

Pakistan Continues to foment Terrorism in J&K

By a Special Correspondent

Despite

much

trumpeted

of rhetoric of 'peace process', peace continues to elude Kashmir. Pakistan continues to sponsor Cross-Border terrorism in J&K. The cycles of terrorist violence have serious political, diplomatic, and security implications for India. It keeps Kashmir under constant international scanner and allows Western agencies to use Kashmir for their geopolitical interests. This explains their ambivalence towards certain patterns of terrorism and their state sponsors.

Continued violence perpetuates attrition on noncombatant civilian population by imperiling their security and safety. It distorts the mainstream politics in Kashmir. Regional parties find it politically expedient to engage in game of competitive communalism and secessionism. Destabilizing proposals emanating from Washington and Islamabad are being parroted here.

Unrealistic options--Diplomatic/global pressure, Unilateral concessionism vis- a -vis Pakistan, Dialogue with separatists etc. has not and will not deliver peace to India. Only exercising political will through relentless imaginative counter- insurgency measures and strengthening nationalist groups has the potentiality of reversing cycles of terrorist violence in Kashmir. Terrorist violence needs to be brought down to negligible limits in a time-frame. This will undermine the base of separatist politics and deepen competitive politics. As long as violence graph continues to maintain upward trend, return of displaced people and building long-term developmental initiatives would remain a distant dream.

Jihadi violence assumed new features in 2005. The Union Govt. has admitted in the ongoing session of Parliament that the threat was as serious as before. There was a definite increase in terrorist violence and casualties. Violence has increased despite 'peace process' with Pakistan, Global censure of Islamist terrorism, better anti-infiltration measures and political process in Kashmir.

Till October in 1736 incidents of violence 490 civilians and 170 officers jawans of security forces were killed. At the end of August out of 350 civilians killed throats of 35 people were slit by terrorists. Attacks on school children, woman, elderly people etc. have assumed stridency. Jihadi violence has seen introduction of Car bombs. There is an increase in number of reprisals against families, people involved in counter-insurgency operations and also against the minority community in parts of Jammu region. Srinagar city remained in focus for terrorist violence in the summer of 2005. Previously sanitized areas e.g. Sopore, Bandipore and Kulgam witnessed increased terrorist activity, besides Mendhar and Pir Panjal belt--Mahore, Gool, Kishtwar, Doda, etc. Outside J&K Kashmir terrorists were found involved in attacks on Ayodhya and Delhi serial blasts.

Infiltration :

Jihadi infiltration manifested itself in an enlarged manner from June to October into the entire stretch of India's Northern Command borders (750km long LOC) extending from Jammu to Kargil. Between April 22 to July 112 terrorists were killed in 40 infiltration bids. In Kashmir 82 terrorists were killed in 24 infiltration attempts. Till October 2005 about 200 terrorists were killed in over 100 infiltration bids. As per official sources 70% infiltrators constituted foreign mercenaries. Many Bangladeshis and Burmese nationals were also arrested while crossing the border. On May 19 three Bihari terrorists were arrested from Nagrota and Srinagar. July witnessed maximum infiltration . There were 20 attempts. Infiltration took place mostly through Keran, Machil, Kupwara, Gurez and Uri in Kashmir and in Jammu region through Mendhar.

Kupwara remained the gateway of subversion into rest of state with Tangdhar/Keran and Machil facilitating more than 70% infiltration. Major attempts were made in Kazinag (Handwara), Chotali (Uri) and Gurez. In the past infiltration through Gurez sector had been rare because of harsh terrain and poor weather. In May a major infiltration attempt was thwarted when security forces killed more than 15 terrorists in an encounter lasting six days. Jihadis crossed LOC from Chakwali to Kaobal Gali and Kanzalwan area. It has been described as the biggest incursion in the recent past. Earlier a freshly infiltrated group of Hizbul Mujahideen was eliminated at Lawaypora, Bandipore. Hardly a day after the devastating earthquake Army foiled a big infiltration attempt near LOC at Jamia Gali ,Gulmarg by gunning down 8 LeT infiltrators.

At the official level there was sense of alarm over increased infiltration. Prime Minister Man Mohan Singh attributed it to damage to LOC fence caused by weather. The Defence Minister, and the MOS External Affairs expressed concern over infiltration. Union Home Minister, Mr. Shiv Raj Patil , DG Military Operations, GOC-in- C Northern Command said even after earthquake infiltration continued as usual. July infiltration was described as an all time high. It was said that infiltrators were coming more heavily armed and in larger groups. The Army Chief JJ Singh revealed that 2000 jihadis were being trained in 53 camps(POK 29,NWFP 15, NAs 3 ,Punjab 7, Sindh 1) . A London daily quoted Pak Human Rights Group Ansar Burney Welfare Trust saying Pak-based terror groups were taking children orphaned by earthquake for training in terrorist activities.

Indian strategy to counter infiltration has been:

- * High Tech surveillance ---Thermal Imagers and Night Vision devices to detect infiltration.
- * Involvement of locals in providing intelligence to the Army about infiltration movements.

*Luring Pak infiltrators in to the Indian territory and than ambushing and liquidating them by sealing their routes of retreat back in to Pakistan as engaging them on the LOC itself would result in their running back in to Pak territory without losses.

*Increased use of aerial mobility in moving Army: reaction parties and reserves.

Lt. Gen. SS Dhillon, XV Corps Commander, said that infiltrators were now better equipped with barrier penetration tools and had received training on mock versions of the fence in camps in Pakistan. One common expedient e.g. was to clip a bypass on to the electric tripwires laid through the fence's concertina rolls and then cut a way through.

BSF Intelligence Chief observed 30% of infiltrators were Kashmiris, while others were Pakistanis. He revealed that top leadership of terrorists was using the Bangladesh and Nepal routes to enter India and then J&K. He said that earlier infiltrators used to come in small groups of 4-5 to avoid serious damage. Now they were coming in big groups to deceive the troops guarding the border. Elaborating upon it ,he said the group is divided in to three ,while one of them take direct route selected by the guide, another go back to POK after giving fire cover to it (first group) and the third take another route to sneak into valley.

Jihadis were also running, as per reports, internal training camps in higher reaches of Jammu region. These have been reported to be in Sui Palyala, Gandoh and Naliyan, Gool.

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Changed Tactics:

Terrorists are taking recourse to Iraqi type of attacks---use of explosives\car bomb attacks, grenade\IED blasts in urban areas to derive maximum publicity and undermine state authority. There were 9 car blasts this summer, 5 of these in Srinagar. A Fiat car was seized on June 7 in Karan Nagar. It carried two gas cylinders fitted with 80 kgs of explosives. Other car Blasts took place in Pulwama, Qazigund, Anantnag and Narbal(Lawaypora). Toll in these blasts was 48 killed and 232 injured. In August\September alone more than 3000 kgs of explosive material was recovered in Kashmir valley, a record haul .2500 kgs of explosive material was recovered from the godown of a transport company, Kahkashan Goods Carrier Company at Muniwar(khayam),Srinagar. Explosives in sizable quantity were also seized from places on the outskirts of Srinagar---Yarikhah, Mazhama, Tangabagh (Idgah), and Kanihama.

In Anantnag town 428 kgs of explosives were recovered.

Another six quintals of the same material were recovered from the basement of a building near Anantnag Bus Stand. Seizures were made from Pattan, Kokernag, Tsogam, Aishmuqam, Lam(Tral), Achabal, Mangalnar forests, Karnah, Tangdar, Naidkhai, Kishan Ganga area, Samboora etc. On Sept. 19, security forces recovered explosives worth 100 car bombs in a cave in Machil .A 60 mm mortar was recovered in Morha Bachai.

Jihadis are also using heavier IEDs weighing 10-30kgs. Mentally-deranged persons and children are being coerced to plant IEDs As per Praveen Swami ,a security expert jihadis are using freely available chemicals to fabricate IEDs .Terrorists are changing strategy to nullify the work done by the ROP. In two recent bombings of military convoy, terrorists drove cars fitted with explosives along with regular traffic once the ROP had completed its work. They then overtook the targeted military convoy and parked the vehicle some distance ahead. The explosives-laden car was detonated as the convoy passed.

Srinagar, besides Sopore (28 incidents), Kulgam (33 incidents), Bandipore (33 incidents) remained much in news on account of terrorist violence. Kupwara and Baramulla witnessed higher killer rate of terrorists, 159 and 122 respectively, and lesser civilian deaths, 55 &13. In Sopore out of 28 incidents 14 cases related to Grenade\IED blasts,besides one fidayeen attack. In Kulgam and Bandipore incidents of blasts were 2 and 3..

Srinagar :

In Srinagar city there were 5 car bomb blasts,and suicide attacks on TRC,CRPF Hqs at Hawal,and Palladium ,two attacks on Dashnami Akhara. . There were 5 grenade and 3 IED blasts,6 grenades were detected in time. On Sept. 28\29 there was a 46 hour long encounter at Chakpora, Baghat Kanipora. Terrorists killed 15 civilians.4 civilians were brutally beheaded at Harwan. 6 persons of 4 families were also killed in the same area, their brutally slaughtered bodies were recovered from different places. And a woman remained untraced. A grenade was thrown at a mourning gathering at Shankarpora,killing two and injuring 20. Official sources say that there were 80-90 terrorists operating in Srinagar.Big successes included the killing of Rashid Salfi, a notorious terrorist responsible for most of the strikes in Srinagar, capture of a suicide bomber for the first time in past 15 years, and arrest of 22 subversives responsible for ongoing violence in Srinagar. One of the arrested persons had been staying in at a CRPF protected hotel acquired by the state govt. Elsewhere, top terrorists eliminated included Shabir Badoori , Yusuf Sheikh ,killer of 75 people. There were three robberies---Rs. 16.47 lakh, Rs.11.77 lakh. and Rs. 4.22 lakh.

In Jammu region Doda topped in terms of incidents of violence with 80 ,followed by Rajouri 39 ,Poonch 36, Udhampur 37,Kathua 5. In district Doda maximum violence was seen in Kishtwar 18, Gandoh 11 and in the vicinity of Doda 39. Mahore 15 and Gool 18 also remained much disturbed. In Poonch --Rajouri, Mendhar and

Budhal witnessed much violence. There was a fedayeen attack in Kathua.

Subversion :

Security forces were able to catch some subversives. A SPO, arrested on Nov.22 from Sarthal,Kishtwar ,turned out to be a top LeT operative. Investigations revealed that two SPOs who had deserted their force had carried out massacre of ten members of minority community in Budhal. . On Oct. 27 a SPO turned HM terrorist was arrested from Gandoh. A JKAP cop turned out to be a Hizbul terrorist . On Oct.6 two JK cops were held in Amritsar, carrying heroin worth Rs. 70 lakhs. A PWD employee was arrested recently. He turned out to be a Jaish terrorist. District Vice President of PDP in Rajouri, Shafi Alam Din was arrested for alleged involvement in killing of 3 SPOs at Barha Draman ,Budhal on July 15\16. A senior congress leader was arrested from Bharat ,Doda on August 20 . He was a senior functionary of LeT. Police unearthed a nexus that linked car lifters to terrorists. Media reports also referred to the role of certain DCs in not cooperating in detention of terrorists .The role of some legal practitioners also came under scrutiny in this context

Miscellaneous: On Oct. 5, five people were arrested in Budgam in a racket involving encashing of one million dollar fake notes. On Oct 31 Delhi Police arrested a kashmiri carrying Rs.63 lakhs, received through Hawala channels .He claimed that its beneficiaries included Shabir Shah ,a separatist leader. The profile of jihadist is also changing. Highly educated youth are joining the terrorist ranks both to make quick buck and out of fundamentalist indoctrination. Mastermind behind Delhi serial blasts, Tanveer Dar had received Rs. 15 lakhs, as per media reports, from a Middle East country a few days before the blasts. Dar had been working as a Sales executive in a Multinational company. In August last security forces had arrested a M Sc. Student of Dudasana Pain, Thanna Mandi.He was a 'District commander' of HM PPR. . An ex-serviceman of Salwa, Mendhar was running a communication centre of terrorists from his house. The main conspirators in Ayodhya attack also hailed from Mendhar.

There has also been involvement of women in terrorist activities. On Oct .13 a woman suicide bomber and spouse of a Pakistani terrorist, affiliated to Jaish-e-Mohd. was blown to pieces while trying to hurl a grenade at the house of a retired official at Awantipora. Earlier two females were arrested for terrorist activities. One hailed from Gildar,Chajru(Mahore),the other a student of Sangram Bhatta(Kishtwar) turned out to be a top HM operative. On Nov.24 a woman was arrested from a TATA Sumo at Parimpora. IED and cache of arms were recovered from the vehicle. In KhanSahib, two daughters of a health employee were arrested with LeT phones.

Civilian Population :

In Kashmir major civilian killings at the hands of terrorists occurred in Srinagar (17), Kulgam(17), Tral (12), Qazigund(10), Bandipore(9), Pattan(7). As per incidents of violence Kokernag had 3 killings against 30 incidents. In Jammu region Mahore(13), Gool(15), Gandoh(11),Kishtwar (15),Doda(21) and Budhal had maximum number of civilian killings.Terrorists also targeted civilians by causing grenade blasts in towns and near schools

Jihadis indulged in gruesome tortures on old people, young boys, and womenfolk etc. to instill fear in civilian population. On June 21, terrorists hanged to death a nine year old boy Javed Ahmed Lone from a tree in Mehmoodabad ,Pattan. In other incidents the jihadis shot dead an eight month old baby at Chaklas,Gool and 3yr. Old Sayeeda at Asthan Mandi ,Chatru. A Gujar youth was kidnapped and hanged at Wagbal,Karhama ,Kupwara in close vicinity of his house. On July 7 terrorists killed a 4th grade student at Fajipora,Khan Sahib after slitting his throat . The dead body of a 10th class student was recovered at Khudwani,Vessu. A girl committed suicide after being sexually abused by terrorists in Muradpur,Rajouri. Terrorists set on fire one Abdul Aziz of Dangerpora,Sopore. 28yr.old Parveena was kidnapped and beheaded at Sangiot,Mendhar on Sept. 5. Terrorists fired at a civilian at Samai,Gandoh and then chopped off his tongue. A civilian was kidnapped on June 7 from Lajoora, Pulwama. His body was recovered on Aug. 15 at Gooripora,Anantnag in chopped pieces. A 75 yr. Old civilian was shot dead at Mandloo dhok ,Gool. The terrorists have also been indulging in massacres and reprisals against families .A SPO, who was instrumental in killing of top terrorist, Fareed, was killed on Sept. 45 along with his two brothers. Later his mother-in-law was killed. There have been some instances where individuals have stood up to terrorists. On July 21 a Gujjar axed to death a terrorist at Kounsar Gali ,when the latter tried to snatch his cattle. In another instance a daring civilian snatched AK-47 rifle of a terrorist and killed him. Earlier this terrorist group had gunned down a civilian in indiscriminate firing on inmates of a house in Thatharaka, Gool.The valiant role played by Kulali villagers in confronting terrorists in Surankot has received little attention

Minority Cleansing:

Budhal :

The terrorists are engaged in pushing minority community out from Kandi\Budhal region and Mahore\Gool. On July 29 terrorists massacred 5 VDC members, including 2 brothers at Thub dhok near Dhar Saiki,Kandi,Rajouri. Their throats were slit after they were dragged out from their dhoks and taken to a forest area.. Earlier, in the same area at Morha, terrorists had burnt grains of a family. On May 16 four dhoks of a family were torched at Larhi Khawas, Koteranka and terrorists opened firing on family members, injuring 2

people.

On Aug. 22 three members of a family, including a VDC member were gunned down at Paira, Koteranka. Ten members of 4 families were massacred at Dhara and Budhal in Gabbar area. The terrorists slit throats of 5 victims. On Nov 28, four terrorists attacked the house of a family at Morha Santra, Kandi and decamped with the rifle of a VDC member. At Garhyok, Kandi VDC members foiled an attempt by terrorists to target numberdar Malok Singh and his family members. In view of these incidents there has been silent migration from far-flung areas.

The members of the minority community were also targeted at Kalakote, Mendhar, Kishtwar. On May 14 four members of a family of coal Miners (3 brothers and father) were killed at Raa, Taryath, Kalakote. In July local terrorists opened indiscriminate firing on family members after barging into the house of Chuni Lal at Mallikote Morha Palan in Chasana, Mahore. Chuni Lal later succumbed to injuries. In August four civilians were killed and 3 injured at Chajru, Mahore. The victims belonged to two families. In GulabGarh two members of the minority community were shot dead. Elsewhere, two shepherds were kidnapped. Their throats were slit and 150 cattle taken away.

In Kashmir body of one RK Bhat was fished out from Jehlam at Sumbal on July 24. 4 houses of Displaced Pandits were burnt at Mattan. Terrorists attacked the police picket guarding Pandits at Aishmuqam.

Political Workers:

Political workers have been another soft target of terrorists. Surprisingly, despite PDP's soft policy towards terrorists its workers have been most vulnerable, followed by Congress. Municipal councilors have also suffered in the violence directed against political workers. MOS Home in previous govt. AR Veeri was attacked at Mirhama. MOS Education, Dr. GN Lone was killed in his house. There was an attack on a rally organized at Tangmarg by Mr. GH Mir, former minister. He demanded probe into the killing of Dr. GN Lone, a demand which was acceded to by the new Chief Minister

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

(October 1st to 30th, 2005)

To our readers: Due to unavoidable reason the chronology of events covering June, July, Aug & Sept. 2005 could not be published. At the request of our readers chronology for these months would be cover in our subsequent issues.

-Editor

Oct 1: A British Parliamentary delegation visited a Pandit refugee camp at Muthi, Jammu. The World Bank team arrived to inspect Baghliar dam. Four terrorists and a civilian were killed in two gun battles in Kokernag at Naubug Larnoo and WanDiwalgam. Two terrorists were killed at Keunisoo, Bandipore and Alipore, Budgam.

Oct 2: A female student of Sangram Bhatta, Kishtwar turned out to be a top HM operative. BSF said 40 % terrorists in Mahore, Budhal, Rajouri were foreigners. In an inter-gang rivalry, a HUIJ terrorist killed his colleague and a civilian at Bhalna, Keshwan (Kishtwar). A top Hizb terrorist and a LeT terrorist were killed in an encounter at Bismai Karamulla top, Tral. Another LeT terrorist was killed at keunoosa.

Oct 3: India asked Pakistan to end cross-border terror to allow the peace process to continue. Mr. Dilawar Mir, a former minister resigned from NC and state assembly. Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee alleged that Congress govts. in 1980s neglected Kashmir and blamed these for rise of terrorism. SP college celebrated its centenary. Kupwara police registered a case of kidnapping and murder against RR 18BN in the alleged custodial killing of 4 porters of Jammu in Kupwara. A HUM

Terrorist was eliminated in an encounter at Gursai, Mendhar. 5466 appointments were made under SRO43 since 1996 till date. Former Defence minister George Fernandes stressed the need for involving Kashmiri Pandits in any dialogue for lasting peace in the Kashmir.

Oct 4: Senior advocate Mr. JP Singh took oath as Additional Judge of J&K High Court. Raymond Lafitte, Swiss expert on Baghliar said his report on technical aspects would be binding on both India and Pakistan. A top jaish terrorist was shot dead in an encounter at Kasuli, Dharmari. Two counter-insurgents were killed by terrorists near Nasrullapora, Budgam. A fruit dealer was kidnapped in Sangas kaharwat, kulgam and later shot dead. A CRPF picket was attacked at Hawal, Srinagar. 44 terrorists, including 7 members of Dukhtaraan -emillat were released. A civilian was injured in an IED blast at Khrew. Pakistan arrested Mufti Abdul Latif Hakimi, Taliban's chief spokesman.

Oct 5: Three members of a family, including a 21yr old girl Parveena Akhter were massacred at Gumeri, Gool by terrorists. Terrorists fired at a young lady at Suranda, Gool. A former SPO was shot dead at Draman, Budhal. A hardcore HM terrorist was eliminated at kandi, Rajouri, while two SPO-turned terrorists escaped during the gun battle. One terrorist surrendered during an encounter at Tessa, Gandoh. J&K chief justice was transferred to Rajasthan. Dr. Farooq Abdullah accused PDP of engineering defections from NC. A HM

terrorist was arrested in Delhi with Rs. 10 lakh obtained through hawala channels. 16 civilians were injured when a terrorist lobbed a handgrenade at a crowded place in Anantnag. One terrorist was killed and another injured in a gun battle with security forces at Begam ,Shopian. 135 kgs of an explosive material were recovered at Tangabagh,Idgah,Srinagar. 5 people were arrested in Budgam in a racket involving encashing of one million dollar fake notes. 'Trishul' was successfully test-fired. Chinar trees decline to 21000 in Kashmir.

Oct 6: PM ManMohan Singh reaffirmed that there would be no compromise with terrorism anywhere in the country and said no grievance could justify resort to terror, violence or anti-social activities. Two JK cops were held with heroin worth Rs. 70 lakhs in Amritsar. On the first day of Ramadan, terrorists blew up a vehicle of SBI at kreeri-Naupora on Anantnag-Dooru road killing a cashier and injuring two police guards. At Ahmedabad, Damhal Hanjipora terrorists shot dead a civilian at Mantribugh,kulgam and later hanged him from a tree. Terrorists entered a house at Ratnipora and opened indiscriminate firing, injuring two inmates in an inter-gang clash. A civilian was fired upon at khrew shalshari. JMM demanded replacement of Article 370 with domicile of J&K act.

Oct 7: India ruled out any change in status of J&K .A 'fidayeen' attack on a BSF formation was foiled in Sopore town ,leaving one jawan dead and 10 injured. Two terrorists were killed in the gunbattle.. A PDP activist was fired upon at Ganaidori ,Alamgarhi bazaar, Srinagar. Three IEDs were defused ,two in Sopore and one in Lower Munda. An afghan terrorist was killed at Poshana, Surankote. Terorists killed brother of a former HM terrorist at Briswana, Premnagar,Doda. A guide of terrorists was arrested from Dhera, Thanna Mandi. Socialist-Democratic chief Dr. Darakshan said after destroying Kashmir Hurriyat was eyeingJammu. Lt Gen. LP Sadhotra,a son of the soil and a leading plastic surgeon was appointed DG Medical Service (Army).

Oct 8:A powerful earthquake, measuring 7.4 on the Richter scale and epicentered in Muzaffarabad rocked Uri and Tangdhar region in Kashmir valley ,besides Poonch district in Jammu province. Large-scale damage to life and property was reported ,Uri dam and a transmission tower were also damaged.

Oct 9: Earthquake toll in Kashmir valley mounts to 656 dead and 2500 injured. Pak toll rises to 25000, 34 aftershocks rock J&k. 100 kg RDX ,kept in ghee containers was seized from a truck at Batote by Army. Two IEDs defused at Batote .A civilian was kidnapped by terrorists in Mahore(Bansal). Security forces apprehended 4 overground workers of a terrorist outfit at Poshiana and arrested a Hizb terrorist at Mulchitar (Kishtwar).Army foiled a big infiltration attempt near LOC at Jamia Galli(Gulmarg) by gunning down 8 LeT infiltrators. A LeT terrorist was killed in an encounter at Dengiwacha (Rafiabad). In another encounter at Sayan , Kokernag 3 terrorists, including HUM "district commander" were eliminated. Two terrorists were killed in a gun battle at Janwari complex ,Sopore.

