

Kashmir Sentinel

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Pandits' Property..... PK demands CBI probe

Fraudulent grab continues unabated

Special Correspondent

Jammu

Most of the displaced Pandits now camping in Jammu and other parts of the country do not know what happened to their property they left behind in Valley. More than ten thousand houses have been burnt, after looting the left-over goods. Another five thousand houses stand badly damaged. About a thousand houses have been occupied by the security forces or put on rent. Of the thirteen thousand houses, more than nine thousand houses are either unauthorisedly occupied by locals or fake documents have been contrived to legitimise the fraudulent occupation.

In rural areas there is large scale encroachment of agricultural/horticultural

vits are produced by the unauthorised occupants to maintain the illegal possession of Pandits' property. Similarly shops run by Pandits have been illegally occupied and Pandit tenants ejected.

A veritable nexus has come to light, which aims at converting bonafide Pandits' property into disputed property. Scared of their property being turned into disputed property through fake documents and faced with apathetic administration, in urban areas Pandits are going for large-scale distress sale of their property. In many cases these distress sales do not fetch even twenty percent of the actual market value.

The frequent occurrence of forcible and fraudulent occupations of houses belong to the displaced Pandits has been causing concern to the displaced community, worse their plea to

Pandits.

Some representative organisations of the displaced community have blamed the government of deliberately turning a blind eye to the issue so as to discourage the displaced persons from returning home.

As per the details now available to **Kashmir Sentinel**, a nexus has been taking full advantage of Pandits' absence and their inability to come to valley to regain their properties. This nexus involving sections of district administration, Police and vested interests has powerful patronage from certain ruling party politicians, including, as per sources, a couple of senior cabinet Ministers.

Informed sources said that the police has been asked to go slow in eviction as it can "create administrative problems". Reportedly some high ranking members in NC have said that this can also distance party from local majority community.

In majority of the cases Police does not even register the FIRs filed by the displaced Pandits' nor do they communicate the progress of the case to the affected victim. Whenever there pressure from NHRC or from the central Government, the state police every time devised its own strategies to prevent the illegal occupant from ejection. In certain instances, even when the matters were brought to the personal knowledge of D.G. Police or I.G.P. Kashmir Range, no action was taken.

Quoting an instance of an affected migrant of Jawahar



Burnt Houses of Pandits

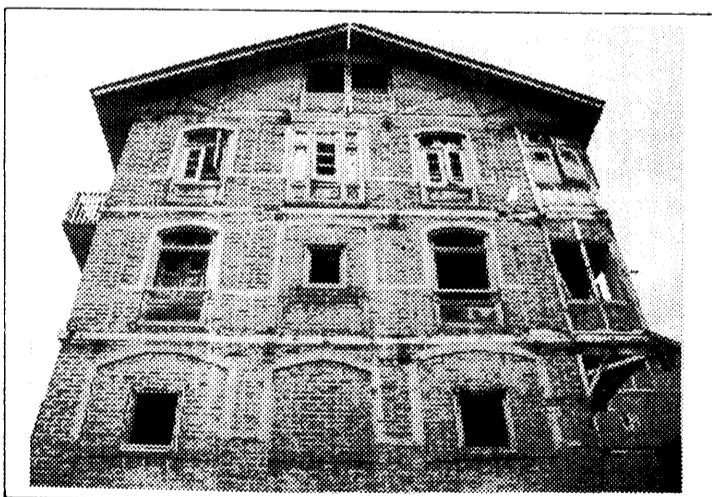
Nagar. Srinagar. Mr. Tariq Abdullah, brother of the State Chief Minister said that he has taken up the matter with the authorities including some ministers, but a "deaf ear was turned by them".

Alleging a nexus between the authorities and the illegal occupants Mr. Tariq Abdulla said, "money changes hands from the illegal occupants to the protectionist racketeers". Describing it as a great shame, Mr. Tariq Abdullah, in a let-

ter published in English daily, Kashmir Times said, "how is it expected from the migrant Kashmiri Pandit community to return to the valley if their very homes are illegally occupied under the protection and patronage of the authorities".

Citing yet another instance of Police connivance, Dr. K.N. Pandita, former Director Central Asian Studies wrote to DIG Police that "the Superintendent of Police, Baramullah

(Contd. on page 11)



Damaged Pandit Properties

land of displaced Pandits. In hundreds of cases by obliging revenue department officials, tampering of land records has been effected.

Dispossession and disinheritance of Pandits' property continues unabated in many forms. Fake documents/receipts, false affida-

the authorities to get the illegal occupations vacated, have hardly produced any results. In fact scores of cases in this regard are pending before law courts for the last three years. This has imposed additional financial and mental burden on the internally displaced

Jammu East By-election

BJP retains seat

KS Correspondent

Jammu : Mr. Ashok Khajuria, the BJP candidate from Jammu East Assembly Constituency defeated his nearest rival, Ved Mahajan of Congress by a comfortable margin of 6700 votes in the recently held by-election. Khajuria polled 58% of the total votes and assured the hold of BJP on this old bastion held earlier by the Jan Sangh BJP veterans Pt. Prem Nath Dogra, Prof. Chaman Lal Gupta and

Vaid Vishnu Datt.

This by-election was slated to be tough and critiques evinced little confidence in BJP victory despite last time's huge margin of 22000 votes which BJP MP Vaid Vishnu Datt registered in this assembly segment during the March 1998 Parliamentary Elections.

The factors commonly being put-forth by the opposition were many including BJP's alleged bungling of MBBS/BDS agitation, its alleged nexus

(Contd. on page 11)

LETTERS

Apprehensions about BJP unwarranted

Dear Sir,

This is in referenc to your write up - "BJP KAC toes NC line". We have to be very cautious in our approach while highlighting our pblems. It is a fact that BJP has been the only political party which supported us in our times of exile. True there can be some elements who for their small interests may try to undermine our view. However, we have to see the policy of political party as whole and not judge it by the individual views of lobbies within the

party. As far I am concerned the articulation of BJP leaders on various issues regarding Kashmir including the issue of our return does not warrant any apprehensions.

- Ramesh Kumar
Mayur Vihar Delhi

Dear Sir,

The write up 'BJP KAC Toes NC line' provides interesting insights about the internal thinking on the issue of return within BJP-RSS clan.

However, before inferences can be drawn, I would suggest

a systematic exposure to the perspective of Pandits on the events issue of return and rehabilitation through the columns of your paper. To my knowledge no attempt has been made to put our point of view in front of BJP leadership in a comprehensive manner. Group dynamics within our community might have been one of the reasons for this failure. But we can initiate a debate at the intellectual level and if done scientifically the outcome will generate its own pressures for streamling the formal community response.

Kashmir Sentinel can play this role as it is gaining in respect with each issue and community takes it seriously.

- Bihari Lal Koul
Udhampur.

Kashmir Sentinel

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- EDITOR

PANUN KASHMIR FOUNDATION

INFORMATION

The office of PANUN KASHMIR FOUNDATION has been shifted to

149, Ram Vihar
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180 005

THOSE WHO LEFT US

(May 28 to June 15 1998)

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

1. Smt. Somavati Thalchur W/o Late Sh. Jialal Raina R/O Mohalla Srinagar, presently at Ayodhya Enclave Sector-13, Flat 60, Rohini Delhi 28-5-98
2. Smt. Shubawati Kaul W/O Late Sh. Prakash Koul R/O Wyan Pampore, presently at 14 G Phase-II Muthi Camp-Jammu 28-5-98
3. Sh. Mohan Lal Jotshi S/O Sh. Ramjoo Jotshi R/O Srinagar presently 26/3 Pamposh Colony Janipur-Jammu 30-5-98
4. Sh. Jawahar Lal Safaya S/O Sh. S.L.Safaya R/O Natipora Kashmir, presently at Gadigarh Satwari Jammu 30-5-98
5. Sh. Ravinder Saproo S/O Late M.N.Saproo R/O Srinagar presently Buta Nagar Jammu 28-5-98.
6. Sh. Bushan Lal Sadhu S/O Late Sh. Gopi Nath Sadhu R/O Srinagar presently at 7-A Ext. Gandhi Nagar, Jammu 31-5-98
7. Sh. Vinod Bhatt S/O Sh. Chuni Lal Bhatt R/O Anantnag presently at 2-A, Muthi Camp Phase-II Jammu 1-6-98.
8. Kumari Usha Raina D/O Late Sh. O.N.Raina R/O Goshbug Pattan Kashmir presently 106/6 Jia pota Mohalla Akhnoor Jammu 1-6-98.
9. Smt. Veshrimali W/O Lt. Sh. Neil Kanth Koul R/O Salia Anantnag presently at 224-M Janipora colony Jammu 4-6-98.
10. Smt. Dulari Zutshi W/O Lt. Sh. Makhani Lal Zutshi presently at 1681 sector 34 D Chandigarh. 1-6-98.
11. Smt. Shobawati Kaul W/O Sh. Kanshi Nath Kaul R/O Srinagar presently at 34 B Govt. Quarters Gandhi Nagar Jammu 29-5-98.
12. Sh. S.L. Kakpuri R/O Srinagar presently at Laxmi Puram Chinore-Jammu 3-6-98.
13. Sh. Soom Nath Handu R/O Srinagar presently at 172 Sect.4 SBI Lane Pamposh Colony Janipur Jammu 5-6-98.
14. Sh. Tika Lal Mam R/O Srinagar presently at C-23 Tota Steel P.O. Rasedia District Raipur, M.P. 4-6-98.
15. Smt. Jai Kishori W/O Sh. Janki Nath R/O Ganeshpora Pahalgam: Kashmir presently at Qtr. No: 319, Muthi Phase-1, 3-6-98.
16. Sh. Soom Nath Bhan R/O Srinagar presently at 43 Bhagwati Nagar Jammu 5-6-98.
17. Smt. Jhansi Bhat W/O Sh. Ramesh Chander Bhat R/O Khrew Kashmir presently at Geeta Bhawan Prade Jammu 5-6-98.
18. Sh. Sri Kanth Kaul R/O Vessu Anantnag presently at Gole Mail, Dhar Road Udhampur 4-6-98.
19. Smt. Dolly Kaw W/O Sh. Raj Kumar Kaw R/O Srinagar presently at Garhi Udhampur 1-6-98.
20. Baby Sheenu Kaw D/O Sh. Raj Kumar Kaw R/O Srinagar presently at Garhi Udhampur 1-6-98.
21. Sh. N.N. Raina (Razdan) R/O Srinagar presently at 28 Laxmi Nagar Muthi Jammu 1-6-98.
22. Sh. Triloki Nath Bakaya R/O Srinagar presently at 133/1 Vinayak Nagar Upper Muthi Jammu 6-6-98.
23. Smt. Radha Mah W/O Late Sh. Ragh Nath Kotru R/O Srinagar presently at 66/4 Panchkula Haryana 3-6-98.
24. Smt. Brij Rani Tickoo W/O Late Sh. Brij Nath Tickoo R/O Srinagar presently at 49-Anand Vihar Lane-3, Bohri Jammu 7-6-98.
25. Smt. Leelawati Karnail R/O Srinagar presently at B.D. 880 Sarojini Nagar, New Delhi 9-6-98.
26. Sh. Gobind Ram Khar S/O Nand Lal Khar R/O Mattan Anantnag presently at H.No: 74 Krishna Nagar Miran Sahib Jammu 9-6-98.
27. Sh. Janki Nath Peer R/O Pamposh Colony Natipora presently at G.B.Panth Hospital Sonawar Srinagar 10-6-98.
28. Smt. Prana Ji W/O Sh. Bushan Lal Waguzari R/O Kothair Anantnag presently Dhar Road, Udhampur 10-6-98.
29. Smt. Chand Rani W/O Late Sh. Lambooder Nath Pandit R/O Virkumoo Kokernag presently at HIB-1, Police colony Channi Himmat Jammu 9-6-98.
30. Smt. Khemashori Wantoo W/O Sh. Manohar Nath Wantoo R/O Srinagar presently at A-127 Sec: 4. HIMT Township Bangalore 11-6-98.
31. Sh. Kashi Nath Kuchroo presently at 273 Upper Laxmi Nagar Sarwal 12-6-98.
32. Smt. Somawati Bhat W/O Late Sh. Kashi Nath Bhat R/O Pahroo Nowgam Chadoora presently 663 Vinayak Nagar Sec. 3 Muthi 12-6-98.
32. Smt. Kishanm Rani Kaul W/O Late Sh. A.K. Kaul presently at 109 Sector-7, Trikuta Nagar Jammu 13-6-98.
33. Sh. Jeetender Kaul R/O Anantnag presently at Muthi Camp Jammu 1-6-98.

