charge of J&K Affairs. Mr Patel is generally perceived to be close to Dr Farooq Abdullah. Mufti camp has even hinted at floating of a regional party.

This is not the first time when Mufti Mohammad Syed's group is exploring this possibility. During last Parliamentary elections, the Kashmir PCC-I openly revolted against Sita Ram Kesri, then, when he asked Cong-I candidate to withdraw from the contest in the Srinagar Parliamentary constituency. Not only Mufti Syed did not relent but even himself stood from Anantnag to give tough fight to the NC candidate.

Mufti Syed's victory restrained the High command from initiating any disciplinary action and also vindicated his line of playing oppositional politics to National Conference. His victory had been possible because of erosion in NC's social base and a section of separatists doing tactful voting for him. Mufti group has been trying to woo separatist support by advocating dialogue with separat-

ists and raking up the issue of 'excesses' by security forces.

When Mrs Sonia Gandhi took over as Cong-I President, Mufti Mohd Sayeed, informed sources say, tried to seek her support for regional party proposal, even while keeping it as a unit of Central Cong-I. Mrs Sonia Gandhi has carefully

Again, she kept Mr Azad out from handling Kashmir affairs, but elevated him to the coveted post of AICC-general secretary.

The state Congress has been witnessing intense factionalism for over a decade now. Group rivalries and line to be pursued vis-a-vis NC have been the ba-

For Ghulam Rasool Kar support or opposition to NC is not the issue. His main consideration is his political rehabilitation. To this end he had been issuing contradictory statements on sensitive issues.

Mufti Mohd Syed has never reconciled to party playing the

the existing ground realities and its obvious imperatives, therefore should engage the attention of all of us".

Mufti's organisational skills and oppositional role to NC made Cong-I a vibrant organisation in early 80's. But then he had the full backing of Mrs Indira Gandhi. This is no more the situation now. As per reports, he has doubts on how far he will be allowed to handle PCC and play oppositional role to NC. After the death of Mrs Gandhi, when Cong-I made rapprochement with NC, Mufti had resigned from Cong-I and joined Janta Dal.

Mufti's victory on his home turf has made him more ambitious in widening his support base. He is of the view, sources say, that a regional party can become a rallying centre for all types of anti-NC elements and also cut greater ice with common Kashmiri Muslims.

Informed sources say Mufti has already formed some sort of alliance with GM Shah and Shabir Shah. It is alleged that a section of Hurriyat is also in touch with him. Mufti Syed's line is facing stiff opposition from Central Party leaders. A section, which endorses oppositional role against NC, also opposes Mufti's move on dialogue with militants. In the Jammu region also, Mufti's soft approach towards Hurriyat is not likely to get endorsement from the rank and file of Cong-I.



avoided the factional controversies. She has been trying to play a balancing act by roping in all factions. She rejected Mufti's claim for presidentship of PCC-I but endorsed Ch Mohd Aslam, who does not belong to any faction. Mrs Gandhi even while giving consent to the pursuance of anti-NC line, brought in Mr Ahmed Patel for J&K affairs.

sis. Groups of Ghulam Rasool Kar, GN Azad and Mufti Mohd Syed have been fighting for supremacy to control PCC.

Ghulam Nabi Azad advocates a pro NC line and owes his present Rajya Sabha seat to the NC. His prominent supporters joined NC, while another leader Molvi Iftikhar joined the NC cabinet.

tailist role in Kashmir. He is of the view that if Congress fails to play effective oppositional role, the vacuum will be filled by the secessionist forces. Sometime back Mufti stated that "the role of the Congress Party in the present situation will have to be closely examined by all of us at every level. Identification of the party and its platform with

Another carnage in Arnas

UDHAMPUR: Contrary to the Centre's claim that the BJP government has succeeded in bringing normality to Kashmir, the terrorists suspected to be belonging to the notorious Lashkar-e-Toiba struck in a big way in village Sukcha at Arnas Udhampur. Four persons of the minority community were hacked to death on the intervening night of Feb 12 and 13. Since the beginning of the last month, the terrorists have been

targeting the minority community members in Doda and Udhampur to force a change in the demographic profile of the hill-districts of Jammu region. The latest massacre has also put a question mark over Centre's attempts to try an "experiment" with Pandits in Kashmir.

The victims of this massacre have been identified as Ashok Singh S/o Roop Chand 20, Maya Devi D/o Roop Chand 15,

Mahinder Singh S/o Pritam Singh 4, Inder Singh S/o Jagat Singh aged 35 years. A minor girl Anjaana was also critically injured.

At 8 PM a group of terrorists barged into the house of Pritam Singh and asked all the family members to come out in the open and line up in front of them. The militants then asked female members to form a separate queue.

The terrorists first killed

Ashok Singh by slitting his throat in presence of his family members. After leaving Ashok in a pool of blood they then killed Maya Devi in a similar fashion. The male members who tried to intervene were threatened to remain away. Later a five year old Mahinder Singh was also hacked to death to instil terror in the area. Inder Singh was killed immediately after terrorists attacked his house.

This is the third massacre in

this area. Last year the terrorists had killed 27 innocent villagers at Prankots. As usual, BSF jawans posted 5 kms from the massacre site came to know about the incident only in the morning. It was after villagers from the adjoining village came to Thoru, after hearing the screams.

Meanwhile, the incident has sent shock waves in the area and it might trigger off a possible migration in the area.

LETTERS

We cannot risk our future generation

Sir,

Kudos to the thought provoking editorial and articles by respected Prof MK Teng, Dr Ajay Chhangoo, Dr Shakti Bhan and others on the current turmoil in the rank and file of our community. (Refer The Kashmir Sentinel Margdarshan Special dt: Dec 16th-15th Jan 1999). It is really strange on the part of certain Kashmiri Pandit leaders abroad and inland, who in the recent past have with great success highlighted the pathetic plight of KP's in various international fora, are now aiding and abetting the idea of phased return of Kashmiri Pandits to Kashmir valley in some secured and guarded places, when still the Domsecules sword still hangs on their heads. Here we can't understand the rationale behind this move, when our Muslim brothers in Kashmir still nurse the grudge against the KP's on the plea that they (KP's) have not fought shoulder to shoulder with their fellow Muslims against the Indian forces. At this juncture the most perinent question arises here is that should the KP's depend on the mercy and sweet will of the majority community in Kashmir to return back to the Valley? The answer to this puzzle in the given situation is 'YES' because of number of reasons. The main reasons being.

--That there may be the political will of the State and Central government to send back the

KP's but still the writ of militants rules large in the Valley.

--That there may be so called improvement in the ground situation but that is merely for the majority community and the security forces and

--That almost whole of the administrative machinery is hostile to the return of KP's.

Therefore, by shifting the displaced people from the camps in Jammu, Delhi and other places to Kashmir valley in phased manner in various so called concentration camps, in our opinion will neither change the demographic nature of the Valley nor it will wean away the spirit of so called Azadi from the minds of our Muslim brethren. Instead KP's will become again the cannon fodder for the militants as put forth by respected Prof Teng in his writ-up. Moreover, the problems will get compounded there in view of the hostile atmosphere.

Since, we feel that the situation is not condusive for KP's return to their homes and hearths at present, we appeal to those leaders of our community inland and abroad who pursue the idea of phased return to have deep scan of the ground situation and the process of repatriation of KP refugees back to the Valley in phased manner at the present juncture. We are also hopeful of the leaders of our community and well wishers who are against the move of repitration at present to translate their views into re-

ality as and when need arises-our solid support is with them, as we cannot afford to risk and ruin the career of our future generations in the concentration camps in view of prevailing hostile atmosphere there in the Valley and also do not want to become again the victims of depredation and persecution at the hands of forces inimical to the very existence of ethenic minority of KP's.

In the given situation, it becomes incumbant on all the sections of the KP community especially the torch bearers to sink their differences at this crucial juncture and have a realistic approach of the problems confronting the community and work unitedly for a durable and lasting settlement of the KP's in their land dear to them.

Rajendra Razdan
Satish Kaul
Dileep Razdan
Tumkur, Karnataka
& others

Sir,

I want to congratulate you on restoring this KS fortnightly after a gap of three years. Beside other things it helps our own people (community) to know about our past, and also about the uniqueness in our culture etc. The present burning topic of our 'Return to Valley' has in fact become a ghost for State and Central government. Ignoring delebrately the ground reality in Kashmir and just avoiding the communities immediate problems to address, in respect of providing special employment drive, enhancement of relief and ration, giving of promotional benefits, releasing of Honourarium Pay to at least near about one hundred displaced Anganwadi workers (as directed by the hon'ble Supreme Court).

Dr Farooq is bent upon to send back Kashmiri Pandits to valley. Had he (Dr. Farooq) really been the well wisher of the community, he would never issue threatnings to our ill fated community. He would never preach regionalism. But the most unfortunate thing which I feel is that even BJP government does not understand this game plan in this matter. I would like to remind those Central and National Politicians that the Rajiv-Farooq accord in 1986 was detrimental to India. I firmly believe in case Kashmiri Pandit's return to Valley to their homes to hearths, it will be a himalayan blunder for BJP led government and will prove devastating to the illfated Kashmiri Pandit Community.

If Farooq is sincere and BJP sympathetic, both should without delay concede the Homeland demand □

B.L. Pandit
Udhampur

THOSE WHO LEFT US

(01-02-99--15-02-99)