Oct10: Ten members of 4 families belonging to the minority community were massacred by Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists at Dhara an Budhal in Gabbar area. The terrorists slit throats of 5 civilians. Suspected terrorists include two SPOs who had deserted their force . A civilian was injured by terrorists at Kalyal Dhok in Budhal. At Panzeth, Qazigund terrorists shot dead a young woman in her home. In the same area terrorists entered a house and opened indiscriminate firing on the inmates. One person died, while two were injured. A terrorist was killed by army in Mujpathri, Pulwama.

Oct 11: PM announced Rs 642 crore for earthquake victims in J&k . Another infiltrating group of 8 terrorists in Nowgam sector (Handwara) was eliminated by the army. 200 infiltrators killed in j&k in 2005 so far. Terrorists fired at a Congress activist in Shopian ,killing his driver and injuring his PSO . US Congress threatened to use caste 'untouchability' as a weapon against India.

Oct12:Paramilitary forces and NHPC announce adoption of 12 earthquake hit villages in J&K . Six soldiers were killed in a landslide in Nowgam, Handwara while taking relief to earthquake victims. Justice BA Khan appointed acting CJ. India turned down US help for tackling earthquake. Panun Kashmir reiterated homeland demand as enunciated in MargDarshan 91' resolution.

Oct 13 : Toll in earthquake mounted to 1340 killed in J&k. A woman suicide bomber and spouse of a Pakistani terrorist was blown to pieces while trying to hurl a grenade at the residence of a retired bureaucrat's house in Awantipore area.Terrorists shot dead a civilian at Samboora, Pampore. Three local terrorists of Hizbul Mujahideen were killed in an encounter at Chuntiwari Aloosa,Bandipore. Army gunned down a tehsil 'commander' of Hizbul Mujahideen and arrested his two associates in Bhaderwah. Two local terrorists were eliminated in an encounter at Poshiana. The terrorists entered a house in Darhal and hit the owner and his wife with iron rods, before gunning down the owner.

Oct14: A LeT terrorist surrendered before Army after an encounter at Yardu, Nawapachi,Doda. 50 people migrated to Sangaldan from Gambiri following terrorist threats. In the same area HM had killed two civilians on Sept. 19 and LeT had shot dead three civilians on oct.5. Kashmiri youth in POK attacked relief workers.

Oct15 : DG Military Operations said infiltration contnued unabated in J&K,even after Oct. earthquake. BSF decided to adopt earthquake -hit villages in Kashmir. Two Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists were eliminated in an encounter at Pushwar, Mansbal. Another terrorist was gunned down at Maspathi, Anantnag. A counter-insurgent was killed by terrorists at Arin, Bandipore. Terrorists attacked an army camp in Kathua town,killing two jawans

and injuring six others.

Oct16: Pak army toll in earthquake mounted to 400 killed and 750 injured.

Oct 17: Two aftershocks jolted J&K. Terrorists threw a grenade at Jewel Chowk. HP alerted on terrorist intrusions from Doda. A prominent CPM activist was gunned down by terrorists at Seer Hamadan, on Anantnag-Pahalgam road.

Oct18: Terrorists killed MOS Education, Gh. Nabi Lone while CPM State Secretary MY Taragami survived an attempt on life. Three terrorists were eliminated in Kathhalaan in Kellar-Shopian belt. Terrorists fired at a CPM activist at Ashmuji in Kulgam area. An aftershock jolted J&k. Two major infiltration bids were foiled in Arnia and Nowshera. An infiltration attempt was foiled in Keri sector of Rajouri. Pak rangers opened firing in Samba sector. A terrorist was eliminated at Hella, Sumbar(Ramban). AKPSC reiterated full support to MargDarshan resolution.

Oct19: Union Home Secretary blamed loopholes for Lone's killing. Earthquake toll in J&K mounts to 1300 and in Pakistan to 41000. A series of aftershocks jolted J&K, HP. Dilawar Mir, a NC MLA joined PDP. A burqa-clad terrorist attacked a police party at Kadalbal, Pampore, killing two civilians and injuring ten. Three local terrorists affiliated to Jaish-e-Mohammad and HUM were killed in an encounter at Shopian. A three-member European team visited Muthi IDisplaced Kashmiris' camp. Panun Kashmir delegation led by Dr. Ajay Chrungoo met the team and presented a memorandum.

Oct 20 : PM ManMohan Singh cautioned nation against the desire of extra-regional powers to keep India engaged in low- intensity conflicts and local problems. CRPF DG conceded laxity in security on Oct 18 . Toll in Pak earthquake 49739 killed and 74000 injured. Two terrorists were gunned down in an encounter at Thanna Mandi and Ahamsharif. .A civilian was killed by terrorists in Gandoh . A terrorist and a soldier were killed at Ahamsharif, Bandipore. Two Jaish terrorists were eliminated at Churibagh, Shikarbagh, Tral. Another terrorist was gunned down at Kharpora Larnoo, Kokernag. A civilian was dragged from his home by terrorists at Darkoot, Kulgam and shot dead. Two jawans were injured in terrorists' firing at Ashmuji, Kulgam and Sheikhnaar Sogam, Lolab. J&K govt. announced that dependents of killed terrorists would be rehabilitated.

Oct 21: LUTF made clean sweep in Ladakh ,winning 21 out of 26 seats. Jawahar tunnel suffered damages in oct 8 earthquake . US flayed terror attacks in J&K

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In the wake of earthquake. One terrorist and two jawans were killed and 5 injured in an encounter in Sopore town. 14 civilians and 4 jawans were injured in a series of grenade blasts in Batmaloo and Balgarden. A top HM terrorist and an army jawan were killed in a gunbattle at Khari, Banihal. Terrorists attacked a VDC-IRP party at Chajroo, Mahore. Security forces recovered one 60 mm mortar from a terrorist hideout in Morha Bachai, Surankot.

Oct 22: India said it was willing to open 5 points on LOC. 37607 houses damaged in oct8 earthquake in J&K. Villages affected—Uri(95), Tanghdar(42). A local terrorist Mohd. Taj , involved in Budhal killings arrested. LeT terrorist involved in killing of Minister GN Lone killed in an encounter in Sopore town . A NC activist and a writer , Gh. Rasool Shah alias Gayoor was kidnapped by terrorists from his home in Ratnipora and later shot dead. MY Tarigami , CPM leader criticized quake-time political appointments. Quake toll in POK –200 students and six faculty members killed.

Oct 23: The congress President Mrs. Sonia Gandhi met J&K Chief Minister to discuss power transfer. SC in a ruling said that an employee can withdraw his resignation during the notice period and is entitled to consequential benefits from the company if he is not allowed to work. President Kalam asked scientists to use electromagnetic phenomena to predict earthquakes. A SPO was killed in Dharam, Gool. Terrorists fired upon a CRPF patrol at Gonikhan, HSH street. Srinagar, killing one SI and a jawan. Three infiltrators were killed in Keran sector. An army post was attacked at Wadwal in Kandi, Kupwara, which left 3 jawans dead and 1 injured. Terrorists shot at a civilian at Ukai, Kulgam. Silent migration of minority community started in far-flung areas of Rajouri.

Oct24: Two terrorists were gunned down at Chakka Sarbaghni, Nachlana, Banihal. A SPO and a jawan were also injured. Two youth kidnapped by terrorists at Suin, Batmas, Gandoh, escaped from captivity and one was injured while fleeing. Terrorists killed a civilian at home in Ratnipora, Pulwama. Two HUJI terrorists were gunned down at Kutamarg , Kulgam. A terrorist was eliminated in Keran sector. 80 kgs of explosive material were recovered from Baitul Huda mosque at Arm mohalla, Pattan. An unidentified body was recovered from Jawalpora, Budgam. A Delhi court convicted a Pak terrorist and 6 others in Red Fort attack case.

Oct25: A JKAP cop turned out to be a Hizbul terrorist. One infiltrator was killed and two jawans injured near LOC in Mankote sector of Mendhar. Three terrorists were gunned down at Bakhpora, Rafiabad. Another terrorist was killed at Sadapora, Harwan. A dead body was fished out from Jehlum at Pandrethan. Terrorists lobbed a grenade at a CRPF patrol party, injuring 4 jawans and 5 civilians in Safakadal ,Srinagar.

OCT26: Terrorists targeted a BSF party through a car IED blast at Omarbad, Lawaypora on Srinagar-Baramulla highway, killing 1jawan and injuring 20 cops and 10 civilians. Two soldiers were injured at

Chanderhama,Pattan. Terrorists fired upon a close associate of Forest Minister,GM Sofi at Magam, Handwara.

Oct27: MR. Ghulam Nabi Azad was named as new Chief Minister of J&K. India offered \$25 million aid to earthquake victims in Pakistan. Police arrested a SPO-turned HM terrorist from Gandoh. Two jawans were killed in a gun battle with terrorists at Ganethi, Doda. A cop injured in Banihal on Oct24 died. Two top Al-Badr terrorists were killed along with their bodyguard at Panzla. Two LeT terrorists were killed at Kootsari Behak, Bandipora. 5 kgs of RDX were recovered in Anantnag district. Terrorists set ablaze the house of a civilian at Dangerpora, Awantipora. A top Jaish terrorist and his two associates, PWD employee and a college student were arrested in Jammu city. Arms and ammunition was recovered from a house in Sidhra. Mr. Tsering Dorje was sworn in as LAHDC Chairman.

Oct28: Ex-MLC's house was attacked in Marwah . An IED blast took place at Suigarh, Doda. Terrorists shot dead a surrendered terrorist at Rishigund, Kupwara. An IED was detected at Sonwar near CJ's house.

Oct29 :In serial blasts in Delhi 55 people were killed and 155 injured. A conductor was killed in an instance of accidental firing at Shoolipora,Budgam.

Oct 30: Mr. GN Azad was elected as leader of CLP party in Srinagar. Terrorists gunned down a conductor at Theed near Batapora Harwan, after severe torture. A terrorist was eliminated at Dunimarg in Shopian –Kulgam belt. An IED detected in Ganderbal main market. A top HM terrorist was gunned down at Tandla , Gandoh. Another HM terrorist was eliminated at Dungi Margh near Peer Gali, Bafliaz. A VDC member was killed by terrorists at Kanji , Chatru (Kishtwar).

Oct31: A major reshuffle in J&K subordinate judiciary. A LeT terrorist was awarded death sentence in Red Fort attack case ,while two kashmiri terrorists were given life imprisonment. Mr. Mohinder Singh was posted as new Relief Commissioner(Migrants) ,in addition to his own charge. 8 kgs. RDX recovered from Krotan forests,Udhyapur,Doda.

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Nov2 : 13- member Azad ministry was sworn in. Delhi serial blasts traced to Srinagar and Muzaffarabad. Top HM terrorist arrested from Bhatindi, Jammu city. A car blast at Nowgam, Srinagar left 10 killed and 15 injured(7 car blasts in 2005---43 killed ,160injured).Two local HM terrorists gunned down at Marhoon, Gandoh. Security forces destroyed terrorist hideouts at Chilli(gandoh),Hari Mohalla(Surankote) and Pir B ehra,Rajouri.

Nov 3: Security forces busted a terrorist hideout at Rewardo Behak , Kralpora(Kupwara),seizing arms and explosives. A grenade recovered from a terrorist at Bahrapora, Sopore. Abdullah Banday ,a prominent congress leader of Bharat, Doda arrested for operating as LeT's main conduit for hawala operations in the district for more than three years. Hans Raj Dogra, a former BJP MLA passed away.

Nov5: J&K Chief Minister declared that corruption by Ministers and Officers won't be tolerated and said 'Transfer shop' would be shut. Two POK terrorists killed while infiltrating in Keran Mandian sector. Terrorists shot dead a civilian at Rajawar,Handwara. A HM terrorist arrested at Nachlana,Banihal. An IED was defused at Udhyanpoura,Doda. A girl committed suicide after being sexually abused by the terrorists in Muradpur, Rajouri. Another Jaish terrorist arrested from Bhatindi.

Nov 6: A HUJI terrorist was arrested in Kishtwar ,while a civilian was killed by terrorists at Chakras,Mahore. A POK terrorist was eliminated at Warnav,Lolab. A terrorist was gunned down at Frisal. Terrorists shot at a civilian at Sopore. A driver was shot dead by terrorists at Kulgam. A civilian was injured in crossfire at Watipora Tulbagh,Pulwama. Portfolios for J&K Ministers announced. A leading international think-tank said HUM cadre was active in Myanmar and Phillipines. Raghunath Bazar,Jammu celebrated 150th anniversary.

Nov 7: Dr. Farooq Abdullah predicted mid-term polls in the state and charged Mufti Syed with pursuing "pro-terrorist" policy and encouraging corruption in public life . A Pakistani national suspected to be behind Delhi blasts was arrested in north Bengal town of Balurghat. Two top LeT terrorists were eliminated at Dharam,Gool. A powerful 10 kg. IED was defused on Doda-Bharat road. Terrorists escaped after an encounter at Bharthi, Gandoh. 17 Bangladeshis were arrested in RS sector. A top HM terrorist was eliminated at Kalipora,Frisal. A Jaish terrorist was gunned down at Warnav ,Lolab. An IED blast claimed two civilian lives at Quil Muqam , Bandipore,while2 people were injured at Indergam,Yatipora(Pattan). A civilian was fired upon by terrorists at Shopian. AP High Court quashed reservation ordinance for Muslims.

Nov 8: Mr. Ghulam Hassan Mir, PDP leader and a former minister admitted power tussle in PDP and demanded probe into killing of Dr. GN Lone ,MOS education. Terrorists gunned down brother and bhabi of a PDP leader at Larkuti, Budhal. A SPO was kidnapped and killed by terrorists at Barno, Bharat,Doda. A civilian was fired upon by terrorists at Kamlari,Doda. 14 Bangladeshis were arrested in Akhnoor and Samba sectors.

Nov9: KR Narayanan ,the former President passed away . A civilian employee working with SOG Tral was shot dead by terrorists . A SPO was injured in an encounter at Sangaldan,Gool. A terrorist hideout was busted in Ramnagar area and 3 kgs RDX plus arms and ammunition were recovered.

Nov 10 : Two Pak spies were arrested in Jalandhar. A Major was killed and two soldieres injured in an

encounter with terrorists at Arin ,Bandipore. Terrorists shot dead a teacher at Nadihal, Bandipora.

Nov 11: Balwant Singh Mankotia, JKNPP MLA was elected as new legislature party leader replacing Mr. Harshdev Singh. Communal tension erupted in Ladakh over kidnapping of two Buddhist girls. A retired Police man turned Congress activist was gunned down by terrorists at Lajoora. He was a former Ikhvani. Three members of a family were beaten up by terrorists in their house at Darhal Chowkian.

Nov 12: J&K Chief Minister opposed troop withdrawal and expressed disagreement with previous govt.'s surrender policy. Mr. ManMohan Singh ruled out de-militarization unless Pak stopped terrorism. Harshdev Singh and Y.Kundal ,former ministers dissociated from NPP .Madhu Dandvate, former Finance Minister passed away. A top terrorist of HUJI was arrested at PulDoda. Two terrorists and a soldier were killed in a gunbattle at Raipora, Palhalan.

Nov 13: Justice RP Sethi ordered police action against his son for alleged case of bribe. BSF gunned down two HM terrorists at Gambhiri ,Thatharaka, Gool. Terrorists fired upon a RR party at Ghurnu., Batote. Lashkar terrorist involved in Delhi serial blasts was arrested in Delhi. A LeT terrorist was killed by his colleagues. A Pakistani terrorist was eliminated at Akhal, Kulgam. A local terrorist was killed in Yamrach-Yaripora. Terrorists critically injured a civilian at Shallapo, Baramulla. A civilian was kidnapped at Pastoona Tral and shot in his legs. Terrorists attacked a CRPF camp at Nageen. Leading London daily 'The Sunday Times' ,quoting Pakistan's Human Rights group 'Ansar Burney Welfare Trust', reported that Pak-based terror groups were taking children orphaned by the earthquake for training in terrorist activities.

Nov 14: 2 CRPF jawans and two civilians were killed when terrorists launched a suicide attack on a CRPF formation at Palladium cinema in Lal Chowk area. 17 persons, including a Japanese journalist sustained injuries. J&K Chief Minister directed ministers and officials not to entertain his relatives or acquaintances if they approach them for favour. 4th LOC point was opened in Mendhar. A 15 kg IED was recovered at Rampora, Kaimoh, Kulgam. Terrorists barged into a house at Gulbug Ratnipora, Pulwama and shot dead a 22yr old girl ,Haseena Akhter. In view of threats she had recently left her job as SPO.

Nov 15: 3 people were killed ,90 others including former minister Gh. Hassan Mir were wounded when terrorists attacked Mr. Mir's rally at Tangmarg. Lal Chowk suicide attacker was killed and another one arrested . Terrorists shot dead a traffic police constable at Nihama. The constable had earlier worked with SOG Kupwara and earned promotions for his excellent work. Three more terrorists, two of them hailing from Srinagar city were arrested for involvement in Delhi serial blasts . BJP leader Uma Bharti blamed RJD supreme for naxalite attack in Jehanabad.

(Contd. from Page 18)

Nov 16: 4 civilians were killed and 72 others, including a former minister Usman Majid ,injured in a bomb blast at JK Bank Hqs in Srinagar. Three of the critically injured civilians at Tangmarg rally succumbed to injuries . One CRPF jawan was killed and 3 injured in a terrorist attack at CRPF convoy at Awantipore . Two female members of a family were injured when terrorists barged into their house at Pul Tak ,Darhal. 13 Bangladeshis were arrested in Ramgarh sector. Mr. Ashok Jaikhanji bagged best Director's award for 2004.

Nov 17: The state cabinet ordered reshuffle of 15 officers in civil and police administration, Mr. Anil Goswami posted as Principal Secretary to CM., Mr. K Rajendra as IGP Kashmir and Mr. Hemant Lohia as DIG CID Kashmir. For the first time in many years local people protested over the abduction of a policeman by terrorists at Lolab (Sogam). CPM Politbureau asked centre to beef up intelligence network in J&K and step up security in view of increasing terrorist violence. Security forces arrested three people at Pul Doda and recovered hand grenades from their possession. Two cousins were gunned down by terrorists at Lancha, Gool. Two BSF jawans were injured in an IED blast at the same site. Terrorists injured a SPO in a gunbattle at Sangla, Surankote.

Nov 18: J&K Chief Minister, Mr. Azad talked tough against terrorists and said he would not be brow-beaten by blasts. New Chief Executive Councillor of Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Mr. Tsering Dorjey demanded resignation of two MLAs from LADAKH, in view of electoral debacle of Congress. Sales Tax Dept. asked Maulvi Ifthikar Ansari 's firm to deposit Rs. 33 crore arrears by Nov 22. Masrat Alam ,a close lieutenant of Syed Ali Shah Geelani quit Geelani faction of Hurriyat to join Muslim Conference. A HM terrorist was arrested at Tral, while security forces busted a terrorist hideout in Wullar forests.

Nov 19: BSF and Pak Rangers agreed on joint border patrolling. J&K Chief Minister warned terrorists of tough action in case they persisted with violence. Two top LeT terrorists were eliminated at Kither, Bunjwa in Patnazi, Kishtwar. A jawan was also killed in the encounter. Security forces busted a terrorist hideout at Draj, Bidhal and recovered ammunition ,including 2 kgs of RDX. A terrorist was gunned down in Drubgam, Pulwama. 5 jawans were injured when terrorists ambushed a security forces' vehicle at Tangpawa, Sagam. A civilian injured in blast at JK Bank Hqs succumbed to injuries. Terrorists hurled a grenade at BSF post at Hathishah bridge in Sopore area.

Nov 20: J&K Govt. ordered a probe in to Dr. G. Nabi Lone's killing . Mafia don Abu Salem unraveled cricketer-underworld nexus. A HM terrorist was gunned down at Pathana Teer, Mendhar. A terrorist harbourer was nabbed at Budh Kanari, Rajouri. A hideout of the terrorists was busted at Koteranka. Dead bodies of two

civilians were recovered from Bumai-Sopore and Thajiwara-Kaneiwal (Bijbehara). A terrorist was gunned down in Pulwama district.

Nov 21: India firmly rejected Pak's "self-governance" idea for J&K. Gen. JJ Singh, Army Chief said militancy would die down only when public stopped support to it. A top Pakistani terrorist affiliated to Jaish-e Mohd was eliminated at Jawahar Nagar area of Srinagar. Terrorists lobbed a grenade at a CRPF formation at Jehlam market in Batmaloo, injuring one jawan and 8 civilians. A civilian was shot dead by terrorists at Bumai, Sopore. Terrorists lobbed a grenade upon a residential house in Sopore and injured a woman. Terrorists fired upon an undergraduate girl Masooda War at Shanu Langate near Handwara. Terrorists fired upon a police vehicle at Charsoo-Awantipore.

Nov 22: Dr. Farooq Abdullah said it would be a daunting task for the new Chief Minister to change the internal set-up in the state which had adopted a soft posture towards insurgency during first three years of coalition rule. A SPO-turned top LeT terrorist was arrested from Sarthal, Kishtwar. Six persons including a sarpanch were arrested from Darhal for sheltering terrorists. A civilian was kidnapped from Neri, Toba(Darhal). A SPO was injured in a gunbattle at Sanai Nullah Top, Surankote. Rs. 16.47 lakhs were looted from JK Bank in Zainakadal area, police suspected involvement of bank officials. Two terrorists were gunned down in Daksun-Kokernag area. The dead body of a civilian was recovered from Ashmender, Pulwama. He had been kidnapped the previous day and was hanged to death. CPM leader MY Tarigami said PDP leadership failed to deliver goods. RJD was voted out of power.

Nov 23: 2 terrorists and 3 CRPF jawans were killed in a suicide strike at CRPF hqs at Hawal, Srinagar. 2 HUM terrorists were eliminated at Mati-hund, Kokernag. Terrorists shot at a civilian in Bandipora. Two hideouts of terrorists were unearthed in north Kashmir(Rajawar) and large amount of ammunition/arms were seized. A grenade was defused at Hari Singh High Street, Srinagar. A top HM terrorist was shot dead at Dewal, Mahore. Security forces destroyed communication centre of the terrorists in the house of an ex-service man at Salwa, Mendhar. A civilian injured at Dewar forests, Doda succumbed to injuries. 2 IEDs were recovered from a cave in Sil, Doda.