मुफ्त!

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अब वंडरवुड से ग्लास का सम्मोहक अडवाइस जगाइय,
यह कायदा 1 अप्रैल '98 से 30 जून '98 तक के लिए है.

NEROLAC PAINTS

Sinkiang link establish

China training Kashmiri separatists

Diplomatic Correspondent
N. Delhi

Muslim separatists had been active for quite sometime in the Muslim majority province of Sinkiang (China). They had been demanding autonomy for the region. In 1995 the region witnessed a massive uprising, forcing the Chinese government to launch a crackdown on the separatists. With the fizzling out of the uprising, many of the activists went underground. Chinese warned Pakistan against fomenting ethnic unrest in the region and even temporarily closed down the Karakoram Highway. As some of these rebels had entered neighbouring central Asian state of Kiryrgan, it also took up the matter with Kiryrgan, government.

In 1993 there were also sketchy reports about Sinkiang fundamentalists and Kashmiri separatists coordinating their activities. In fact many Sinkiang rebels after training in subversion in Pakistan chose the Kargil route to reach back their intended destination.

This was the time when US was exerting pressure on China by supporting autonomy/independence for Tibet and Sinkiang. Saudis

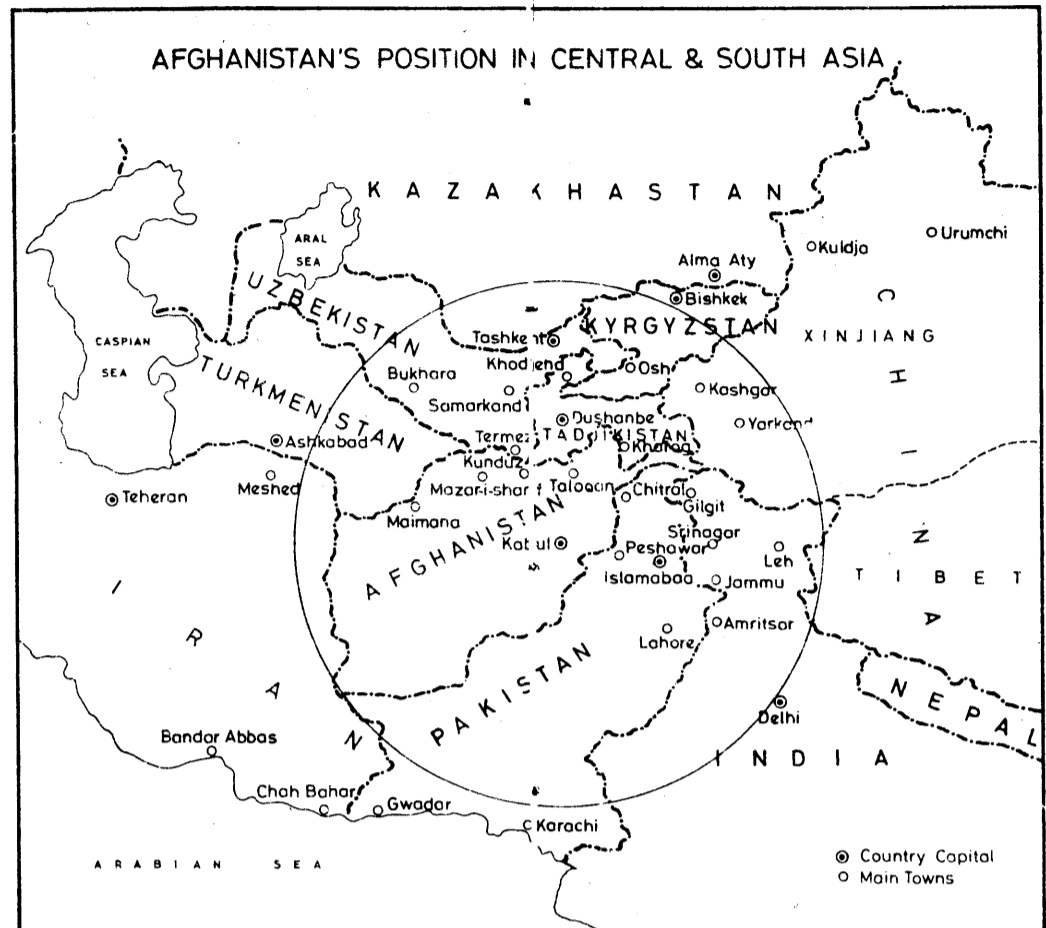
were actively training the Sinkiang separatists, China was thus forced to take a stand on Kashmir which did not appear hostile to Indian position.

The reported interception of a letter from a Kashmiri separatist leader from Ulan Bator (Mongolia) reports about the training of

FOCUS

Sinkiang Muslim boys in ISI run camps and information that the Chinese themselves were training Afghan mercenaries and POK nationals have served to highlight that Chinese are not so innocent on Kashmir.

The letter, intercepted by the intelligence agencies, talks about this leader having visited Sinkiang in 1997 and that his next destination was Saudi Arabia. In this letter the separatist leader makes adverse comments about some of his erstwhile collaborators, for their "talking a different language". The leader was previously in the top leadership of People's League and now belongs to the anti-Geelani faction of Kashmir Jamaat Islami. Prior to this a Kashmir University scholar and a top Jamaat cadre is believed to have visited Sinkiang through Mongolia



in 1988-89.

Recently, as reported in a section of press some Kashgari boys came to the Head-quarters of Jamaat-i-Islami in Lahore. From there they were taken to Al Badr training camp at Ooji, a place on the Afghan-Pakistan border. In this camp run by ISI, fifteen boys are believed to have undergone a month-long basic training and 45 day specialised training in handling explosives.

In fact the training in explosives was repeated two-three times to improve their prowess. After completion of the training, the Kashgari boys reported back to the Jamaat headquarters at Lahore.

What looks intriguing is that the Kashgari separatists have reportedly been insulted by other mercenaries from Algeria, Afghanistan and Gulf countries.

There have also been credible reports of Chinese PLA officials themselves running specialised training camps for Afghan mercenaries, POK nationals and Kashmiri separatists, on Afghanbaistan-Pakistan border, particularly in Khosht and Kunrar areas.

As per reports Indian intelligence agencies are investigating whether training camps for Kashmiri separatists exist on Chinese soil in Sinkiang also.

Other reports suggest that these Kashgari youth have been given training in subversion with Chinese consent. Chinese feel that diversion of Sinkiang fundamentalists to destinations other than Sinkiang can slow down the nuisance at home and at the same time increase its strategic influence in Pakistan, by helping it in its covert war against India.

Strategic experts in India say that Chinese stand on Kashmir needs to be reviewed in the context of its own objectives in J&K and long term foreign policy interests. For Chinese, the best stand on Kashmir is status-quo. This helps it to maintain illegal occupation of 5000 square miles of J&K State gifted to her by Pakistan. It has built the strategic highways of Karakoram and Mintak through this area. Any serious mediation would have to first ensure that the illegal occupation of J&K territory by China is to be vacated. Moreover over-playing Kashmir card can reopen Sinkiang and Tibet for China in future.

China and US have been following a policy of collusion and confrontation also in the regional context of Pakistan.

As far as Russia and India are concerned, there is total collusion, but where their mutual interests are affected, they assert.

When Mr. Talbott visited Pakistan in aftermath of nuclear tests by India and hinted a package, it was given a nod by Gohur Ayub Khan. The package offered to Pakistan was a) hefty economic package b) Nuclear Umbrella c) soft

(Contd. on page 4)

VHP talks tough on internal subversion

Jammu: Sufficient indications are available that sections within Sangh Parivaar are opposed to the soft policy proposed by its Kashmir Cell on matters pertaining to 'internal' subversion. In contrast to policy of BJP Central leaders on 'befriending' Farooq Abdullah, VHP leaders have indicated NC government for 'patronising' internal subversion.