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

1. Sh Jagar Nath Bhat, R/o Ladhoo, Pampore; presently at 45 Indira Colony, Talab Tillo, Jammu. 27/1/99
2. Sh Arjannath Bhat, R/o Hawal Pulwama; presently at 804 Tali Morh, Prem Nagar, New Plots Jammu. 28/1/99
3. Sh Dina Nath Bhat, R/o Zewan, Sgr; presently at 177/D Sector-1, Durga Nagar, Jammu. 28/1/99
4. Smt. Sidh Lakshmi Bhat, R/o Hawal Pulwama; presnetly at 18/5 Supreme Enclave Mayur Vihar Phase-I, New Delhi. 28/1/99.
5. Sh. Maharaj Krishen Qasba, R/o Habbakadal Sgr; presently at Sari Rakhawala Goumnasa Road, Jammu. 28/1/99.
6. Sh Virender Koul (Bitu Ji) S/o Sh Dina Nath Kaul, R/o Ishber Nishat; presently at 53/1 Vivek Vihar Paloura, Jammu. 30/1/99.
7. Sh Ashok Kr. Raina, R/o Nowgam Kuthar Anantnag; presently at Plot No: 44, Near Gurdwara Bakshi Nagar, Jammu. 30/1/99.
8. Sh P.N. Bradoo, R/o Wazir Bagh, Sgr; presently at 26-C, GTB Enclave Pocket-F Delhi. 30/1/99
9. Sh Kashi Nath Maghloo, R/o Sanat Nagar, Sgr; presently at H.No: 298, Opp. Rupa Opticians, Sarwal, Jammu. 31/1/99.
10. Smt. Sheela Revo W/o Dr. C.L. Revo; presently at 57 Sector-8, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu. 31/1/99.
11. Sh. Niranjan Nath Kachroo, R/o Batyar Alikadal; presently at 22-A Bhawani Nagar Janipora Jammu. 31/1/99.
12. Sh Jagan Nath Sadhu, R/o Fateh Kadal, Sgr; presently at 166-A Upper Laxmi Nagar, New Plots, Jammu. 31/1/99.
13. Smt. Radhamali Bhan, R/o Zandar Mohalla, Sgr; presently at H.No: 101, Sector-7 Trikuta Nagar, Jammu. 31/1/99
14. Sh Daleep Bhan (Bitu Jee) S/o Sh NN Bhan, R/o Banoo Mohalla Sgr; presently at Lane No: 6, B-Block, Roop Nagar, Enclave, Jammu. 1/2/99.
15. Smt. Asha Bhan W/o Sh Makhan Lal Bhan, R/o Ganpatyar, Sgr; presently at 25, Mohinder Nagar, Canal, Jammu. 1/2/99.
16. Sh Nand Lal Fotedar (Hakim), R/o Begam Kulgam; presently at Qtr. No: 714 Block-H-2, Purkhoo Camp, Jammu 30/1/99
17. Smt. Purinama Kachroo W/o Sh Makhan Lal Kachroo, R/o Langate; presently at Qtr. No: 186 Migrant Camp Phase-I Purkhoo, Jammu. 1/2/99
18. Smt. Kamla Kaul Jalali W/o Sh Rughnath Kaul Jalali, R/o Banihal; presently at Sriganganagar Rajasthan. 2/2/99
19. Smt. Tarawati Kotha, R/o Chowdhary Bagh Rainawari; presently at Faridabad. 3/2/99
20. Smt. Prabawati Matto, R/o Bhoori Kadal; presently at H.No: 120/D, New Plots Krishna Building, Jammu. 3/2/99.
21. Sh Janki Nath Kachro, R/o Rainwari; presently at New Delhi. 4/2/99
22. Sh. Bitu Jee Handoo S/o Sh JL Handoo, R/o Anantnag; presently at Ploura, Opp. Soap Factory, Jammu. 5/2/99
23. Sh Premnath Bhat, R/o Bandipora; presently at H.No: 83 Subash Nagar Ext. Jammu. 5/2/99
24. Smt. Shobawati Karihaloo, R/o Kaksarai Karanagar; presently at H.No: 61 Lane-1, Sector-1, Bhagwati Nagar, Jammu. 5/2/99
25. Smt Gunwati Sharma, R/o Bonagund Verinag; presently at Vijay Nagar Camp Road, Lane No: 2 Talab Tillo Jammu. 6/2/99
26. Sh Sham Lal Tikoo, R/o Bijbehara; presentiy at Police Colony Channi 21-D, Jammu. 6/2/99
27. Sh Durga Prasad Ganjoo, R/o Rainwari; presently at 1320-B Sector-41B Chandigarh. 6/2/99
28. Smt. Prabhawati Ganju, R/o Jagan Rainawari; presently at 376, Shastri Nagar, Jammu. 8/2/99
29. Sh Narayan Raina of Raina News Agency; presently at Adarsh Cololny Ward No: 2, Udhampur. 8/2/99
30. Smt. Kamlawati Mattoo, R/o Banamohalla; presently at 54, Shalimar Bagh, Tubewell Lane, Talab Tillo, Borhi Jammu. 9/2/99
31. Sh. Dina Nath Dhar, R/o Habakadal, Sgr; presently at H.No: 1267 Sector-16 Faridabad. 9/2/99
32. Smt Kamlawati, R/o Khunmoh; presently at 387 Sector-9, Nanak Nagar behind Dogra Academy Jammu. 9/2/99:
33. Sh Prem Nath Raina R/o Chowgam (Qazigund); presently at Forest Qtrs. Salian Talab Udhampur. 9/2/99
34. Sh. Neel Kanth Pandit R/o Mahind (Bijbehara); presently at Salian Talab Udhampur (Near Range Office). 9/2/99
35. Sh. Janki Nath (Bota) R/o Banmohall (Razdan Kocha), Habbakadal Srinagar; presently Army Officer's Colony, Khanpur, Nagrota, Jammu. 9/2/99
36. Sh. Zinda Ram Pandita R/o (Kokernag); presently at 169-Sarwal, Jammu. 10/2/99
37. Smt. Prabhawati R/o Khrew; presently at Sec-4, Pamposh Colony, Janipur, Jammu. 10/2/99
38. Sh NN Dhar (Kachew); presently at 265 Kailash Nagar, Canal Road, Jammu. 10/2/99
39. Smt. Sham Rani Koul R/o Kaloosa, Bandipore; presently at Rohini (Delhi). 11/2/99
40. Smt. Sham Rani Koul R/o Alikadal, Sringar; presently at E-89 Jyotipuram (Reasi). 11/2/99
41. Sh. Somnath Bhat R/o Motiyar Rainawari, Srg; presently at 81/B Railway Colony, Naini, Allahabad. 12/2/99
42. Smt. Somawati Bhat R/o Wandhama, Ganderbal; presently at 72 Amar Colony, Gole Gujral, Jammu. 12/9/99
43. Sh. Rugh Nath Pandits R/o Maratgam, Handwara; presently at Patoli Brahmana, Jammu. 12/2/99
44. Sh. Prem Nath Kaul (Talib); presently at B-4/48 Paryatan Vihar Vasundra Enclave Delhi. 12/2/99.
45. Sh. Soom Nath Dhar R/o Reshi Mohalla Habbakadal Sgr; presently at H.No: 66, Lane No: 3 Durga Nagar Talab Tillo, Jammu. 13/2/99
46. Sh Roshan Lal Raina R/o Motiyar, Rainwari, Sgr; presently at Saari Rakhwala Gomansa, Jammu 14/2/99
47. Smt. Janki Devi R/o Tahab Pulwama, presnetly at 1/30 Vikasnagar Sarwal, Jammu. 15/2/99.
48. Sh Swami Satyanand Mahant R/o Uma Devi Shrine Umanagri (Brarian); presently at Jammu. 10/1/99.



Hurriyat gives twist to Pandits' return

Special Correspondent

In a major shift from its earlier stand, the separatist conglomerate All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has called for a comprehensive dialogue with popular Pandit organisations to facilitate the return of the displaced Pandit community. Dismissing its past Pandit-baiting as 'part of history', APHC also endorsed Shabir Shah's reported interaction with Pandits. These observations of APHC have come in a recent interview published in a leading Chandigarh daily The Tribune by a senior Hurriyat functionary.

This senior Hurriyat leader while demanding broad based measures to resolve the Pandit's issue said that these could be worked out during a series of discussions between the APHC leaders and leaders of the Pandits. He added that the meetings could help the two sides to share their perceptions and to shed mistrust. However, the Hurriyat leader told the Tribune that the Pandits should take the initiative for dialogue with APHC and "those leaders who matter in Kashmir these days".

The Hurriyat leader also contradicted the government claim that normalcy was returning. He said that the two indicators of normalcy were the scale of the violence and the return of the displaced Pandits. He added that on an average 5-10 people were killed daily, which belies the official claim. The Hurriyat leader also made accusation that the centre and the State governments were insincere to the return of Pandits. He said that the government at no stage explored the possibility of encouraging a dialogue with different Pandit organisations and APHC leaders.

The shift in Hurriyat stand has intrigued the displaced Pandits as well as the close watchers of

the Kashmir scene. Hitherto APHC and the local Muslim elite conditioned Pandits' return to their support for the secessionist-fundamentalist movement. They also used to say that

total let down by NC-BJP combine. Even though Pandit leadership has time and again rejected any proposal on return which does not take into cogni-

muslim leadership. The general apprehension in the community is that its dragging into intra Muslim power struggle and experimentation for facilitating short term political expedencies

semi-fascist sectarian outfit with close links with externally sponsored religious militias. The on going third party mediation has convinced the Hurriyat that it has not shape itself for a new role. Informed sources revealed that ambassador celeste during his last trip to Kashmir valley dropped clear hints to Hurriyat leaders that acceptance of LoC as the international border was the first step in the third party mediation. Lord Avebury and other western diplomats have also told Hurriyat in clear terms that they have to justify their representative character by participating in the local elections.

The first indication of Hurriyat's serious plunge into electoral politics has come when its top leader based in Jiddah Abub Thakur went public on this issue. Under ISI pressure he had to retract this statement as per sources. Mr Ayub Thakur who also heads world Kashmir Freedom Movement (WKFM) based in Jiddah has as per reports sent an eight page letter to APHC. Among other issues he has asked the Hurriyat leaders to change the party's name to 'freedom conference' and seek popular representation from Jammu Hindus and Budhists of Ladakh. It may be recalled that WKFM served as the main link between Western powers, Saudi Arabia and terrorist group in Kashmir.



APHC chairman Syed Ali Shah Geelani addressing a press conference at Srinagar

the return of Pandit refugees was possible only when the return of those 1947 Muslim refugees (who are full-fledged Pakistani citizens), was facilitated. The Pandits also blame Hurriyat and its constituents for unleashing a campaign which led to ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus. Not only that in recent years when specific instances of the fraudulent grab of Pandits' property by pro-Hurriyat supporters were brought to the notice of senior Hurriyat leaders, they looked the other way.

The long legacy of the double speak and petty politicking of Kashmiri Muslim leaders vis-a-vis Pandits' return naturally make Pandits wary about the real intentions of the Hurriyat leaders. The Hurriyat leaders' appear to have timed their call at a jun-

cture when Pandits feel better at

will deliver the last blow to the future of the community.

What has suddenly made Hurriyat to engage in a posturing which even talks about broad based dialogue? Internationally its image as a representative party of Kashmiris has no takers. It is being projected as a

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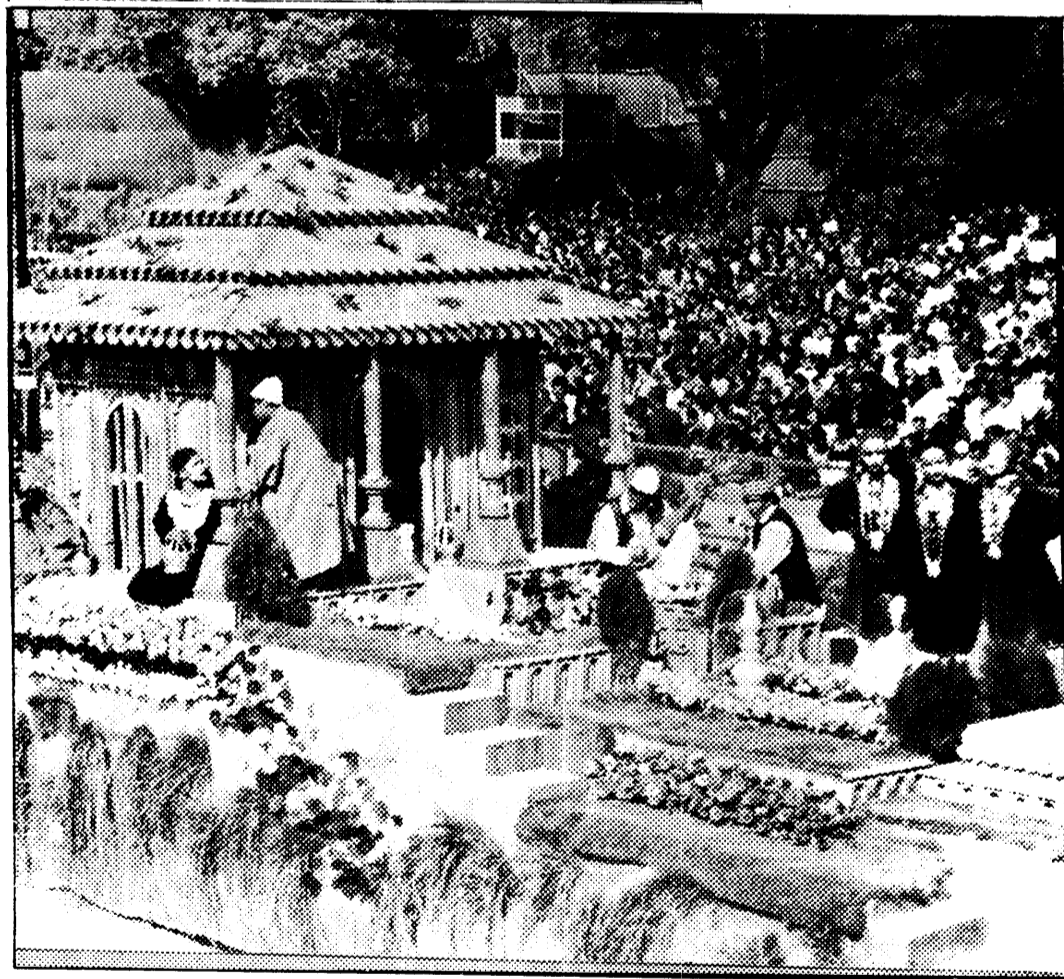
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Vir Munshi's Tableau Wins Prize Again



The Tableau from Jammu and Kashmir state which was displayed on the republic day-parade in New Delhi on 26th January, 1999 was adjudged the best tableau of the year. The Tableau was designed by the prominent displaced artist, Vir Munshi, presently living in New Delhi. It is noteworthy that the tableau from the J&K State, displayed on the republic day in 1997, designed by Mr Munshi, was also awarded the first prize. Vir Munshi's design for the year 1998 tableau from the state also received widespread acclaim. However, in this year for some reasons tableaus were only demonstrated and not considered for any competitive felicitation □



J&K Govt rejects minority status for displaced Pandits

Even while going ahead with its greater autonomy report, the ruling National Conference has opposed the recommendations of the National Minority Commission that Pandits be accorded minority status in J&K. Reports said that National Conference leaders say the recommendations could result in disaffection and regional tension.