Nov 24: GOC in C, Northern Command said that the level of infiltration was same as it was before Oct 8 earthquake. Two more local LeT terrorists were arrested in Kashmir for involvement in Delhi serial blasts. A top Jaish terrorist was killed in an encounter at Dhobiwan, Tral. Police arrested four members of a family at Maisuma for questioning on Nov 14 Fedayeen attack in Srinagar. Unidentified gunmen looted Rs. 90996 from ED Bank at Kulgam. A female baby was killed and her two sisters were injured when a terrorist lobbed a grenade inside the house of a civilian at Pagla, Surankote. State BJP flayed PDP President Mehbooba Mufti for advocating joint control of India and Pakistan over J&K.

Nov 25: Congress President Sonia Gandhi asked the GOVT. to send a loud and clear message that there would be no compromise in combating terrorism and underscored that terrorists attacks should cease for continuation of peace process. Terrorists shot dead a civilian at Handwara. 4 terrorists were held at Pulwama, Ganderbal, and Handwara. Tariq Ahmad Dar, accused in Delhi blasts admitted his role in hawala links with terrorists.

Nov 26: President APJ Kalam visited earthquake-hit Tangdhar. Lawyers and judicial employees clashed in Srinagar, two injured. 6 HM terrorists surrendered in Upper reaches of Gulmarg. Three hide-outs of terrorists were busted—two in Thanna Mandi and 1 in Damkund, Ramban. An ISI activist was shot dead in Ahmedabad. Leaders demanded reorganization of J&K state at a seminar organized by Panun Kashmir in New Delhi.

Nov 27: Three infiltrators were killed in Uri sector near LOC. 16Kgs of explosives were recovered from a civilian at Naidkhai, Sumbal. Terrorists threatened Bangladesh judges. President Kalam visited Uri.

Nov 28: Union Home Minister Shiv Raj Patil said infiltration continued in a calibrated manner, with terrorist organizations in Kashmir being funded from the other side of the border. Two HM terrorists surrendered at Dachan, Gool. 4 terrorists attacked the house of a minority community member at Morha Santra, Kandi(Budhal) and decamped with rifle of a VDC member. A Municipal Councilor and his driver were shot dead at Brad, Bandipore. Terrorists threw a grenade at a patrol party of CRPF at Hazratbal. A handgrenade was recovered from a HM terrorist in Pulwama. Kashmir Singh, former MLC, quit state BJP.

Nov 29: J&K High Court directed J&K Govt. to treat the migrants of Doda and Poonch at par with displaced people for Kashmir valley in respect of relief and rehabilitation. PM announced Rs. 5 lakh each for quake orphans in J&K. SOG Pulwama eliminated two top terrorists of Al Badr in Nilura. A HUM terrorist was arrested from Shopian. Terrorists set on fire one Abdul Aziz of Danderpora, Sopore.

Nov 30: In a third attack of its kind during the past one month, gunmen decamped with Rs. 11.77 lakh from a J&K Bank branch at Rajouri Kadal in downtown Srinagar. Terrorists fired upon a police constable at Khanyar. A terrorist was gunned down in an encounter at Veeri, Bijbehara. Security forces arrested two people, including a woman from a TATA Sumo at Parimpora. An IED and cache of ammunition was recovered from the vehicle. Top HM terrorist Mohd. Iqbal Sohail of Sarbagni(Banihal) surrendered. A 4kg IED was recovered from

Kahara,Gandoh. 15 Burmese nationals were arrested in Akhnoor sector. US Congressman and India-baiter, Don Burton described PM ManMohan Singh's statement to make efforts to erase the visible borders as a "giant step". MOS External Affairs said Pakistan has not curbed infiltration.

INTERACTION

INTERACTION

Panun Kashmir meets European Commission to India

KS Correspondent

Panun Kashmir had a 1 hr. meeting with the members of European Commission which visited Jammu recently. This delegation of European Unions was represented by the Trioka Francisco da Camara Santa Clara Gomes Ambassador. Head of delegation European Union, Dr Jutta Stefan Bastl Ambassador of Austria and Sir Michael Arthur KCMG British High Commissioner to India.

In the meeting various aspects of the situation in Kashmir was discussed in detail. Panun Kashmir delegation was lead by Chairman Dr Ajay Chrungoo and the other members were Sh .Kuldeep Raina General Secretary Panun Kashmir and Sh ON Trisal Veteran Freedom Fighter and President of All State Kashmiri Solidarity Conference.

Panun Kashmir delegation apprised European Union about the situation in the state particularly the dimensions of the Jehadi violence. Dr. Ajay Chrungoo described the recent violence in the state particularly after the peace engagement between India and Pakistan as a proof of the deep entrenchment of Jihadi forces within the Kashmir Muslim social mileu. The European Union delegation was apprised about the communal and Jihadi ideological motivations of the armed separatism in the state. They were also cautioned about according respect or support to any so-called solution for Kashmir problem which further fortifies Muslim identity politics in the state.

Dr Ajay Chrungoo apprised the delegation about various aspects of the religions cleansing in Kashmir Valley and the plight of Kashmiri Pandits. The concept of Panun Kashmir as a solution to the genocide of Kashmiri Pandits was also discussed with the European-Delegation. Dr Ajay Chrungoo explained to the delegations that drawing parallels between Kashmir situation and Palestine will be highly erroneous. In Palestine a Jewish pocket was created which lead to situation where native Palestinians were displaced. In Kashmir the so-called freedom struggle of Kashmiris expressed itself with the forcible expulsion of Hindu minority of Kashmir.

The delegation subsequently accompanied by Panun Kashmir team visited Muthi Camp where a reception was organised in their honour by Swami Kumar Ji Geeta Satsung Ashram. The European Union was received in traditional Kashmiri Pandit way and were offered Kashmiri Kewah Tea and Kashmiri Pooris. The camp leaders apprised the delegation about the conditions in the camps and the struggle for survival of displaced Kashmiri Hindus. They also presented a memorandum to the EU delegation which supported the homeland demand and described it as creation of a pocket of tolerance within Kashmir Valley.

EDITORIAL

WINDS OF CHANGE

The appointment of Mr Ghulam Nabi Azad as the new Chief Minister of J&K is a historic event in many ways. It signals the return of Congress after nearly three decades. Secondly, a nationalist Party with an All-India perspective will be at the helm of affairs in the state. A nationalist party is best placed to harmonise local urges with national imperatives. During the past three decades Kashmir witnessed the hegemony of regional parochial politics. This unleashed a vicious cycle of secessionism, fundamentalism and communalism. This in turn undermined the governance, leading to political instability. The process of integration, both within the state and with rest of India, which started during Late Sh. Ghulam Mohd. Sadiq's time, got stifled.

Mr. Gh. Nabi Azad belongs to Doda district of Jammu, but is an ethnic Kashmiri. He had a long innings in the nationalistic politics at Centre. These advantages make him perhaps the only politician who has acceptability in all the regions of the state. His initial policy pronouncements are bold, reflect confidence and display vision which looked absent during past three years of coalition rule.

The new CM has unambiguously qualified violence in the state as sheer terrorism. Mr Azad has refused to describe terrorists as misguided youth. He went on record saying that even if his father indulges in violence he will not hesitate even for a moment to call him a terrorist. Referring to some high profile terrorist attacks soon after he took over, the Chief Minister minced no words in saying that he would not be cowed down by such threats. Mr Azad also dissociated from PDP's policy on surrendered militants which had unhinged the counter insurgency work. Armed with this vision his initial administrative changes have already started yielding results.

Mr. Gh Nabi Azad has also tried to put the regional parochial politics in perspective and endorsed political mainstreaming. He debunked the myth of 'Indian Demon', saying that he could reach the highest positions despite the fact that he belonged to the minority community and a farflung area of the state. In a statement of profound significance he decried the assessment that Kashmiris were comfortable only with exclusivist subnational politics. The CM asserted that no ethnic group including Kashmiris could remain away from mainstream politics in the age of globalisation.

During the past three decades due to the compulsions of regional politics the institutions of governance were systematically undermined leading to the erosion of accountability and rise of clannish corruption. Those who have been demanding greater autonomy for the state have in the main been responsible for dismantling autonomy at the district and provincial levels, which the state enjoyed during the Congress era. The Chief Minister's constant emphasis on work culture and eradication of corruption from the political establishment will go a long way in addressing the alienation of Kashmiris. On the issue of Displaced Pandits Mr Azad has distanced from PDP's line of 'Coerced tokenist return'.

The new Chief Minister faces three main challenges. On the security situation, for some reasons, the smashing of overground support cells of the terrorists and 'seek and destroy' operations in the forest hinterlands had remained shelved. Unless these initiatives are restarted urgently the security situation may worsen. By reaching out to the victims of terrorism in Kashmir Valley which constitute not less than 13,000 Muslim families Mr Azad can turn tables against terrorism.

Mr Azad has said that his government will not discriminate against anybody on the basis of caste, region and religion. The forced extirpation of Kashmir Hindus from their Homeland in Kashmir has not been addressed from a holistic and humane angle so far. This has led to the total marginalisation of Kashmir Hindu community from all walks of life. In the existing scenario their return remains an elusive dream. The issue of addressing their discrimination should receive priority before the issue of return is taken up. The issues of survival and discrimination need to be delinked from issue of return.

Mr Azad is a man with good intentions. A section of mediemen in Delhi have been uncomfortable with his elevation as J&K Chief Minister. Didn't these people during all these years flaunted a myth that only a regional party with confrontationist approach towards Centre is best placed to keep Kashmiris happy. This emboldened separatist and parochial forces in Kashmir. There is need to counterinform the nation about the reality in Kashmir. t

Indian Nation—State is passing through a critical transition. Beginning with this series, we will be presenting before our readers how nation's intelligensia thinks on different issues concerning nation.

India needs to move from hand-wringing to a credible counter-terror strategy
Cause without effect

By Brahma Chellaney

what has turned India
into a laboratory for
international terrorists, who try out and perfect techniques in the world's largest democracy, before replicating them in other pluralistic States? Acts first tried out against Indian targets include attacks on symbols of State authority, mid-air bombing of a commercial jetliner and coordinated strikes on a city transportation system. India now has the highest number of terrorist attacks in the world, according to new methodology employed by the CIA's Office of Terrorism Analysis.

The reason India has come under siege from the forces of terror is apparent from its response (or, more precisely, the lack of it) to the deadliest terrorist strike in its capital. More people died in the synchronised New Delhi bombings than in the worst terrorist attack ever suffered by Britain, Israel, Australia and several other democracies that see themselves on the frontline of terror. Yet, India has already put the bombings behind it and gone back to what now defines it — partisan politics, scandal and cricket. It is business as usual.

It doesn't need an outgoing chief justice of India to remind fellow citizens that "We don't have the political will to fight terrorism." That failing is manifest from India's reluctance to wage its own war on terror. Although it has been one of the first victims of transnational terrorism — long before the US even woke up to that scourge — India relies on America to help lower cross-border terror, although results are hard to come by.

Not only is there no will, the Indian system has also become so effete that the State instruments are unable to deliver even on the odd occasion when the leadership displays a political spine. Conversely, when intelligence and security agencies do demonstrate good tradecraft by providing timely, actionable information, their efforts can be frustrated by a leadership lacking both clear-headed policy and resolve. Such shortcomings instil greater policy caution and endurance in the face of rising terrorism.

The ingrained ambivalence, evident from the PM's disinclination to do anything other than vaguely refer to an

'external link' to the New Delhi bombings, tells something about the way India's stoic, forbearing approach has set into the national psyche. It is as if the Indian State has come to accept terrorist strikes as the products of its unalterable geography or destiny. That may help explain why India's response to Pakistan's strategy of inflicting death by a thousand cuts has been survival by a thousand bandages.

Whenever India is tested by the horror of terrorism, it responds in a pre-set way — with brave words that serve as a cover to do nothing. Under the government of the sphinx-like Atal Bihari Vajpayee, terrorism morphed from hit-and-run attacks to daring assaults on military camps and symbols of national power, as the PM made one brave vow after another — from 'zero tolerance' against terrorism to *aar par ki ladai*. Now, under Manmohan Singh, even when terrorists strike brutally under the nose of the government, the nation again hears only empty words.

To know why transnational terrorists fancy India as an easy target, just compare New Delhi's reluctance to impose costs on terrorists and their sponsors with the declared policy of several democracies not to let any terror attack go unpunished. Indeed, India has advertised itself as a soft target by striking deals with terrorists, even after the Rubaiya Sayeed capitulation case helped fan the Kashmir insurrection.

The Jaish-e-Muhammad, which has claimed responsibility for numerous terror strikes including last week's car bombing in Srinagar, owes its establishment to Vajpayee and key members of his cabinet. Vajpayee and company have yet to apologise to the nation for flying to freedom three jailed terrorists, including the man who went on to form the Jaish-e-Muhammad and another who helped finance 9/11.

Forget policy, India is not consistent even in its statements. In a 48-hour period in New York, Manmohan Singh first told Bush: "Pakistan still controls the flow of terror and they must stop it for any realistic progress." Yet, the next day he signed a joint statement with Musharraf pledging "not to allow terrorism to impede the peace process". Then, in his UN address, he played to his domestic constituency by citing cross-border terrorism. It is evident Singh has not made the transition to a national leader and remains hobbled by the mindset of a bureaucrat wanting to please different bosses.

The New Delhi bombings indicate that the patrons of trans-border terror — the Pakistan military and its ISI agency — have taken the joint statement as providing them a *carte blanche* to hold the gun of terrorism to India's head. In fact, the Indian-initiated 'peace process' serves as a valuable front to them in their mission to bleed India.

If India is not to compound its problems, it needs to shed its lackadaisical ways and take the battle to the springboard of terrorism. Counteraction does not mean overt aggression. Between the two extremes, waging war against Pakistan and doing nothing, lie a hundred different options. These are the options India needs to explore and pursue. In fact, to raise baseless fears of war is to rationalise inaction and promote more terrorist attacks.

For India, terrorism is an existential battle that will determine whether it stays a free, secular, united State. If India were to recognise its mistake in trying to fight terrorism as a law and order issue (such as by increasing security and adding more police on patrol), it follows logically that it ought to be proactive. The only defence against the sly, murderous terrorists is offence aimed at hounding, disrupting and smashing their cells, networks and safe havens. Against covert, unconventional aggression, counteraction must also employ clandestine, unconventional methods in order to strike at the heart of a terrorist network and disrupt its cohesion, operational capacity and logistic support.

India's counteraction has to be at multiple levels: domestic policy (formulating a credible counter-terror strategy), legal (forming a political consensus in favour of anti-terrorism laws, with adequate safeguards against their misuse), law enforcement (identifying and destroying terrorist sleeper cells in cities), intelligence (building assets so as to operate behind 'enemy' lines and target a particular car, cell or haven at an opportune moment), strategic (keeping Pakistan on tenterhooks), and retaliatory (imposing costs on the patrons of terrorism).

The last component involves a range of possibilities from inflicting diplomatic costs to mounting discreet actions. These are issues no nation discusses in public. Rather the options are weighed in private and action initiated quietly.

Instead of acting to stop further attacks, India is more interested in collecting and presenting evidence of Pakistan's terror links to the outside world, particularly America. Even if New Delhi had a film showing Musharraf personally ordering a bomb attack, it will be overlooked just the way the voluminous evidence of the ISI-sponsored jihad against India is ignored. Those that India wishes to convince do not build files to prove that a particular group attacked them before they hit back.

India does not realise that the world is not run by white man's justice. India needs no great power's approval to defend its interests and honour. If it acts on its own and succeeds, it will win international respect. If it fails, some nations will make some noise before ignoring the failure. But if it does nothing but place evidence before those who do not really care or who are pursuing differing strategic interests, it will earn only disdain and make itself a softer terrorist target.

*(Source: The Hindustan Times, November 8, 2005)

Terror: Risk and Response

By MK Dhar

THE SERIAL bomb blasts in Delhi on October 29 last has again proved that the combat tools of the Union and State governments are awfully deficient in drawing up battle plans against Pakistan's proxy war and behind-the-lines strikes by Pakistan and Bangladesh-based jihadi tanzeems, which are patronised by the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan and the Directorate-General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI) of Bangladesh. The intelligence agencies and police forces have miserably failed to trace, locate, identify and destroy the jihadi modules established in various parts of the country exemplified by sensational assaults on Akshar Dham, make-shift Ram temple at Ayodhya, the Red Fort and the Parliament. They simply chase the shadows and are wized after the incidents.

Cliches in security parlance are used to justify an absence of intelligence and operational preparedness, by chanting that acts of terrorism are front-less and boundary-less wars. Each bullet cannot be replied. Cliches are like Nostradamus' predictions that can be interpreted in thousand manners-vague, motivated, apologetic and apocalyptically prophetic.

The basic facts of the present war scenario can be classified under the following broad categories, for which there should exist individualised battle plans textured together under a broader national plan. Such plans, like most battle plans, require periodical modification.

1. The invisible enemy belongs to numerous jihadi tanzeems located across the borders. They are trained and indoctrinated by the resurgent Islamist fundamentalists who want to advance the cause of Islam through jihad.

2. They have defined geographical territories for forward operations in India—like the States of Jammu & Kashmir and the North East.

3. The concept of jihad beyond geographical boundaries encompasses the whole of India, particularly vulnerable areas and locations including important national symbols.

4. The war inside geographical areas can be fought from static and mobile positions and can be kept localised.

5. Static forces cannot fight jihad beyond boundaries and it requires innovation, both in intelligence tradecraft and operational methodologies.

6. The jihadis are financed, aided and operationally readied by important tools of the governments of Pakistan and Bangladesh—the ISI and the DGFI. They cannot operate in a neighbouring country without state patronage. To fight these aspects of operational directions by official tools of governance it is necessary to sharpen certain aspects of forward intelligence, proactive operational planning, diplomatic and strategic offensive. India woefully lags behind in these spheres of defensive and offensive activities.

7. The jihadi tanzeems establish deeper modules in the target areas of operation in collaboration with their own government agencies and spy machines.

8. Such actions involve prolonged planning in collaboration with India-based collaborators, sympathisers and believers in jihad beyond boundaries.

India's defensive and offensive plans can emerge out of in-depth study of these and other related aspects and characteristics of operational technologies of the jihadis. Our intelligence agencies are in possession of databank about these jihadi tanzeems and their linkages with the tools of governance of Pakistan and Bangladesh. However, they are pitifully ignorant about their operational plans, timings, targets, logistics, housing inside the target country and location, local collaborators and tradecraft adopted by them to implement the scheme of terror. In most cases they solely depend on electronic and technical surveillance and ruefully lack in human intelligence. The last mentioned deficiency occurs because of human, intelligence penetration inside the tanzeems and erection of human assets in the likely target areas is more complicated. The technology of developing human intelligence is universal with local variations, but analysis of the likely thrust B areas of the technology and implementation methodologies are not addressed with pro-active zeal.

The operational forces, both intelligence and police, are not primed to concentrate on this priority area of national security. Their focus is not automated and concentrated and at best of times they function in isolation. An operational force should be empowered to develop its own intelligence on a given target and execute the same under appropriate legal coverage. The intelligence generating agencies and executing arms lack automatic activation process, communication and advance sharing of intelligence at the developing stage. Quick response to actionable intelligence is related to location, readiness and availability of executing forces equipped with technical support. Tricky targets like the Ayodhya temple and crowded market places demand fast mobilisation and response and online communication between the executing forces and the intelligence. This requirement presupposes a few operational reorientations like dispersal of Special Forces and intelligence generating units.

Battlefield commanders carry out such reorientations. Fighting terrorism in undefined geographical locations and against selected vulnerable targets would require precision calibration and reorientation. For this purpose these vulnerable targets would require classification, geographical earmarking tailored to intelligence generating process and executive response.

To achieve some reasonable target of some of these objectives the country will require tougher laws, breaking the barrier of constitutional demarcation between state and union subjects, enhancement of intelligence generating capability and modern training to the executive and intelligence forces to achieve unified command capability to carry out pre-emptive strike, quicker response to developing situation. The job of post-incident handling of an act of terrorism in urban areas should be left to normal policing system.

Our human, technical and electronic intelligence generating assets are appallingly inadequate. A glaring example of such inadequacy can be witnessed at the security and immigration offices of Indira Gandhi International Airport. The prime airport of the country does not have hotline, fax and internet facility giving direct connectivity to other major airports of the country. In case a terrorist suspect is identified, the immigration post has to alert Mumbai through its Delhi headquarter control room. Security forces and intelligence do not have even STD facility in smaller airports.

To be able to combat jihad beyond borders and over a vast geographical area, India requires fast changes in its intelligence generating and quick response executing capabilities. Adoption of such methodology and tradecraft is feasible and should override vote bank compulsions of the political parties.

-The writer is former joint director of Intelligence Bureau.

**Source: Sahara Time, Nov. 12, 2005)*

HARD TIMES FOR SOFT STATE

By Ajai Sahni

THE ISLAMI Inqilabi Mahaz, which has claimed responsibility for the Delhi blasts, is a Front organisation of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). The LeT's founder and chief, Hafiz Mohammad Sayeed, has recently been in the news as leading the most significant jihadi initiative for earthquake relief in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. There is nothing secretive about his freedom to operate in Pakistan. The LeT remains the most prominent among the Sarkari/ jihadi groups in Pakistan — groups that enjoy the protection and patronage of the State and its covert agencies.

This incident confirms the strategic continuity of Pakistan's broad orientation towards India, and its sustained enterprise of encirclement, penetration and subversion, with an objective to do as much damage as possible. The attack is consistent with past patterns; there have been at least 25 occasions since 1997, in which Pakistan-backed groups have executed bomb blasts in Delhi, though this attack has been, by far, the worst in terms of casualties.

Over the last couple of years, dozens of arrests of Pakistan-backed terrorists, and seizures of large caches of arms and explosives have taken place in and around Delhi. The prominent groups connected with these arrests and seizures have included the LeT, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, Al Badr and Hizb-e-Islami, as well as Khalistani groups, particularly the Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) that was responsible for the May 22, 2005 blasts in two cinema halls in the city, and whose leaders are Pakistan-based.

Despite the very high toll, the latest attack does not reflect technical sophistry. Terrorist groups, when they are well entrenched in a particular area, normally attack strategic targets and vital installations; only when they are lying low do they go in for mass-casualty soft targets. Indeed, the long list of arrests and seizures in and around Delhi is testimony to the quality of India's counter-terrorism intelligence and the potential threats that have been neutralised. There is, however, no scope for complacency. Apart from the tragic loss of life, terrorists always retain a residual capacity for generating major strategic threats.

Regrettably, India's response has been restricted to mere policing and intelligence work, and these cannot suffice in neutralising terrorism that enjoys external state support. India's policies have encouraged Pakistan to keep the two fronts of negotiation and terrorism simultaneously open, and Pakistan knows that it can keep the terrorist enterprise going without danger of Indian retaliation or even any significant shift in the peace process. This was confirmed when, even as news of the enormity of the blasts was coming in, several Indian leaders sought to reassure Pakistan that the incidents would have no impact on the course of the 'peace process'.

State-sponsored terrorism can't be defeated unless unbearable costs are inflicted on its backers. Regrettably, the Indian leadership does not appear to have the will, the imagination or the capacity to evolve strategies to do this, and continues to hope that it can buy peace with Pakistan.