Mr. B.L.Sharma 'Prem, former MP and Central Secretary VHP told press at the conclusion of 3-day training camp at Kathua " NC government was trying to change the demographic character of Jammu. He added that some nationals

from Azad Kashmir were also being settled in Sidhra bye-pass area. This, he said, was the game plan of ISI, which has the blessing of ruling NC government to have free flow of Islamization in the State. However, Mr. Prem said that this policy of NC would be counterproductive and needs immediate revision.

The VHP leader called for declaring Rajouri and Poonch as disturbed areas. He accused the state government of pursuing a hostile policy towards VDCs in Doda. According to him surrendered militants received Rs. 1800/- per month where as 8 members of the VDC share just Rs. 1500 per month.

Mr. Prem demanded training for local Hindu youth in firearms in vulnerable areas.

The VHP leader also demanded that all assistance should be provided to the displaced Hindus where ever they may be till they are able to return to their homes.

Mr. Prem blamed NC for distress sales of Pandit properties in Kashmir valley. He added that the situation in the valley had worsened and all claims of returning normalcy were bogus. He stated that the only indicator of normalcy was an honourable return of Pandits back in the valley and guarantee of their rehabilitation, there.

International NGO's concerned about Pandit's plight

Special Correspondent

Geneva : More and more International Non-Governmental Organisations have started voicing their concern on the plight of displaced Pandits.

Subsequent to Wandhama massacre International cognisance of the cleansing operations directed against Kashmiri Pandits has increased. In the recently concluded session of UNHRC at Geneva many western NGO's have made representations to the Commission on the threat to Kashmiri Pandits. This has forced many separatist representatives of Muslims to change their stance. We here reproduce the excerpts of the representation by the President of International Progress Organisation Dr. Hans Koechler to the UN High Commissioner for the Human Rights Mary Robinson.

Vienna 13th March 1998

P/RE/15862

Dear Madam High Commissioner,

The International Progress Organisation in connection with the forthcoming session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, would like to draw your attention to the tragedy of the Pandit community in Kashmir.

Since 1990, 3,00,000 Pandits have been forced to flee their native country. They are now living in 40 refugee camps in the Jammu region under inhu-

man conditions. Many of the Pandits have been killed by terrorist gangs. The most recent massacre occurred on 25th January 1998 in Wandhama (Kashmir) where 23 Pandits were killed by unidentified gunmen.

We urge the United Nations Organisation to stop these atrocities and to prevent these brutal acts of "ethnic cleansing". On the basis of international human rights instruments the international community has a special responsibility in that regard. It is intolerable that at the end of the 20th century ethnic or religious minorities are threatened by extermination because of the lack of international protection. Acts of genocide have to be punished whenever and wherever they occur.

While being aware of the fact that final settlement of the issue can only be achieved through a lasting peace agreement between India and Pakistan over the question of sovereignty in Kashmir. We urge the United Nations to undertake an international investigation on the acts of terrorism in Kashmir and to send an international fact finding team to the area so as to determine the responsibility for these acts of "ethnic cleansing and genocide."

Srikiang link established

(Contd. from page 3)

line towards Pakistan's covert war against India & conventional arms package of non-interference in Pakistan's nuclear programme - just short of bomb.

Had the Pakistan agreed to Nuclear Umbrella package, this would have meant serious hindrance to Chinese growing strategic influence not only in Pakistan but also the entire region, the sub-continent and Central Asia. That is why China goaded Pakistan into carrying out the test and offered not to impose sanctions on her and even oppose them if others were going to do against her. In fact a Chinese ship carrying enriched nuclear material was intercepted by US at Andaman Islands.

Terrorists attack Dessa again

KS Correspondent

Doda : In their attempt to force minority out from this area, terrorists again attacked the house of a VDC member of Sher Kund area in Dessa area of District Doda. Reports reaching here say that VDC members Om Prakash and his brother Ram Prasad were sitting in their house when they were attacked.

Undeterred, both the brothers took positions and fired upon the militants. In the encounter, which lasted one hour, Ram Prasad sustained bullet injury in his right arm. The police which reached after some time, however, failed to nab the terrorists.

Escalation of violence in Valley

KS Correspondent

Srinagar : In the renewed violence in the capital city of Srinagar, Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists hit the Gypsy of NCMLC, Ghulam Nabi Shaheen with a mine. In the mine explosion Mr. Shaheen who is also brother-in-law of MOS for Home, Ali Mohammed Sagar, suffered serious injuries. The incident has sent shock waves among NC circles who were claiming that the state was now left with only residual militancy.

Pandit's exodus

The varying perceptions of Army and Police

"They (Pandits) should have been put up in secure camps in the Valley but never allowed to leave. Political parties are unfortunately making political capital of the migration in the Jammu region by distributing rations in the camps and making them feel conformable. The police has stressed upon the political parties to launch a concerted effort to make the people return to their homes"

- Mr. Gurbachan Jagat, D.G. Police J&K Government. (Indian Express Newslines 8th June, 98)

"The ethnic cleansing of 2,48,000 Kashmiri Pandits contained within it all the seeds of an

ethno-religious movement, the like of which the world has witnessed in recent times in erstwhile Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Had the Pandits dithered or delayed their departure from the valley, they too would have suffered the cruel fate of Serbs and Muslim Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The eviction of the Pandits must also be viewed against the background of 97 Hindu temples being destroyed since 1990, a fact that has been underplayed in the overall interest of communal harmony and religious amity".

- Major General Arjun Ray in 'Kashmir Diary Psychology of Militancy'

CORRIGENDUM

In our last issue 1-15 June 1998 we published the article, India and USA — two Great Democracies. The article was reproduced by courtesy Indian Express. The author of the article Mr Garry Kessler is a free-lance Journalist covering Central Asia.

Attention

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The bomb that blasted the family

KS Correspondent

Jammu : "Papa, I am sorry that I have not done my home work today. I promise to do it after I return from Matamal tomorrow, six year old Sheenu scribbled on a piece of paper and left this message for her father with the landlady. She never returned tomorrow to complete homework.

Raj Kumar Kaw an employee in Post-Master General's office and his wife Dolly had got married in 1990, after migrating from Kashmir. Raj Kumar had built a house along with his brothers at Garhi in Udhampur and had been shuttling between Udhampur and Jammu. Since it was very inconvenient, he decided to take rented accommodation at Janipur on the outskirts of city.

Ashtmi is a very sacred day for Pandits. On this day some Pandit ladies do not take meals at all and prepare sweet-puris (Satyadeev). Others take only one meal. Ninety percent Pandit ladies observe fast on Ashtmi.

Raj Kumar's wife Dolly decided that she would take the specially prepared ahtmi meal at her parental house at Bohri. Dolly had told her father to wait for her around 2.30 p.m. He grew anxious as she did not turn up even upto 5 p.m.

Dolly took her own time

in completing household chores and left home at 5 P.M. Dressing her two little girls Sheenu and Sibbu (2 year) in their best, she thought of getting new shoes for Sibbu. Dolly also carried money to purchase a fridge through her brother.

Dolly and her two kids were walking along the busy Raj Tilak bazar, when the blast occurred. Sheenu was blown to pieces, her legs were thrown into the air due to impact of the blast. The explosion was caused by a time bound device kept beneath the extended portion of a cloth shop.

Little Sibbu fell out of the lap of her mother and landed close to an auto-driver, who brought her to the hospital. While Sheenu died on the spot, her semi-conscious mother was shifted to GMC Hospital. Sheenu's one missing arm, which lay in a bylane was brought one hour later to the hospital.

In Hospital, Dolly just managed to mumble her address. The police reached Raj Kumar's home. That day he had left office late since his wife was away. Having learnt about the blast, he was a little worried and asked the Landlord about the time his children had left for 'Matamal'. Meanwhile the police arrived and told him his wife Jolly



The body of 5 yr old girl Sheenu Kaw killed in a blast at Raj Tilak Road Jammu on the spot of Carnage.

was injured in the bomb blast. Raj Kumar told the police innocently that the name of his wife was Dolly and not Jolly and ignored the police message. His neighbour smelt the rat and told Raj Kumar to come along with him to the hospital to confirm whether his family was safe.

Raj Kumar saw his wife struggling for her life. Despite her grave condition, the only words she managed to communicate to her husband was to look for their two little girls. Dolly succumbed to injuries later at night.

The world seemed totally lost for him, as Raj Kumar next morning took the dead body of his wife and dear Sheenu to Udhampur for

cremation. Sibbu who had suffered serious contusions on the front portion of her brain was left in the hospital in the custody of relatives and office colleagues. The office colleagues took complete care for Sibbu. By turns they kept nursing Sibbu round the clock. She has since been discharged from the Hospital.

Sheenu's death was a great shock to all those who knew her. By nature she was sweet, active and intelligent. Her teachers from Sai Montessori High School New Plot looked dazed and they praised her.

Intriguingly police has not informed the family regarding what happened to the cash and Jewellery Dolly Kaw carried with her.

Neither the state government has announced the ex-gratia relief.

Another bombblast victim was Vandana Koul D/O Mr. M.L.Koul. She sustained a grievous injury to her eye and has been referred to All India Institute of Medical Sciences for further specialised treatment.

Meanwhile, two Kashmiri Pandits were among the civilians killed in another bomb blast at Maheshpura Army camp. Identified as Vinod Bhat R/O Janglat Mandi, Anantnag and Jitendra Koul R/O Mattan, they were reportedly associated with counter insurgency operations. Vinod Bhat lives at Purkhoo camp, while Koul lived at Muthi camp.