Ironically in 1982, the Farooq government itself had adopted a bill for setting up a minority commission. Even the name of Mr SL Shakdhar was being proposed for the chairmanship. The Bill was later repeated by the GM Shah government.

Since 1996, after the popular government took over, suggestions had been given to the government to move the Bill again. Several ministers and legislators belonging to the NC are said to have opposed the move.

To pre-empt the move for minority status, the State government shifted Prof Satish Raina, a close confidante of Dr Farooq Abdullah from SSRB and appointed him as principal Advisor on minority affairs. The appointment of Prof Raina has come under severe criticism from Kashmiri Samiti, Dehi and other Pandit groups □

Kashmiri Samiti denounces experimentation with displaced Pandits

NEW DELHI, Feb 11: The Kashmiri Samiti, Delhi President Mr CL Gadoo denounced in strong terms the reported State government move to force displaced doctors and teachers to return to militant infested Valley on experimental basis.

Seeking intervention of NHRC to restrain the State government from coercing Pandits to return in insecure conditions, the Samiti President said that it was not only impracticable but also fraught with dangerous consequences. The displaced Kashmiri employees, who had once forcibly migrated from Kashmir due to selective killings and open threats, cannot be forced to face a similar situation again, he added.

Mr CL Gadoo also doubted the intentions of the State government in improving. The conditions for the displaced people, said that the State Chief Secretary has also, failed to constitute a high-powered committee,

which was to formulate short-term and long-term proposals for the well-being of displaced persons. The proposed committee was also to have representation from Kashmiri refugees □

No postal ballot for Kashmiri Pandit

In the forthcoming Panchayat election in the State, the Chief Electoral officer, Mr SV Bhawe ruled out the facility of postal ballot for displaced Kashmiris. It may be recalled that the Kashmiri refugees had been given the postal ballot facilities during 1996 and 1998 elections, as these had the international focus. Mr Bhawe said that those on the electoral rolls will have to go to their respective Panchayat areas in the Kashmir valley for casting their votes □

KASHMIRI SEWAK SAMAJ

14/16A, FARIDABAD-121 002 TEL: 276429

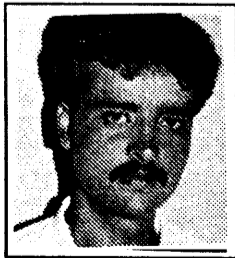
IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Kashmiri Sewak Samaj is hosting the annual NAVREH celebrations on March 21st, 1999, Sunday at Hari Parbat, Village Anangpur, Faridabad. The Murtysthapana of Ashtbujang Sharika Diety shall be done at 11:30 AM.

HARI PARBAT, ANAGPUR is emerging as a centre of Socio-religious significance for Kashmiri Pandits living in Delhi, and the satellite towns of Faridabad, Gurgaon, NOIDA, Ghaziabad. It is situated on Suraj Kund-Badhkhal road and can be conveniently reached via Charmwood village or the Budia Nalla underbridge on the Mathura Road.

KSS takes this opportunity to invite you all, with children, to renew social bonds, meet the near and dear ones and for spritual rejuvenation, since congregations of this kind assume special significance for a displaced community.

CONDOLENCE



With profound grief and sorrow we condole the untimely demise of **Sh. Bittu Ji Handoo** S/o Sh Jia Lal Handoo of Anantnag, Kashmir on 5th of Feb, 1999 at Jammu.

K.K. Wangnoo & Friends

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Ladakhis sore with the State Govt.

Special Correspondent

LEH: The cold war between Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) and the NC-led government over the issue of functional autonomy has revived. After a decade-long agitation, Ladakhis succeeded in getting an Act adopted during Governor's rule in 1995. This Act granted Hill Council to Ladakhis. It was a climb down from the original demand for Union Territory status. Ladakhi leaders justified this by saying "Due to the trouble in Kashmir and for maintaining the unity of the State, we accepted on the LAHDC in 1995".

While accepting the Hill Council, LBA demanded cabinet minister status to the Chairman of the Council on the Darjeeling pattern and conventional presiding over of the Chairman over Republic Day and Independence Day celebra-

tions in Leh. It also asked for flow of more funds to the council to ensure the speedy development of the desolate cold desert region.

The row between the LAHDC and State government started, when the convention of the chairman presiding over Republic Day and the Independence Day functions was stopped by NC government after it came to power in 1996. It may be recalled that the National Conference had opposed the autonomous hill council for Ladakh tooth and nail.

Every time when there is Independence Day or the Republic Day function, the LAHDC and the State government come in conflict to establish respective supremacy over the district administration.

On this year's republic day, LAHDC and the State government held two separate func-

tions. For the poor participation at the official function, the Deputy Commissioner, Mr Bashrat Ahmed Dar was made a scapegoat and transferred. In a sharp reaction to this move, the 27-member LAHDC adopted a resolution condemning the State government for attaching the Deputy Commissioner, without any "rhyme or reason". It described this as an attempt to undermine the authority of the LAHDC and a general strike on the call of LAHDC for transferring back the Deputy Commissioner was also observed on January 30. This call was also supported by Ladakh Buddhist Association, Anjuman-e-Imamia, Anjuman-e-Muinul Islam and the Christian Association. The Deputy Commissioner had served as a good bridge between the State government and the Council since August last year. It was due to his efforts that the Independence Day function

was held jointly last year.

Mr Chewwang also said that in case the State government continued to undermine the Hill Council, the agitation may be revived for grant of UT status to Leh. He alleged that NC was adopting discriminatory policy towards the other regions of the State. Mr Chewwang also hinted at major political stirs in Jammu and Ladakh over tabling for report for greater autonomous to the state in the state assembly. He said that it will severely "increase the regional imbalances in the militancy affected state".

Meanwhile, Pradesh Congress Committee President Chowdry Aslam charged National Conference government of trying to topple the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council. He said that the government was trying to enroach on the autonomy of the Council and meddle in its affairs □

Banihali-A rare breed among politician

The veteran Congress leader Sonallah Banihali passed away on Feb 12 after brief illness. For his dedicated social work and active environmental campaign, he had become a legend in the region.

Committed to left wing views, Banihali was a prominent member of the proleft Democratic National Conference formed under the leadership of GM Sadiq in 1957. He was its district President.

The environmental degradation in the Banihali region caused by reckless deforestation greatly perturbed him. He withdrew from politics and immersed himself in rebuilding the healthy eco-system in the area. Banihali rebrought greenery to denuded areas and also worked in the successful experimentation in growing several agricultural, horticultural and floricultural varieties. He proved to the outside world that this state too can have its Sunder Lal Bahuguna. Banihali also worked for the welfare of the weak-the women and the handicapped □

Christian missionaries lambasted

KS Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 10: Vishwa Hindu Parishad alleged that Christian missionaries have let loose rein of a terror in the Balmiki colony, Baksh Nagar and are threatening Hindu families there.

Addressing a press conference, Mr Tilak Raj Sharma accused Christian missionaries of attempting to grab temple land with help of goons. He said that after their failure to convert Hindus to Christianity, they are now terrorising Hindus

9th Kashmiri Nishkasan Day-19th January, 1999

Kashmiri Visthapit Sabha Samiti, Bangalore observed 9th Kashmiri Pandit Nishkasan Day (Holocaust Day) in Bangalore today i.e. 19/1/99.

The day commemorates the dreadful night of 19th January, 1990 when militants captured mosques-exhorting people to come on streets to fight Jihad against India. Entire Valley looked to be bursting with maddening shrills & cries.

Kashmiri Pandits are now entering their 10th year of exile from their homes and hearths. The history is full of evidence to show that Kashmiri Pandit have been to the subject of tyr-

anny and suppression. Kashmiri Pandits have paid the supreme price for their loyalty to Bharat Mata, today forgotten and unwanted. This community has shown utmost patience and fortitude as they have still belief and hope for a brighter tomorrow.

Speakers appealed to Govt. of India not to take any hasty decision regarding affairs of Kashmir and without Kashmiri Pandit. Kashmiri Pandit is essential component of Indian state and not to be used as a cannon of fodder for cattles to be pushed out or pushed in.

Meeting concluded with prayers □

Samuhik Havan held at Kanpur

Kashmiri Pandit Sabha, Kanpur organised the annual 'Samuhik Havan' at Kanpur on the 19th & 20th of December, 1998. The havan has been a regular event at Kanpur and is being organised every year for last many years. Ever after, the forced exile of our community from our homeland the subsequent dispersal for survival and sustenance, it is events like the havan that not only help the community members to come together and celebrate together but also inculcate a feeling of belonging to those of our young ones who have very little feeling of what our community was like back home in Kashmir.

This year the 'Havan' was attended by almost all the seventy six odd families living at Kanpur. A few of the old Kashmiri Pandit families (non-speaking) living at Kanpur for long also participated. The havan was celebrated in the traditional Kashmiri way and all the devotees were enthralled by the discourses of Pandit Makhhan Lal Wangnoo who had come over from Jammu specially for this occasion. He explained the religious significance of all aspects of the havan.

On this occasion a telephone directory all the Kashmiri Pandit families living in and around Kanpur was released by Shri MK Mirza, President, Kashmiri Pandit Sabha, Kanpur, and distributed amongst the participants, with the courtesy of Pandit Roop Kishen Raina.

The havan culminated with a prayer to the almighty for early return of our community to our cherished homeland. At the end, the devotees were offered Naveed.

On this occasion, it was decided to send donation to Mrs Usha Raina to upper Muthi, Jammu in aid of Mr Ashok Raina Relief Fund on behalf of Kashmiri Pandit Sabha, Kanpur □

Appeal to Readers

KASHMIR SENTINEL is the largest circulated English fortnightly of J&K State. It is circulated in India and Abroad and has a readership of above twenty thousand. It has now become the only genuine voice of Kashmiri Pandits in exile.

KASHMIR SENTINEL covers wide range of topics from people to politics, despair to hope, history, culture, identity, aspirations as well as opportunities for survival. Undiluted news, views and analysis is brought to you by its dedicated team of political analysts and area specialists in the editorial board.

We are in a crucial phase at present times. Five thousands years of history is behind us. We are sure we will rise again more rejuvenated, more glorious than before. In spite of our best efforts it is not possible to achieve without your help and cooperation. So please join us in this struggle.

You can help us in following ways:

- Please send your subscription in favour of Kashmir Sentinel. It costs just Rs 100 per year or 40 Dollars for overseas.
- You can also support us through advertisement from your company, corporate sector or otherwise as per the tariff details given in this paper separately.
- You can also gift subscription of this paper to your friends or relatives.

Your prompt action will help us in building this institution for future generations.

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INFORMATION

Tribute to Ali Mohammed Lone--Recreating memorable moments from Kashmiri's past published in Margdarshan Special Issue was written by prominent journalist Sh Shyam Koul

KASHMIRI SEWAK SAMAJ

14/16A, FARIDABAD-121 002 TEL: 276429

KSS HOUSING PLAN

Group Housing Societies promoted by Kashmiri Sewak Samaj, with 200 members have been allotted land by the Haryana Govt. in a draw held at Faridabad on 13/2/99. The location of land is in Sector 21-D and Sector 45-areas that are prestigious and pollution free. The location is in the vicinity of HARI PARRAT, ANAGPUR.

The allotment was the result of fine and sustained team work of S/Shri Rabinder Nath Kaul, Surinder K.Bhat, Dr Surinder Rawal, Dr Pankaj Dhar, Adeep Bagati, Ashok Dhar and many of their colleagues.

For Details, please contact:

Shri Surender K.Bhat Tel: 91-261480/0129-261480

KASHMIR SENTINEL

February 1--28, 1999

The Tragedy of a community

The conception of Kashmiri Pandits as tools for experimentation and the seeds of the national insensitivity towards them were sown by none else than Nehru himself. However, a power coterie continues to direct its ire against Pandits for Nehru's 'crimes', imagined or real, obviously for his ethnic linkage.