Historically, however, terrorists and their sponsors have only been encouraged by concessions, it is important to recognise that the 'peace process' has had no impact on the trajectory of terrorist violence in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of India. This trajectory has demonstrated a steady downward trend since 9/11,

irrespective of the alternating tensions or detente between the two countries, and is essentially related to a continuous diminution in the capacity to engage in terrorism as a result of the increasing external and internal pressures on Pakistan.

*The writer is the Executive Director, Institute for Conflict Management.

(Source: Tehelka, 12 Nov. 2005)

Kashmir

Why a jointly owned demilitarised area?

By HK Watal

The article titled above has been written by Sridhar

Jagan Nathan and was published in Kashur Gazette dated 18-24 September 2004. In this the writer has pleaded the cause of separatists and anti-nationals who are handful in number. Perhaps the writer is ignorant about history, geography and ground realities of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. He has focused his views on Kashmir only.

J&K is not Kashmir only. It is Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh, which of fourteen districts. Six districts fall in Kashmir Valley, six districts in Jammu region and two districts in Ladakh. Ladakh and Jammu region constitute the major area of J&K with more population than six districts of the Valley Kashmir. After 15th of August 1947, all the princely states decided their fate by joining either with India or Pakistan. Maharaja of J&K also decided the fate of Jammu and Kashmir once for all by signing the instrument of accession with India. This instrument of accession is final, irreversible and non-challengeable. The writer has pleaded joint-owner ship by India and Pakistan of J&K. In what capacity Pakistan can claim the ownership of Kashmir? Pakistan is an aggressor and has occupied some portion of J&K forcibly known as POK. She has handed over some portion out of POK to China. The need of the hour is to get POK freed; basically the creation of Pakistan is illegal, as it has not been created with the consent of the people of undivided India. There has been no referendum on this issue. The creation of Pakistan is the agreement between two or three persons. Today Pakistan is demanding J&K. Tomorrow she may claim all border states. The issue has been politicized by Indian political establishment. Otherwise, it is the law and order problem. After 15th of August 1947 till date the state has witnessed the rule of Valley-based rulers. These rulers treated Ladakh and Jammu regions as their colonies. Since then these two regions have remained backward, due to biased attitude of Valley-based rulers. Now the situation has come to such a pass where the people of Ladakh region demand union territory status. The people of Jammu demand statehood, seven lakh Kashmiri Hindus (The aborigines of Kashmir) have been exiled. They are wandering throughout the globe as territory less people. These people have full faith in India. For all practical purpose the entry of this exiled community has been restricted to Kashmir valley. All immovable property of this community has been occupied and their houses and temples gutted. The doors of employment in state services for this community have been closed. Thus this community has intensified their demand for Homeland within Kashmir valley. There are some handfuls of people who want separation from India. Keeping in view the above points for whom and for what part of land the writer advocates the joint ownership of India and Pakistan on Kashmir. A handful of Kashmiri terrorists can't thrust their views and ideology on majority of the people.

The writer feels that the voice of the people of Kashmir has been neither properly heard nor acted upon. I may remind the writer that this is false allegation. The voice of people of Kashmir has been heard and acted upon. Before accession of J&K within Indian union the living standard of Kashmiri people was very low. There were limited educational and other facilities. The people were residing in Kacha Houses with thatched roofs. The Kashmiri people were clad in rags and wearing chappals made of grass. They were roaming in search of work with a few meters of rope on their shoulders.

After linking their fate with Indian union the living standard of the people of Valley grew rapidly. There are schools and hospitals after every Km. There are Medical Colleges, Engineering Colleges, Powerhouses and all round development in the Valley. The people of Valley man highest posts. They are Doctors, Engineers, Professors, Teachers, Administrators, Scientists, Army officers etc. The people are also businessmen; they are importers, Exporters. The people of Valley hire labourers for their daily work from outside the state. One can witness that the people of the Kashmir valley are millionaires these days. This time one can hardly see a Kacha House with a thatched roof in the Valley.

Sufficient people have their own two wheelers, four wheelers, telephones, trucks, buses, tractors, orchards and all other essential commodities. The Valley of Kashmir is very well developed as compared to other states of India. No one in the Valley is living below poverty line. Unemployment in the Valley is low as compared to Ladakh and Jammu regions of the state and other states. The chappals made of grass can now be seen in museums only.

If anybody's voice has not been heard or acted upon, it is of the hapless Kashmiri Hindus, of the people of

Ladakh and Jammu.

The writer feels that there is daily potential for violence and death due to militant and military activities. This is true to some extent. But it is also true that one who acquires arms has to die one day or the other. For safeguarding the innocent people, law-enforcing authorities have to be given free hand.

The writer has expressed that democratic rights to representation have been infringed upon and held hostage to strategic imperatives. This is totally wrong. There have been free and fair polls. The people have exercised their franchise in each and every election as in other parts of India. Defections in J&K should not be treated in isolation as it is an all-Indian phenomenon and you can not single out J&K.

The suggestion is not acceptable to the people of Jammu, People of Ladakh, Exiled Kashmiri Hindus, Gujjars, Bakerwals and other mainstream people. The need of the hour is to crush terrorism with an iron hand.

It is not understood as to why some writers, politicians and other people dance to the tune of the anti-nationals and separatists.

It may be perhaps for their selfish desire to come to the limelight.

REJOINDER

Kalhana, Saraswat Brahmins

By MM Munshi

I most congratulate you for bringing out the special September issue of your esteemed journal. Most of the articles are very interesting as well as informative. Further this letter has reference to two articles of the said issue "Dr. B.N. Sharga -the living Kalhan" by Kuldip Raina and "Saraswat Brahmins". "With the spirit of let Truth prevail" I beg to point out that parts of the said articles are not factual.

Pt. Kaihana son of Campaka the illustrious minister of Harsa and other Kings of Kashmir) was the first indigenous historian of the Indian sub-continent to record history with true perspective. Prof. R.C. Majumdar formerly (i) Head of the Department of ancient history and culture, Nagpur University, (ii) Vice Chancellor and Prof. of History Dacca University, (iii) Honorary Head of the department of history, Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan and general editor and part author of "History and culture of Indian People" has paid a glowing tribute to Kalhana for having set the tradition of art of compiling history in real perspective.

Kalhana has compiled the history of Kashmir in eight Tarangas (cantos) in Raj Tarangini (River of Kings) from the time of King Gonanda I regarded as contemporary of Kurus and Pandvas to the almost of middle of 12th century A.D., a period of several thousand years. Besides history his work reflects the culture, geography and other aspects of ancient Kashmir.

On the other hand Dr B.N. Sharga has compiled detailed family histories of well-known mostly Hindi-speaking Kashmiri Pandits whose ancestors had migrated from Kashmir to Indian Plains of Punjab, U.P. Rajasthan etc in eighteenth century. His painstaking researches revealed more than what their present day descendants knew themselves. But whenever Dr. Sharga has written political history of Kashmir ancient or of recent past, his writings betray the fact that he has mostly relied on heresay and not on authentic and trustworthy documents. His article "Trifurcation of J&K State" is one of the examples. The comments for the same have also been documented in your special issue of September 05 with the title "Distortion of Kashmir History". Dr. Sharga about two years back advocated that Kashmiri Muslim families with surname DAR are converts to Islam from Kashmiri Pandits with the surname of DHAR. No historian of Kashmir or Kashmiri Pandits have accepted the idea to be factual. DARS are not converts from DHARS but Damars the feudal lords during the Hindu Rule.

* Equating Dr. Sharga with Kalhana is like comparing Emperor Ashoka with a ruler of pre-independence princely state of Indian sub-continent.

In the same article it has been mentioned that certain Kashmiri Shia families settled in Lucknow trace their ancestry to Shah Hamdan (Syed Ali Hamdani) which seems to be their wish full thinking as Syed Ali Hamdani who started converting Hindus to Islam by persuasion was a Sunni and not a Shia. He lived in Kashmir for about 6 years and left Kashmir via Hazara but died on the way to Iran in 1384. His son Mohammad Ali Hamdani arrived in Kashmir in 1393 and spent 12 years in desecrating, destroying, and damaging Hindu places of worship beyond repair tectonic persecuting, converting Hindus to Islam by force in collaboration with Sikandar Butshikan before he departed from Kashmir in 1405. Shia sect was introduced into Kashmir by about 1484 by Shamas-ud-Din Iraqi and others.

According to the other article "Saraswat Brahmins" - editor Saraswat Brahmins are original inhabitants of Saraswati Valley in Kashmir does not stand scrutiny. Neither Saraswati flowed through Kashmir nor the area through which Sarawati River flowed formed part at any time of the domain of Kashmirian Kings. It has been proved beyond any doubt by historical, archaeological, geomorphological as well as geological evidences that

River Sarasvati flowed through present day southern Punjab, Haryana, Bhawalpur (Pakistan), western Rajasthan, Eastern Sind (Pakistan), independent of Indus system and Gujrat before falling into Rann of Cutch which used to be an even inland sea about 1500 years back.

It dried up in stages as its main feeders (i) Yamuna got diverted due to tectonic movements along NE extremity of Aravali axis occupying a tributary of Chambal joining the Ganges system in Mahanbarata times and (ii) Satadru (Sutluj) also got diverted due to no moments and joined Vipasa (Beas) after invasions of Indus system of North India by Alexander.

The Saraswat Brahmins who derived their clan name from the mighty river by virtue of living along its banks migrated to other places like Kashmir, Punjab, North west of undivided Punjab; Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka as far Kerala after the river dried up. It is highly improbable to believe that all the Saraswat Brahmins in the first instance migrated from Saraswati Valley enblock to Kashmir and subsequently spread to other parts of the Country.

However it is possible that Saraswat Brahmins from Kashmir Valley migrated to other parts of the Country during late 14th and early 15th century when they were ruthlessly persecuted by Sikander But Shikan, Syed Mohammad Hamdani and others.

It may not be out of place to mention here that in POK a tributary of Kishenganga River known as Sargan / Kankotri originating from hills near Chilas meets the Lattar slightly upstream opposite the confluence of Madhumati Stream near Sharda Temple has been referred in scriptures as Sarasvati. But the course of its valley is too narrow and steep to have supported a sizable settlement.

Operation Gibraltar & the Indo-Pak War of 1965

By J.L. Tiku

“Ayub Khan may have a lot to answer for authorizing Kashmir Operation, but in agreeing to ceasefire he acted with...realism....patriotism...., though he had to pay a terrible price in personal term” Altaf Gauhar

Probably, the successful counter of the Pakistan army with Indian forces in the Rann of Kutch area had reinforced Ayub Khan's rising faith in the military superiority of his forces. The Rann of Kutch conflict was a low cost test of Indian will & capabilities. Ayub Khan in his autobiography *Friends Not Masters* published in 1967 had left the important event of the 1965 war untouched intentionally. Now his son Gauhar Ayub Khan is trying to fill this gap in his reported forthcoming book. The book may be an attempt to salvage the lost position of his father *Field Marshal Ayub Khan* as President of Pakistan after 1965 debacle.

Rann of Kutch was one of the areas left undemarcated by Radcliffe award during partition. Pakistan laid claim to whole of Rann, contrary to India's position. The clash started between border police force and soon involved the armed forces of both sides. Pakistan did make local gains, it seems they were prepared for the battle. India didn't want to engage extensively in the sticky area thinking it may have been Pakistan's diversionary tactics. The Rann of Kutch operation also bolstered Pakistan official *General Musa's* morale. His assessment of the inherent strength of army rose in tandem to Ayub Khan's perception on the subject.

Pakistan's army was persuaded to produce a plan for a bolder course of action. The task was entrusted to *Maj. Gen. Akhtar Hussain Malik*, the General Officer Commanding, 12th Division, who was responsible for the defence of Pak Occupied Kashmir. The plan reflected his outlook and character - supposedly bold and imaginative. Thus was *Operation Gibraltar* born.

Highly trained 30,000 strong *non-Kashmiri* guerilla force labeled *Gibraltar Forces* was to be raised at Murree under the charge of *Maj. Gen. Akhtar Hussain Malik*. The *Gibraltar Forces* bearing romantic names comprised of ten forces. These would be infiltrating whole of Jammu & Kashmir for mobilising mass scale uprising against India. Then the Pakistan army would march in to protect the 'revolutionaries'.

The decision for *Operation Gibraltar* was primarily based on three important premises. It was assumed that widespread support existed within Kashmir to make a guerilla campaign a success. It was considered unlikely that as a consequence of this action India would be inclined to attempt a large-scale military offensive against Pak Occupied Kashmir territory. Lastly the possibility of India crossing the international border either in the East or West Pakistan was ruled out.

The several groups of *Gibraltar Forces* that infiltrated into Kashmir were: *Saladin force* headed for Srinagar and Valley; *Ghaznavi force* operated in Mendhar-Rajouri; *Tariq force* was to strike Dras and Kargil; *Babbar force* Bhimber, Kalidhar; *Qasim force* Bandipora; *Khalid force* Qazinag; *Nasrat force* Tithwal area. The operation was launched as hurriedly as it had been conceived. It was not gradual enough to give it the character of an internal uprising.

Whereas it was true that goodwill for Pakistan existed in some pockets of Kashmir, it was unrealistic to expect that this feeling of resentment against India could be mobilized all over Jammu & Kashmir and thereby make the execution of large-scale operation within Indian borders possible. They were not successful in establishing the necessary rapport with local populace. Few of them were turned over or revealed to the Indian army. With their self styled liberators and 'freedom fighters' who apart from doing some damage to public property and inflicting much suffering on the people by burning their homes got nowhere close to capturing the Srinagar Radio Station for their historic broadcast on 9th August proclaiming that *war of liberation* was on.

When faced with a rapidly escalating situation, which endangered India's position in Kashmir, army persuaded to retaliate in an area in Pak Occupied Kashmir, which would be strategically important. The Haji Pir salient, which provided Pakistan with a link between the northern and southern sectors of Pak Occupied Kashmir, was a natural region, which fitted this pattern. Also, it had become important gateway for infiltrators and had to be closed. On 27th August the Indian army launched a strong attack on POK positions in the area, which were relatively lightly held, and by 28th August we were in control of strategic territory to cut the line of communication between Muzaffarabad, the capital of POK and Kotli, a major town in the southern POK. On 10th September Indian force advancing from Poonch completed the control of Uri-Poonch link, thus straightening the bulge.

Pakistan retaliated in vulnerable area of Chamb-Akhnur It is the only sector along the ceasefire line (LoC) where tanks could be used effectively during, offensive. Pakistan ordered its infantry division located South of Lahore to move to the Chamb area. Initially the attack was to be carried out by Maj. Gen. Akhtar Hussain Mulik of 12th Division. As formations of Pakistan's 12th division moved swiftly towards Akhnur, India was faced with a difficult military situation. The capture of Akhnur by Pakistan would provide them a base, seriously threaten the lines of communication between India and the Kashmir valley and it could result in the loss of a large portion of the Indian army in northern and central Kashmir.

Indian was left with little choice but to remove this threat to the security of their vital strategic area. Rather than confining the contest to Pak occupied Kashmir, it was decided to widen the area of conflict to then West Pakistan. *Operation Riddle* was code word for all out attack on West Pakistan. The plan was prepared after Rann of Kutch incident. Of all the places in West Pakistan Lahore was the natural choice. "*I want to reach Lahore before they take Srinagar*" were the strong words of then Prime Minister Shastri to army chief. A threat to its security could not fail to draw forces to Lahore's defence, and this could well remove the threat to Jammu and Akhnur. The offensive was with this limited objective only.

On 2nd September, just about thirty-six hours after the Chamb offensive launched by 12th Division, Pakistan completed the movement of their 7th Division to the Chamb area. On the very same day, *Maj. Gen. Yahya Khan*, GOC 7th Div. was given command of this sector and *Maj. Gen. Akhtar Malik* was ordered to return to his earlier location further north. The decision to change commanders in the midst of the Chamb battle was clearly based on the assumption that the Indian retaliation to an attack on Akhnur would come in the Pak Occupied Kashmir area in the North and not against Pakistan territory in the South.

As Pakistan changed horses in mid-stream, India began to make a last bid to strengthen her crumbling defences in the Akhnur area. The change of formation slowed down Pakistan's advance sufficiently to allow the Indians to consolidate their position. And as our forces crossed Pakistan borders in Punjab on 6th September at dawn, the morale of the Indians in the Chamb-Akhnur sector began to recover.

Neither country won the 22 day war. It was inconclusive war. It is equally true that Pakistan lost the war in that she failed to win her military and political objectives. Pakistan's blunder was her over-confidence and arrogant underestimation of its adversary's strength and competence. Pakistan having convinced themselves that they would win the war in a week's time on paper, had put everything they had all at once in full force their armour, artillery, and air power. With the result Pakistan army was short of supplies, it was running out of ammunition and had lost heavily in equipment and trained men. It had to seek help from friendly countries, Indonesia, China. Pakistan lost most decisive battles of the war-Assal Uttar in the Khem Karan sector and the tank battle in Sialkot sector. Pakistan lost half of their American gifted Patton tanks. Their strike power was crippled and humbled. The psychological impact of loss upon the Pak army and the military leadership couldn't be underestimated. To continue to fight under these circumstances and with principle fighting concentrated in Pakistan would bring the risk of further heavy losses without immediate hope of gain. Pakistan finally had to accept conditions for truce which settled none of the issues which had precipitated war.

It can be concluded from the course of events that steered the 22 day war, Pakistan had misjudged Indian psyche to its misadventure. If Pakistan's army leadership had got hold of the war plan from Indian army official as reported by Gauhar Ayub, why did they leave *Haji-Pir* salient lightly held and then move 12th Division from South to Chamb sector so as to leave Lahore vulnerable for Indian attack. It is reported that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had assured Ayub Khan that Indians would never violate the Indo-Pakistan border. On what basis Bhutto had given the assurance would require to be elaborated. These are few unanswered questions, which, Gauhar Ayub Khan has to throw some light on.

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- 1 Altaf Gauhar was at the time of conflict, *Secretary, Ministry of information & Broadcasting, Government of Pakistan*, who worked closely with Ayub Khan for five and a half years.
- 2 Courtesy Times Of India, Bombay monograph dated November 10th 1965, *India Answers Pakistan* by B. G. Verghese

Valley in Upheaval

"I am ruling a graveyard" PM of Pak-occupied Kashmir, 11th Oct, 2005

By Deepak Tiku

April 5 1905, 6 AM -
"I...realised what the
northward commotion meant when I heard Jane from under her *resai* ask....."is it an earthquake?" ...
before I could reply, she was up and away, in a fearful hurry.....towards the open country. I followed, but
finding hoar-frost on the groundI went back for a *resai*.....door was flapping.....Seizing the wrap in
haste.... afraid of the door jamming I rejoinedthe open, to watch the poplars swaying like drunken men
and the solid earth bulging unpleasantly. The shock lasted for three minutes, and when it seemed quite over we
retired...

The morning.....was perfectly beautiful. Baramulla lay serenely mirrored in the silver waters of
the Jhelum.....No signs of any unusual disturbance.....among the chattering crews of...boats and.....*doungas*
that lined the banks of... shining river'...T.R.Swinburne

When *Swinburne* family happily retired to get warm again on the shivering morning of April 5th at
Baramulla, little were they aware of the holocaust the 1885 earthquake had brought to the people of
Baramulla 20 years back and now hundred years hence the people of Baramulla will again
face the fury of nature with bigger vengeance. The 7.6 magnitude earthquake that struck close to
Muzaffarabad in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir on Saturday morning 8th Oct 2005 at 9.30AM has
caused widespread devastation. Although the tremors were felt as far as Kabul and Delhi, the main areas
affected have been erstwhile Kashmir and Pakistan's NWFP. More than 40,000 are estimated dead in
Pakistan-occupied Kashmir & NWFP, and 1300 people have been killed in Jammu and Kashmir on
Indian side. It is a great human tragedy, about 2.5 million people are estimated to have become homeless.
Since the fifteenth century twelve great earthquakes have occurred in Kashmir, all of long duration and
accompanied by great loss of life. In the nineteenth century there have been five severe
earthquakes, and last three 1828, 1864 and 1885 are worthy of notice.

Experts have long been warning of the danger of serious earthquakes in Indian sub-continent and say more
are likely. Many have struck in the vicinity of the Himalayas over past centuries, but not enough to account for
the northward thrust of Indian plate into Eurasian plate at a steady pace of five centimeters a year.

The Himalayas, highest mountains in the world, is like a thousand-mile-long wall, stretches from Kashmir in
the west to and beyond Arunachal Pradesh in the east. Scientists of the nineteenth century were dismayed to find
that, as high as they climbed, the rocks of the massifs yielded skeletons of marine animals, fish that swim in the
ocean, and shells of molluscs. This was evidence that the Himalayas had risen from beneath the sea. At some
time in the past azure waters of the ocean streamed over Mount Everest, *carrying* fish, crabs, and *molluscs, and*
marine animals.

It was assumed that the Himalayas rose from the bottom of the sea to their present height tens or perhaps
hundreds of millions of years ago, however, numerous facts have emerged from mountains and valleys that tell a
different story. "*Studies on the Ice Age in India and Associated Human Cultures*", published in 1939 by De
Terra with the assistance of T.T. Paterson is demonstration of the fact that the Himalayas were arising during the
Glacial Age and reached their present heights actually in historical times.

In Kashmir, DeTerra discovered sedimentary deposits of an ancient sea bottom that was elevated at places to
an altitude of 5000 feet or more and tilted at an angle of as much as 40° the basin was dragged up by the rise of
the mountain. But this was entirely unexpected: these deposits contained Paleolithic fossils. And this, according
to Swiss geologist, Arnold Heim, would make it plausible that the mountain passes in the Himalayas may have
risen, in the age of man.

The Kashmir valley at the beginning of the Pleistocene was less elevated, and its southern rampart, the Pir
Panjal, must have lacked that Alpine grandeur that enchants the traveller today. Then various formation groups
moved both horizontally and vertically, and the main Himalayas suffered sharp uplift in consequence of which
the Kashmir lake beds were compressed and dragged upward on the slope of the most mobile range. The
Pir Panjal massif that was pushed southward due to not so mobile belt of older rocks. Tilting of terraces and

lacustrine beds indicates a continued uplift of the entire Himalayan tract during the last phases of the Ice Age.

The Himalayas have not yet attained stability or quiescence. In very recent times, the creation of various zones of weakness and strain during uplift has been faced with severe crumpling of the rock-beds and strike of earthquakes. Earthquakes happen when energy stored up along geological faults, like the Himalayan thrust, is suddenly released. The more time passes without seismic release, the more energy accumulates, making a giant earthquake more likely. Of the great Indian earthquakes recorded in history the best known are: *Kashmir, 1552, Delhi, 1720; Calcutta, 1737; Eastern Bengal and the Arakan coast, 1762; Cutch, 1819; Kashmir, 1885; Bengal, 1885; Assam, 1897; Kangra, 1905; North Bihar, 1934; Baluchistan, 1935; Mekran, 1945; and N.E. Assam, 1950.* And the recent ones are *Latur, 1993 and Bhuj 2001.*

The memoirs of many foreign travelers who visited valley in past are testimony to this fact - earthquakes are by no means uncommon in Kashmir as might be expected from its past history. They are tolerably frequent, the shocks are usually very slight; sometimes, however, *they are* very severe, and create great alarm;

Terminology of Earthquakes

Bunil'-dev- long succession of earthquake shocks as destructive as a demon. Bunil'-tsur- violent earthquake which destroys one's home and property. Bunil'-yeth- single solitary earthquake shock.