Posturing by overseas separatists

Special Correspondent

Geneva : Overseas representatives of various Kashmiri separatist outfits appear to have developed a broad based consensus on the issue of 'return of displaced Pandits'. This attitude was amply evident during the recently concluded session of the Human Rights Commission of United Nations at Geneva. Given the tone and tenor of their representations through various NGOs accredited with the UNHRC and the interaction with other representatives. All of them appear to have embarked on a propaganda drive of intense tactical posturing on the issue of displacement of Kashmiri Pandits and their return to valley. In fact some of the representatives had started advocating this apparently

'accommodating' line on Pandits since the failure of Pakistan to get through a resolution in UHRC against India few years back. Pandit campaign in that particular session and the subsequent sustained effort to highlight the issue of their religious cleansing and atrocities committed by the Muslim terrorists had made these representatives including the rabidly pro-Jamaat groups like Kashmir American Council headed by Dr. Gh. Nabi Phai to acknowledge the importance of Pandit factor at the international level.

Mr. Nazeer Geelani an overseas representative of Kashmiri separatists who has been leading their propaganda campaign in various international fora particularly UNHRC, had visited India in January 1997. He reportedly had detailed interac-

tion with Kashmiri Muslims leadership in the valley as well as New Delhi. In his 50 page report, he has urged Hurriyat to initiate a dialogue with 'fellow native Kashmiri Pandits' and assuage their hurt feelings. He is also reported to have told Farooq Abdullah to initiate measures for the return of Pandits. As per the reliable sources he had advocated the names of four prominent Kashmiri Pandits with whom Farooq government should initiate a dialogue. Interestingly all the four Pandit names proposed by Nazeer Geelani which included a leading Pandit Physician are known for soft-peddling the core-issues on Pandit return.

As in Kashmir valley, the muslims separatist groups operating in USA and Britain and spearheading the propaganda

campaign are broadly polarised into two groups.

The non-Jamaat secessionist groups are basically neo-fundamentalist in orientation and are closer to National Conference and JKLF. Overseas separatist leaders like Nazeer Geelani, Khursheed Draboo, Siraaj Shah, Abdullah Raina,

Majeed Tramboos etc represent this non-Jamaat group.

Subsequent to failure of Pakistan to attract significant international attention on Kashmir this group opened channels with National Conference and presently appear to be more accommodative and appreciative. (Contd. on page 10)

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Kashmir Sentinel

(June 16-30, 1998)

Sino-Indian Relations

Indian defence minister was right when he succeeded in shifting the focus of a possible threat perception from Pakistan to China.

It raked up an uncalled for criticism from the left and left of centre parties including the Congress. The critics have gone on lamenting a decline in Sino-Indian relations after the defence minister's public utterances. The BJP lead coalition has also been charged of vitiating an atmosphere of trust and confidence which had emerged in the South-Asia among the Neighbours. If the opposition especially the Left really believes in what it says then there is definitely something wrong with both the understanding as well as the perceptions of this opposition.

Both China and Pakistan have succeeded in encircling India and abetting hostile groups within the Indian territory. Whereas the Pakistan's intervention has been obvious and overt, China has been tactfully employing insurgent groups through Myanmar, Bangladesh and Nepal into India. It has not only refused to address the long standing border dispute with India but has illegally occupied Indian territory handed over to it by Pakistan. Further China is charged of having deployed nuclear missiles on the Tibetan Plateau aimed at major Indian strategic locations.

China, as reports suggest, is also helping Pakistan ISI to spread its tentacles in Central Asia and Kashmir. More serious is China's overt as well as covert support to Pakistan's nuclear programme which has also been established by the US defence experts.

What really has sustained this persistent anti-India policy of China has been India's soft-peddalling on most of the issue concerning security in the region. It is now for long that India has been behaving like a soft state. The attitude of Indian state can be judged in terms of its meek response to the proxy war in Kashmir. In fact, the Indian state has undermined the magnitude of the crisis the nation is facing. Grave issues of the ethnic cleansing of minorities in J&K have been relegated to non-issues. For years now, the Indian state has been behaving as an anti-people state.

In such a scenario Beijing finds an obliging Pakistan a better bet to directly fiddle in the troubled scenario of entire Tadjik-Afghan-Kashmir crescent.

Taking the country into confidence on the issues of security is an act of responsibility. The process needs to be carried forward and people educated. The US-Sino-Pak nexus has not emerged overnight. It was there since long. Only we refused to acknowledge the same.

Changing pattern of

It is regular

By Shyam Koul
(Veteran Journalist)

After Wandhama and Prankote carnage earlier this year there were still any doubts about the intentions of mercenary terrorists, those have been fully dispelled by the slaughter of innocent citizens at Surankote (Poonch) and Dessa (Doda) in the first week of May.

It is clear now that the terrorists are choosing their targets and killing fields according to a set pattern, with the frequency graph also shooting upwards. From Wandhama at one end of the State to PRANKOT, high up in what could be called the central region, to Surankote at the other end, the terrorists have spread their deadly tentacles all over the State, completing their firm hold.

The killings are being carried out with greater frequency than witnessed ever before. There have been five mass murders already so far during 1998, with at least 75 men, women and children, butchered mercilessly, a third of them hacked with axes, or clubbed or simply bled to death.

The Pakistan sponsored terrorism seems to have entered a decisive phase with foreign mercenaries, more or less, taking over complete command and control of proxy war in Jammu & Kashmir. Observers here see it as an evil portent of imminent killings and massacres in days to come. There are strong fears that recent carnage could only be the precursors of more tragedies to come. It could also mean more bloody encounters between the army and the mercenaries, who recently gave the evidence of their battle-worthiness, determination and tenacity at Ahgam where only eleven of them held on to their position for three days.

The mercenaries have several advantages and are better placed than the army.

Jammu and Kashmir is a predominantly mountainous area, and its heights and terrain would ideally suit any terrorist, especially the ones like Afghan mercenaries who thrive in such surroundings. And going by the official reports most of the mercenaries in this state are either Pakistanis or Afghans. They take difficult routes to sneak in, and while moving in the interior areas, they hold on to hills and mountains, avoiding the valleys. They can and they do reach from one end of the State to the other, trudging all along through the high altitude regions, undetected by the police or army.

According to reports coming in from different hilly areas, terrorists have built entrenchment and cave bunkers in the mountains, generally out of the reach of the army and they operate from there, swooping down on their targets at chosen times. One such large cave bunker was stormed by the army soon after Wandhama carnage, in the neighbouring Safapur mountain, and seven mercenaries were killed. The army found abundant supplies of ammunition, food and other essential commodities stored in the cave hideout.

On top of all this the mercenaries are kept fully supplied with arms and ammunition, which come in regularly through the supply lines over the mountains. Arms consignments intercepted and seized by the army now and then contain most modern and sophisticated weaponry which any fighting force anywhere in the world would be envious to possess and handle.

It would be no exaggeration to say that the mercenaries hold sway over hill tops and strategic points in the mountains in Kashmir valley and hilly areas of Jammu region. What is more alarming is that their

presence is on the increase, week after week. So also the smuggling of arms and ammunition. These facts are conceded by both army and civil authorities.

In the background of this grim scenario and with Pakistan getting more "aggressive and assertive", and Pakistan Premier, Nawaz Sharif adopting a "shrill attitude", as former diplomat, S.K.Singh, has put it, one wonders whether it is a

OPINION

mere proxy war or a regular war which Pakistan has unleashed in Kashmir. Is there any room for doubt after the much publicised visit of Pakistan's Information Minister, Mushahid Hussein, to the training camp and headquarters of Lashkar-e-Toiba, one of the main tormentors of Kashmiris in perpetrating terrorist violence, massacres, murders, and abductions?

With the non-Muslim population in Kashmir Valley having been reduced to only a few hundred families, the terrorists have turned to the hilly areas of Doda, Udhampur, Poonch and Rajouri. In the words of Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah, spoken at a function in Srinagar on May 11, there was "massive infiltration" from Pakistan in Kupwara, Poonch and Rajouri and the infiltrators were resorting to "unfortunate massacres of minority community".

In Jammu region, the mercenaries have an added advantage of having a safe mountain route right from Doda to Pak-occupied Kashmir, without having to touch plain ground anywhere, thus giving them deep penetration into the higher reaches of the entire region.

By pounding regularly the minority community, mercenaries seem to be striving to achieve many objectives. One of these is to create fear and panic among the members of the

terrorism

war now



minority community in order to generate a wave of insecurity, instability and flight of people from their homes and hearth.

Another is to kill non-Muslims, brutally and mercilessly in the sinister hope that it may one day fulfil Pakistan's dream of sparking a communal holocaust in India.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the armed forces are not only fully alive to the magnitude and intensity of the challenge of Pak mercenaries, but they are also dealing with it forcefully and effectively. The clashes that take place most daily on the border in the interior, lead to capture or annihilation of scores of foreign hirelings and seizure of smuggled arms. But it is also a fact that there is no let up either in infiltration or arms smuggling and far greater vigilance and counter infiltration measures are needed to gain complete control over the situation. These measures need particularly to be heightened in villages and hamlets situated in the mountains or in close proximity to them.

There should be no ambiguity regarding the fact that the mercenaries deserve no mercy whatsoever and they should be dealt with the bullet only and

completely eliminated like a dangerous pest, which they are for the entire humanity.

Gen. Krishna Pal, Security Advisor to the State Government, has all along been advocating a "strong response" to the Pak-sponsored terrorism, which, he pleads, is the only way to eradicate militancy.

India has given a strong response to Pakistan's aggressive and assertive postures, Nawaz Sharif's shrill declarations, and the creation of a "dangerous nuclear environment" by that country. The five underground nuclear tests conducted by India on May 11, it is hoped, will cool aggressive and quarrelsome tempers in Pakistan and will also act as a deterrent to their territorial ambitions, terrorist designs and conspiracies.

India has been warning Pakistan time and again to refrain from sponsoring, organising, promoting and perpetrating terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir. Now that Pakistan has fully entrusted its proxy war to foreign mercenaries, strongest possible response is absolutely necessary. Those who persist on playing with fire, end up with burnt fingers. In this it could be permanently maimed fingers.

PERSPECTIVE

Preserving Identity

By P.N. Wali
(President, KPA Bombay)

Exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Kashmir Valley after 1990 has posed besides many questions of survival and sustenance, a very serious problem of preserving the identity of the community. This question is upper most, nor only for those who had to flee Kashmir and seek shelter and livelihood outside the state after 1990 but also that large number who had left Kashmir say from 1947 onwards (if not earlier) to seek better avenues outside Kashmir - where their progress and advancement was throttled by brute majority force and unkind regimes. It is a progressive community with a fund of talent in all fields. It cannot be confined to one place, much less the valley to which it claims its origin. It will spread out in all corners of India, nay the globe. But will this spread forcing atomisation and fragmentation result into the community losing its identity.