There is little awareness about what Nehru thought about the future of Kashmiri Pandits. Reacting sharply to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru's concern, Nehru told his secretary Kachru, "Yeh Booda Abhi Mara Nahin-what does he think? Have I done accession for Kashmiri Pandits". Again at Sheetal Nath in 1947 he asked Pandits to either submerge, get destroyed or leave Kashmir. This exhortation carried all the portends of a genocide in evolution. Despite all this Kashmiri Pandits continued to be the victims of a political mind set that simply treats them as an extension of Nehru clan. *They are suffering rightly for their retribution. They have been ruling for five decades-these are the slogans of this paranoid mind set.*

This mindset is not only shared by a section of non-Kashmiri bureaucrats but also by a section of Sang Parviar leadership. For as many as five decades Sangh Parivaar built its critique of Nehru on non-issues and personal hate. Pandits' problems do not remain confined only to Sang Parviar. Communists shun them saying "Aise Batain Chalti Hain, Who BJP Ke Saath Bandain Hain". In Congress Mr VN Gadgil has to remind his high command that Pandit card can deliver political dividends as well. Pandits are victims of a subverted polity and a perverse political culture that works against the vital national interests.

For Pandits the issue is not symbolic return. The priority for them is how to arrest high death rate, stop pre-mature aging and prevent community from extinction. The displaced community is also concerned on how to put a halt to the continuing genocidal assault. For the escapist political establishment the criteria for normalcy is how many pilgrims visit Amar Nath.

It is a pity that the entire political establishment continues to display increasing incapacity in coming to grips with the real aspects of separatist menace in Kashmir. Vital strategic decisions are not being taken on the basis of evolved thinking but on the whims and political expediencies of individual politicians.

The common Indian knows that it is normalcy which will lead to return of Pandits and not vice versa. Political establishment which appears to stand on its head than on its feet has declared that return of Pandits lead to normalcy.

Sadism has become a part of the new governance culture. When reminded that ground situation is not conducive for return of Pandits Home Ministry officials retort 'Ek Experiment Ho Jai'. The many massacres of Hindus of Jammu and Kashmir have not made these officials any wiser. Pandits know the price for such experiments--massacres, perpetual insecurity, social disintegration, economic ruin, seeking immunity from separatists and fundamentalists, and possibly even conversions.

Why is Indian state so willing to risk the alienation of one of the most patriotic social groups in Kashmir. What will be its effect on other nationalist groups in the state. In the past also Hindu elites who turned insensitive to national interests paved way for centuries of colonial slavery. The same spectre haunts the nation today.

Prof JD Sethi the veteran Gandhian economist describes Indian state as an imperial-bureaucratic state-a state that cannot define the national interests and treats its own people as adversaries. The tragedy of the Kashmiri Pandit community is the tragedy of the Indian nation state as well.

Kashmir in th

By R.K. Sher

The vale of Kashmir, one single strip of landscape carved out by the nature in the continent of Asia, designed, chiselled, shaped and finally decorated with its unbounded exquisite handsomeness in naked and innocent decor with its artistic celestial hands; unfolding the genre of Divinity, is the abode of that small minuscule human material which is famous all over the world ever since the great Reshi Kashyap turned the lake Satisar, infested with demons, into a beautiful living pace on the earth, by the name of "Kashmiri Pandits". It was aeons ago.

2. As day is followed by night, so is happiness by adversity. This is the law of nature. As ill luck would have it, Nature's benedictions proved ephemeral. They were dreams, come and gone. This unevitable small piece of land got contaminated by some uncouth and uncultured human element, resulting in this landscape turning barbaric, beyond the confines of human thinking. We in common human behaviour, believe that the man's civilizational strides aided by educational gains, expands his mental horizon in the direction of progress of mankind; searching for the path that leads to the Nature's treasure of sublimity and its grandeur but Kashmir, once land of saints, chose the path of retrogression, annihilation of its own famous ethnic cohesion and the rigours of religiosity; where Vedic, Puranic hymns and Quranic suras reverberated day and night, purifying the human mind; the Valley once having been the torch light for the whole subcontinent of India, Nature's lovely grand piece of land has allowed itself to be converted into a hell, metamorphosing the very old and accepted concept of virtuosity. This basic trait of humanity was very crudely and mercilessly trampled under the feet of rapsallions, the most ominous period of time that converged on the unfortunate Valley. Only time will heal the wounds inflicted, as a result of determined man-slaughter, covering the minuscule minority of Kashmir.

3. The ab origins of India's sweetland, the docile bunch of people never allowed themselves to get swayed by any evil thought of crossing the borders of its land and invade other civilisations; much less its neighbour. As such vedic religion that came down to Indian subcontinent since pre-historic days, did not commend itself to the countries other than the Indian subcontinent resulting in the faith in Vedic religion remaining substantially confined

to India. This was because the faithfuls were humble and tolerant. The valley of Kashmir being dominated by this sect of people could hardly have something other than being suave and affable. This docility, forbearance and tolerance oriented mind are the main characteristics of the people of Kashmir that never rescued the community of Pandits in the hour of adversity so as to remain unscathed whenever oblique situations erupted there during the past seven centuries. They either allowed themselves to get swayed under the weight of invasion committed by the hostile invaders or preferred to bid good bye to their ancestral hearth and home silently to escape the wrath of the beast-shaped invader. The community comprising people of great intellect, prone to imbibe in themselves the values of life and duty to humanity, did never think of retaliation because the handling of destructive weapons was and continues to be unsuited to the hands that habitually handle the irresistible pen. Literacy among all and education for 90% of the community is a doctrinal creed, necessitating each parent to prefer one meal or no meal for days on end but never keep children unlettered and uneducated. They consider a sin of immense dimensions if a child remains illiterate. In the recent past when the entire community was hounded out the Valley, just on encamping outside the Valley wherever space was available, the first thing the members of the community sought for were the facilities of schools for their wards. The present (December 1998) ultraist and ultra-partisan Central government is wonderfully enamoured of the State government administration especially its Chief Minister that his irresponsible, untimely and ulterior fulminations are summarily disposed of as his (CM's) truest analysis of Kashmir situation, making the world believe a false phenomenon of revival synthesis of religious ethos of centuries Kashmir was known for.

4. The process of elimination of the "Kafir" from the Valley has reached the flash point of tolerance for the fact that the hounding exercise is the fifth since 1389 AD when mass migration started taking shape. Then the ancestors of the present progeny were too meak observing horrible elements all around, hid themselves in forests during the day, starting on journey on foot during the nights with very meagre rations being available during the arduous and long travel. Only two options were available to them; either to bow and accept Islam or to perish.

The world has taken 'U' turn since then and the pattern of thinking of man too has had its share of introspection. Kashmiri Hindu is now quite thoughtful about his future and that of his progeny. Any kind of overtures will not work on his mind that has turned tough with the rage of wear and tear of dislocation and destruction of near one decade forced exile. The past fifty years since 1947 have trounced his gentleman behaviour under the feet of the biased sultanate. Sardar Prakash Singh Badal and other Sikh gentry of the Punjab beat their breasts over the inclusion of Udhamsingh Nagar in the -to-be-carved out Utranchal State, because their big landed estates in this sector of Uttar Pradesh are at stake as they fear these huge landed properties may attract the provisions of the

shall be pauper property, where escheated to g distributed amor the poor for the The Kashmiri Hi aggrieved of the mir because the sition was tactfu the Sultanate ai were hounded c by those very eth whom they had their landed pro compensation/ land. The Kas community ha bluntly say that than the Sultar noeuvred terror so as to cleanse minorities and t i-Mustaffa. And so under the pre:

Kashmiri Hindu is now quite though his future and that of his progeny. An overtures will not work on his mind turned tough with the rage of wear ar dislocation and destruction of near on forced exile. The past fifty years since trounced his gentleman behaviour unde the biased sultanate..The Kashmiri H greatly aggrieved of the kings of Kashn their financial position was tactfully r the Sultanate and finally they were hou the State by those very ethnic brethren they had sacrificed all their landed p without compensation/or cost of th

'Land Ceiling Law' of Utranchal and their lands escheated to the government. This materialistic phenomenon when contrasted with the so-called 'Land Reforms' in Jammu and Kashmir present itself in a strange archaic form that, in India where land reforms are yet a dream after the lapse of fifty years from partition, the people in the State holding small landed estates, were deprived of them with one stroke of pen of 50s sultanate which was waiting in wings for snatching the power from the Hindu feudal ruler and shower benefactions over the co-religionists at

the cost of minuscule minority belonging to a different religion, causing a great hardship to this small minority community as the landed properties were source of sustenance for a large number of them, rendering them to the state of penury and pauperdom. Mr Badal and his ilk were refugees from the west Punjab. They came over here and became big land lords whereas the ab origins of Jammu and Kashmir State were reduced to poverty line by the Kashmir Sultanate because they professed a religion other than the one professed by the Sultanate. Does any body think that Badal and other Sikh land-lords of Udhamsingh Nagar

dispensation. A in a television (Ram Uchury, admitted that t Peoples War G Andhra Pradesh Bengal were in tl of non-implem land reforms. such a step take Kashmir State ir a million dollar to be answered ment of India along been in th dus. When the q within the State ernment unaba the land reform cable to Kasl Jammu Divisor fact that the lan that division ma Musalmans wt State and slipp on Sialkot Di Suchetgarh, a b Ranbirsingh Pu kms from Jamr in the effect of reforms being i no land lord v these reforms.

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Kashmir: Indo-Pakistan talks

Dr. M.K. Teng

There is a measure of misplaced optimism, that seems to pervade, the commitment of Bhartiya Janata Party coalition to negotiate a settlement with the Pakistan, on major issues, outstanding between the two countries including the issue of Kashmir. Pakistan's insistence on a settlement on Kashmir, which it claims forms the core of the conflict-situation between the two countries, has sinister forebodings. A settlement on Kashmir is not so simple a matter, where India would find it easy to come to terms with Pakistan on terms which are determined by that country.

The Indian Foreign Office has always ignored a fundamental aspect of the policy of Pakistan; that of seeking a balance of power with India, followed assiduously a course of diplomacy of open negotiations with India on terms, which it determined. Pakistan is, right now following the same policy design to defeat India on dice, when it has not been able to defeat India in the field.

The war of attrition Pakistan unleashed in Jammu and Kashmir, was a massive military assault accompanied by subversion behind the lines on the front. Indeed, Pakistan is actively seeking to use the impact of the war of attrition in Jammu and Kashmir, to pressurise India to accept its terms for a settlement on Kashmir. Interestingly the terms Pakistan wants India to accept in negotiating a settlement, are aimed primarily to:

- i) annex Jammu and Kashmir to open the way for the Muslim power of Pakistan to march eastwards into the Himalayan hinterland
- ii) Rush the Indian frontiers deep south across the Bari-Doah of the Punjab, delinking the Himalayas from the defences of India in the north.
- iii) Seek a parity of power with India, both at the level of conventional as well as strategic armaments to exclude India from all processes of security-management in Asia.

Clearly enough, Jammu and Kashmir is pivotal to the future power interests of Pakistan. For Pakistan and the Muslim nations of the world, Kashmir is the gate-way to South Asia and adjacent regions of South-East Asia. Kashmir also provides Pakistan, as well as its allies a strategic outpost to guard the Muslim interest in Central-Asia. The inclusion of Jammu and Kashmir with Gurdaspur-Sheikhopora belt of the erstwhile British Province of the Punjab in 1947, formed an integral part of the grand design of

the Muslim League to carve out a Muslim state across the north of India, from Afganistan in the west to the frontiers of Tibet and Sinkiang in the east. But the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India in 1947, stopped the Muslimisation of the north-India half-way.

Till Pakistan invaded the Jammu and Kashmir State in October, 1947, it upheld the lapse of Paramountcy underlined by the Indian Independence Act of 1947, and the reversion of the authority, the British exercised over the State, to their Rulers. While the partition was on the anvil, Pakistan insisted upon the lapse of Paramountcy to ensure the independence of the Muslim ruled States or their eventual integration with Pakistan. Jinnah sought to use the lapse of Paramountcy for the Balkanisation of the Indian

Accession to Pakistan was the last act, he was prepared to perform and the Indian leaders were well aware of his intentions. Indeed, the whole policy design he followed after the visit of the Viceroy to Srinagar, was inspired by the Congress leaders and put into operation with their approval. For what followed after the accession of the State to India, the responsibility lies squarely on the Indian leaders, who, perhaps were unable to deal with the States with any firmness and ability and who shifted their responsibility to defend Jammu and Kashmir against the invasion of Pakistan to the United Nations Organisations. Hari Singh made no secret of his resentment against the way the Indian leaders dealt with the defence of the State. But his voice was stifled, and he was confined to his pal-

Gizir and Jasin, which formed a part of the Jammu and Kashmir by Pakistan in 1947, has cost India heavily in terms of men and material. The declaration that India was a secular state, was enough ground for India to have pushed the invading armies out of the whole state. Kashmir is the last frontier, in the north west, which if abandoned, will demolish the Himalayan complex of the northern frontier of India.