Source: "A Dictionary of the Kashmiri Languages" by Sir George A. Grierson & Pandita Ishvara Kaul, 1916-1932

people forsake their houses and remain in the open air for hours or even days until the danger is *over*. In olden days in the courtyards of many a villager's houses a temporary wigwam, which was always kept in readiness for shelter in times of shocks, as the dread of another earthquake was always present. The compilation of *kashmiri words* by Sir Grierson gives types of earthquakes which were named in valley, includes a demonic type of earthquake.

Francois Bernier, French doctor of medicine was probably the first to believe that the opening in valley causing the drainage of great lake, Sati-Sar in prehistoric times was the handiwork of violent earthquake, not the creativity of *man (demon) as* referred in the fables of Valley. Bernier accompanied Mogul emperor Aurangzeb's entourage to valley in March 1665. He also confirms that the earthquakes are not uncommon in valley.

Another traveler Moorcraft, on the rolls of East India Company, visited Kashmir in November 1822 and stayed till 1823. Kashmir at that time was just relieved from the tyranny of Afghan rule. Moorcraft presents a depressing picture of wretchedness and decay which had set in environs of valley. He describes the decay of city of Kashmir as "...a confused mass of ill-favoured buildings,.....houses are in general two or three stories high;.....built of unburnt bricks and timber, the former serving for little else than to fill up the interstices of the latter; they are not plastered,mostly in a neglected and ruinous condition,.....walls out of the perpendicular,....pitched roofs threatening to fall.....formed of layers of birch bark covered byearth.....have vegetated..... with grass, flowers."

Moorcraft further goes on to explain that the peculiarity of the construction in Kashmir suggests the occurrence of earthquakes, which are frequent, though not very violent. Only few years later, in 1828, the earthquake caused havoc in the valley-1200 houses were shaken down and 1000 persons were killed. In 1835 G.T.Vigne, an English barrister visited valley, describes the houses in the city *are* built of a framework of wood, for safety during an earthquake. And makes mention of the great earthquake (1828) took place in the second year of Kupa Ram's administration.

Vigne relates an incident regarding the precarious condition of building rendered by earthquakes - "When I was in the valley there was one in particular (building) in the city that still remained upright and isolated amongst the devastation around it, although from its appearance it would not be supposed capable of standing against a breath of wind. Kupa Ram during the earthquake used to go in a boat very often, in hopes of seeing it fall; but to no purpose."

In the last two great earthquakes of 1864 and 1885 in Kashmir, the most violent shocks were felt in an elliptical area whose focuses were Srinagar and *Baramulla*. *The worst earthquake of all in last 120 years* commenced on May 30th 1885 at 3 AM and aftershocks more or less violent were felt up to August 16th. The shock was felt over an area of about 130,000 square miles and its effects were destructive over an area of about 500 square miles. Over 20,000 houses were destroyed and there was general panic, people slept for many days outdoors. It is said that some 3,500 persons were killed, and enormous number of 40,000 cattle, ponies and other domestic animals crushed by falling buildings, landslides.

Arthur Neve a missionary doctor, who arrived in valley in 1882 and served next four decades people of Kashmir, was witness to the earthquake of 1885. A few days after the episode he went through the district collecting the wounded into temporary hospitals, finds the terrible loss of life and destruction. Neve gives first hand account of the destruction "...it was in the uplands near Baramulla that the

earthquake wrought greatest havoc..... villages of Baramulla were leveled to the ground, crushing those who had not time to escape,....sides of the hills were scarred with landslips; forests were seen with trees prostrated; hill tops were crumpled.....looked as if a thirty foot ploughshare had been passed along

them, so regular were deep furrows.”

Baramula had suffered the most, three fourth of the houses in Baramula town were damaged. Large earth fissures were caused, at Laridura in the Krihun Tehsil, a fissure 700 feet long, 300 feet broad and 70 feet deep, occurred in which six houses with all their inmates disappeared.

Seeing the gravity of situation, Maharaja Ranbir Singh distributed thirty thousand rupees among the sufferers for rebuilding their houses and remitted two lakhs of rupees in the land revenue of the Zamindars who had suffered from the catastrophe, writes Walter Lawrence, the famous British Settlement Officer of valley.

Some may suggest that the old style of architecture in Kashmir is not safe to withstand the shocks of an earthquake, but apparently frail structures of wood escape whereas heavier and more massive buildings succumb. Experts warn earthquakes many times more powerful can be expected killing as many as millions in Sub continent. It will be important to predict the strike of earthquakes in advance, so as to limit loss of life.

We may see light in tunnel in future. Earthquakes are said to generate two type of waves - fast moving primary low energy wave P and destructive shear wave S. Scientists are working on P waves to use it for advance warning. But advance warning time will be matter of tens of seconds only, depending on the distance from epicenter. Greater the distance from epicenter, greater will be the time for warning.

Or else, think of deep nuclear detonators to release artificially the buildup of seismic energy at faults in a controlled manner.

A Holiday in the Happy Valley, TR Swinburne Smith, Elder & Co. London, 1907

Burton disappoints separatists

KS Correspondent

NEW DELHI: The visit of known India baiter American Congressman Dan Burton's recent visit to India raised lot of din and ended up in an anti-Climax. Heading a congressional deligation to assess human rights situation in India Mr. Dan Burton had already his fame or infame preceding him as a leading Congressman who has supported the Muslim separatism in Jammu and Kashmir unambigously alongwith other separatist movements in India. News story raising speculation about the actual puprose of his visit circulated all along during his stay in India that he had come here to push the Kathwari Plan or some model of Kashmir Study Group on Kashmir and even to encourage Sikh separatism appeared in the media with prominence. These stories also raised apprehensions about the US role in Kashmir. However, a high profile meeting of Kashmiri leaders with the Mr Dan Burtan alongwith his team of congressional members provided a more balanced insight. The meeting was organised by US embassyin Delhi on 28th November 2005. The Kashmiri leaders invited were President of National Conference Sh. Omar Abdullah, Sh Umar Farooq leader of Hurriet Conference and Dr Ajay Chrungoo Chairman Panun Kashmir. PDP leader Miss Mehbooba Mufti was alsoinvited but she did not attend the meeting. Besides the Kashmiri leaders Human Right activist and feminist Madhu Kishwar, Prof Radha Kumar of Jamia Milia University and prominent bureaucrat Wajahat Habibullah wer also invited to the meeting.

The meeting started with almost neutral remarks of Dan Burton. He informed the participants about the purpose of visit being assessment of human rights situation in the region. He invited the participants to make their views known to the congressional delegation starting with Mr. Umar Farooq the leader of separatists conglomerate Hurriyat Conference (Omar Faction). The views expressed by both Omar Abdullah and Umar Farooq were almost similar and essentially complimentary. Umar Farooq was very subdued in his criticism of India and delived more on the features and natureof the dialogue between India and Pakistan as well as between Hurriyat Conference and Govt. of India He while supporting the dialogue process and engagement between India and Pakistan particularly emphasised about the need of a tripartite dialogue between India, Pakistan and Kashmiris. He sought Mr Burton's special interest in the issue. He also emphasised about the need to demilitarise the Jammu and Kashmir. He emphasised that a huge Indian military presence in Jammu and Kashmir was not required at all because the number of insurgents was just around 4000 in the region.

Mr. Omar Abdullah while supporting the main contentions of Umar Farooq mainly delved upon the recent proposal by Gen. Pervez Musharraf of self governance on two sides of LoC in Jammu and Kashmir. Mr Omar Abdullah was particularly critical of GoI for its rejection of the self-governance proposal made by Pervez Muhyarraf. He supported the proposal and reiterated his party stand of granting maximum autonomy to the state.

Surprisingly both the presentation by the Kashmiri Muslim leaders were less focussed on human rights. Dr. Ajay Chrungoo Chairmanof Panun Kashmir made a presentastion which covered a broader spectrum of issues involved in the Kashmir problem. vis-a-vis the human rights abuses in the state. He pointed out that Kashmiri Muslim leadership were nourishing a politics which was basically exclusivist and comunal. "The first expression of the so-called freedom struggle in the Kashmir valley has been the expulsion of Kashmiri Hindu minority through a systematic campaign of religious cleansing." He said the state centric approach towards the human rights gives a lopsided view of human rights." Human Rights are a universal responsiblity of the state, organs of the society and the individual", he said while emphasising that in the expulsion of Kashmiri Hindus the organs of Muslim society in Kashmir actively participated. He informed the congressional delegation that through a

systematic campaign of kill one and scare ten the religious cleansing campaign was unleashed in Kashmir Valley. Since then entire residential habitat of Kashmir Hindus has been put to plunder and loot and burning. Hundreds of temples have been destroyed, Dr Ajay informed the delegates and further elaborated that what the world witnessed in the destruction of Bamiyan Buddhas has been happening in Kashmir since last one and half decade. Dr Ajay clearly stated to the delegation that the underlying ideology of the separatism in the state was that of intolerance. It had started with the expulsion of Kashmiri Hindus and has subsequently killed Muslims as well. He told the delegates that more than 11 thousand Kashmir Muslim families have been the victims of terrorism Dr Ajay asked for the comprehensive delegitimisation of religious identity politics in the context of India and asserted that any concession to it would unhinge Indian democracy which has provided the democratic dispensation to the second largest Muslim population of world for more than 4 decades. He also stressed that the solution to Kashmir problem should necessarily address the comprehensive and permanent reversal of genocide of Kashmiri Hindus. He warned that if this issue was ignored we will be creating the most dangerous exclusivist society in Kashmir Valley. He finally completed his presentation by asserting that what is happening in Kashmir is a relentless effort to entrench Jihad in Himalayas which if not tackled will lead to creation of many Afghanistans. The presentation created a profound impact on the delegates.

Mr Wajahat Habibullah asked the Congressional team to look at the Positive aspects of situation in the state where successful elections were held and said had everybody participate in the elections process and let the elected representatives decide about the future of Kashmir. Almost Similar views were expressed by Prof. Radha Kumar who wanted the positive movement in the peace process between India and Pakistan to be appreciated. Prof. Radha Kumar cautioned the congressmen about the negative fall out of the take over of relief and rehabilitation in the earthquake affected areas of Jammu and Kashmir by the Jihadis.

Miss Madhu Kishwar told the congressional team that the debate on Jammu and Kashmir should not be Kashmir Centric but should include Jammu Ladakh and the diversity of the state.

The meeting was perhaps a setback for separatists as Mr Dan Burton chose to distance from the position of separatists in Kashmir by asserting before his departure that democracy was the way forward and ruled out the option of plebiscite. His departure statement perhaps also disappointed the hawkish opposition to his visit to India within the cross section of Indian political class.

SYMPOSIUM

'Peace Process-Detrimental to Peace

PK organises Seminar on Peace Process

KS Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Speaking at the seminar organised by Panun Kashmir at the India International Centre New Delhi on 1st October the former Defence Minister George Fernandes candidly accepted the drawbacks of the peace process between India and Pakistan, "I have heard all the speakers who made in-depth analysis of the ongoing peace process and the dangers that overlook all of us. The peace process was started by NDA government and I was a cabinet minister in that government. I am bound by the oath of secrecy. But I will say that despite whatever way I might have expressed my opinion in the cabinet about the peace process. I share the responsibility of all the pitfalls and failures of the decisions taken. I can make a broad comment that I agree with the main points of criticism of Peace Process voiced here".

The theme of the seminar was Peace Process: Where will it lead to? The main speakers in the seminar besides George Fernandes were Mr Jagmohan former governor of J&K and former cabinet minister in NDA government, Dr Brahma Chellany eminent political and defence analyst, Dr Ajay Chrunoo Chairman of Panun Kashmir, and Sh SK Tickoo leader of Awami League.

The seminar was inaugurated by Dr Shakti Bhan vice-chairman of Panun Kashmir. While welcoming the speakers and the participants in the seminar Dr Shakti Bhan explained the purpose of conducting the seminar.

"We have seen that only one perspective has been flaunted to describe this peace process. Any alternative view point which is not in line with this perspective is been discouraged. We want the peace-process to be seen in the holistic perspective". She raised certain basic questions about the process and set the agenda for seminar, "Are we heading for a joint control of J&K by India and Pakistan? Are we gradually seeing the unfolding of Kathwari Plan?, What is the meaning of porous borders when war is being waged by Pakistan from across? What is the role of Kashmiri Hindus, Jammu, Ladakh in such a future dispensation? I leave these questions to the speakers to delve upon".

In his eloquent and detailed presentation Dr Brahma Chellany made a scathing attack on the peace process and said we are seeing the gradual erosion of national will and a sustained national humiliation. "Pakistan is having a clear objective and they are having a sustained policy to pursue it. But lack of clear objective marks our policy about Kashmir and national security. Our approach is adhoc, lackadishal and timid." As per Dr. Chellany, the peace process is to be seen in the broader geopolitics and bigger developments have not to be missed. He criticised the Indo-US accord on Nuclear issues and said that it will harm national interests and undermine the

minimum deterrence doctrine pursued so far. Dr. Chellany said US was actively influencing the Indo-Pak engagement. He said Condoleza Rice's unscheduled meeting with Manmohan Singh and the telephone call of President Bush to him were not courtesy calls. US pressure tactics on India to make it concede vital concessions in Kashmir. Dr Chellany said the 3 hour meeting of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh with non-entities like Hurriat Conference has taken Kashmir dispute to a different level which was unimaginable earlier. He said it has serious implications for integrity of the country.

Former Union Minister and Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Sh. Jagmohan said that the country required the rejuvenation of National Character. "Duplicity has marked the behaviour of our leaders on vital issues as national security". Mr Jagmohan said that the National Conference leader Sh. Omar Abdullah had recently discussed in a seminar organised by the *Statesman* group that Kashmiri Pandits were expelled under a systematic design. 'If this is the understanding of NC leaders now then why were they blaming me for the displacement of Kashmiri Hindus'. Mr Jagmohan asserted that nation needed people of character imbued with vision and patriotism to handle problems like Kashmir.

Dr. Ajay Chrungoo in his presentation placed in proper perspective the peace process. He said that the very architecture of peace process between India and Pakistan accorded parity to Pakistan to decide the fate Muslim majority state of Jammu and Kashmir. "This is a critical concession similar to Congress conferring right to Muslim League to decide about the Muslims of India which straightway lead to partition of India in 1947," Dr Ajay said. He further said that peace process was being pushed by the logic of violence and even the logic of nuclear blackmail. Dr Ajay said that the violence has remained markedly in a visible range despite the ceasefire, building of fences along the LoC, international coalition against terrorism and Pakistan's commitment that it will not allow terrorism to be exported from its soil. Dr. Ajay said radicalisation of Muslim society in Kashmir has taken place at a rapid pace and Kashmir is witnessing most barbaric violence against civilians. Dr Ajay said entire architecture of peace process is to be reviewed.

Sh SK Tickoo leader of Awami league set the tone for the debate by making a detailed presentation. He said that Indians are suffering from 'Give-Give Syndrome' and we have been unilaterally conceding on vital issues involving sovereignty, integrity and national security.; He said that the nationalistic segments in J&K including a large section of Kashmir Muslims have been virtually abandoned by the state while they have to withstand the organised assault from terrorists. He was amazed that GoI accorded legitimacy to a faction of Hurriat Conference which cannot win even two seats in the state by making them debate the future of Kashmir with the Prime Minister of India. The audience was surprised when George Fernandes unambiguously expressed his support to Kashmiri Pandit cause. He said no solution of Kashmir Problem can take place without KP participation. "Panun Kashmir means our own Kashmir and KP's should be given Panun Kashmir", George said to the full cheer of the audience.

Sh. Vijay Tickoo vice-chairman of Panun Kashmir and incharge Delhi unit thanked the participants and promised a series of such public awareness programmes in the future. Sh. Dileep Koul Hindi writer and free lance artist conducted the proceedings as an anchor.

Quadripartition of J&K the only peaceful solution

KS Correspondent

Panun Kashmir organised a seminar at India International Centre on 26th November at New Delhi. Second in the series of seminars initiated by Panun Kashmir on various facets of Kashmir problem and national security, its theme was Reorganisation of J&K state: The peaceful solution. The main speakers who spoke in the seminar were Sh Balraj Madhok veteran leader of Bhartiya Jana Sangh Dr. Subrahmanum Swamy former Union Minister and President of Janta Party, Mr Thupsan Chiwang Member Parliament Lok Sabha from Ladakh, Sh. VK Dhar former bureaucrat and member of National Minority Commission and Dr. Ajay Chrungoo Chairman Panun Kashmir.

The welcome address was made by Dr. Shakti Bhan vice-chairperson of Panun Kashmir and President of daughters of Vitasta. She welcomed the speakers and participants in the seminar and said that it was high time that the debate on Kashmir should become broad based. 'If Govt. of India, and all the political parties are willing to discuss such solutions like Independence of Jammu and Kashmir, shared sovereignty, maximum autonomy, all of which are basically secessionist, why do they avoid the nationalist solutions like reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir. Panun Kashmir has started this task of developing awareness about the relevance of quadripartition of the state as a definite peaceful solution" to Kashmir problem.

The founder of Bhartiya Jana Sangh Prof. Balraj Madhok while appreciating the role of Panun Kashmir claimed that this political option was his brain child.

He said that while initially Kashmiri Pandits were skeptical about the demand, it was assuring the entire community was accepting it now. He delved in detail about the genesis of Kashmir problem and blamed Jawahar

Lal Nehru. He described the conflict between India and Pakistan as a civilisational conflict and warned that any wrong step would lead to disastrous consequences for India. He said the artificial union of Jammu and Kashmir has to be done away with and state of Jammu, UT of Ladakh and Panun Kashmir need to be created to solve the Kashmir problem permanently.

Sh. Thupsan Chiwang the MP from Ladakh welcomed Panun Kashmir for initiating inter community collaboration and stressed the need of joint ventures between people from Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmiri Pandits. He described Kashmiri Pandits as the pioneers for development of political consciousness in Ladakh. He paid his tributes to Shridhar Joo Duloo and described him as the founder of the movement for Union Territory of Ladakh. Sh Thupsan Chiwang said that he would take special care for developing proper relationship with Panun Kashmir and said that Ladakhis support the cause of Kashmiri Pandits.

Dr. Ajay Chrungoo in his address dealt in detail about the need for creation of Union Territory of Panun Kashmir. At the outset he described the Change of the Chief Minister in the State as blowing of fresh air. He said, "the initial policy pronouncements of Chief Minister are bold and imbued with Nation Spirit. He has described violence in Kashmir as terrorism. He has created lot of hope by his clear understanding of the issue and his remark that he will describe even his father as a terrorist if he indulges in violence are having a profound meaning. Mr Azad has very subtly distanced from the policy of his predecessor on the return of Kashmiri Pandits and the community has welcomed it. His emphasis on governance with a national outlook is a correct priority. We wish him well,". Dr. Chrungoo said the reorganisation of the state into four parts including Union Territory of Panun Kashmir should be seen as a means of empowering the social groups in the state of Jammu and Kashmir which owe their allegiance to India. He said the violence in Jammu and Kashmir is a concerted attempt to dismantle the Northern Frontier of India to pave way for eastward movement of Muslim power. The quadripartition of J&K is a fool proof mechanism of stabilising the northern frontier and not a process of compromise to be struck with separatists. Dr Ajay Chrungoo also cautioned about trying to treat the historical events in 1947 and afterwards in a myopic way. We have to look at not only the role of Nehru but the entire galaxy of leadership at that time," he said. 'Creation of Panun Kashmir', Dr Ajay said, "will stop the continuous process of genocide of Kashmiri Pandits".

Sh. V.K. Dhar former member of Minority Commission expressed concern over the apathy of the successive governments in dealing with the issue of displacement. He said, that lack of will and perspectives mires the government outlook. Sh Dhar insisted that KP's should calibrate there goals and accordingly plan their movement.

Sh.Subrahmanium Swamy who was the Chief Guest for the programme described Kashmir issue in its international legal perspective. He said accession was perfectly legal and so there is nothing like Kashmir problem. He said that leadership of the nation has failed to demonstrate the required determination and grit to convey to Pakistan and rest of the world that Kashmir's accession to India is irrevocable. 'If we would have bombed PoK when the first terrorist attack was enacted on our soil a clear signal would have gone across.

Failure to do so has cost us heavily," Dr Swamy said. He described the struggle of Kashmiri Pandits as a movement of renaissance for Hindus of India and stressed the creation of Panun Kashmir as a national necessity. He offered his services for filing Public Interest Litigation on vital aspects of Kashmir problem.

At the beginning of the seminar the General Secretary of Kashmir Samiti Delhi made a eloquent presentation and extended his support to homeland demand of Panun Kashmir. Sh. Vijay Tikoo vice-president Panun Kashmir made vote of thanks towards the end of the programme and said that a series of such seminars and public awareness programmes will be held during this year in Delhi. Sh. Vijay Mattoo a well known TV anchor and news reader conducted the proceedings with flair and deftness.

Naubandhana Tirtha

Konsarnag—Myth, Legend and History-I

Dr. R.K. Tamiri

I was in summer (July) of 1982 that I visited the enchanting high altitude lake of Konsarnag. A decade and a half later when I drifted into the field of folkloristics and history I 'discovered' that in my trek to this beautiful lake I had accomplished the pilgrimage to the historic *Naubandhana Tirtha*.

Konsarnag, over 2 miles long and located at an altitude of 12,000 ft, has been worshipped since times immemorial as Visnupad (foot of Visnu). In *Nilmat Times* it was called by its Sanskrit name Kramasaras or Kramsara (Kramafirststep, *Saras* lake). Since it is supposed to mark the footstep of Visnu, it is the main objective of the Naubandhana pilgrimage.

VisnuPad Legend:

Konsarnag lake is one of the two places in Kashmir Valley that is associated with worship of 'Visnupad'. The other shrine of 'Visupad' is located in the foothills of Pir Panjal at Fatehpur, in Dooru-Shahbad tehsil, not much away from Verinag (Nilkunda) Spring. Fatehpur shrine houses as per local folklore, footprints of Visnu on a stone.

In the Vedic literature (Rigvedic verse I22.17) mentions three steps of Visnu. According to Sakapuni, Visnu placed his steps in a 3-fold manner, on the earth (as fire) in the atmosphere (as the lightning) and in the sky as the sun. Visnu is chiefly extolled for his three strides with which he traversed the world. The *Mahabharata* speaks of him as the presiding deity of motion. The *Natyashastra* of Bharata applies to him the epithet *amitagata*, one with unrestrained movement and the earth is often described as having been trodden by Visnu in the past. In the epic-purana period a few holy spots were supposed to bear the markings of the feet of Visnu, whose main attribute is his power of striding. Scholar BM Baru explains *Visnupada* as an astronomical term, when the sun is on the rising point (*Samarohana*) and setting (*Gayasiras*).