Till 1990, the valley was a focal point, out one point reference. We related our existence to the valley, which we might not have been able to visit for years sometimes. We had our relations there. We had our physical assets left behind. Older ones, among us had our memories there. We had our icons. Devis and Ishta Devas there. The need for any other identity reinforcing mechanism was minimal. This has changed. Will this endanger our existence as a community?

Need :

Do we need the identity? Every individual does. It is a psychological and a sociological anchor. Some people say that Kashmiri Pandits are individualistic in nature. It may be true as far as we have learnt to fight our individual battles of existence along, with courage and fortitude. But we are very much gregarious as for

our community is concerned. We seek each other. We love to be in each other company. We associate with each other. Enough proof has been thrown up during last few years, in spite of small number we have been able to direct the world opinion to visit our woes.

Interestingly I find that every subsequent generation is more concerned with this issue of identity than even the preceding one.

We are a community with specific traditions - physical and philosophical, a specific way of life, a value system and a thinking pattern. We would like to stick to them or, should we? I think the present consensus is in favour of preserving and sustaining this identity.

How :

A tradition, a value system, a social pattern of thought and action very conveniently perpetuates itself on a situation of physically confined space. The dispersal of the community into a thousand centres is therefore, a negative factor. The pressures from the environment to absorb small groups is always enormous. The reduction of barriers of time, language, distances through modern technology makes this pressure all the more pervasive. Language as means of cultural continuity is unfortunately losing its hold as far as we are concerned. Dress and other behavioural patterns are getting invaded. No doubt food preferences persist much longer but how long? Purity of blood, whether considered desirable or not, was a sure way of continuing of community ethos. Lately even this is coming under serious strain. Inter-cast marriages are increasing by the day. All these things point to the fact that something positive need to be done to preserve the identity of the community as a socio-cultural religious ethnic group.

If the community thinkers put their heads together, they can evolve a pattern and an action plan which will help in maintaining our identity. We have instances in India where small groups have kept their identity for long time, in spite of losing contact with their place of origin. Sindhis in India, after partition, Parsis in India after having been driven out of Persia few centuries back, even the Kashmiri Pandits of UP who left Kashmir more than three centuries back, the Jews kept their identity intact even for a thousand years away for Israel. In my opinion the community leaders and all the community members must take positive steps to preserve the identity.

Steps :

While it is matter of serious thought, possibly research, into steps that need to be taken to reinforce the identity, some indicative steps can be listed.

1- A commitment towards refurbishing our links with valley, presently almost snapped: This is a matter of our political agenda and will receive greater attention there. In spite of what time it may take to achieve that goal, this objective should become the part of the psyche of each Kashmiri Pandit, young or old. Karbala is encased in the mind of every Shia Muslim wherever he is. Israel lived as a dream in the mind of every Jew. Kashmir should remain as a part of the Kashmiri Pandits psyche, howsoever vague it may appear at times. We may not suffer from persecution complex but we should remember the persecution complex gone through not only since 1947 but few centuries even before that.

2. To inculcate a sense of pride into each K.P. This has been a great community with a rich tradition, a long history and scholastic achievements.

(Contd. on page 10)

Key to Kashmir lies in Valley, not Geneva

Mohammad Sayeed Malik

Spasmodic 'internationalisation' of the Kashmir issue, by forces inimical to India, is a familiar feature of the five decade old problem. It never mattered in the past and it is not going to alter the ground reality in future.

The deliberations of the P5 meeting at Geneva pertaining to Kashmir are no exception. The drama enacted at the P5 meeting is largely an 'action reply' of US president Bill Clinton sponsored Robin Raphel's old script. It did not work five years earlier and it is not going to work now.

Implementation of the UN Security Council resolution - calling for a ceasefire from January 1, 1949 - has been the one and only material consequences of international intervention in Kashmir. All other attempts at arbitration, outside the bilateral framework has ended in failure.

India has suffered periodic pressures to compromise on its Kashmir stand - more so whenever it was faced with diplomatic difficulties on some other account. This has been the case ever since India, ironically, chose to take the issue to the United Nations on December 31, 1947, following the 'tribal invasion' from Pakistan two months earlier.

Today the P5 nations are once again trying to use Kashmir as a lever today to extract concessions on the nuclear issue. It bears a remarkable similarity to US - propelled dialogue (Swaran Singh-Zulifkar Ali Bhutto) after the Chinese aggression in 1962.

The US aim then, was and still remains, to divide Jammu and Kashmir, while providing a strategic foothold to the western powers in the sensitive Asian region. India saw through the game and shot down the clandestine attempt to revive the notorious Dixon plan of 1950.

The so-called China connection surfaced ominously in 1965 - shortly before the massive Pakistani infiltration into Kashmir later that year. Chinese premier Chou En Lai went out of his way to play host to Sheikh Abdullah in Algeria in April 1965, in the face of India's strong opposition to their meeting. Sheikh was on warpath with India leadership at that time and he was abroad on pilgrimage. The Chinese support to Pakistan's stand on Kashmir grew stronger, as the relations between the two countries warmed up.

However, the situation on the ground in Kashmir continued to be influenced by the prevailing local conditions than by the events that were being staged in far away countries.

After the 1965 war, Kashmir again figures at an international meeting. This time, the venue was Tashkent and the ceasefire meet was hosted by USSR. However, like the earlier ones, this attempt too failed to have any impact on the ground. Differences between India and Pakistan remained irreconcilable.

Six years later, the two countries were again at war. This time on the Bangladesh issue, and not Kashmir. The Shimla Accord of 1972, following the 1971 Indo-Pak war, made a qualitative difference. It was a purely bilateral engagement, leading to declaration by both the countries that they would not use force against each other to resolve the Kashmir dispute.

The Shimla Accord brought about one major change - more importantly from India's angle - with the ceasefire line in Kashmir being re-designated and demarcated as the Line of Control, extinguishing the role of the UN military observers Group.

India had been just tolerating the presence of the UN military observers in Kashmir, presumably for

diplomatic reasons, without recognising their jurisdiction to monitor the Line of Control. The deployment of UN military observers in Kashmir was the offshoot of the 1948-49 Security Council resolutions.

One of the resolutions called for total eviction of Pakistani forces from J&K, as a prerequisite for holding a plebiscite in the state. These resolutions are practically dead by now, because the 'international' forces were either not interested, or had failed to secure the withdrawal of Pakistani forces from J&K, which in terms of the UN resolution, include the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir as well as the portion of the territory ceded by Pakistan to China.

The US revived its 'divide Kashmir' stand during president Bill Clinton's first term. Robin Raphel had sought to revive the 'dispute' over Kashmir's accession to India. Clinton, in his address to the US Congress, had mentioned Kashmir along with other 'flash points' across the globe - like Bosnia, West Asia and Northern Ireland.

The root of India's Kashmir problem lie nowhere but in Kashmir itself. Irrespective of what the other countries have been saying or doing in this regard, India's essential strength - and weakness - in the matter has invariably been dependent on the nature of its domestic policy on Kashmir. To be precise the handling of this policy. A sound policy based on objective ground assessment has always yielded wonderful results.

Take just one example. The 1977 Kashmir Assembly election, held for the first time under Governor's rule, was universally acknowledged to be the first ever free and fair poll in the state - particularly as the state's track record in this aspect had been unenviable.

That election had established an authentic

(Contd. on page 10)

Imported culture rules Kargil society

Khomeini's shadow spreads

Aasha Khosa
Kargil

Atollah Khomeini's legacy may be gradually fading in Iran but the Shia spiritual leader continues to shape the destiny of indigenous Ladakhi tribes living in this cold desert region located along the border with Pakistan.

Portraits of Khomeini adorn marketplaces, homes, public institutions and even offices in this town, located between to Himalayan peaks overlooking the Sure river, about 200 km north of Srinagar. The Khomeinin Trust, a voluntary organisation comprising mostly youth, is aggressively tightening its hold on the society giving rise to distress signals from traditional religious leadership of this predominantly Shia area.

"These (Khomeinin Trust) people are trying to import Iranian cultural into this small society which is living on the borderline," says Sheikh Ahmed Mohamadi, Vice Chairman of Islamia School Trust a 40 year old theological institution. He said the administration had mutely watched the increasing militancy of the trust over the years. "These boys have destroyed our peace for last eight years," Mohamadi says.

The officials say the rise of the Khomeinin Trust had created a "suffocating atmosphere in Kargil". The lone cinema hall in Kargil has been closed following instruction by the trust. Kashmiri secessionist leaders received rapturous receptions from the activists of Khomeinin Trust while the rest of Ladakh region ignored them.

The trust has been organising separate religious functions and its activists raise anti American and Anti-Isreal slogans during Muhharam procession. "We live under a different constitution and cannot affort slogans which should be raised only in Iran", says Mohamadi. The recent elections saw the open nexus between the National

Conference and the Khomeini Trust. The liasion, senior residents warn, could turn into a Frankenstein's monster.

Ominous portends of the power struggle between two seminary institutions (the trust and Islamia) had surfaced on Muhharam this year, when their supporters nearly came to blows and

Homes and institutions have the Iranian leader's photo on walls, the Khomeinin Trust forced the lone cinema hall in town to close down.

curfew was imposed. The residents say that the truce was temporary and their growing tensions could snowball into major conflict any time.

The Khomeinin Trust is reportedly slush with funds coming mainly from Iran. It has been running the first Islamic bank here for past five years without the permission of the Reserve Bank of India. They have occupied government buildings to house their offices. An auditorium of the State Information department has recently been vacated by them. Now it is a meeting hall of this religious organisation and a huge portrait of Khomeini hangs there.

Behind the militant face of this organisation lay the deep desire of youth to retireve their people from the abyss of social backwardness that the institutions such as Islamia School has pushed them into', the organisers say. Asghar Karbali, the young secretary of the Khomeinin Trust, says: "Illiteracy is their biggest enemy which had kept the people backward." Kargil is the least literate district in Kashmir and statistics about women's health and education reflect its backwardness.