The warm Himalayan hinterland is crucial to the security of the northern Indian States. Jammu and Kashmir State forms the central spur of this warm Himalayan hinterland. This Muslim demand for the secession of the State and its Islamisation is a part of the over-all strategy to open of the warm Himalayan hinterland to Muslim expansion. Successive Indian governments have so far, overlooked the dangers lurking in the war of attrition, being fought in Jammu and Kashmir, partly to escape harder decisions for petty political interests, partly out of sheer lack of conviction and partly out of the inability to defend the northern frontiers of the country.

The time has come, particularly after the Pokhran test and the retaliatory action Pakistan took without loss of time, to view the crisis in Jammu and Kashmir in a national perspective. The Indian leaders should not lose sight of the fact, that the unintegrated political culture of the Indian state in the north and north-east are vulnerable to disruption. India has been fighting separatist and secessionist movements in these States all along the five decades of its freedom. The Indian governments have yielded enough ground along its northern frontier to both Pakistan and China. India abandoned its military positions in Chumbi valley in Tibet in sheer haste and when the Chinese occupied Tibet, they descended down hundred miles south of the Tibetan frontier with India and cut away the strategically vital eastern part of Ladakh.

The issue of Jammu and Kashmir, is closely connected with the interests the Muslim state of Pakistan has in Asia, particularly in the context of an international configuration of power, in which there is only one polar player, the Unites States of America, which has used Muslim irriditicism to further its diplomatic interests, over the years after the second world war without any compunction. The creation of Pakistan was a cold-war manoeuvre, ideologically oriented to forge an Anglo-Saxon-Muslim alliance to dominate Asia

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treated as sacrificial goats so as to keep the State annexed perpetually to Delhi throne; allowing the Delhi rulers spend holidays under the salubrious climate of the 'Heaven' on the earth coupled with the fact of ensuring safety of Musalmans in other parts of India as otherwise the gost of secularism shall get exposed. An excerpt from a letter sent by Nehru on 26/7/1962 to Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz shall bear me out in relation to the point.

Begins "while accession is complete, it is true that Pakistan is there to create trouble which it continues to do in a variety of ways. There is hardly a day when intruders from Pakistan do not indulge in some bomb outrage or other. The speeches delivered from Pakistan go on referring to jihad and war. All this does create a certain abnormal atmosphere.

The real problem of Kashmir is whether it continues as a secular State as the rest of India or not. This affects the whole of India because secularism in India also has not got such firm foundation as I would like it to have. Anything happening in Kashmir will undoubtedly affect the rest of India with its vast Muslim population.

I hope you do not mind sending your letters to me to Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad.

Thus we reached the point that annihilation of the Kashmiri Hindu community is immaterial for the Sultanate of Kashmir and surprisingly the Centre, dominated by Hindus, In this state of affairs it is beyond the limits of prudence to start a march towards the beloved Homeland unless the Centre comes down from the tall citadel of immature political stratagem to the concrete realities. May it be finally said that this writer is extremely anxious for the future of the community which stands scattered all over India, having fallen in utter doldrums. Just to manipulate small resources of sustenance in their present places of stay cannot be equal to the permanent settlement of the community. Time is fast running out. Let the heads of various organisations which self-style as the representatives of the community, gather at a place, put their heads together and chalk out a programme for future struggle and shall enable the community wrest a Homeland because that is the only permanent solution of the problem. The ego of being educated, having the ability to look after our own well being individually requires to be pocketed for some time so that the community does not fall on bad days perpetually



States, which spread over almost one-third of the Indian sub-continent and which were inhabited by ninety million people one-fourth of the population of the British Indian empire.

Mountbatten's efforts to divide the States between the two dominions of India and Pakistan were frustrated by Maharaja Hari Singh, the ruler of the Jammu and Kashmir State, who refused to accept the advice of the last Viceroy of India to reach a settlement with Pakistan. The Congress leaders, frightened by the deepening crisis created by the Nizam of Hyderabad, who prepared feverishly, to declare the independence of his State, the Nawab of Junagarh, who conspired with the League leaders to bring about the accession of his State to Pakistan and the Nawab of Bhopal, who made a surreptitious move to integrate the Central Indian States, including the Hindu ruled States into an independent commonwealth, cautioned Hari Singh not to take any precipitate action in regard to the accession of his State to India till at least, the British had quit. Hari Singh did not wait in vain. He offered a standstill agreement to the two dominions, to bide time and wait for the Indian Dominion to overcome the intransigence of the Muslim rulers and then join the Indian Dominion.

ace in Jammu till he was forced to abdicate in 1949.

It was only after Hari Singh acceded to India, that Pakistan claimed the State on the basis of the Muslim majority of its population. Since the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir, as the Muslim League leaders claimed, had a common destiny with the Muslim nation of Pakistan, the Jammu and Kashmir must inevitably be united with that country.

The military operations carried on in the State now by the Muslim militant organisations and Pakistan and supported by several other Muslim states, have far-reaching consequence for the future of Jammu and Kashmir State as well as the other northern States of India. Pakistan has called for a second partition of India to liberate the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir from India. Pakistan has a long cold war history and its strategic measures in Afghanistan have provided its subversive tactics in the northern States of India, a new thrust, which poses a serious danger to them. India has no alternative except to check the expansion of the Muslim power to the east.

The occupation of the frontiers of Gilgit and Baltistan, and the annexation of the Dardic principalities of Hunza, Nagar, Darel, Ishkoman, Tangir, Koh

Can Pandits go back?

Kashmir Today

By A.N. Dhar

One of the most important questions facing Jammu and Kashmir today is when and how will the migrant Kashmiri Pandits go back. If they go back, will they be able to go to their ancestral houses? They must be assured of not only jobs but also perfect safety. If they do not go back, Kashmir's return to normal life will not be complete. But the primary question is how soon and in what way will the trek-back start.

The government in New Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir know of the pleasures and pain of the undertaking. They have the difficult task of getting the Kashmiri Pandits back to restore secularism in full measure as well as to be harsh and forceful on a people who have already suffered much. How to go about this task is a major challenge. An untoward incident will put the clock back.

Dr Farooq Abdullah, on becoming Chief Minister, said that he would not ask the Pandits to go back immediately. He said realistically that he did not want them to live in serais. Of late, his attitude has clarified—and hardened. He told a press conference in Chandigarh recently that “if they do not go back, we will stop all financial support and even rations to them. They must go back to their homes”.

With news coming daily of killings in the Valley, many Kashmiri Pandits say that it will be difficult for them to live and work in a place where even the government is not able to control the situation. Otherwise, how come there are daily killings? The fear of the gun and reprisals continues.

Dr Farooq Abdullah also said that “if they (the Kashmiri Pandits) are happy settled elsewhere, we do not want to disturb them. We will not try to force them to go back.” He was obviously referring to those Kashmiri Pandits who have obtained jobs in the rest of the country and abroad. In the last seven years this section of the Pandits and Muslims has found settlement outside Kashmir. When you speak to them, tragic memories come back.

In the first flush of the militancy, the ISI wanted to give the situation a communal colour. Islamic fundamentalism was the base of the movement. The militants resorted to ethnic cleansing and tried to send out Kashmiri Pandits by creating communal terror. The terror travelled to pro-India Muslims after the Pandits had been done away with.

At first the militants asked the Pandits to join the anti-India processions being feverishly taken

out. The Pandits refused. There were selective killings designed to set off a wave of individual terror. The militants resorted to torture, burning of houses, kidnapping and violence against women. This is when the Kashmiri Pandits and many Muslims fled. Most who remember this and have found somewhere to live and a place to work in would not like to go back unless total safety prevails.

The other section of the migrants is made up of those who have been living on paltry government aid in tents on dried up river beds. Mostly they are from villages. Their life has been tortuously hard. Most of them have no jobs. They would want to go back if their lands are restored and they are assured safety.

Dr Farooq Abdullah is right when he said that “Kashmir will never be the same without Kashmiri Pandits”. The Pandits are an intrinsic part of the life and culture of Kashmir. Without them, you can't think of a secular Kashmir. The Authorities must therefore try to create conditions for them to go back. They must be able to go not only in safety but as confident citizens, who can move about freely, carry on their work and live in honour.

Koshur Samachar, the publication of Kashmiri Samiti, wrote in a recent editorial: “We need nobody's invitation, permission or goading for our return home. We yearn to be back after an exile of seven years of misery to light our deserted homes, if any left intact; to be back in our offices and places of work; to run our shops and establishments; to till our abandoned lands; to pray in our temples and shrines; to resume our social life and to live harmoniously with out Muslim brethren, who have also suffered the agony. But all this depends on the avowed will of our government. Militancy has to be curbed with an iron hand. Its recurrence after our return home will be disastrous for the whole nation”.

The fear is that militancy has not been curbed. Killings go on. The latest report suggest that even some Muslims have again left the Valley for Jammu. This is one side of the argument. The other is that the Pandits cannot go on waiting endlessly, till there is complete peace.

Many questions must be answered to bring about the right situation. In the past Kashmiri Pandits have been living in remote areas in small numbers, like one or two Pandit families in a village of a city mohalla with a hundred or two hundred Muslim families around them. Life went on in perfect harmony. The Muslims of Kashmir, despite the militancy that overtook

some of them are among the most cultured and friendly citizens of this country. It is when they are misled by fundamentalist elements, as can also be the case with the other communities, that some of them lose their best qualities.

The authorities have to consider whether one or two Hindu families can find themselves confident in living in largely Muslim areas. Can a Pandit go back to his old locality and live there in confidence? He can do so if he is confident that no harm will come to him. In a number of cases his house has been burnt down and looted. Will he be able to reconstruct his house and furnish it once again? Dr Abdullah said that the government would give loans. It is not only the physical help that is needed. The environs must be safe. The old confidence must be restored. This cannot be done by the security forces because that would create suspicions. Panun Kashmir had been asking for a separate homeland in the Valley. The question to be answered is whether this will divide or unify the communities.

What about the Pandits getting back their jobs? All the vacant jobs have been filled in the time the Pandits have been away. Can the government provide new jobs? Dr Abdullah has said that the government will provide thousands of new jobs. But it must not court financial disaster by creating jobs which are not needed. Is it possible to throw out the person who has been given the job the Pandit had? The same about houses. Some of the Pandit houses have been occupied by others. Can the occupiers be asked to go away? If yes, will this not create new social disturbances and sow the seeds of discord? Yet, the wages of loot cannot be allowed to remain.

Dr Farooq Abdullah told a press conference that if other Kashmiris could stay back and face the situation, those who migrated too should have stayed on and joined their brethren and made sacrifices. This is asking too much of individuals when the entire administration had collapsed. Least of all by Dr Farooq Abdullah, who also was a

near-migrant. Even his party, the National Conference, was not able to function. Its cadres left for Jammu and Delhi. When he was asked why, Dr Farooq Abdullah said that he did not want his cadres to be liquidated. About a dozen members of the old assembly were killed. The Pandits say that it is not right to have expected them to stay back.

Dr Abdullah has said that those who do not return will be thrown out of the services. When schools reopen in March or April and the teachers do not return, they would be dismissed from service. The same about doctors.

The migrants love Kashmir. Given safety and a living, they would return. But this cannot be done by force. The government must go about this delicate task with wisdom, perseverance and justice. It must see to it that the migrants are not displaced emotionally and materially once again. Perhaps the return can be gradual and at first only to safe areas—to be continued as confidence grows □

(Courtesy: The Tribune)

Detection, Kashmiri Style

By Somnath Dhar

It was a happy sunny spring day in Srinagar. I was in my school, at Gurgari Mohalla, situated in the vicinity of the fifth bridge, one of the seven the ‘Venice of the East’ boasts of.

The headmaster, who used to be so aloof, entered our classroom, prompted by the teacher in charge. We stood up deferentially, as was the wont in the late twenties. With the headmaster was a well-dressed man whom he introduced to us: “This is my friend, Hari Kishan Kaul Sahib. He lost his purse yesterday afternoon. I want two students, the intelligent ones, who have not eaten meat last night or this morning”.

Though we could not make out the connection between the pick of us and the food we had consumed, the class teacher plied us with a number of questions. Ultimately, the choice fell on me and my friend, Shambu Nath Ganju.