Stories about a hill bearing the footprints of Visnu were current in the days of Yaska. *Visnumriti* mentions *Visnupada* alongwith *Godavari*, *Gomati*, *Vipasa* etc. besides *Gaya*.

An important aspect of *Gaya* pilgrimage (where a person can perform his own *sradha*), is visit to *Visnupada* temple (bearing foot-prints of Visnu). This temple existed in 4th Century AD, but the temple in its present condition belongs to Gupta period. However, Buchanan draws our attention to an inscription that says the temple was constructed by King *Jayasimha* (1128-49 AD) of Kashmir in honour of the footprints of deity *Dattatreya* (a form of Visnu).

The epics refer to a *Visnupada* situated in the north. *Mahabharata* carries as many as six references to it, three of which speak of it as a spot on the top of a northern hill. Historian *Suvira Jaiswal* says, "At present we cannot determine its exact location, it appears to have been in the north".

Popularity of worship of *Visnupada* in Kashmir is certainly due to sway of Buddhism in the region. *Jaiswal* argues," the practice of dedicating the footprints of Visnu and of erecting shrines over them became popular certainly due to the Buddhist influence. It was later adopted by *Vaisnavism* in which Visnu's foot was already much exalted. But it was not popular among *Vaisnavas*, as dearth of available evidence indicates".

Dessication of Satisar Legend:

Kashmir's religious tradition locates on the peaks in the vicinity of *Konsarnag* lake the seat from which Visnu, Siva and Brahma fought the water demon *Jalodbhava* and dessicated *Satisaras*. The western most and the highest peak (15523 ft) is said to have been the site of *Naubandhana tirtha*. In the Kashmir version of the deluge Visnu in his *Matsya* (fish) avatara had bound to this peak the *Nau* (ship into which *Parvati/Sati* had converted herself) to save the seeds of beings from destruction. *Konsarnag* lake lies at the foot of this peak and to the northwest of it.

Nilmat Story:

As per the legend narrated by *Nilmat Mahatmya*, at the end of *Manvantra* (one of the 71 *Caturyugas*) all the movable/immovable creations of the earth were destroyed completely, sparing of course the mountains. The whole of *Jambudvipa* was effaced, the earth turned into a sea. After the destruction Lord *Mahadeva* stayed all around the world in the form of water.

At that time, the Goddess *Sati* assumed the form of a boat. The future *Manu*, through magical power, placed all the seeds in that boat. Visnu in *Matsya* form dragged off that boat by means of his horn, fastened it to the top of a mountain and left for an unknown place. This mountain peak came to be called *Naubandhana* peak-holy and destroyer of all sins and fears.

The goddess *Sati* in boat form becomes the earth and on that earth comes into being a lake of clear water, *Satidesa*, 6 *Yojanas* long and half of that in breadth, enjoyable, heart-enrapturing and the sporting place of the gods.

Indra was sporting once on the bank of *Konsarnag*, accompanied and his wife *Saci*. *Daitya* Chief *Sangraha*, who was exceedingly difficult of being conquered came there while *Indra* was sporting. He was aroused by *Saci* and wanted to carry her away. This angered *Indra*. In the fight between *Indra* and *Sangraha* that lasted a year, the *Daitya* Chief was killed and *Indra* ascended to heaven.

However, just before his death, *Sangraha* discharged his semen into the lake. A child was born in the waters out of the semen of the evil-minded *Daitya* Chief. As he was born in the water, the child came to be called *Jalodbhava* (demon-child). Due to compassion, the *Nagas* led by their chief *Nil* brought up that child in the waters.

Having propitiated the God *Pitamaha* with penance, *Jalodbhava* obtained from him a triple boon, viz. immortality in the water, magical power and unparalleled prowess. The *Daitya* chief devoured all the human beings who lived in various regions near the lake. The people fled away from Kashmir due to fear.

At that time *Kashyapa* was on a pilgrimage of Kashmir to visit the holy spots. *Nil* went to meet *Kashyapa* at a place called *Kanakhala*. On his visit to holy *Visnupada*, *Nil* pleaded before *Kashyapa*," Now that imprudent fellow (*Jalodbhava*) who obtained boons from Brahma of imperceptible birth, ignores me like anything and I am

incapable of keeping him under control due to the boon of the lord of three worlds.”

Kashyapa accompanied by Nila, the Lord of Nagas reached the abode of Brahma and complain to Vasudeva, Isvara, Ananta about the activities of Jalodbhava. The God *Pitamaha* tells Nila, the sage of unparalleled valour, “we shall go to Naubandhan a to subdue him. Then the God Kesava (Visnu) will undoubtedly kill him”.

Gods mounted their respective Vahans (vehicles), Hari on Tarkasya, Hara along with his wife on bull, Brahma on Swan and the two Nagas on the cloud. They went after Jalodbhava. Kashyapa went by his supernatural power. Indra heard that and, in the company of the hosts of gods, went to that place where Kesava had gone. Other smaller gods also came on their respective mounts to witness the fight.

Having reached Nauban-dhana, Visnu adopted a firm position. As Jalodbhava heard the sound of the retinue of the gods, knowing himself to be imperishable in the water he did not come out. The pleased Madhusudana, having learnt that the water-demon would not come out, entered Naubhandna in the company of Gods. Rudra took position on Naubhandna peak, Hari on the southern peak, Brahma on the northern peak and the gods and the asuras following them.

With gods having taken up the positions, God Janardana implored Ananta to kill the demon,” Breaking forth Himalaya today with the plough,make soon this lake devoid of water”. Ananta broke forth Himalaya with the plough.When the water of the lake was disappearing, Jalodbhava practised magic to create darkness all around. Then the God Siva, holding the sun and the moon in his hands, brought the world to light.With the vanishing of darkness, Hari through yogic powers assumed another body and fought with the demon. There was a terrible fight between Visnu and the demon with trees and peaks of mountains.Hari cut off forcibly the head of the demon and Brahma felt pleased.

Brahma, Visnu and Sambhu gave their own names to the peaks of which they had taken their positions. So the peaks came to be called Brahma, Visnu and Mahesvara. That which is Naubandhana peak is Sankara. The one on its right side is celebrated as Hari and the left one as Brahma. The Gods declared, “whoever shall see you after taking bath in the lake Kramasara shall see three of us on the mountain and will go to heaven.” As per tradition even the evil-doers are freed by seeing these peaks. Different places on the peaks are worshipped as hermitages erected by Brahma, Kashyapa, Mahadeva, Ananta, the sun and the moon and Hari. Mahadeva's hermitage is located on the spot where Visnu stood and obtained victory at that time. Hari's hermitage is celebrated as Narsimha.

After the slaying of the demon, the Sudarsana wheel, intoxicated with the blood of Jalodbhava, wandered in the deserted land and was caught by Sankara. The latter handed over the discuss to Jnarndana. The latter made his abode on the head of Jalodbhava. He erected a divine image, on which both Kesava and Siva-the destroyer of all sins-are represented.

Kashyapa then declared land as habitable, holy and charming. He asked Nagas to live in the company of Pisachas. When Nila, the Naga Lord reminded sage Kasypa about war-like nature and evil-doings of Pisachas, Sage Kasypa explained to him the role of Nkumbha, the noble lord of Pischas appointed by Kubera to keep Pisachas in check. The Sage Kasyapa discussed with Nila the compromise, whereby Pischas would live for six months in the Valley.

Nilmat assigns two explanations for the Valley being named as Kashmir. Kasyapa played an instrumental role in reclaiming Valley land, while Balarama took out the water through the plough-wielder. Kasypa is also called Prajapati. Both Prajapati as well as water are called Ka.

Source of Vyeth (Vitasta, Jehlum, Hydspes):

Veshau, the ancient Visoka, which later on turns into Vitasta, receives streams coming from the northern slope of the Pir Panjal range between Sedau and Banihal passes. Its traditional source is placed in the Kramasaras or Konsarnag. This is the third aspect of veneration for this lake. Visoka, means griefless (free from pain). Traveller GT Vigne crudely describes it as meaning as river of Visnu. Nilmat describes Visoka as Uma. Later, after worshipping Lakshmi to purify Kashmir Veshan was glorified as Visoka. The fine waterfall which is formed by the stream of Konsarnag, not far from the village of Sedau, is known as Ahrbal. In Nilmat times it was called Akhor bila, ‘the mouse-hole’. Aharbal is its present name.

Abul Fazl, a minister at Emperor Akbar's court,in his '*The AINI Akbari*' describes Veshau as “the name of a stream which issues picturesquely from an orifice in a mountain and at the same place is a declivity down which the waters tumble from a height of 20 yards with a thundering roar”. Abul Fazl (16th century) and GT vigne (1834) have documented sanctity of Aharbal. Abul Fazl writes,” Hindu devotees throw themselves down from its summit and with utmost fortitude sacrifice their lives, in the belief that it is a means of securing their spiritual welfare”.

GT Vigne says, “Arabul (Aharbal) is a place of peculiar sanctity with the Hindus and as such, is frequently visited by them, though perhaps less now than formerly, before the prosperity of the Valley was on the wane, and the precipice overhanging its flood has been upon several occasions the last resting place for the feet of the Hindu suicide.”

Who discovered Amarnath

By MM Munshi

It has been clearly documented in history that Amar Nath Shrine has been visited by pilgrims since ancient times including a ruler of Kashmir between 34 BC and 17AD . (Kalhana's Rajtarangini Book II . Verses 130-141).

Narrative of Amarnath Mahatmyas and other related composite Mahatmyas in BhrngiSamita (translated by Dr.Amar Nath Shastri on pages (156 to 225) proves beyond doubt that Amarnath Shrine was an important pilgrimage during 2nd and third AD century. Mention of Amreshvara (Amarnath) in Nilamata Parana along with other *tirthas* of Kashmir also proves that Amarnath ji Shrine was well known during 5th - 6th century AD.

Kalhana while referring to the legend of Sushram Naga (Sheeshnag) states that (Sheeshnag) and Zamtirnag are seen to this day by pilgrims proceeding to Amreshvara (Amarnathji) i.e. 1148-49 A.D. (the period of compilation to Kalhana's Rajtarangini (Taranga I verse 267).

Muslim rule was established in Kashmir in 1339 and conversions to Islam started by the end of 14th century AD during the rule of Sikandar *butshikan*. How on earth Muslim shepherds/ Maliks could have discovered Amarnathji Shrine which was visited by pilgrims in early historic, if not prehistoric times.

It is believed that Sikandar Butshikan after desecrating, damaging and destroying most of the Hindu temples of Kashmir valley was proceeding to Amarnath ji cave for the same purpose but turned back from Ganeshbal (Lidau Valley) and after reaching Vijesvara (Bijbhera) repented his deeds.

The fact that Zain-ul-abdin (1420-1470), pious Muslim ruler of Kashmir visited Amarnathji has been documented by his chronicler Jonaraja (Jona's Rajtarangini Bombay Edition).

Ali Mardan Khan the Mughul governor of Kashmir during the rule Emperor Shahjahan (1635-58 AD) has derisively commented on the so called madness and religious eccentricism of the streams of the faithfulls barefooted, illclad winding their way in rain and snow through slush and tracheous routes to behold what was not a god in a cave. However, he dreamed of Mahesevara (Shiva) and changed from sceptic to a firm believer and compiled beautiful persian couplets in praise of Shiva.

The French physician Francis Bernier who visited Kashmir in the company of Emperor Aurangzeb in 1663 after visiting number of interesting places in Kashmir was about two days march from some place in Sind Valley to a grotta (Cave) full of wonderful congeliations (frozen things) apparently Amarnathji Cave was recalled by the emperor. Smith who has edited the 2nd edition of Bernier's book has identified the cave as that of Amarnathji (Travels in Moghul Empire) by Francis Bernier.

Vigne in his book "Travels in Kashmir, Ladakh and Iskardu",

1842 says "The ceremony of the cave of Amarnath takes place on 15th of the Hindu month of Sawan.... Not only Hindus of Kashmir but those from Hindustan of every rank and caste can be seen collecting together and traveling up the valley of Lidar towards the celebrated cave which from his description must have been the place which Bernier intended to visit but was prevented. Vigne himself tried to visit Amarnath ji cave in late season of 1840 during the rule of Sikh Maharaja Sher Singh but was forced to return from Vawjan due to bad weather. From his narrative we can easily conclude that pilgrimage was in vogue before 1840 - 41 and pilgrims from the plains outside Kashmir Valley visited Amarnathji in great numbers.

It has baffled the Kashmiri Pandits, to be told that this Yatra, holy cave was lost for quite a long time, some theorists like Pervez Dewan have gone on to claim that Amarnathji Yatra had been lost for thousands of years, others have been saying few hundreds of years, historically both look fantastic. There is no mention of Yatra having been banned. It is not possible to opine that Zain-ul-Din or Akbar or their descendents could have done that. Afghans took over from Mughals in 1753, they ruled Kashmir for 66 years. It is here that whole story of lost and found is hinged.

None of the lost theorists is committal about the time the Yatra and hoicy cave got lost, about rediscovery of the Shrine they have given conflicting dates. Accordingly to ON Chrungoo the Amarnathji Cave was rediscovered about 1600 AD and Yatra again remained in abeyance during the Afghan rule 1753 - 1819. Yatra was resumed only during the reign of Maharaja Gulab Singh (Pilgrimage to Amarnath Daily Excelsior 06.08.2000). Parvez Dewan in his article "Discovery of Lord Shiva's temple" Daily Excelsior says that Amarnathji cave was rediscovered some time between 1750 - 1775. Maliks themselves claim to have rediscovered the cave by 1775 i.e. Afghan rule which is constrained by the adversity of that time as Afghans who ruled Kashmir between 1753 - 1819 persecuted Kashmiris in general and Hindus in particular, would not have taken kindly to Maliks or anybody else for discovering or rediscovering a Hindu or a Buddhist Shrine. Moreover theorists of lost and found have given contradictory names of the Muslim shepherd who rediscovered the shrine as Adam Malik, Buta Malik and Akram Malik.

As the claims about timing names etc. are contradictory these cannot be accepted as factual. We have positive evidence from Vigne that pilgrimage was in full swing before Gulab Singh appeared on the scene. We have only few gaps of non-mention of the Yatra for few decades in the otherwise continuous Yatra. No community loses its

collective memory in matter of few decades.

It could have been a low key affair during political upheavals or after natural calamities or catastrophes but lost never.

The concept of Shrine having been discovered / rediscovered by Maliks / Muslim Shepherds has to be understood taking into account the History and background of Maliks and not to be confused with that of Kashmiri Shepherds who were and are still known as Pohuls or Choupans. According to Baron Von Hugel (1840) and R.K. Parimoo (History of Muslim Rule in Kashmir). Malik is a title of honour and distinction given to successors of Davarpatis, Margesas (Later called Magres) holding charge of watch-cum-military stations on feudal basis on the important routes and passes, entering and leaving Kashmir, by the independent Sultans of Kashmir and also to other clans like Chaks, Rainas, Dars for latter's loyal service. After the annexation of Kashmir by Mughals in 1586 A.D. most of the Maliks, Rainas, Magreys and Chak clans etc. who had fought against the former were hunted, killed and banished from Kashmir, some of them escaped to remote and inaccessible hills and valleys to avoid persecution. But those who later submitted themselves before Akbar and took the oath of loyalty were allowed to resume the duty of guarding the routes, administration and even judiciary. All routes except the Baramulla - Muzaffarabad route remained closed during the Afghan rule.

With the advent of Dogra rule in 1846, opening up of all the routes and gradual establishment of regular police posts at vulnerable places, the ancestral occupation of Maliks came to an end. Since the latter part of 19th century the Maliks had to content themselves with guiding and escorting the pilgrims to Amarnath Ji, Harmukh, probably to Sharda in Kishenganga valley and other places of Pilgrimage. The allotment of a part of offering , at the Amarnath shrine, could have been in lieu of these services.

Lawrence in Valley of Kashmir mentions that pilgrims to Amarnath were joined by Brahmins at Mattan and further up at Batkot the Maliks used to take charge of the pilgrimage. According to Lawrence Valley of Kashmir (1895) the Maliks were supposed to keep the track in order, guide and escort the pilgrims and carry sick ones and ensure that nothing was stolen, and received one third of the offerings at the Amarnath Ji Shrine. The other two shares used to go to Pandits of Mattan and Giri mahants of Amritsar who used to and still lead the pilgrimage with Chari Mubarak. Lawrence does not mention any where that share of offerings to Maliks was in lieu of their having 'discovered/rediscovered' the cave. There is no mention of receipt of rasum rahdari from pilgrims nor grants from the State Govt. for the services rendered by Maliks. Apparently the share seems to have been received by Maliks for the services rendered. Neither Lawrence, Vigne, Montgomery nor others have mentioned that Amarnath ji Cave was lost from memory or was discovered -rediscovered by Maliks / Muslims Shepherds . The lost theory is a wild conjecture that does not stand any test. The history of Amarnathji pilgrimage to be depicted on the plaque at the war to be built in front of the Shrine should be based on actual historical research from authentic documents and not on hearsay for petty reasons. It may amount to distortion of history and suppression of facts , to presume that Amarnathji Shrine was discovered by Maliks/Muslim shepherds. It is prayed that distortion of history of the Amarnathji Shrine should not be depicted on the Dewar or any other structure to be built at or on way to the Shrine.

My years in Journalism-A Memoir

By Shambo Nath Gurkha

(Shri SN Gurkha joined Journalism in 1954. On completion of his five decades in journalism, he visits down memory lane to recapture his early life and engagement with Urdu journalism for our readers. Presently, he lives as a refugee in Nagrota camp- The Editor)

Our family lived in Budhgaer quarter of downtown Srinagar. This locality was a predominantly Pandit locality as were many other parts of the old city. This place was once the seat of power of King Rinchin, a Buddhist fugitive from Ladakh, who ascended the throne of Kashmir in 14th Century. The locality derives its name from King Rinchin.

I was born in Razdan family of the same locality, but was given in adoption to Gurkha family. Gurkha surname/nickname is shared by some members of the majority community too. Originally, Gurkhas were Kauls, with Gotra of Swami Kaushik. Initially these Kauls adopted the appellation 'Waguzaris' and finally the Gurkhas. This is the way most of the surnames of Kashmiris have evolved.

My father Pt. Shridhar Kaul Gurkha worked in the Accountant General's office as Superintendent. He had read up to matriculation. He and his cousin Pt. Bal Kak set up a joint business, titled 'Gwash Lal-Vishnjo (father of Pt. Shridhar joo) and Sons'. This firm dealt in Import-Export business in items like handicrafts, Saffron, Musk, Rafal and Pashmina.

Pt. Janki Nath Trisal, son of Pt. Shridhar Joo's sister used to stay at the parental house of his mother. After passing F.Sc., my father sent him and Balkak to Lahore to learn the trade of Soap manufacturing. On return, they set up a unit, titled. Himalaya Soap Works' at Zainakadal. Pt. Kashyap Bandhu took great pride in our entrepreneurial initiative. Through his efforts, Mr. VN Mehta, the then minister for Revenue allotted 4 kanals of

nazool land at Shireen Bagh Karanagar, where Dental College stands today, for 40 years. Modern machinery was installed, when the unit shifted to the new place. This soap became quite popular. After sometime our family added a Hosiery/Weaving Unit, 'Mahalaxmi Hosiery and Weaving Mills! Initially, we used to import these items from Ludhiana. Peer Yahya Shah, a labour union leader who later rose to be Deputy Minister for Industry, was our employee. Subsequently, we installed a candle manufacturing unit, 'Moonlight Candle Works'.

I had my primary education at Govt. School Rangteng and passed matriculation from Bagh Dilawar Khan School in 1940. Punjab University used to conduct these examinations. I joined Sri Pratap College for further studies and passed F.A. in 1942-43. Among my schoolmates who reached prominent positions in later life were Mr. Moti Lal Sopori (secretary in J&K Govt.), Poshkar Nath Bhan (an ace broadcaster, and an artist of repute), Mr. Kashi Nath Bakshi (a philanthropist), Pirzada Ghulam Nabi (Chief Engineer Power Development), Mohd. Abdulla Qadri (Deputy AG, Himachal Pradesh), Janki Nath Thusoo (Secretary J&K Govt.). After the installation of unit at the new place, our family also shifted to Karanagar, where we lived in the vicinity of 'Stone House' of Kilams and Warikoos. I was married in 1948 in Zalpuri family of Rainawari. We continued to live in this house till 1952. In 1967 disturbances our Karan Nagar house was put to arson.

Our family business worked well. The government helped by providing subsidy on raw materials, offering tax concessions and imposing heavy duty on imported soap. In 1953, Shri GL Dogra, the cabinet minister favoured the firm of Kishanchand-Bhola Nath of Amritsar, which manufactured Soap 999 and reduced the import duty. Gurkhas could not compete against this firm. Family disputes in our family and the competition ruined our business. I had been associated with family business from 1943-1952. I was jobless and shifted to Rainawari.

Journalism:

During my adolescence years, I was acquainted well with Milap, Martand and other prominent Urdu weeklies except PN Bazaz's Hamdard. Pt. Kashyap Bandhu was quite close to our family and often visited us since we were the financiers of Martand and Yuvak Sabha. Bandhuji suggested to me to look for employment somewhere. We had once 70 people in our employment. To serve some employer in a subordinate position looked humiliating to me. I sought his advice to join the profession of journalism. This was the time when there was little scope in this profession..

I joined apprenticeship for Katib under the supervision of my brother Shri Kashi Nath Razdan. He was rated among the best calligraphists of northern India of those times. I worked hard to gain the experience in this field. This lasted for one year. My brother wanted me to join Shama, a well-known Urdu periodical. Meanwhile a vacancy in the local daily 'Khidmat' had been advertised. I joined the paper, at a remuneration of Rs 40 a month.

'Khidmat' was a pro-government newspaper, owned by the ruling National Conference. Since the headquarters of National Conference was at Mujahid Manzil, the editorial office of 'Khidmat' and the 'New Kashmir Press' were also housed here. After some time 'Khidmat' office was shifted to Bund area. Subsequently, it was taken over by the Congress Party. Its editor was Maulana Syed Masoodi. After the dismissal of Sheikh Abdullah in 1953, Mr. Mohammad Amin Pandit functioned as editor for while. During the editorship of Shri NL Wattal, Mr MA Pandit worked as joint editor. Mr Pandit was honest in dealings and was a sound administrator. The paper had three brilliant Assistant editors—Shri Bansi Nirdosh (News Editor), Sofi Ghulam Mohd, Sh. Makhan Lal Mahaw. Mr Nirdosh was a literary genius. His play "Dechirant" became quite popular. Nirdosh was helpful to his colleagues. He engaged in bitter polemics with Pt. RC Abhay, and the latter had finally to concede. Nirdosh worked partime in *Aftab* also.