The trust runs cooperative societies to provide market to the small appricot growers in this region. It is trying to green at least 12 villages through

(Contd. on page 10)

A Kashmiri Pandit diaspora

On the trail of a lost tribe

Dr. Ramesh Kumar

Jyeshtha Purnima is a day of great festivity for Bilaloch and Raina Brahmin biradaries of northern India. Every year they assemble in great numbers at a remote hamlet of DABUJ-KAKA, located about 25 Kms from Jammu on the Jammu-Pathankot national highway. They come here to pay their homage to their ancestor, Dati Maa whose life symbolised the struggle against feudal oppression.

This village, where once Bilaloch Brahmin community lived in great strength has not a single Brahmin family now. Some generations ago Rajputs (Bhardwaja gotra) from the adjoining villages came here to reclaim the abandoned village.

The magnificent temple of Dati Maa stands over an ancient Bauli. Though the main fair is held annually, but Thursdays (Breswar), as at Jethyar and Tsar shrines in Kashmir are also considered auspicious for visiting the temple. An interesting feature of the fair is that chelas go into a trance state to the beat of Dholki. It is the chelas who tell intimate

details about the legend.

Since Diaspora, especially numerically small ones are known to desensitise historico-cultural memories, just beyond the story of Dati Maa, as narrated by 'Chelas' not much is known about the antiquity and the socio-historical 'Uniqueness' of the Bilaloch-Raina Community.

When did oldest Rainas and possibly Bilaloch Brahmins migrate from Kashmir is presently a matter of conjecture only. Some centuries ago, it is said that one Dati Ma, a daughter of a Raina family from neighbouring village of RAYA was married to a Bilaloch boy in DABUJ-KAKA village. Brahmins here, just like Sadhotra Brahmins of Birpur groaned under terrible feudal oppression.

The local feudal chieftain, as the legened goes, asked the family of Dati Maa to hand over their best milk-yielding cow. Dati Maa in her family stood her ground and refused to submit to the dictates of feudal tyranny. Sometime later the cow was found killed. Dati Maa found it unbearable. She committed Sati along

with the cow. Her two brothers, a pet snake and a bat also joined sati. Her two brothers had been a source of great inspiration in her struggle.

Some how Dati Maa felt that her clans people did not stand firmly behind her. She cursed the village. It is said that soon after no Brahmin family was left in the village. In fact, the people assembled at Bilalochs (named Khooni) is not permitted to visit the place by the Bilalochs.

The entire management of the temple complex and the fair is conducted by Bilaloch biradri. Rainas and Bilalochs settled at as far away places as Calcutta come to visit this place.

Rainas, Reens and Rainus among Poonch Sikh Brahmins trace their ancestry from Rainawari, a suburb of Srinagar. Rainas- Razdans derivative from Rajnaka were part of the nobility of Hindu Kings of Kashmir. They have produced scholars of yore. Kalhana himself was a Raina. The high influence which Rainas wielded in terms of power and learning, the suburb of Rainawari was named after

them.

The earliest reference about the migration of Rainas from Kashmir comes from the story of Shiva (Seu) Raina, the master painter-artist from Kashmir. Shiva, contemporary of Rupa Bhawani, the Saint poetess is believed to have left Kashmir alongside the people, who joined Guru Kripa Ram Dutt in his mission to Guru Tej Bahadur. He came to settle in Haripur-Gular and emerged as the pioneer of what has come to be known as Pahari school of Painting. Rainas, who live near Baij Nath have strong historical memory of their previous origins. The place they live today was named by them as RAINABARI.

Many Raina families of Jammu say they came only 4-5 generations ago. Due to matrimonial alliances outside the clan and lack of effective communications with their ancestral land, they have lost their Pandit ritual structure. Some have even adopted Sharmas as new surnames like many Zutshis in UP, who turned 'Joshis'.

For Rainas living in Gurdaspur, Batala in Punjab

and Channi, Treli, Kunah, Narayan Muth villages of Kathua district there seems to be total historical amnesia about their origin from Rainawari.

Gotra of Raina and Bilaloch Brahmins is common i.e. Kaushal. Among the Rainas of Kashmir the exclusive gotra area a) Gautama Atreya Shalan Kucha and b) Dat Sharman Kantha Kashyapa. Interestingly the gotras of Razdan a subgroup of Rainas are variants of either Kanth Kashyapa or Gautama. In the opinion of serious scholars on Brahminology, Kaushal is the name of a floating gotra adopted by those groups, who due to some reason have lost the name of their original gotra.

It is thus safe to assume that both Bilaloch and the older Rainas are the lost 'Tribes. Among Kashmiris we do not have anything by the name of Bilaloch, except that some Kashmiri Pandits have the surname 'bilav'. Bilaloch-Raina story is thus a virgin field for the potential researchers interested in reconstructing the social history of Kashmiri Pandits.

Old symbols & Symbols of Exile

Pandits observe 'Jyeshtha Ashtami'

KS Correspondent
JAMMU

She had visited 'Khair Bhawani Tullamulla' last year also. When the privately hired bus which carried displaced pilgrims entered the premises of Khair Bhawani, she along with other Yatries were terror stricken as a rocket was allegedly fired at the shrine. The gun fire which ensued there after lasted for more than half an hour. Terrorists exactly knew when the first batch of pilgrims would reach the shrine and conveyed the message. Mrs. Saroj distinctly remembered those moments. She also remembered the spiritual atmosphere which prevailed in the shrine when

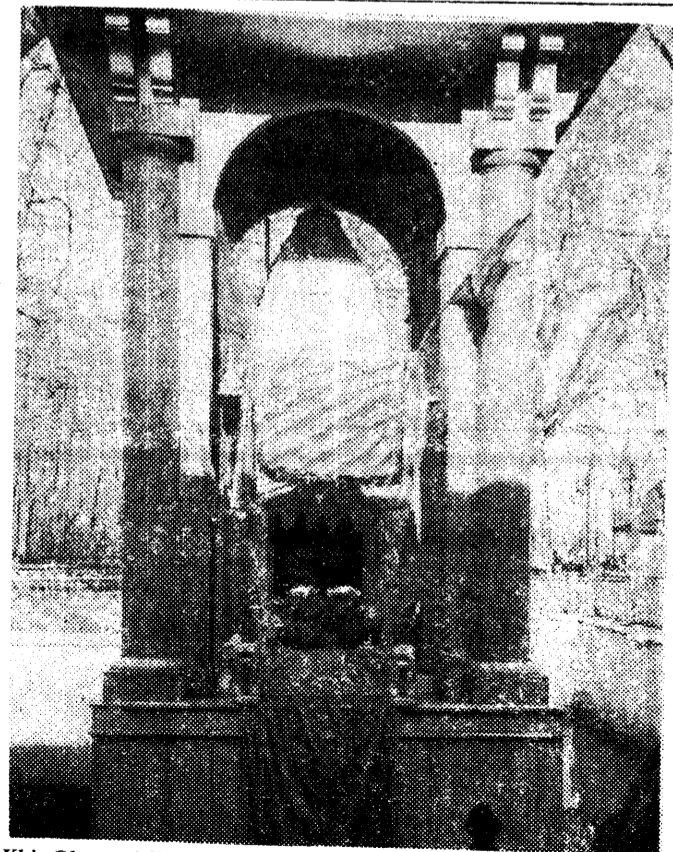
the displaced Pandits worshipped the Goddess Khair Bhawani for the entire night. A village lady interrupted a folk music group which was singing the prayers of Goddess, virtually captured the mike and then sang for the whole night.

Entire shrine then witnessed an ecstatic worship of Goddess 'Raghya'. This year to experience the same spiritual moments Saroj again visited the shrine forgetting the negative experiences of the terrorist attack on the shrine. Arrangements were pronounced this year. The vehicles carrying the devotees from Jammu were given comprehensive security cover. Each vehicle was having its own security of two

armed guards also.

Tall claims of the Govt. notwithstanding, around 1500 pilgrims from Jammu visited Khair Bhawani in around 50 buses arranged by the Govt. They were mostly displaced Pandits. Even optimistic estimates of the pilgrims themselves put the total number of devotees not more than 4000 which included around 2000 persons from the Valley. Worshipping and praying during the entire night produced an emotionally surcharged atmosphere.

"Locals who mostly sustained on the business carried around the shrine like selling of flowers, milk, Deep etc. were obviously happy because it gave them some easy money.



Khair Bhawani Temple, Tullamulla Kmr.

But we have no illusions about the situation. See the massive security presence. This year

you were not even allowed to venture outside the premises of
(Contd. on page 10)

Govt. has to address core issues - Inderesh (Contd. from page 12)

political rights of the minorities in the valley have to be restored. This small

Imported Culture

(Contd. from page 8)

watershed management, sponsoring education for 80 orphans and is paying monthly pension of Rs. 500 to Rs. 700 to a large number of poor widows. The trust runs at least nine schools with nearly 4,000 children on rolls and lays emphasis on girls education, which is labelled as a taboo by the traditional leadership.

However, senior residents remain skeptic. "Under the fundamentalists, we are fast losing our identity as indigenous ancient people and are consolidating as a religious entity, which by no means is good for our future," said a retired police officer from Kargil.

Coutsey: Indian Express

minority has to be politically strengthened. Immediately, govt must ensure that voters enrolled for Parliamentary elections should be eligible for panchayat elections also." RSS believes that the displaced should return but it is very essential to correct the population imbalance.

Q) *There has been talk about demographic invasion in Jammu. How do you assess this new threat?*

a) This part of the conspiracy has not stopped but people in Jammu are more aware of its dangers now. Anybody who sells his property is more cautious now. It will be very simplistic to assume that people are coming down from hills in search of jobs and settling in Jammu. Apprehensions within the society in Jammu have some

basis. However, that the society is reacting to the development with full awareness is a welcome development.

Q) *What will be the impact of BJP-NC alliance on the fight against separatism in Jammu & Kashmir State.*

A) The nation is facing the fundamental question of its unity and integrity. Pakistan is the main threat. Muslim mentality sometimes reflects it as a pro-Pak attitude. In Kashmir demand for plebiscite has been raised from time to time. A befitting answer to Pakistan has to be given. 12-13 crores of Muslims living in our country have to be mobilised to stand up against Pakistan. Central Govt has kept this thing in mind and tried to mobilise political leadership of Muslims in J&K to stand up and oppose Pakistan.