We were asked to follow the headmaster and his friend. The envious gaze of other students followed us, as we all boarded a tonga outside the school, bound for Zadibal, a suburban locality, about five miles away.

When we reached there, the headmaster inquired the whereabouts of a certain Pir. Guided to the place by local urchins, we found the Pir squatting near a window in a dilapidated two-sto-

reyed hut. Incense was burning in an old *kangri* (Kashmiri wickerware fire-pot), adding to the darkness of the place.

The brief salutations over, my friend Ganju, was made to sit before the Pir. He quizzed him whether he had eaten any meat or fish in the morning or last night. Then the Pir made him bend in front of a small-wooden cube, on which was mounted a black glass, about one and half inch square.

He put ample folds from his turban on Ganju's head, so that he could only see the wooden

MEMOIR

cube in the penumbra. The Pir kept asking, “Do you see anything?” When Ganju failed to respond, he was released from his bondage. It was my turn to be the ‘medium’.

Feeling the folds of the turban like a heavy weight on my neck, I was kept looking at the black glass. In response to questions from the Pir, I said I could see some light from the left. “Keep looking”, the Pir urged, patting my bent back, “Do you see the friend of the Headmaster Sahib?”

Sure enough, I saw him walking across a bazaar. One being asked what the locality was, I described it accurately. It was about a mile from our school. Then, I saw the man walking. He was looking for something in his

pocket. His purse fell down. A small urchin walking behind picked it and went to a nearby shop.

I was asked to note the shop, to try to remember it. In the shop, while the headmaster's friend walked on, I saw the boy give the purse to the man, presumably his father. He opened it and kept it. I was again asked whether I could identify the shop. When I replied in the affirmative, the turban folds were taken off the neck and head.

I felt relieved to look around the dingy room. The Pir, beaming a smile, gave me a few almonds. He was given his tip by the headmaster's friend. We left the hut and took another tonga to the place that I had spotted in the magic device.

Sure enough, we found the shop that I had viewed in the Pir's contraption which was my first experience of ‘television’ before it became an everyday reality in London in the mid-fifties. The headmaster and his friend spoke to the shopkeeper. He surrendered the purse without any protest, with the money intact.

During our visits to Kashmir, before 1989, I inquired whether such Pir-detectives were still around. It appears that the ‘trade’ died with the older Pirs. Perhaps their progeny has diversified into other trades, including black magic on the side □

Kashmir Shaiva Monism-its broad features

By Prof M.L. Koul

Conversant with the broad tenets and concepts of mainstream philosophy of India the Kashmir Shaiva doctors constructed a system placed on the pedestal of monism which in its approach and premise is not in sync with the six systems of Indian philosophy. As Buddhism and its philosophical expressions held absolute sway over the thinking milieu of Kashmir the Shaiva thinkers shaped their thought model in sheer refutation of Buddhist positions of impermanence of objects and non-soul doctrine. Some Buddhist concepts and stipulations were absorbed and robed with new meanings to suit the Shaivite positions and treatment of its specific doctrines. The absolutistic Shaivism became a possibility only when the entire spectrum of Indian thought evolved to its full-scale maturity. The Himansa, Nyaya, Viyakarna and Shaivagamas and the Vedantic

background setting fine-tuned the reasoning skills and thinking abilities of Shaiva doctors, who presented the Shaivite philosophy of monism with its logical formulations on all the issues of philosophical importance.

The Upanishadic doctrine of 'know thyself' has impacted the Shaivite thought in its basic assumptions. There are lot many Shaiva texts that are replete with the quotes from the upanishads. There is a close relationship of the thought in Shaivism with the expositions of issues as available in the Bhagwatgita. Abhinav agupta and Rajaanak Ramkanth have commented on the text of Bhagwatgita from their positions of Shaivism.

The Sankhya as a thought system played an immeasurable part in the development of Shaivism. The first twenty five tattavas are straightaway borrowed from the Sankhya and to complete the thought structure many more have been added to make them thirty eight in number. The fundamental categories

of Purusa and Prakriti have considerably impacted the concepts of Shiva and Shakti. Despite the close affinity between the two systems of thought, the Kashmir Shaiva-monism could not subscribe to the thesis of dualism as upheld by the Sankhya and established an undiluted system of monism couched in theistic assumptions. Abinavagupta in his work, Paramarthasar, explicitly puts that the Lord instructed to attain Brahman as per the methodology advocated in the Sankhya, by distinguishing between Purusa and Prakriti and finally awakening to the concept of supreme unity in Siva.

Absorbing the currents and cross-currents of philosophical thought and refuting the assumptions and concepts of various philosophies, the Kashmir philosophy of monism shaped out into a full-fledged thought structure with its definitive views on ontology, axiology, epistemology and aesthetics. The specific features of the system are put as under:-

Tantric plank--The Kashmir Shaiva monism is built on the plank of Tantricism which as per Kuluk Bhatt signalled a thought at variance with Vedic thought alongwith its world-view. Tantras, broadly speaking, are materialistic in their content and the thought which they inspired is equally materialistic. But, at a later stage, the Brahman thinkers accepted their relevance to the exposition of philosophical issues and invested them with a thick layer of idealism, thus transforming them in their range and import. The Tantras impacted the Buddhist thought and also the entire spectrum of Indian thinking. The Tantras are seriously opposed to established codes, accepted rituals, ethical standards and well-beaten family practices. To the shock of pudes, they are open-minded, liberal, new and un-ethical. They flout the norms that are socially acceptable. Sankara was opposed to the Tantras and spurned Sankhya for the gulf between Purusa and Prakriti be-

cause of Tantric-influences. Human body has found both acceptance and importance at the Tantric level as it is deemed a potent vehicle for the attainment Sivahood. A well-known Tantric dictum states- 'what is not in body is not in cosmos'.

Kashmir as a pivotal centre of Shaiva thought had its own tradition of writing Tantras which clung to dualist, dual-cum-non-dualist and non-dual stand-points. The Tantras which were known as Bhairav Tantras constituted the substratum of the monist thought in Kashmir. The coherence of thought content and its presentation with finesse was missing in the Tantras as a whole. The thinkers took up their seed ideas and structured them in a way called philosophical resulting in a set-back to the writing of Tantras. The monist thought in comparison to the Tantras was more delicate, well-structured and more than most highly coherent. Malinivijay, Swacchand, Vignan Bhairav,

(Contd. on page 10)

When Shivratri was celebrated in the month of Har



Mohan Kishen Tikku

The Shivratri festival very important for the Hindus all over India. Common man's conception of this festivals is wedding day of Lord Shiva with Parvati.

In Kashmir this festival is the most important one and commences from the first day of moonless fortnight of Phalgun (February, March). The prevailing mode of worship here is that of Shiva and Devi Parvati. The Trika-system evolved in Kashmir is an exposition of the philosophical thoughts pertaining to the religious practices prevailing here. Kashmiri Pandits are devotees of Shiva-Shakti and are Shaktas. Lord-Shiva could be worshipped alone. The Devi is never worshipped without her Bhairava viz. Shiva.

Herat in Kashmiri, it seems a deformed shape of the word Shivratri, where Sh has remained only 'H' and the vertical 'A' in 'ratri' has got deformed in the horizontal and rat. After the passage of Sanskrit language in Kashmir through Prakrit which was prevalent in Kashmir during the Buddhist time and thus Shivratri word became the Herath.

During the past so many years Kashmir was cut off from

the rest of the world. No fruits were available for puja. The walnut was only dry fruit available which since then is being used as Parshad or Naveed.

There is one more reason for the Herath-specially the Herath-Maj.

i) Heram is the seed word through which the most important 'biga' representing Shakti.

ii) Hora is another word for Mother Lakshmi and Hora-Ashtmi is the name given to the preceding day of the Shivratri, when even now Mother-Goddes is worshipped at Hari-Parvat for the whole night.

The combination of these two words seems to be Him and Hora, and also the formation of the Herath as described above seems to be the natural course of the day-long called Herath-Maj. At the time of Puja performed in a Kumba with the name Vatuka and Ganesh are the two names of the two sons of mother-Shakti and are represented by ingoing and outgoing breath. In the Da-Hasta-Devita-Chrika the cycle of the Devatas are described by Abhinavagupta.

For Yogis it is the most suitable day in the year when Jagrati of the person can coincide with the universe congruence in the consilation fac-

crues).

Astrologically during the month of Phalgun (February, March), when the sun is acquiring Cumba-pot during these three days and the Moon is also tramping the same consilation. So for Yogis who depend on the outgoing breath i.e. Moon and ingoing breath i.e. sun can be easily merged to gether in the Cumba and perfect 'Cumbaka' takes places. It is here at the external, function of ex-hailing and in-hailing process that a Yogi can get the consciousness of the Trria conditions and this congruention is called the meeting of Lord Shiva with Parkashya illumines with HIS power of consciousness. 'vimarasha'. Thus in ordinary language this is called the wedding day of Shiva and Parvati.

Importance of major Shiva concepts is the one projecting HIM as the Maha Yogi who is in uninterrupted communion with his self in the universal soul and as such HE is wisdom incarnate. The Yogic pose symbolises spiritual quest and the conquest of self. These constitute the very essence of Indian religious thought and practice. With the expansion of this aspect of Shiva HE becomes Dakshinamuri. In the Tantrik form he plays a corresponding

role.

Lord Shiva-the auspicious is hailed as Mahima (greatness) which even Brahma and Vishnu failed to fathom. HE alone is called Mahadeva-the Great God. Being totality that controls the triple forces of creation, preservation and destruction. Shiva is the most ancient of Indian Gods, long before the Vedic Age. With its roots deep in antiquity the cult of this ancient God grew with the march of time. In Kashmir on Shivratri day called Heretatruah, the elder of the house, keeps fast and performs puja as per direction of the family purohit.

The watuka consists of some basins and two earthen pots the Kalasha and Khatrahpala. The earthern image of Bhairva called Sanipotul. The Kalasha pot and the two watuka-pots are filled with water and walnuts soaked in them.

The puja starts early in the evening and every member of the family has to participate in the puja.

The water of Watukapot is changed for some days till the walnuts are to be distributed, among relations, neighbours and friends as Prashad.

Next day-known as 'Salam' is a day of feasting and festivity. Men exchange presents in cash

and kind. Parents send curd candy, walnuts dry fruits and cash to the daughters. Also sons-in-law are invited to dinner. New brides are to play with small bivalve sea shells (Kodies) with other family members.

The Shivratri celebrations in Kashmir is a main link in harmonious relationship.

Pandit Anand Kaul Bamzai mentions in his works about Herath as under.

Jabbar Khan (Afghanistan Governor) in Kashmir (1819 A.D) was once told by some one that it was a common notion among the Pandits that snow-falls invariably at the Shivratri night. To test this, he ordered that Kashmiri Ppandits be not allowed to observe this festival in Phagan (February, March) but in Har (June, July). Accordingly it had to be observed on the corresponding night in the latter month. It so happened that even on this night flakes of snow fell. The Governor and his courtiers were put to herat astonishment. The hard then mocking at him sang:-

"Wachhton Yih Jabbar Jandoh Haras Ti Karun Wandah"

Look at Jabbar, the wretch, even Har he turned into winter ☐

Kashmir Shaiva Monism-its broad features

(Contd. from page 9)

Mirgendra, Netra, Rudrayamas et al are some vital Tantras of Kashmir origin.

Concept of freedom--Freedom (swatantrya) is the corner stone of Kashmir Shiava absolutism. Siva as the coping category of the system is stipulated as absolutely free. In existentialist parlance He can be termed as 'condemned to freedom'. In its ordinary meaning freedom implies self-dependence. But in terms of philosophy freedom connotes that Siva in his absolute grandeur can will an idea or an act without any conceivable restraint or limitation. It never occurs to him whether his ideas or actions fall within the limits of possibility. His absolute sovereignty lies in his capacity to manifest Himself to Himself. Siva's freedom is absolute and nothing can restrain his willing, doing and knowing. Siva acts and that is his Kriya, not his karm as is stipulated in Sankar Vedanta. He knows and that is his Jnatritav, not Jnanaas as in other systems.

Somanand puts---'The unrestrained willing, knowing and doing of Siva is freedom (Swatantrya)'.

According to Kshemraj, the unlimited capacity to know and act is the freedom.