Sofi Sahib was a well-known short-story writer in Kashmiri. The literary talents of Messers Nirdosh and Sofi Ghulam Mohammad made 'Khidmat' very popular. Sofi Sahib's "Bechhakath" was liked immensely by the people. Another assistant editor was Mr. Gh. Nabi Turi, who later joined State Information Department. Mr. Sham Lal Saraf, the then Cabinet Minister was Chairman of the Press Committee of 'Khidmat', while Mr. Prithvi Nath Kaul was General Manager. The latter enjoyed proximity to Bakshi Rashid, brother of Prime Minister Bakshi Ghulam Mohd. He had taken over after there were some allegations for irregularities against Mr. Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din. Shri Sham Lal Wali was Head Katib.

My interesting memories about the days at 'Khidmat' are some instances which relate how the government of the day handled the paper and its staff. Once, Shri MA Pandit had gone to visit Nishat Bagh. On seeing him there, the Prime Minister Sheikh Abdullah had felt quite annoyed. On another occasion, when Shri SL Saraf visited the press, Mr PN Kaul, General Manager, presented him the gradation list of the staff. When Shri SL Saraf showed indifference. Mr Kaul lost his temper and told Mr Saraf, "You were illiterate and have become a minister. Has this gone to your head". Mr Kaul was recuperating from heart attack. Unable to bear the humiliation, he collapsed the next day. Mr PN Kaul was an efficient administrator. He mobilised advertisement support to make 'Khidmat' self-sufficient.

Bakshi Rashid once rang up Shri Nand Lal Wattal. The phone was picked up by Gh. Rasool Arif, an employee of the paper. He had stammering speech. Bakshi Rashid could not make out what he was saying and abused Arif. The later told Mr. Wattal that Bakshi Rashid had abused the editor. A man with dignity, Mr PN Kaul talked to Bakshi Rashid. He told him", I don't require your job. You have started even abusing the editor'.

Bakshi Rashid narrated him the sequence of his talk and told him Arif had misrepresented the facts to his editor. The following day Bakshi Rashid came to the 'Khidmat' office and slapped Arif. The management even wanted to sack Arif for this.

The Katib, Mr. Wali for sometime had been referring to the Chief Minister as Bakshi "Ghulam" only in news head lines of Khidmat. This came to the notice of the Chief Minister. Incidentally, PoK Radio in its propaganda had been using the same name for the Prime Minister. Mr Bakshi in a lighter vein enquired from the editor, "where have you brought this Muslim from PoK. Is he not happy with my name?" Visibly embarrassed Mr. Watal told him the error had been committed by a Kashmiri Pandit, Mr Wali. On another occasion, a serious lapse occurred when the paper carried a byline '*Bakshi Ghulam Mohd. Ki Wafat Par*'. Next morning, the paper made brisk sales. The workers felt angry and excited. 'Khidmat' staff cut sorry figure. The editor tactfully avoided taking up calls from the PM's office. Six months later, the PM told Mr. Watal to carry on the business as usual and prepare a rejoinder for Mr. GM Sadiq, who had floated DNC.

In 1968 after his release from jail, Sheikh Abdullah one fine morning forced his way into the office of 'Khidmat' and the 'New Kashmir Press' and locked these. He said the press and paper would be shifted to Auqaf building at Budshah Chowk. This decision was strongly resented by the staff. They requested Sheikh Abdullah to allow them to take blocks and other material that were to be printed as advertisement. He gave them a weeks time. For nearly ten days the *New Kashmir Press* functioned from the Auqaf building.

During my years at 'Khidmat', I came closer to Mir Ghulam Mohd. Rajouri, who later became minister and speaker. He was widely read, liberal, an intellectual who surpassed his peers and had flair for writing. Mr Rajouri remained as secretary of Legislature Party and later held portfolios of Education, Transport, Industries and Health. As Health Minister, he deducted pay of Accounts Officer for negligence in informing the department about the retirement of an official in time. After Kamraj Plan, he joined Congress-O. He was President of the Organisation, while Mr BK Vaishnavi was its General Secretary. In the 1967 assembly elections, he was dropped from the list of candidates selected by ruling Congress to contest elections. Syed Mir Qasim had resigned from the Presidentship of the State Congress. Mr Rajpouri went to meet Sadiq. Mr Mir Qasim was also there. The chief minister, referring to Mir Qasim, told Mr. Rajpouri that Qasim was tired of politics and read out a newly composed verse of poet Dina Nath Nadim to indicate this fatigue. To avoid direct reply, the chief minister asked Mr. Rajpouri to meet DC Anantnag and himself left for Jammu. Rajpouri contested as an independent against Gh. Qadir Mir of Murran. A mischievous cartoon was drawn to mock at Gh. Qadir Mir, a lower rung worker then. Ten thousand pamphlets were also distributed. This made no impact and Mr Rajpouri lost. The ongoing factionalism between Mir Qasim and GM Sadiq hurt interests of Mr Rajpouri, first at selection level and later during elections.

Mr Rajpouri, stunned by this defeat, retreated into journalism. He launched weekly '*Imroz*', which did not go beyond four issues. The first issue of the weekly carried an analysis of the political situation, in which Mr. Rajpouri had delineated four trends.

When Mr Rajpouri launched *Jahan-e-Nav* as a daily in 1969. I was appointed as its editor publisher and printer. It used to be a weekly after it was started on 13 May 1955. It became a daily later. Mr. Rajpouri could write in Urdu and english with ease. Our editorial staff included Messers Tahir Muztar, Jagar Nath Khyber and Parwaaz Qureishi as Assistant Editor. One Deepak Kashmiri, an employee of the State Transport Department also contributed articles besides preparing Sunday Film edition in colour. He hailed from Budgam and later became a choreographer in Bollywood. His father was District President of National Conference in Budgam. Deepak worked partime for Jahan-e-Nav. Jagar Nath Khyber's satirical column increased readership of the paper manifold. Mr. Muztar wrote editorials and looked after the news section. State government had stopped giving advertisements to Jahan-e-Nav. We got DAVP ads. People also gave donations. Jahan-e-Nav sold around 2000 copies. It made good impact. This unnerved the state government. Mr Rajpouri was principle contributor in writing. Jahan-e-Nav, unearthed scam in the Food and Supplies Department. 'Chinar' led personal on Mr Rajpouri, caricaturing and debunking him as Rajkapoori, Band-master etc. The State government also tried to implicate him in case of Paddy seedlings in Pulwama district. All this was done to silence Jahan-e-Nav.

In late 1960s there was mushroom growth of Urdu newspaper. Papers like Daily *Chinar* (edited by Peer Giasdin), Daily *Aftab* (edited by Khwaja

(Contd. from Page 12)

Sonaullah), *Srinagar Times* (edited by Sofi Ghulam Mohd.), *Naya Sansar* (edited by Gh. Rasool Urfani), Navjivan were launched. Daily Hamdard was being edited by Gh. Rasool Arif, who was Katib of Khidmat. Martand was critical of Sadiq administration on the issue of communal quota policy of 70:30. Srinagar Times was avowedly critical of administration. JN Khyber wrote a scathing satire '*Gadisaaz*' on Sadiq. Soon after this administration ordered closure of Jahan-e-Nav and Srinagar Times. The latter resumed its publication after two months. Mr Rajpouri wanted me to start the paper again but I was reluctant. Ban on the paper was a frustrating experience for me.

1967 Agitation:

During Pandit agitation of 1967, Khidmat's policy remained neutral and did not take any sides. In an incident at Fatehkadai, police lathicharged the protest demonstration of Pandits. A 70 year old Pandit fell unconscious after receiving few blows. An old Haji took the Pandit to his house and nursed him. The following day he himself took the injured to his home. The Haji went to see Mr. Rajpuri and asked him if Sadiq was going to kill even 70 year old Pandits. What right has Sadiq to call himself secular, he asked. Mr Rajpuri told him that since he was related to Sadiq he should himself go to put forth his complaint. The Haji told Sadiq, "I was an eyewitness to brutal canecharge on a 70 year old Pandit. Throughout night I felt restless". Sadiq phoned up Rajpuri. He told him he already knew about the incident.

A man-eater Lion, brought from Kargil was let loose for few minutes to frighten people arrested in 1967 agitation. Pt. Sham Lal Shastri (Shalla) editor of *Desh*, who too was detained, received few injuries, before his fellow-prisoners could over power the Lion.

One evening during the 1967 agitation, a police party landed at my residence to arrest me. During this agitation the police detained people without any warrants. They had confused my name with my neighbour Pt. Shambo Nath Mujoo. When they asked me if I was Pt. SN Mujoo I replied in negative. I knew they had to arrest me. I rang up Mr. Rajpuri and protested in making life hell for me while they enjoyed. Mr. Rajpuri spoke to Sadiq, saying, "have you to kill all Pandits. Mr. Gurkha is working with Khidmat and Jahan-e-Nav and is serving you people only. What has he done". Rajpuri also spoke to Syed Mir Qasim and Gh. Rasool Renzu, the Home Secretary. It was after this incident that the police restrained from detaining Pandits without proper warrants. Most of the Gazetted officers among Kashmiri Pandits of Rainawari, including Sh. Vishnath Jalali, Marshal of Assembly were detained.

Desh:

Pt. Kashyap Bandhu had launched '*Martand*' on behalf of Yuvak Sabha in 1931 and remained associated with it till 1938. After differences with Yuvak Sabha, he floated '*Kesari*', an Urdu weekly. Later, he launched '*Desh*' as a weekly. Such columns '*Pagal Ki Diary*', '*Man Ki Mouj*', '*Challant*', written by Pt. Kashyap Bandhu became extremely popular. Pt. Gangadhar Bhat Dehati of Murran was sub-editor of the paper. In 1947 Bandhu Ji handed over the paper to Sham Lal Shastri. *Desh* was the first paper to highlight the cause of peasantry in Kashmir and attacked usury, corruption etc.

Pt. Ramchand Abhay was associated with *Desh* since 1947 and discharged editorial responsibilities. Kashmiri Pandits had two associations-SD Yuvak Sabha and Samaj Sudhar Samiti, headed by Pt. Gopi Krishan of '*Kundalini*' fame. The *Martand* was mouth-piece of the former. Sudhar Samiti's organ was '*Jyoti*' (started in 1948). It used to be printed from Shivala and Pt. RC Abhay was its first editor. I worked partime with '*Desh*' from 1955 to 1967. In 1967 Prof. Omkar Nath Bhat, who taught English at Vishwa Bharti College, was its editor. He was brother-in-law of late Janki Ganju. Prof. Bhat was a fine person and a capable journalist. He also wrote commentaries for the Radio. Before this assignment he performed the job of editor for weekly '*Rehnuma*' owned by Mubarak Shah Qadiri. Mr. M.S. Qadiri was a teacher. He had become a member of upper house after having defeated poet Dina Nath Nadim. Pt. Triloki Nath Handoo (later associated with *Sarda* and *Indian Times*) was Assistant editor of '*Desh*'. Mr. Makhan Lal Mahav joined '*Desh*' in 1967 as a parttimer. He wrote powerful satire. Bakshi Gh. Mohd. was a great fan of Mahav's '*Lateefe*'. Mahav was quite innovative and enriched the paper with new ideas. Khwaja Khazar Magribi also wrote satire in '*Desh*'. Pt. Som Nath Ganjoo was an employee of '*Desh*'. During 1967 agitation '*Desh*' highlighted atrocities and discrimination against Kashmiri Pandits.

Martand:

I joined *Martand* in 1970. Pt. Shambo Nath Kachroo was editor besides being printer and publisher but Shri JN Khyberri After Khyberri was executive editor. After him the mantle of editorship passed on to me. *Martand* was a 4-page daily paper. The paper had no editorial staff or reporters. Mr. Prithvi Nath Bhat was its manager, while Shri Dina Nath Ogra managed the accounts. Soon after Sheikh Abdullah took over the reins of government in 1975 monthly paper of State Information Department carried a sectarian write-up '*Kashmiri Pandit Firka Parast*' (though the paper's brief was to cover only developmental issues). Strangely, a copy of this issue was not sent to me. We couldn't understand the motive behind this write-up, which threatened to provoke communal animosity against Pandit minority. '*Martand*' serialized my rejoinder in four parts. This unnerved the people behind this derogatory write-up. I was called by the Principal Information officer and asked why I was attacking the Sheikh Abdullah government. I edited *Martand* for 6 years. It sold 1800 copies.

I left *Martand* in 1981 and joined *Morning Times*, owned by Bashir Ahmed Naushad. It was a daily paper and served as official organ of youth federation. The paper committed a faux pas on the occasion of death anniversary of Shamim Ahmed Shamim. Sheikh Abdullah was still alive. Instead of writing '*Shamim Ki Wafat Par*' it wrote '*Sheikh Abdullah Ki Wafat Par*'. There was great hue and cry. The lapse was on the part of Katib Master, Shri Mohd. Shafi and not on the part of a '*Jansanghi*' as alleged by Late Maqbool Ahmed one of the veteran journalists of Kashmir.

After leaving *Morning Times*, I had brief stints at *Daily Wullar*, owned by Sh. Gh. Mohd. Dar, *Daily*

Naqashband, owned by Bashir Bin Qasimi, a contractor and a good draftsman, *Srinagar Express*, owned by Abdul Rehman Mir (cousin of Mir Lasjan) and *Vakil*, owned by Shri Poshkar Nath Vakil. Mr GM Dar would also write for the paper and pursued a pro-NC and pro-India line. The other papers also broadly followed a policy which did not hurt national interests. I worked with Vakil from 1984 to 1988. It was associated with Hindu Mahasabha and sold 500-600 copies. It got advertisements worth Rs 8000 per month. Vakil sold 200 copies.

In 1988 I launched my own daily '*Bahar-i-Kashmir*' (circulation 1000 copies). On 19 May, 1990 after the terrorist attack on my house, I had to move to Jammu. At that time Shri Makhan Lal Mahav and myself were the only two Pandit journalists staying put in Valley, despite all odds. In 1990 myself and Shri ML Kaul, formerly Joint Director of AIR started an Urdu Weekly '*Jan Shakti*'. I brought out my own '*Janat-i-Kashmir*', weekly in 1994. I continue to survive.

I had also the privilege to cover Assembly proceedings both before and after 1990 for Radio Kashmir. During my journalistic career I had the privilege to cover visits of such luminaries-General Cariappa, Marshal Bulganin and Nikita Khrushchev and President Sanjeeva Reddy. Soon after Wazawan session was over, Khrushchev, overwhelmed by huge reception, told the audience. "If you have any difficulty, you go up the hill and shout at us. We will come to your help". Shri Jagar Nath Khyber and Mr Rajpouri have been my '*Gurus*' (teachers) in journalism. I wrote editorials for '*Desh*' and discussed these with editor Shri Sh Shastri. He was a very mature person with good grasp of politics.

archives

Indulge the terrorists!

Prakash Singh gives ten reasons why the 'draconian' POTA ought to be repealed

The UPA Government is going to repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act, thanks to the enlightened advice (or, pressure?) of some of its constituents. It was, in any case, an atrocious piece of legislation, not in keeping with our traditions of tolerance and peaceful resolution of all problems. The police in our country are monsters who should never have been trusted with such sweeping powers as are vested in them under the Act. So, the sooner they are divested of these, the better for all of us. With the Act taken off the statute book, we would be able to breathe more freely — it does not matter if the terrorist also feel more free and get emboldened in the process.

There are ten solid reasons why the POTA must go.

One: India has a tradition of foreign invasions from the time of Alexander to the Pak intrusions in Kargil. The tradition must be kept up. The foreign mercenaries who are causing mayhem in J& K should not feel any let or hindrance in their marauding campaigns.

Two: Political considerations have always been more important than national in this great country of ours, and they dictate that the draconian law must go. Vote banks must be kept intact. What happens to the country is not so important.

Three: The Security Council passed Resolution 1373 in the wake of 9/11, making it incumbent in the part of all the countries to take comprehensive measures to deal with terrorism and ensure that all those who participate in terrorist activities are brought to justice. We can tell the world body that we believe in non-violence and are prepared to pay any price for our principles. What does it matter if the Aksai Chin is lost or even if the Valley slips out of our hands.

Four: Terrorists killed one of our Prime Ministers, an ex-Prime Minister and a former Army Chief. No less than 60000 lives have been lost so far as a result of terrorist violence in the country. So what? We have a trillion people and should ever be ready to make more sacrifices -so long as the honourable elected representatives remain unscathed! Five: The criminal justice system of the country does not believe in punishing criminals. You may organise a massacre and yet get away-you may embezzle government money and yet become a minister, you may be a notorious mafia don and yet get elected to the parliament. This is the prevailing scenario in the country. Why then discriminate against the terrorists? Why should there be a special law to fix them? After all,

we must extend them democratic privileges even if they have none in the country of their origin.

Six: The human rights of terrorist must be safeguarded. The armed forces personnel serve to die only.

Seven: It is true that it was the Congress party which had promulgated TADA in the country. But then, politics and consistency seldom go together.

Eight: The Supreme Court upheld the validity of TADA. It is also true that the provisions of POTA are less stringent than those of TADA. But we should tackle terrorism with the normal laws of the land even if it makes the job of police and the prosecution far more difficult.

Nine: It is nobody's argument that the Act, though well designed, was misused and that therefore instead of repealing time the law, the perpetrators of injustice should be punished. All instruments which are abused must be abandoned. The Excise Act, the Arms Act, the Narcotics Act. Which are misused by the law enforcement agencies to implicate people, and other similar legislation, should all be thrown into the Indian Ocean. We should aim at having wily the laws of nature to protect us.

Ten: We should not try to imitate USA, which passed a very stringent PATRIOT Act or the UK which also has a severe Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act. You can see the flak these countries are getting. Besides, the terrorists are hell-bent on causing destruction in these countries. Let us be indulgent towards the terrorists. May be, our benevolence wins their hearts and softens their attitude towards us.

Bin Laden *sharanam gachchami!* Masood Azhar *sharanam gachchami!* Satahuddin *sharanam gachcham!*

*(The writer was DGP Assam, DGP UP and DG BSF)

(Source: The Pioneer, July 10, 2004)

The origin of Shargas

By Dr. B.N. Sharga

^Y_M

grandfather

Rai

Bahadur

Pandit Shyam Manohar Nath Sharga, used to say quite often that his ancestors were from a warrior race and had won many battle honours. His statement developed a curiosity in me to trace the origin of this Sharga surname, which is typical among the Kashmiri Pandits.

I started my research work in 1980 to write the social history of the Kashmiri Pandits.

I found that the word *sharga* is used in the Mongolian language to describe yellow colour and the term *sharga* means yellowish. There is also an ethnic group in Mongolia which bears this Sharga surname.

Mongolian plateau was in ancient times inhabited by various nomadic tribes, who had great fighting skill and abilities. The term Mongol came into existence much later and evolved from the word *mong* which means brave men. So Mongolia means the land of the brave men or the warriors.

The original homeland of the historic Mongols was the area between the Onon and Karulen rivers, south east of Lake Baikal. These ancient Mongols were great warriors, adventurers and mercenaries. They had different ethnic clans who used to worship their own deities. These Mongol warriors being mercenaries used to travel quite fast on their ponies along the ancient Silk Route from Mongolia to Rome to seek employment in the armies of different lands. Their marital links with the European women had developed a new race of people known as Eurasians. The Gorkhas of Nepal, a martial race still get employment in the British army.

Ashoka the Great became the emperor of India in 269 B.C. He was a great warrior and had commanders in his army of different martial races of that period. His commander in chief Chakuna was a Chinese general. Some other commanders were of Mongol descent. He founded the Srinagar city in the Kashmir Valley.

During his reign Kashmir became an important centre of Buddhist teachings and many Kashmiri Brahmins became renowned Buddhist scholars. These Kashmiri Brahmin Buddhist scholars undertook long journeys to different lands to spread the message of Buddhism. Some of them went to Mongolia and succeeded in converting certain ethnic martial groups there to Buddhism.

After Indo-Greek (Eurasian) rulers the Shakas or Scythians became the rulers. They controlled new larger parts of India They were followed by the Parthian kings (19 to 45 A.D.) Then Kushans came from north Central Asia near China. They were basically the warriors of Mongol descent. The most famous king of this dynasty was Kanishka. He started an era in 78 A.D. which is now known as the *Saka era* and is used by the government of India. Kanishka founded some cities in Kashmir. During this point of time various ethnic groups of different martial races of Central Asia came to Kashmir and settled down in different pockets of the valley. The ethnic group of Shargas settled down in Rainawari locality of the Srinagar city. They were tall, well built and fair complexioned people with sharp features like Romans and Greeks. Later on they adopted the local customs and traditions to become one with the people of their adopted land.

Due to these conquests of the foreign warriors there was utter chaos and confusion throughout India in the matter of religion and philosophy. Sect after sect such as Charvakas, Lokayatikas, Kapalikas, Saktas, Sankhyas, Banddhas, Madhyamikas etc. sprang up in the country. The number of these religions rose to as high as 72. There were frequent fights among them to gain superiority over each other. It was during this period of turmoil and turbulation that a great Indian philosopher, thinker and social reformer Adi Shankaracharya appeared on the scene in the 8 century.

During this period various sects and ethnic groups in Kashmir adopted Brahminical order including Shargas, who then started writing Kaul as their surname.

In Mongolia a tribal chief Temujin, who was born in 1162 A.D. in plains of that country then reorganized and united the various martial ethnic groups including *shargas* to form a formidable army and assumed the title Genghis Khan meaning universal ruler in 1206 A.D. His conquests forged new links between east and west. He and his successors like Halaku Khan and Kublai Khan rebuilt the foundations of modern China, Russia, Iran, Afghanistan, Turkey, Syria, Tibet, New Countries of Central Asia, Ukrain, Hungary and Poland. These conquests realigned the world's major religions, influenced art and established new trade routes. The effects remain as key stone in Eurasian history.

During all the military campaigns of the Mongols their commanders and soldiers got settled in different countries conquered by them. That is why some of the countries of the Russian federation still have ethnic groups carrying Sharga as their surname.

The mass unrest against the government provided an ideal condition in 1320 A.D. for Rinchen a tribal chief of Mongol descent to attack Kashmir from the north west from Tibet and Dulchu a Mongol adventurer of Turkistan from the north east. Kashmir witnessed lot of blood shed and mayhem during this period. The king of Kashmir Suha Dev fled away from the battle field and took refuge in the deep forests in Kishtwar.

Rinchen's army commanders and soldiers of Mongol descent belonging to different ethnic groups also settled down in different pockets of Kashmir. They married local Kashmiri girls to raise their families. The Sharga ethnic clan settled down in the Rainawari area of the Srinagar city. This Sharga clan subsequently adopted Brahminical order and started following local customs and traditions. They then started writing Kaul as their surname and subsequently became good Sanskrit and Persian scholars. Narain Kaul (1640-1712) of this clan was a great historian of Kashmir.