Posturing by overseas separatists (Contd. from page 5)

ciative of Farooq line on return of Pandits. This approach they feel, as per the reliable sources, can undermine the criticism and opposition to the Muslim secessionist politics at the international level. Very well aware of the bleak chances of immediate Pandit return particularly in view of a confused and half-hearted support of government of India to Pandit cause, whole sale destruction or illegal occupation of Pandit properties in Kashmir Valley and threat of terrorism these groups now advocate a gradual approach towards total liquidation of Pandit factor which is subtle and not obvious.

In fact this group has been able to veer round the pro-Jamaat overseas outfits lead by Gh. Nabi Phai and Ayooob Thakur on the issue. In the aftermath of Wandhama massacre of Pandits the entire lot dissociated from the tragic event in

Geneva and even issued some symbolic statements criticising the act.

The non-Jamaat group has in recent times managed to have increased their acceptance with Government of India. In fact they have managed to get visas to visit India.

Surprisingly the same recognition has been denied to other separatist leaders like Hashim Quereshi who have been rabidly anti-Pak in their pronouncements.

Jamaat groups are in a situation of dilemma as they have not been able to develop an alternate approach on Pandit return which can be convincing for their supporters outside India. This group, like their main organisation in Kashmir, has been also beset with factionalism. According to sources Dr. Phai had a very difficult time in sustaining his support channels in

ISI. In fact alarmed by his projection ISI seriously attempted to develop an alternative to him. They reportedly tried to cultivate Jaleel Andrabi who subsequently died in mysterious circumstances.

Dr. Gh. Nabi Phai appears to have managed to mend his fences with ISI, now. While the Jamaat in Valley has been evolving new strategies to sustain its relevance, subsequent to assembly elections, its support groups at the overseas level are content in advocating a non-confrontationist attitude with other non-Jamaat groups on the issue of return of Pandits.

Interestingly while this posturing by separatist groups is getting pronounced, some known soft-liners in India on the secessionist movement of Kashmir like Kuldeep Nayer, Rajinder Sachar, Romilla Thapar are advocating a line on Kashmir which excludes Pandits. In a seminar in Delhi conducted some time back they have supported Autonomy to J&K as a bottomline with accession as the basis, however, with no emphasis on return of Pandits.

As the post Pokhran scenario has once again raised some hopes of a third party intervention in Kashmir which most of the separatist groups operating in overseas countries have been advocating, it will be interesting if these groups continue to hold the same line on the issue of Pandit cleansing and return

How to preserve identity (Contd. from page 7)

a) We need to know our history and transmit it to our younger generations.

b) We need to know the contribution Kashmiris made to the world science, literature, philosophy in the past.

c) We need to highlight the contributions of the community even in recent past in various fields, music, theatre, cinema, science, medicine, armed forces, administration, literature. Our contribution in diverse field is much more than the size of the community would suggest.

d) Reinforce and give a social content to our religious functions: Shivratri,

New Year, etc. are our symbols of unity and need to be observed with more regularity.

e) Increase social contract, our friends in the states holding camps is an excellent example.

f) Research and Propagation of the philosophy of Shaivism. It has been our greatest contribution to the world thought. This will entail publication/distribution of material.

g) Compiling directory/directories of KPs at various places.

h) Compilation of religious rites and scriptures considered sacred by the community.

Old symbols & Symbols of Exile

(Contd. from page 9)

shrine", said Sh. Kashi Nath, who is presently living in Muthi Camp in Jammu.

Govt. was not taking any chances this year particularly after the experience of Sangrampura and Wandhama massacres. Most of the devotees were promised in Jammu that they would also be taken to visit the temples of Shankracharya and Zeethyaar. However the authorities did not permit such visits and ensured that the yatris were taken directly back to Jammu from Tullamulla.

'Khir Bhawani' was worshipped by displaced Pandits in Jammu also with an unprecedented religious fervor at the newly constructed temple in Janipura. Around 50,000

Key to

(Contd. from page 8)

popular rule, marginalised extremists and given a serious setback to the separatist movement. Giving free play to genuine democracy, rather than patronising a few favourites, turned out to be the magic solution to all the problems - domestic and external.

Tragically, in less than a decade, all these gains were just frittered away. The result: Emergence of militancy, with all its national and international concomitants including the revived bid to internationalise the issue.

The conclusion is obvious. The solution to this 'flash point' lies in the Valley itself and not in Geneva or New York.

Coutsey: Sunday Observer

devotees mostly displaced Pandits visited this temple on 'Zaisht Ashtami'. This temple has been built by the displaced Kashmiris in Jammu as a replica of the main shrine in Tullamulla on a small hillock in Janipura. The area is now known as Bhawani Nagar and a colony of displaced Pandits has come up around this area. A small pond has also been built around the sanctum sanctorum exactly as it is in Tullamulla.

"I saw the Goddess in my dream urging me to visit this place", said an old lady who was overjoyed to find the place and the temple constructed there. "This is the second abode of Khir Bhawani", she said with tears in her eyes. Sh. L. Koul was annoyed that the festival did not get proper coverage in the local media. "More than 50,000 devotees visited this place. This is a major festival from any standards", he said.

Last few years displaced Pandits have been observing the 'Zaisht Ashtami' both at the original temple in Tullamulla as well as in the newly constructed temple at Bhawani Nagar, Janipura. Interestingly many small socio-cultural centres and temples have come up around Jammu particularly near the Pandit Colonies.

The pattern of observance of 'Jyeshtha Ashtami' by the displaced Pandits in Jammu as well as Kashmir reflects a desperate effort to hold on to old symbols of socio-cultural identity left in Valley and at the same time create new symbols to relate to in exile.

Compliments from:

Dr Shakti Bhan

Sr. Consultant

**Gynaecology and
Gynaecancer surgeon**

**Inder Prastha
Apollo Hospital New Delhi**

PK demands CBI Probe

(Contd. from page 1)

is neither inclined to discharge his official duty nor is he prepared to respond to the administrative briefs of his superiors. This naturally makes the efficiency of the police organisation in the state doubtful. A blatant disregard of matters of public interest by a junior officer is possible only when the higher echelons want to be fraternal rather than duty-conscious".

After looting, Prof. Pandita's house, the same and its four canal compound area have been turned by the locals into public latrines. "I am told that since a Jamaat-e-Islami school stands adjacent to my house besides its central location in the mohalla, the local militants have discarded the usual practice of burning the houses of the minority community members as that could endanger the safety of the neighbouring houses. But in order to prevent the security forces from occupying the entire complex the locals have been motivated to use it as a vast latrine. This is a faithful demonstration of the local concept of good neighbourliness. The local police authorities could, if they willed, prevent such vandalising", said Prof. Pandita in his complaint to the D.I.G. Police.

The methodologies adopted for disinheriting Pandits of their property through fraudulent mechanism include

Impersonation in the court and contriving fraudulent documents;

Producing fake affidavits and fake receipts from migrants;

Fictitious persons with vague addresses, parentage etc. are shown as intermediaries in the transaction for "sale" of migrant property and described as a known person, relative or a friend of the migrant. This serves the purpose of 'building' a case and prolonging it with an attempt to break the resolve of the affected victim to force him to sell his house for a song;

In a case of a migrant's

house in a posh locality of Srinagar, a person had impersonated as the Pandit owner in the court and got a rent deed executed with an educational establishment. For months he pocketed the rent before his fraud was uncovered;

In yet another instance of fraudulent grab in the central part of Srinagar the locks on the shop of a displaced Pandit were broke open with connivance of land lord and police. New locks were installed in its place illegally without the tenants permission.

The issue of fraudulent occupation of Pandit property came to light, when an NGO Friends of Kashmir took up the matter with National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). In his representation to the Hon'ble Chairman, NHRC, New Delhi the Secretary of the NGO said "We have reports that hundreds of properties left behind by the extirpated Pandit community from Kashmir since 1990 have been illegally and fraudulently occupied by the local people in Kashmir. These properties include residential houses, shops, business complexes, orchards, arable lands etc. The local revenue and administration structures are reported to be conniving at these irregularities. In order to regularise forcible and illegal occupation of these places, the entrepreneurs have contrived forged documents and filed suits in the court of law".

Invoking the charter of Human Rights and the law of the land the NGO demanded stopping "occupation of the vacant houses and immovable properties of the internally displaced persons from Kashmir, either through muscle power or through fraudulent and illegal documentation". It further added "They are already fouled and it would mean their refolement, which is not only unjust but also inhuman. As if sending them into forced exile is too small a punishment, which must be upgraded to forcible occupation of their

property".

The NGO also asked NHRC to order an independent probe into the fraudulent occupation of displaced Pandits property and advise the Government of J&K state to issue order for "appointing an independent Tribunal headed by a High Court Judge and based in Jammu. All cases of internally displaced persons' property could be referred to this Tribunal for speedy and summary disposal." The Act passed by the State Legislature of protecting the property of the "migrants" appears to be toothless because what is needed is empowerment of an authority to order eviction of illegal, forcible and fraudulent occupation of properties, as per experts.

Meanwhile, in the first case of its kind to undergo investigation since the mass migration, the crime branch Srinagar arrested four unregistered brokers who had sold off a Kashmiri Pandits' house through impersonation in the court and fraudulent documents.

Speaking about this case Crime Branch Officials told press reporters "The detection of this brazen fraud case involving the fraudulent sale of migrant property is expected to be only the tip of the iceberg. This crime of fraudulent migrant property sales is all the more brazen because previously there were cases only of mutation of either government land or co-owned land in one party's favour. But this fraud was effected by persons who had not even a remote part-claim to the land or were well known to the legal owners".

Mohd. Qasim Bhat, a broker from Budgam, sold the house (legally owned by Purnima Ganjoo and her brother-in-law Ramesh Kumar) located at Hyderpora to Tufail Raina and others for Rupees 4 lakh. Its market value is nearly Rs. 20 lakh.