If Siva or Chitti (absolute consciousness) is considered as devoid of freedom, there would be no major difference between him and insentient matter (Jada). He is absolute and sovereign only because he is absolutely free. In Sankar Vedanta Brahman has an attribute of consciousness, but he is not free. Therefore, he is inert and does not create, emanate or manifest. Siva as an absolute is all perfect, purna and infinitely a free being with no limitations and restrictions. The real recognition (Pratyabijna) lies in the feeling that Siva is an infinite freedom.

The fundamental function of philosophy is to explain the why and how of the world and in Kashmir monist thought the world is exposted through the concept of freedom. Siva is stipulated to be in the world and transcendental too. Like Brahman in Vedanta he will not become impure when he is in the world. Siva wills, knows and acts and through the integration of will, knowledg and action in His category the cosmic processes are explained. If he had the inherent abilities of consciousness and bliss alone, he would be at par with the Brahman of Sankara Vedanta. That Siva wills, knows and acts establishes his position of absolute freedom. He is an active, agile and dynamic subject. Such a capacity of Siva differentiates him from Brahman who is sunk in inertia and inactivity. Freedom

connotes Siva's dynamism and dynamism is the manifestation of the cosmos and its multitudinous process.

Nothing is unreal--The supreme consciousness of Siva perpetually manifests the cosmos and absorbs it. The process is eternal and continuous. The cosmos manifests in Siva only, not outside his consciousness. In his state of absolute equipoise cosmos is present in Siva in the form of seed which sprouts forth and flowers out through the mere act of his will to manifest himself to himself. Siva in his state of absolute transcendentalism is real. He remains real when he is stirred to the act of manifestation through his own will. Real must manifest real. Hence the cosmos as gets manifested in his own consciousness cannot be assumed as unreal or illusory. Unlike Vedanta, Kashmir Shiava monism affirms life and world as positive. Siva is the integral unity of being and becoming, Prakasa and Vimarsa, transcendentalism and manifestation. If being is real, becoming cannot be any manner deemed as false or illusory.

Knowledge and ignorance--In Kashmir Shaiva monism Maya is not considered as an independent entity. It has been integrated into the being of Siva as one of his potencies. Siva is the sovereign lord with unlimited sweep and sway. For manifestation he does not depend on Maya as Brahman in Sankara Vedanta does. It is in his nature to manifest. Manifestation is his sport. There is no design or purpose in it.

Siva out of his free choice assumes the form of a limited subject with limited potencies. With his own potency of Maya he conceals and forgets his real Siva condition. He is the unity of Prakasa and Vimarsa. Prakasa is knowledge luminous and Vimarsa is dynamism. When Siva is absolutely free, He is knowledge and when He chooses to assume limitations or forgetfulness, He is ignorance. In monist parlance ignorance is not 'Avidya' but less of knowledge. It is to mistake body or physico-psychical mechanism or broadly called not-self as the real self to cognise one's condition of Sivahood or its attendant consciousness is what is called knowledge.

Bhukti and Mukti--There is a pleasing blend of Bhukti and Mukti in the thought structure as propounded by the Shaiva monists. Bhukti means the enjoyment of the world and nature and its sensuous pleasures. It is important to stress that the Shiva monism does not negate or reject the world. What ensues from this stand-pont is to enjoy the inherent beauties of world and nature. The world has not been

rejected as false or illusory. The sources and instruments of joy and pleasures in the world are not to be rejected as false. The Shaiva doctors reposing full faith in the positive outlook of world affirmation have not urged the seekers to renounce the world.

Veneration for Women--The Kashmir Shiva monism has elevated women to a new pedestal of honour by bestowing upon them religious and social importance which otherwise was denied to them. The entire Himalayan belt was littered over with numerous Shaiva Mathikas where women enjoyed an equal right along with men to initiate women in Shaiva Yoga practices and thought nuances. Tryambaka in one of the Mathkas preached and propagated his thesis of non-dualism, which turned into a major trend of Kashmir Shaiva thought. His daughter known as Aradhya-Tryambaka also initiated women in the monist thought and its related practices in one of these Mathikas. In Kaula practices women had a special importance and without their participation no spiritual gains could become possible. In his pen-portrait of Abhinavagupta a spiritual seeker from the south, Madhuraj, makes an explicit mention of Dutis surrounding him and Dutis were spiritually awakened women highly proficient in the Shaiva doctrine and its web of practices.

The Kashmir thought has viewed woman as a paragon of Shakti. It added a new context and content to the man-women relationship in social and cultural terms. Women was not looked upon only as an article of pleasure but assumed extreme relevance in matters spiritual. Motivated by the Tantric though the Shaiva doctrine developed a new vision about man-women relationship which was more delicate, sophisticated and value-oriented. An ordinary man was looked upon as Siva and an ordinary woman as an embodiment of Shakti. The entire gamut of social values underwent a metamorphic change there by generating a new wave of healthy positivism.

Nothing is impure--The Kashmir thought of supreme non-dualism does not uphold the view that the world is impure and is, therefore, to be shunned and rejected. As per it, Siva is absolutely pure, so is the world. If the world is held as impure, it automatically implies that it is unreal and false and loses all importance in matters spiritual. The non-dual thought views the world from an objective standpoint and rejects the thesis of mayavad. It pronounces the world fit to be enjoyed and experienced and unleashes a new

current of positive optimism. In Sankara Vedanta the world as an objective reality is false and unreal and hence is a great hurdle in spiritual attainments. Renunciation is the only path that leads to spiritual cultivation. But in Kashmir monism world is as real as Siva.

According to Zimmer, 'Tantricism as a matter of course insists on the holiness and purity of everything'. Impacted by the Tantric doctrines Saivism rejects the notion that the world is an abode of pain, agony despair, predicament and pessimism and views man in the given situation in the world in a manner which is objective. But the monist thinkers preach propriety and moderation and spurn extremes in any form. With the predominance of affirmative outlook, they contribute to the acceptance of pains and pleasures, purities and impurities obtaining in the world. A seeker is initiated to tread through the maze of pains and pleasures, holiness and unholiness to attain the condition of Sivahood. As per the Shaiva monism, pleasure is Shiva, so is pain, purity is Siva, so is impurity.

Non-dualism--The Kashmir Shaiva thought in its world-view presents the culmination of non-dualism. It is generally believed

that non-dualism is an oriental world-view. Buddhist philosophy of Vijnanvad and Sankara Vedanta are also non-dualist in their basic assumptions. But the concepts of Vasana and Maya in the two systems militate against the non-dualist thesis. Kashmir thought is absolutely monistic and all concepts and categories are directly related to Siva who is the absolute in the system. There is no category like Maya or Vasana which is sovereign like Siva, or inexplicable like Maya.

The non-dualism of Kashmir thought secured its motivational inputs from the Bhairav Tantras that were abounding in seed ideas about monism. The seed ideas flowered into a full-fledged philosophy of non-dualism which is compact, comprehensive and coherent. There are no loose ends which impair the system. In non-dualist thesis the absolute is stipulated as transcendental and maintain its sovereignty despite its participation in world process. Siva in His fundamental position is beyond flux, but out of his sovereign will subjects Himself to the condition of flux and change. In his transcendental state Siva is being and in His immanence is emanation or manifestation □

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NHRC urged to withdraw action on return

We reproduce here the letter addressed to the Chairman of NHRC by Sh PN Koul. The letter conveys the concern of a large section of Pandit intelligentsia on the proposed plan mooted by Indo Canadian Kashmir Forum to NHRC and the action initiated by letter

Sir,

The Hon'ble Commission may kindly consider to withdraw action initiated on the proposal from the Indo-Canadian Kashmir Forum concerning Kashmiri Hindu Displaced persons-officially labelled migrants-in the wake of fundamentalist terrorism in the Valley of Kashmir for reasons that:-

1) The aforesaid forum, namely Indo-Canadian Forum is a foreign organisation based on foreign soil representing foreign interests and view points over the issue of Genocide of Hindus in the Kashmir valley by the local Muslim fundamentalists in the first and crucial phase killing hundreds of them resulting in their total displacement from their perennial abode and later joined by the other foreign Muslim mercenaries and 'Jahadists' to cleanse the last vestiges of the Hindu diaspora for establishment of the so called 'Nizam-e-Mustafa in the state:

2) The members of these foreign outfits, namely Indo-Canadian Kashmir Forum, Indo American Kashmir Forum and Indo-European Kashmir Forum are largely the Nationals/Green Card holders of respective foreign countries where they are based and do not in any way represent Kashmiri Hindus, the vic-

tims of continuing Genocide since 1989;

3) The proposal of the Indo-Canadian Forum is more or less a repetition of the formula earlier floated by the state government and rejected by the dispossessed and displaced Kashmiri Hindu community and consideration of the same by the commission would only entail waste of its precious time;

4) The proposal submitted by the aforesaid Forum witting or unwittingly, directly or indirectly serves the political interests of 'Jahadists' and their eastern and western allies inasmuch as the proposed relocation of the displaced Hindu community piece meals to the Valley at this stage when the Islamic fundamentalists, armed to the teeth with modern weapons of mass destruction still hold complete sway over social, religious, cultural and political spheres, would only silence for ever the living testimony of the Genocide and accomplish as well the obliteration of all the relics and reminders of the shame and ignominy of Genocide viz the camp sites and structures occupied by the Hindu diaspora outside the Valley following their vacation on the relocation of the victims to yet other for more dangerously situated concentration camps,

which the displaced community and its well wishers would like to have preserved as permanent reminders of the depredations of the Islamic fundamentalists and as a grim warning to future generation to beware of the similar evil in future; the situation being further compounded by the as yet wilful absence of any confidence building measures on the part of the majority community whose good will is the sine-quo-non for return of the displaced community to the Valley.

Besides, the displaced community fears that the proposal of the IC Forum and of any other similarly placed forum operating from foreign countries seeks to prejudice, thwart and render infructuous the cases already submitted by the representative Kashmiri Hindu organisations to the Hon'ble Commission namely:

1) Genocide of Kashmiri Hindus by Muslim fundamentalists, 2) Change of the nomenclature from 'migrants' to Internally Displace persons.

The Commission is also requested not to entertain any proposals concerning displaced Kashmiri Hindus from any foreign body(ies). Proposals which the community would respond to and which the commission may consider should emanate only from authorised bodies and institutions of the displaced community from the Indian soil in the J&K State□

--PN Koul

Talab Tillo, Jammu

Shivratri being deleted from restricted holidays in Jammu

JAMMU: In spite of the fact that more than 60% of the displaced population is putting up in Jammu, the concerned authorities for no known reason tried to delete 'Shivratri'-the premier religious festival of Kashmiri Pandits, from the list of restricted holidays. It was only on the intervention of the employees that the decision was

Centre to discuss rehabilitation

Special Correspondent

BHOPAL, Feb 7: Central government is going to convene a meeting this month to discuss the rehabilitation plan for Kashmiri migrants. This was disclosed by Union Home Minister LK Advani to reporters after addressing a BJP training camp here. Mr Advani said that there is "sea-change" in situation and sited peaceful republic day function as an example□

deferred for this year as per reports. It is noteworthy that 'Shivratri' till recently was considered one of the few festivals for which 'festival allowance' was granted. Observers believe that the decision was one more attempt of discrimination to deny the displaced Kashmiri Pandits community of the 'festival allowance'□

SSRB reconstituted

KS Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 6: The State government today reconstituted State Services Recruitment Board (SSRB) and appointed Mr BR Kundal as its Chairman. The Board will have now government officials as its members. Earlier, the government had appointed a number of retired persons, allegedly Manzur-ul-Nazar, as members of the Board to cover largest ever employment drive

Panchayat election schedule announced

KS Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 12: The State Cabinet today approved the scheduled of 4 phased Panchayat election to be held from May 30.

Announcing the decision, Chief Secretary Ashok Jaitely said that elections will be held on party lines. In first phase, Jammu, Kathua, Pulwama and Anantnag will go for polls on 30th May. In the 2nd phase, elections will be for Udhampur, Rajuri, Srinagar and Budgam district on 2nd June.. In 3rd phase, Baramulla and Pulwama will go for polls on June 5. The schedule for Leh and Kargil will be announced separately□

in the State. However, the Recruitment Board came under fire from opposition political parties and general public for alleged corruption and nepotism□

Chronology of Events February 1st to 15th

Feb 1: Security forces gunned down 4 hard core militants, including an intruder, in Rajouri district while 1 more militant was killed by troops in Ganderbal encounter. Meanwhile, a PDD employee was killed in an encounter in Beerwah.