When Narain Kauls descendants Zind Ram Kaul and his son Sahib Ram Kaul got the employment in the Mughal army they naturally came into close contact of the Mughal generals, who were basically Mongols of different ethnic groups. This obviously revived the latent clan spirit in them and ignited their mind. They then after becoming the commanders of the cavalry division in the Mughal army added an appellation Sharga after their surname and became Kaul Shargas. Later on they dropped Kaul and retained their original clan name Sharga as their surname. The present day Mongolia has been divided into 21 provinces for its effective administration. Out of these 21 there is one province known as Sharga besides there are people of Sharga nationality there. In India there are descendants of only one family who carry this Sharga as their surname.

Kashmiri Pandit Diaspora in Himachal Pradesh (Bilaspur)

By Upender Ambardar

Bilaspur district of Himachal Pradesh abounding in low hills, forests, grazing lands and rivulets comprises of the areas of Gumarwin, Nambol, Naina Devi, Swara-ghat, Jukhera and Barwana besides the new Bilaspur town. This erstwhile princely state, also known by its ancient name of '*Kehloor*', founded by a Chandel Rajput Prince Veerchander in 697 A.D. supports a rich past. Organised as a separate state on 12th, October 1948, it was finally integrated in Himachal Pradesh in 1954. Named after the Rishi Vyas, who has penned the epic Mahabarta, the new Bilaspur town situated on the banks of Gobindsagar dam lies on the Shimla-Hamirpur-Mandi route at a distance of 85 kms. from Shimla. The beautiful old Bilaspur town lies engulfed down below in the waters of 225 metre high Gobindsagar water reservoir, the world's highest dam.

Bilaspur is famous for the hallowed spots of Vyas-Cave, Markand, about 25 kms from Bilaspur where Maharishi Markande performed penance, ancient temples of Naina Devi, Lakshmi Narayana and Radhayashyam, besides Asia's biggest mirror-carp hatchery. It is also home to the worlds' second highest bridge of Kandror, an engineering marvel, Barmana cement plant and medicinal plant Katha (Acacia Katechu), which is used in pan (Beetle) Bilaspur, still retains a link with the past in the form of Nalwari cattle market fair, observed every year in the third week of March.

The new town of Bilaspur is the adopted home of only four families of our community. Their determination, urge and unshaken resolve to triumph under the alien situations in the distant land has brought them achievement and recognition.

Sh. Amar Nath Mattoo, belonging to Sona Masjid, (Fatehkadal), Srinagar was the first from our community to

come to Bilaspur in the year 1947, during the time of Raja Anand Chand, who was the then ruler of the Princely state of Bilaspur from the year 1931 to 1947.

Being M.A. (Hindi, Pol. Science), B.Ed, Sh. Amar Nath Mattoo, joined as a teacher at the State Higher Secondary School, located at Bilaspur proper. He served at the said school up to 1957 and was then transferred to Talai, which is known for Baba Balak Nath Temple. After serving for a few years at Berthein and Auhar, he was transferred back to Bilaspur (old town). In 1955, he was sent to Hr. Sec. School Solan, where he served for three years. Subsequently, after having rendered his services at Nahan, Chamba and Rajpora, he was transferred back to Bilaspur in 1965. His eldest son Sh. Mahraj Krishan Mattoo, being M.Sc. in Chemistry from Ratlam, Ujjain, also joined the state education department as a lecturer in the year 1968. He served at Nahan, Chamba, Bilaspur and later-on retired as Principal from the Government College, Gumarwin. His wife Mrs. Santosh Khosa (Mattoo), M.A. (English), hailing from Chinkral Mohalla, Habbakadal Srinagar, has also served as a lecturer in the state education department at Rajpora and Bilaspur.

One of their sons is married to a Bilaspuri girl, while the younger one, an engineer at Bangalore has a Kashmiri speaking girl (daughter of Sh. Pran Nath Tikoo of Talab Tillo, Jammu) as his spouse.

The younger son of Sh. Amar Nath Mattoo namely Dr. V.K. Mattoo is a Professor in the Department of Biosciences in the prestigious Himachal Pradesh University located amidst the idyllic natural surroundings of Summer Hill, Shimla. After having qualified M.Sc. Zoology in the year 1977, he earned P.hd in 1982 from the Himachal Pradesh University itself on the topic of "Honey Bees" Genetic Diversities in the Himalayan Region." Dr. V.K. Mattoo is married to Dr. Neelam, who is also serving in the Department of Biosciences at Himachal Pradesh University. Dr Neelam Mattoo has obtained her P.H.D. on the topic of 'Honey Plant Resources of Himachal Pradesh' in the year 1989. Though being a Himachali, Dr. Neelam is quite familiar with our cultural and social traits, besides being adept in Kashmiri cuisines.

During a conversation, she shared her elation for being a part of the said family. One of the daughters of the said Mattoo family Mrs. Indu (B.Sc. B.Ed.), a Headmistress at the government school is married in a Bilaspuri family of Sankhain. Their second daughter Mrs. Shashi, B.A. B.Ed, married in a Sharma family is settled at the picturesque spot of Chail, her husband being a businessman. One more daughter Mrs. Kumud Sharma (M.A. Hindi, B.Ed) is a teacher at Government School at Arki in Solan district, her husband being an Ayurvedic doctor at Arki itself. Except for Mrs. Mattoo and her eldest son's family, who are Kashmiri speaking, the rest of the family members can only understand it.

One more Kashmiri family of Bilaspur is that of Sh. Jagar Nath Ganjoo. Hailing from Sopore, he first came to Bilaspur in the year 1950. Starting from humble beginnings of a steno, he by dint of sheer hard work and dedicated efforts, rose to become a tehsildar in Himachal Pradesh government. His wife Smt. Jaikishori also hails from Sopore.

One of their sons, Sh. Surinder Ganjoo, a Manager in UCO Bank and presently posted at Chandigarh is married in a Bilaspuri family, while another son Sh.Suresh Ganjoo is an engineer in the state P.W.D. Their daughter Mrs. Surekha is married to Mr. V.K. Upadhyay also of Bilaspur, who is a Superintending Engineer in Prasar Bharati. Rs. Sucheta, another daughter married in a Sharma family is presently settled at Shimla. Excepting for Mr. and Mrs. Ganjoo, who are still Kashmiri speaking the rest of the family members can only understand their mother-tongue. Mr. Manmohan Kath, the original resident of Anantnag first came to Bilaspur in the year 1955 and is now permanently settled here. He has served as a District Industries Officer of Bilaspur. His lone son, having a business of his own in Bilaspur is married to a Kashmiri speaking girl Mrs. Jyoti of Umanagri, Anantnag.

Mr Manmohan Kath, himself is non-Kashmiri speaking but can only understand it as he had come-out of Kashmir at the tender age of fourteen. One more family of our community at Bilaspur is that of Mr. P.N. Bhat, a Development officer in L.I.C., who is a post 1990 settler there. His lone son is also running a business of his own at Bilaspur itself.

Inspite of their cultural isolation, all the four Kashmiri families of Bilaspur still carry the nostalgic memories of Kashmir. In tune with their traditional roots, the celebration of 'Heyrth' (Shivratri), 'Navreh' and 'Pun' continue to occupy a place of pride in their socio-religious lives. Further, the wearing of the traditional '*Dejhor*', still being adored by them testifies to their unshaken veneration for their moorings.

All of them have earned success and distinction in life by sheer hard labour and efforts and in the process have carved out a niche in their respective fields in the distant land. My interaction with my community members was a rewarding experience, making me to feel proud of their achievements and success in their respective lives.

Objective of our socio-cultural unity operating in Rohini

KS Correspondent

We want to establish a centre which will function as a socio-cultural unit covering all social activity so that

over youngsters are made to :

1) realise the importance of social gathering. Maintaining our ethnic identity and passing on cultural virtues inherited from our forefathers, as we believe that if culture is lost-identity is lost.

2) It should act as a new centre for economic help, information centre for unemployed, searching for necessary information, act as marriage bureau so that our community are not compelled to go for inter-caste, out of community marriage, information centre for various trainings, qualification needed, colleges and other necessary allied information, so to say try to extend help to needy.

3) This centre will act as centre for carrying forward information received from various organisations, Samitis, parties to keep the migrant-in-exile politically alive about the changes going on.

4) This centre will try to maintain an upto date directory of all such KPs' living in Rohini and nearby areas for ready reference.

5) This centre will prepare a dedicated group of volunteers available who can be utilised to help needy, ailing, or in any or any eventuality.

6) Extend all type of help to KPs' when they need help of any form to live in honourable social life and this centre will act as a miniature society to regain the lost glory and encourage youth, elders with the spirit of helping all needy, those KPs' who have lost hope and strengthening the will power of the community members.

To accomplish these objectives we require a properly laid down policy and planning so that there is no wastage of the community money. We need purposeful, goal oriented direction from community members and strategists.

To materialize the idea of creating a centre of activity we need land and a hall with other necessary requirements, where gatherings could be accommodated with ease. We have to raise a huge capital and we expect that our political leaders, social leaders, men of eminence will extend every possible help and explore sources, where from the capital is raised by way of subscription and donation. Initially we require at least 15 lakhs to purchase a piece of land.

This centre should act as a central point of meeting, discussing, getting direction, celebrating festivals jointly and further enrich our ethnic cultural identity to prove our worth as an elite community, which was inflicted all types of atrocities that bore all untold miseries with tolerance, farsightedness, about not at the cost of honour, and established the fact that they are politically mature, socially aware and economically better then they were previously placed.

Photo identity cards for Haryana KP's

KS Correspondent

AMBALA: The tiresome efforts for the last so many years of Sh J.L. Koul Secretary Panun Kashmir Haryana brought results when the Financial Com. and Principal Secretary, Home department Govt. of Haryana vide its letter no 27/26/2002-Home, addressed to Sh. J.L. Kaul Sec Panun Kashmiri issued orders for issuing photo identity cards to KP migrants of Haryan state. When asked Sh. J.L. Kaul thanked Mr KD Kuchi Research officer, o/o Financial Commission-cum-Principal Secretary. Minority Cell Govt.of Haryan for his special efforts in issuing the orders. Mr Koul further said that around 400 families from various cities of Haryana state have been already issued the photo identity cards and added that this will help the KP migrants and especially their wards in getting admission in various professional colleges in the country, which was being denied to them till now, because of not being registered as migrants. He further said that the Haryana Govt. has recommended monthly cash relief of Rs 500 to the maximum of Rs 2000/ family to many KP migrant families which include 24 from Ambala, 14 from Rohtak, one from Kurushetra and one from Faridabad. Those KP migrant families living in Haryana who are yet not registered, are requested to be get in touch with Sh. J.L Koul, Sec. Panun Kashmiri (Haryana) 11-B, Inderpuri, Ambala or through Phone No: 2654624 for registration and issuing of photo identity card in their favour.

125th Issue of Kashmir Sentinel released

PANUN KASHMIR GENERAL SECRETARIES REPORT

Respected Guests and the members of distinguished

it is a proud moment for us to
release the 125th issue of
Kashmir Sentinel. With this issue this paper has entered the 12th year of its publication. For a journal

which exists on a shoe-string budget it is a momentous occasion. We feel honoured in presenting this issue to Dr. Baikunth Nath Sharga to felicitate him for his stupendous contribution to historiography of Kashmiri Pandits.

For his path-breaking work, the Kashmiri Pandit community has come to regard him as the Kalhan of our times. Through painstaking effort, Dr. Sharga has succeeded in re-constructing the social history of our oldest diaspora in exile. Dr. B.N. Sharga is no professional historian nor trained in the historical method. He has excelled where professional historians have failed. Also keeping in view the fact that hardly any institutional support is available both from within and without the community for such type of research work this work is bound to be regarded as a major contribution to the art of historiography.

Religious-cleansing of the native Kashmiri Pandit community has thrown up challenges to which solutions are not handy. Not only have we been thrown into the political and economic junkyard but a big question mark hangs on our very survival as a distinct socio-historical community. If our intelligentsia and the other members of the community continue to remain neutral to our destiny, the once proud community, whose contribution to the fund of Indian civilisation remains second to none, would be relegated to footnotes and commas in history.

Some of our sensitive intellectuals have assumed a vanguard role to prove the prophets of doom wrong. These great sons are engaged in the task of enriching the historiography, and rebuilding durable cultural and social anchors so as to perpetuate our distinct ethno-social identity for all times to come.

Dr. Baikunth Nath Sharga's contribution to the community's historiography will continue to inspire all of us and also the coming generations. By felicitating him we are only recognising the efforts of our sensitive intellectuals who are ever alive to the challenges that confront us in exile. Dr. Sharga has published his research work, six volumes of which have already come out and few more are likely to follow.

To generate the social sensitivity, we have been bringing out special issues from time to time to commemorate different occasions and recognise the contributions made by the outstanding intellectuals. The last issue was dedicated to the memory of Pt. Mukand Ram Gurtoo, the first Kashmiri to set up his own press and start a paper. In future also our effort would be to bring before the readers the contribution of our scholars, who have hitherto remained ignored. *Kashmir Sentinel* is committed to explore the virgin terrains in the field of journalism, history and literature.

It was in 1994 that *Kashmir Sentinel* was initially launched as the crusading paper for the Pandit community. With the community thrown in exile and faced with the hostility of the political forces, both from the right and the left spectrum, some of the elder members of the community felt the need of having a powerful mouthpiece that would act as the watch dog of exiled community's interests. They recalled with nostalgia the role played by Martand in 1930s and 1940s under the inspiring editorship of Pandit Kashyap Bandhu and Pandit Prem Nath Kanna. The urgency for launching the paper was dictated by the nefarious role played by a section of the national English press. These mediemen due to ideological blinkers or for some other calculations had let loose a barrage of disinformation against the Displaced Kashmiri Hindus on almost every issue--be it the causes that led to religious-cleansing, continued genocide, return and rehabilitation, future political status of Pandit community and even vital issues linked to Kashmir's history and identity. Their attempt all the while was to craft a thesis that no genocide has taken place and project the forces of theo-fascism in Kashmir as 'great secular patriots engaged in noble task of national liberation struggle'. These people, alongwith influential members of Indian civil society and few NGOs with dubious links succeeded to an extent in camouflaging the genocide of Kashmiri Pandits and obfuscating the real issues at stake in Kashmir till the exiled community decided to fight back. *Kashmir Sentinel* is the baby of these efforts. Earlier, these very intellectuals were engaged in similar exercise on Punjab also to weaken its links with India and undermine its secular character. In a remarkable study Dr. Baikash Chandra has exposed this moribund segment of Indian civil society. We too have preserved everything what these disoriented intellectuals have been writing about Kashmir and Kashmiri Pandits from time to time. Even on the issue of Kashmiri Muslims, their sympathy is not with the segment that is victim of terrorism but with those who instigate terrorism and have brutalised the society. Bharat mata's soul will remain in agony unless we succeed in initiating a national debate on the role of these intellectuals vis-a-vis national unity. We are committed to it. If India does not survive, how do we survive. Our patriotism ensures our own survival.

It is our firm belief that the Pandit community's religious-cleansing is not an isolated event. It is a link in the chain of a wider conspiracy to dismember India. We are only the frontline victims of this conspiracy. After our cleansing, this process was extended to the members of the minority community in the Muslim-majority districts of Jammu province. There can be no piecemeal solutions in reversal of our genocide. This has to be addressed in a perspective that declares any accommodation with forces of subversion and terrorism as a crime against the nation. We need to build a nation-building model that foils the conspiracy to balkanise India and ensures the return of the victimised community to their homeland with fully restored civil, social and political rights. There cannot be two different yardsticks for addressing the minority concerns in Gujrat and Kashmir.

India is to survive as a democracy that respects religious pluralism and toleration. Practice of secularism cannot be a selective principle. Enough tears have been shed in this country for the demolition of a dilapidated structure. The silence on the religious-cleansing of an entire community should be a matter of serious concern for

all of us. If the Indian nation-state fails to restore Kashmiri Hindus to their homeland as a matter of right and choice, we wonder whether such a state would survive in history. Abandoning the frontline victims of terrorism to their own fate or cut tactical deals with forces inimical to national unity strikes at the very root of nation-building.

Kashmir Sentinel has been playing a role within its means to highlight the genocide of Kashmiri Hindus and other groups in Jammu and in building national sensitivity on the issue of terrorism and caring for its victims. It has countered the forces of disunity from both the right as well as the left. At the cultural level, *Kashmir Sentinel* has addressed the issues of concern in a comprehensive manner. It is for our readers to judge how have fared.

Kashmiri Sentinel is now emerging for a new role. From its initial role as the spokesperson of the exiled community, it is trying to address the new concerns of conducting a wider debate. We are thankful to people of eminence like Shri Gautam Kaul, Prof. Ravi Mohan Bakaya, Shri Sumer Kaul, Dr. Shashi Shekhar Toshkhani, Shri Sati Sahni, Prof. Hari Om, Shri MM Khajuria, Shri Prakash Singh, former DG of BSF and many others for responding to our requests to write for us. In future also we would continue our efforts to reach out to other intellectuals for participation in the debate through our paper for building a new strong India and a tolerant Kashmir that is at peace with it self and with others as well.

LETTERS

Keep the resistance flame alive

Sir,

I have been a young activist of Panun Kashmir from my early school days. Participation in the Panun Kashmir programmes and rallies gave me great strength and shaped by personality in many ways.

You will be happy to know this summer I secured a job in Bangalore. I here send my small contribution of Rs 1000/- for 'Kashmir Sentinel' to help the flame of Kashmir Pandit resistance to injustice alive.

Vishesh Kaul

Bangalore

Kashmir Sentinel as a magazine may serve the posterity well

Sir,

You may be kind enough to continue my heartily pleased journal, 'Kashmir Sentinel' by post. If this journal may transfer to magazine the it will be helpful of some reader, who wished to perserved it for many times. My proposal may be discuss, to you management department.

Sh. Radhakanta Ghorai

Vill. Deulichak, Raghunathbari

Distt. Purba Medinipur, West Bengal

THOSE WHO LEFTUS

Kashmir Sentinel and Panun Kashmir Foundation mourn their sad demise and pray for thepeace to the departed soul.s

1. Ashok Kumar Pandita S/o Lt. Arzan Nath Pandita, R/o Kakran Kulgam Kmr; presently at 303, Sec 1, Durga Nagar, Jammu. 1/8/2005

2. Sh. Radha Krishen Raina S/o Lt. Sh. Maheshwar Nath Raina, R/o Akingam Anantnag; presently Qtr. No: 580 Nagrota Camp.

3. Sh. Jagar Nath Dhar S/o Lt. Sh. Tara Chand, R/o Kupwara Kmr; presently at Purkhoo Camp Jammu. 1/8/2005

4. Smt. Arandati Handoo W/o Lt. Sh. Arzan Nath Handoo, R/o Anantnag Kmr. ; presently at Q.No: 7, Block-H-1, Panjtirthi, Jammu. 3/8/2005

5. Smt. Prabawati Zutshi W/o Lt. Sh. Mohan Lal Zutshi, R/o Chinkral Mohalla Sgr; presently at 300 Sarwal Jammu. 4/8/2005

6. Dr. O.N. Koul S/o Sh. Madhusudan Koul R/o Dewan Bagh Baramulla, Kmr; presently at A-109, Greenward City, Gurgoan. 4/8/2005

7. Sh. Amar Nath Zutshi S/o Lt. Sh. R.K. Zutshi R/o 95 Upper Laxmi Nagar, Sarwal. 5/8/2005

8. Sh. Mohan Lal Peer S/o Lt. Mahanand Peer R/o Malapora Habba Kadal, Sgr; presently at 43-A, Indira

Colony Camp Road, Jammu. 5/8/2005

9. Smt. Vijay Laxmi Zutshi W/o Sh. Joginder Kumar Zutshi, R/o 76/8, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu. 5/8/2005
10. Smt. Gouri Shori Razdan W/o Lt. Sh. T.N. Razdan R/o Madanyar Habba Kadal Sgr. presently at 308 Kabir Nagar, Poonch House Jammu. 7/8/2005
11. Sh. Pradiman Krishen Handoo S/o Lt. Sh. Ram Ji Handoo, R./o 11 Iqbal Colony Broadway Sgr; presently at 431-Sec-3, Ext. Trikuta Nagar Jammu. 7/8/2005
12. Sh. Neel Kanth Peshion S/o Lt. Sh. Vaishnav Ji Peshiin R/o Tikker Kupwara; ;presently at C-189-B, Sec-26, Nodia (UP). 7/8/2005
13. Smt. Subhag Rani Bhat W/o Sh. Shiv Ji Bhat, R/o Pahalgam Kmr; presently at 9-C, Om Nagar Udeywalla, Jammu. 8/8/2005
14. Sh.Omkar Nath Bhat S/o Lt. Sh. Sarwanand Bhat, R/o Logripora Anantnag; presently at 8-C/A Om Nagar Udeywalla Jammu. 8/8/2005
15. Smt. Prabawati Raina, W/o Lt. Sh. Jaggar Nath Raina, R/o Seer Jagir Sopore; presently at 30-C, Om Nagar Udheywalla, Jammu. 10/8/2005
16. Smt. Ratni Pandita W/o Sh. Ramesh Pandita, R/o Muran Pulwama; presently at Qtr. No: 116, Mishriwalla Camp. 10/8/2005
17. Smt. Dhanwati Zadoo W/o Lt. Sh. Amar Nath Ji Jadoo, R/o 59/2, Ganpatyar; presently at H.No: 20, Vasant Enclave Trilokpur, Jammu. 10/8/2005
18. Smt. Santosh Fotedar W/o Udey Nath Fotedar, R/o Mattan Anantnag; presently at Laxmi Puram Ext. Chinore, Jammu. 11/8/2005
19. Sh.Soom Nath Bhan S/o Sh. Lt. Sat Lal Bhan, R/o Madanyar Habba Kadal, Sgr; presently at 15, Lower Karan Nagar, Jammu. 11/8/2005
20. Sh.Damodhar Koul, R/o Kulgam Kmr; presently at Community Hall Phase-III Purkhoo Camp Jammu. 11/8/2005
21. Smt. Reeta Ji Bindroo R/o Ram Hall Baramulla Kmr; presently at Barnai. 11/8/2005
22. Smt. Kunti Moza W/o Lt. Sh. Kanya Lal Moza, R/o Gurgoan Haryana. 11/8/2005
23. Sh.Radha Krishan Naru, R/o Fatehpura Batpora Anantnag; presently at 22-C, Om Nagar Udaiwala Jammu. 11/8/2005
24. Sh. Dwarika Nath Bhat, R/o Fatehkadal Sgr; presently at B-47, Basant Nagar Janipur Jammu. 13/8/2005
25. Smt. Khima Ji Ganjoo W/o Sh. Jawahar Lal Ganjoo R/o Sehyar Ali Kadal Kmr; presently at 927, Subash Nagar, Jammu. 13/8/2005
26. Sh. Brij Nath Handoo S/o Lt. Sh. Sham Sunder Handoo, R/o Motiyar Rainawari, Sgr; presently at H.No: 109, Sec-5, Vikas Nagar, Jammu. 15/8/2005
27. Smt. Khemashori Peer W/o Dr. M.K. Zutshi. 15/8/2005