In a well planned fraud Bhat and three others first went to Jammu in October, 1995 and got three persons, Purnima, Ramesh and Krishan Kumar (Whom they believed were the legal

owner) to impersonate in a lower court and got a power of attorney to effect sale of the land. Armed with this, the brokers returned to Srinagar in February 1996 and negotiated the sale of the house with Raina.

Since the land purchased by Purnima in 1989 had been from Mohammad Afzal's family, the revenue records were easily procured. However records varied with fraudulent power of attorney. There was no third owner in the form of Krishan Kumar, while Ramesh Kumar's father's name was different. These incorrect insertions were according to crime branch officials removed by scamsters through simple erasure and subsequently a sale deed was effected through the formal procedures.

Purnima, however, got a wind that somebody had

taken possession of her house and complained to the crime branch. "The illegal owner pleaded before us that the sale had been effected through a proper sale deed. But what exposed the fraud was a Photostat copy of the power of attorney that Raina had taken from the brokers before the incorrect entries had been erased", said an official associated with the probe.

Meanwhile Panun Kashmir has demanded a CBI enquiry into these fraudulent occupations and asked for setting of Special Tribunals for summary disposal of these cases. "Prolonged litigation between two communities would further communalise the situation and make the return of Pandits next to impossible", said Kuldeep Raina, Secretary of Panun Kashmir.

Jammu East By-election

(Contd. from page 1)

with NC and internal bickering.

The internal bickering in BJP surfaced to an embarrassing situation when the party ideologue Prof. Hari Om started an open campaign against the party candidate Sh. Ashok Khajuria. As many as 5 articles by him appeared in the local Dailies whereby he questioned BJP's commitment as well as role with regard to the regional issues of Jammu.

The Congress campaign spearheaded by Mufti Mohd. Sayed kept harping on the issue of an alleged NC-BJP nexus. Congress veterans like Girija Vyas and Rajesh Pilot camped in Jammu to actively campaign in favour of the Congress candidate and a time came when Congress victory was being projected sure shot.

The BJP camp was in a disarray when a senior BJP leader refused to be part of the campaign and, as is being alleged by some insiders now, even went to the extent of harming the prospects of Sh. Ashok Khajuria compelled by casteist considerations. Some insiders also allege that this leader had a falling out with the BJP Central leadership for the nomination of a candidate

own for the prestigious Jammu-East seat unsuccessfully.

In fact, the low turn over is also allegedly being imputed to the campaign unleashed by this senior leader.

The prospects of Sh. Khajuria's victory brightened up when Sh. Jagmohan BJP MP and Ex-governor of J&K chose to campaign in favour of Sh. Khajuria and also issued an appeal in his favour during a flying visit to Jammu. It has been reported that some senior BJP leaders from Jammu had sent telegrams disuading Mr. Jagmohan from coming to Jammu.

Mr. Khajuria's resounding success in the By-elections has gone a long-way in establishing a credibility for Vishnudatt-Kotwal-Khajuria camp in the local BJP. The camp seems set to make further gains and is distancing itself from the alleged rift between National Conference and BJP. The camp has even gone to the extent of demanding Dr. Abdullah's resignation for his direct failure in containing the terrorist forces in Jammu region and have openly charged the Jammu NC-Congress camp of playing a role in the rising of militants and

Govt. has to address core issues - Inderesh

Recent intensification of terrorist activities in Jammu province and internal displacement of sections of Hindu population from parts of Rajouri, Poonch, Doda and Udhampur following masscrs of Hindus in these areas. R.S.S leadership finds itself in a unenviable position with its hand full of contingency tasks in the form of providing relief and soccour to terrorist victims and displaced population. RSS cadres are finding it very difficult to mobilise social resistance against armed separatism in the state.

The expectations of people in general and its supporters in particular, have gone very high after the BJP lead alliance

assumed power at the centre. The usual alibi of blaming centre for the failures is also not available now. Even the unbridled criticism of National Conference is to possible as its support to the continuance of BJP-alliance at centre is being considered important. Our correspondent had an exclusive interview with Inderesh Kumar the Prant Prachark of RSS who looks after the 'RSS activities in Jammu & Kashmir State and Himachal Pradesh. Sh. Inderesh Kumar is an engineer by qualifications and has devoted his life to missionary activities of Rahstriya Swayam Sevak Sangh. Excerpts of the interview are produced below here :

Q) What is your comperative assessment of the situation in Jammu and Kashmir state in 1989 and now.

A) One message has been conveyed unambiguously to Pakistan and separatists during these years and that is Kashmir will never be allowed to separate from India. Our country will give any sacrifice at the peoples level, administrative level or militarily to keep Kashmir a part of India.

After around eight years a democratically elected government has returned to power. It was expected that this government will crush terrorism and strengthen the roots of democracy in the state. However, for last one and a half year state government has not been able to curb terrorism. Terrorist activities have infact sharply intensified. One of the reasons for this is that immediately after coming to power Dr. Farooq Abdulla took the decision of removing the army pickets in terrorist infested areas of Rajouri, Poonch, Doda and Udhampur. Local administration was not as yet geared to tackle terrorism without the help of army.

Secondly within state administration there is a very large section which is Pro-Pak and Pro-USA and supports

terrorism. Many important leaders in the ruling party and important officers in the administration or there closest kins are directly involved in terrorist activities. Intelligence reports have confirmed this and even Farooq has occassionally admitted the fact publically. Unfortunately he has not been able to weed them out.

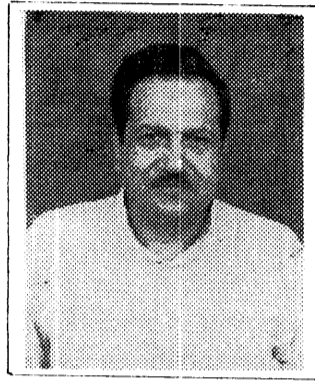
The hope that terrorism will be controlled after democratically elected government came to power has not been fulfilled so far. That the situation has improved at the ground is not correct. However, terrorists and their masters must be certainly feeling now that the central government is very clear about these issues and also stronger in dealing with them.

Q) BJP - RSS has supported the democratic process, particularly in view of large scale subversion and infiltration. Don't you think deterioration of situation in Jammu is a result of this thinking? Were you not instrumental in cultivating a contradiction i.e. having a democracy in a subverted set-up?

A) Establishing and strengthening a democratic set up particularly when Foreign powers are bent up destroying it is a necessity. It

is correct that if such a thing could have been done after crushing terrorism results would have been better." We tried to convince the government, that for conduct of elections time was not ripe and elections should be held only when terrorism is

INTERVIEW



brought under control and administration cleared of subversive elements. The parties which were ruling at that time, their patriotism is not very strong. Pressure from foreign powers to hold elections was also there. Once government decided to hold elections, opposing such a porocess within the country would not have been in the national interest. There was no contradiction in our stand". To strengthen democracy, give a befitting reply to foreign forces and making it possible for patriotic forces to play a role in future course or events. RSS in the supreme National interests decided to participate in democratic process.

To hold elections was not a proper decision at that time. Our decision to support elections was an appropriate decision at that particular time.

Q) Situation in Rajouri, Poonch Doda and Udhampur has deteriorated. How do you see the situation there?

A) Pakistan has a dream to cleanse Jammu and Kashmir or patriotic forces be it army, administrative infrastructure or people. They succeded in vally and cleansed it of patriotic Hindu population. Now their target is Rajhouri, Poonch, Doda and Udhampur. They have established a terrorist network here. However, Central government has taken some right steps and

with the cooperation of People living there terrorism is brought under conrol to a large extent. In these areas people are helping security forces. Society has responded as a whole and not allowed dispersal and scattering of those who have got displaced from some areas. They are helping displaced people to return to their homes and hearths. Village Defence Committees have been constituted, Government is also now helping these VDC's and they are playing a prominent role in containing terrorism. "Many RSS workers have got martyred fighting terrorism. Many of our cadres have got commendation certificates for their role in curbing terrorism. Now central government has sent army to the area in a big way. I hope with a sensitive government at the centre and awakened public opinion terrorism in the area will soon be choked to death.

Q) You have talked about return of displaced to their homes in these areas. But we talked to these people and most of them are not ready to return. You also must be aware of the compromises which Hindu population has to make living in terrorist infested areas?

A) Their disagreeing to return is a natural reaction under the circumstances. People feel there that if government would have heeded to their assessment of the situation and created properly equipped Village defence committees, massacres in these areas would not have taken place. Because of the callousness of some sections of government such events took place. These people even now are ready to return if they are trained and equipped properly to fight terrorism. Victims of Prankote massacre are being helped in all ways by people besides the help from government. Substantial help has come from Jammu, Katra, Udhampur and Akhnoor. Army has now been deployed. Youths are being trained by army to fight terrorism. If state

government's intentions remain clear and VDC's are equipped properly, people there will successfully control terrorism.

Q) Sh. L.K.Advani has declared Pro-active policy on Kashmir. What is RSS concept of a Pro-active policy?

A) Things will come to light gradually. To fight sucessfully the 4th attack by Pakistan in the form of a proxy-war all necessary steps have to be taken. This also includes proper employment of the youths in these areas. People have to be made selfsufficient to fight terrorism. Central and state government, social organisations and people should jointly coordinate to fight terrorism.

Q) Prankote massacre revealed lack of coordination amongst security fordces. Is it just a propoganda by State Chief Minister or is there some truth in it?

A) Chief Minister gave the first statement that only 13 persons were killed. He also tried to keep central government in dark. It was local MPs who informed Home Minister that around 30 persons were massacred in Prankote. Infact Home Minister pointed out this to the state Chief Minister. However, it is also important that intillegence agencies and security set up has to be geared to meet the new challenges.

Q) Farooq government has released an interim report on return of displaced persons from Valley. This report envisages an economic package and creation of sanitized zones. What is your reaction to it?

A) Only economic package is not sufficient for return of displaced Hindus from Kashmir Valley. Our view is that a committee should be constituted under Home Ministry to go into the real causes of emergence of terrorism in Kashmir Valley and cleansing of Hindus from there.

Addressing of these causes should constitute the framework for return of Hindus. Economic, social and

(Contd. on page 10)