Feb 2: Security forces eliminated 2 militants in Valley while the encounter at Gunde Rehman (Ganderbal) was still continuing.

Feb 3: 4 Lashkar-e-Toiba militants including 2 foreigners were gunned down by security forces in Beerwah and recovered 4 AK 56 rifles from encounter side. Meanwhile, Pak militants in Kotbalwal went on hunger strike to compel authorities to allow them to come in open. It may be recalled that 3 Pakistani militants had escaped from jail earlier.

Feb 4: Militants struck in Kulgam area and killed a father-daughter and another youth at Redwani village while a dead body, alleged to be a militant, was recovered from Safapora. In militancy related incidents, 3 civilian, including 2 children and a foreigner were killed in Doda district. Another civilian was killed by militants in Rajouri district.

Feb 5: In a fierce encounter, 4 militants, 3 jawans and 3 civilians were killed in Rajouri district. The dead include the dreaded Pakistani militant Shar Khan I JKLF militant was killed by militants in Poonch district. At Khayar (Pahalgam) 3 civilian and 2 militants got killed in a fierce encounter which was continuing.

Feb 6: In the Khayar encounter 2 more civilians and a militant were killed, and a security jawan also lost his life. A foreigner was killed by forces at Ajas and SOG apprehended 4 militants in the Srinagar city.

Feb 7: Rashtriya Rifles (RR) gunned down 3 Hizbul Mujahideen militants at Sondhu (Ahabal) while a Jamaat activist Master, GH Mohd Paul reportedly launching chief of HM, was killed in Tral (Pulwama) BSF foiled an infiltration attempt and killed an intruder in Samba sector. Meanwhile, SOG is hunting his 3 associates in an encounter on Rajouri-Kalakote road.

Feb 8: Security forces achieved a major success when they eliminated 3 top militants-2 Pakistani and 1 Afgani-in Rajouri district while militants kidnapped 2 civilians from Dyalgam area of Anantnag district.

Feb 9: Security forces killed 5 dreaded militants in Anantnag and Kupwara districts while a SOG cop also lost his life in encounter. Meanwhile, a number of civilians were injured in a grenade attack Pulwama town Pakistani troops resumed heavy firing in Akhnour sector.

Feb 10: Army achieved yet another success and 2 top militants in Nowshera (Rajouri) while SOG-Army operation failed in Ganderbal as all the trapped militants escaped. Meanwhile, a Pakistani national died in police lockup at RS Pura police station.

Feb 11: Counter-insurgency suffered a major blow when Shabir Ahmad Sofia prominent Ikhwan-ul-Muslimoon leader and nephew of Kuka Parray was allegedly killed by militants while security forces eliminated a militant near Bijbehara (Anantnag) and recovered dead body of a Pakistani militant in Kokernag area. Meanwhile, a former militant, reported still active, was also killed in an encounter. In Jammu region, a militant was killed by forces in Surankote (Poonch) and 3 civilians of minority community were abducted by militants in Kalakote (Rajouri). Valley observed a partial bandh on Maqbool Bhat's death anniversary.

Feb 12: Army achieved a major success when they killed 3 militants, including a Chamba massacre accused Din Mohd Gujjar, in the encounter in Doda district, 3 jawans also lost life in the encounter. In Poonch, 2 militants and a SPO were killed in an encounter at Karni (Mendhar) which, an electric transformer was flown up by militants at Pargwal (Jammu). In Kashmir valley, militants shot dead 2 civilians at Kakpora (Pulwama) and Sajeedakadal (Srinagar) while a Hizb militant, who was planted by his organisation in Ikhwan cadres and reportedly killed Shabir Sofi, was killed by the Ikhwan cadres and security forces in a joint operation.

Feb 13: Militants slaughtered 4 minority community members including 2 minors at Thoru (Arnas)Reasi while a civilian was killed and an SPO injured in an encounter at Sagla (Surankote). In Doda district, security forces eliminated 2 militants in an encounter. A major cop and a civilian were also injured. One militant was killed by troops in Kupwara district while a jawan was killed in Pak shelling in Tangdar sector. Umar Farooq, PM Srinagar constituency, hits at Centre and threatens to withdraw support to Vajpayee government at a rally in Marh block.

Feb 14: 2 militants were killed and 3 ITBP, RR jawans injured in a fierce encounter at Bongund (Verinag) while person, reportedly a militant, was killed by troops at Tengwani (Shopian). Police and Security Forces recovered a huge quantity in Thannamandi area of Rajouri district.

Feb 15: Security forces killed 1 militant and trapped 2 others in a fierce encounter near Dehabal (Anantnag) while 6 persons were injured in an IED explosion near Mattan Adda Anantnag, 2 dead bodies were recovered from Kupwara district one is reported to also a militant and another a civilian who was kidnapped by militants earlier. Meanwhile, Jamaat-e-Ahle-e-Hadith chief Prof Mohd Ramzan succumbed to his injuries. He was attacked by militants sometime back outside marquee. A militant was killed and a woman arrested for harbouring militants in Doda district. Meanwhile, Pak fired 2 rockets at civilian population in Akhnour sector.

'Even Biological Human Rights are Violated'

Dr Jitendra Singh is a leading local physician and diabetologist in Jammu. His study on the prevalence of diabetes mellitus amongst displaced Kashmiri Pandits has received widespread attention in the national press and the medical fraternity. We reproduce here excerpts of an interview with him on his study.

Q: Your study on prevalence of Diabetes amongst displaced Kashmiris has attracted a lot of interest in the country and abroad. What made you to take to this study voluntarily?

A: I was seized of this subject because of the diversity in my interest. What initially struck me as a physician and a diabetologist was that the number of displaced Kashmiri Pandit patients went up at my clinic. My main clientage is diabetic patients. This must have been the experience of other prominent practising physicians as well. I wonder that why none of them took serious notice if it.

Q: What was your initial response to these observations of sudden increase in Diabetic patients amongst Kashmiri Pandits at your clinic?

A: I started wondering that while living in the Valley this community did not mention diabetes as one of the commonest diseases amongst them. I looked into the medical data available. The commonest known problems amongst Kashmiri Pandits when they were living in Valley have been reported as acidity and Ulcers; partly because of eating habits. Incidence of High Blood pressure has also been reported again because of the ethnic background. Another common ailment has been bronchitis which is related to seasonal typicalities and also due of their habit of smoking.

Sudden increase in the patients from amongst the displaced community with diabetes mellitus type II was as such a very interesting observation and quite stimulating academically. And I started probing into the matter with more interest. But to approach a subject of such a scientific importance one has to be very meticulous and jumping to conclusions can lead to errors. The first thing I stopped was being selective. Patients would be picked up serial wise and I completed case studies of 10 patients., then .10 more patients and so on and so forth.

Q: What were your observations when you took up the subject as matter for scientific study?

A: The most important initial observation was that while Kashmiri Pandits were in the Valley, a large section of this medically aware community

was unfamiliar with the Diabetes and its symptoms. I will site a very interesting example. A young Kashmiri Pandit man in late thirties is working in the accounts department in Jammu. He is a displaced person who somehow got adjusted in one of the local offices. Two or three months after his adjustment he started feeling very thirsty. He told his peon to leave a glass of water at his table after every 10 minutes and don't wait for him to call for water. He attributed this thirst to the hot climate. In his office another colleague who was a Diabetes patient getting treatment from me noticed it and persuaded him to consult me. I told him that thirst was the most common osmotic symptom of Diabetes. He was not familiar with it inspite of his being an educated person.

So what I observed was that a disease which was so uncommon in a group that the even the reasonably aware sections of it were not even familiar with its suddenly started afflicting the group. The health spectrum of the community has almost turned topsy turvey and undergone a reversal. My study points out to the existence of diabetes in almost each family of displaced Kashmiri Pandits-which is of epidemiological proportions. The comic side my study is that many of my colleagues tell me in good humor-*Doctor Sahib Aap Ne To Diabetes Faila Di.*

The second most important observation has been that almost all of these patients are in chronic stress.

Q: Initially your effort was a voluntary one. Did you get government help in this study?

A: To tell you frankly there is no help even now when my study has attracted wider attention and appreciation? You will be surprised that though I am a part of Medical College there has been even no support from this institution also. I was following this work as a passion and I had this fear in my mind that if I try to seek support from government or some governmental agency or my department, I may not succeed in getting any support and on the contrary the entire work may be discouraged or sabotaged. I convinced myself that I should only seek help from those who are re-

ally interested. I got help from those who were themselves diabetic, but were enlightened to contribute resources for this study. I got lot of support from the migrant community itself because it is a community which appreciates Academic Initiatives. They would voluntarily come with photographs and bio-data. ICMR has now started taking notice of my study.

Q: Are you getting the institutional recognition now?

A: Yes, My study is now being reported in different kinds of publications and even national press. The initial indifference was mainly because of the reluctance of experts to do studies which are off beat or unique is over now. In all the conferences where I made presentation the response in general was overwhelming and experts are now drawn to look into this aspect. The Diabetologist fraternity in country-particularly experts who are involved in epidemiological studies are showing keen



interest. The main centre in Chennai, which is called the birth place of Diabetologists and where we have the only post-graduate department on Diabetes has offered me to collaborate with them. My study was presented at Indian Institute of Management at Ahmedabad with the initial recommendation from the Mumbai. I have also been asked to present the study at Karachi.

Q: You have attributed the rise of Diabetic patients in displaced Kashmiri Pandits to chronic stress. Please elaborate on this?

A: Actually stress is a defence mechanism and in situation of stress blood sugar levels and blood pressure goes up. After the stress in over the levels come to normal. However, at certain times persons are subjected to prolonged stress. For example if the fiancée of an about to be married lady dies it will lead to acute stress, but after the lady is married to another person the stress dies down. However, if a lady with a few children becomes widow at an early age-the stress will continue for a larger time. The aftermath of the initial triggering factor of stress leads to perpetual state of

stress. The same phenomenon has happened in displaced Kashmiri Pandits. They were subjected to the initial acute stress of packing overnight and running for life up. However, subsequent to this they had to search a secure place, rehabilitated themselves, look after their uprooted children. Then they had to worry for their abandoned homes and hearth. Work hard for settling their insurance claims for the damage brought to their properties etc etc. This chronic stress is continuing and is not over.

Q: You have referred to the increase in Diabetes among Kashmiri Pandits as a 'Biological Havoc'.

A: Yes, first of all my study points that there must be very small number of displaced families who do not have a patient of Diabetes. But what is more serious is that people at a younger age are getting the disease than commonly known. I have cases where people have got Diabetes at an age of 35-40.

You see Diabetes Type II has a familial disposition. Even is such families which normally had a history of diabetes this type of diabetes would appear late in life. But the stress has triggered it to become manifest earlier. When a disease like diabetes inflicts a person at an earlier age the likelihood of complications and consequent incapacitations become manifold. You see when there is lot of talk about human rights violations, what I am pointing towards is the basic biological Human Right which getting violated. We have a serious situation where an entire generation has got Diabetes and even the yet to be born generations of Kashmiri Pandits has been already effected as they are more destined to get diabetes mellitus.

Q: You were talking about complications of this disease.

A: Most common complications of Diabetes are Renal failure, involvement of eyes etc and

very less talked about complication of sexual impotency. We have data which confirms that almost 50% of male diabetics develop sexual impotency. There is a psychological component of this as well. A diabetic is made aware of complications and knows that he is liable to get impotency, develops psychological impotency even when he might not have got the complication physically.

Disease of Diabetes at an early stage effects the quality of life in general because in young patients the productive years of life are seriously crippled. This human aspect has a bearing on future generations.

Q: As a general physician do you think there are other diseases whose prevalence may have increased in displaced population and which needs a thorough study?

A: Yes, The incidence of high blood pressure in displaced appears to have gone high. Psycho-social problems are on increase and need to be looked into. Stress on the community needs to be understood in depth. There is lot of fear-psychosis which is natural as the diseases are effecting the community at an earlier age.

Q: What measures do you suggest to bring down the chronic stress on the community?

A: Main emphasis should be on awareness and education activities. This should also include meditational part. Community is to be made to realise as to what is actually happening so that they will unable the community to come to grips with the problem. We also need to channelise their energies in right direction otherwise the great human resource is going to get waste.

Feeling of loneliness has to be removed. Problems need to be addressed through a professional approach rather through routine political and administrative measures. It requires insight into the problem□

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