

EDITORIAL

A Frightening Scenario

The Pakistani Military dictator has floated yet another balloon on Kashmir. This time he says Pakistan is ready to give up its claim on Kashmir and disregard UN resolutions plus demand for plebiscite if India agreed to his four-point formula.

Musharraf spell out his formula as-no change in boundaries of Kashmir; making borders and the LoC irrelevant, staggered de-militarisation; autonomy or Self-Governance with a joint supervision mechanism. He went on to claim that "Self-Governance or autonomy was not the first step to Kashmir's independence".

The regional and the global situation have made UN resolutions and the plebiscite demand redundant. The international opinion is also arraigned against Pakistan on the issue of its blatant sponsorship of crossborder terrorism.

The Pakistani military and the bureaucratic elite continues to peddle two-nation theory principle. It seeks to annex Kashmir by describing it as "unfinished agenda of partition". In the prevalent geopolitical situation the military junta and its cohorts believe that 'Self-Governance or autonomy' could be the stepping stone to annex Kashmir subsequently. How to get support from India's liberal and secular elite and also provide manoeuvrability to its lackeys in India to galvanise opinion in its favour? Musharraf has to feign that 'Self-governance/autonomy was not the first step towards independence.'

Musharraf also talked about staggered de-militarisation in Kashmir. In January 2006 he had advocated withdrawal of Indian troops from strategic towns of Srinagar, Baramulla and Kupwara. In exchange he promised that "Pakistan will be with the Indians and Kashmiris to ensure that there will be total peace and tranquility in these places". Strangely, on one hand he said that there is no cross-border terrorism and proxy war by Pakistan against India and yet he concedes that Pakistan has full control over terrorism and militancy in Kashmir.

In 1947 Jinnah had mooted a similar proposal to Mountbatten when the latter visited Lahore to ask Jinnah to stop Pakistani aggression on Kashmir. Why is Musharraf demanding selective de-militarisation in Kupwara and Baramulla, the main ingress route through which he infiltrates terrorists in Kashmir for subversive activities? Has the Commando who staged Kargil something up his sleeves to catch India once more off guard?

We do not believe that Musharraf's "out of box" solutions are cheap tricks of any street corner magician—all illusions and no substance. Also, we do not endorse the view that Musharraf's balloons are the consequence of his domestic and external beleaguement. A sinister strategy is at work to force India to dilute its sovereignty over Kashmir and at the same time get support from India's liberal and secular elite for it. How does the military dictator turn 'reasonable' and 'flexible' when he refuses to agree to authenticate actual ground positions at Siachen and continues to sponsorship crossborder terrorism despite many earlier commitments?

The Indian media continues to obfuscate the debate on 'Self-Governance' and 'Autonomy' for Kashmir. Regional party politicians in Kashmir, who have been all through pursuing Muslim identity politics, are trying to fox Indian public opinion into believing that 'Self-Governance' or 'Autonomy' were essentially other names for federalism and devolution of powers to states. Nothing can be farther from the truth.

The demands for 'Self-Governance' or 'Autonomy' are aimed at creation of a Islamist state based on Muslim precedence on the soil of India, funded by India but outside the constitutional organisation of India. There is an inherent conflict between sub-national pluralism and political autonomy. The latter is a residue of political authority and hence, complimentary to national unity. Sub-National pluralism is basically a function of ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic separatism. It is damaging and irreconcilable to national integration and nation-building.

The Muslim League in India claimed a sub-national identity for the Muslims of India which subsequently led them to opt for separation from the Indian mainland. The political autonomy which the Constitution of India envisaged for the Indian States, was visualised by the framers of the Indian Constitution as a residue of political power and not as a function of sub-national pluralism. The Indian provinces were administrative units, forged by the British, by and large on the basis of allocations in terms of political authority. They did not represent subnational identities.

'Self-Governance' or 'Autonomy' demands represent quest for separate identity for the J&K State, based upon the Muslim majority character. It is an attempt to link up the Muslim-majority character of the state with its accession and reclaim the right of the Muslims of J&K to determine its future disposition. The politicians who raise these demands are seeking fresh guarantees to safeguard their isolation from India.

Reconstitution of the state into a separate political identity on the basis of Muslim precedence holds the seeds of country's balkanisation in it. Can India still remain secular and strong when it acquiesces a Muslim state on its soil but outside its constitutional organisation? How is the demand for recognition of communal balances compatible with imperatives of Indian unity?

By demanding Joint Supervision Pakistan is not only asking for a foothold in Kashmir but also seeks veto to act as an arbiter on behalf of Kashmiri Muslims. Tomorrow it would demand a similar veto on behalf of Indian

Muslims. According parity to Pakistan on Kashmir could invite a frightening scenario the consequences of which remain to be grasped by those who handle India's destiny on Kashmir. END

Awami League holds a massive Rally at Khanabal
KS Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Nov 30: Awami League, the pro-India party of Kashmiris staged a massive rally at Khanabal, once the stronghold of PDP. Around 4,500 people turned up to attend the rally organized by Liaqat Ali, the Awami League leader of Anantnag. At a time when the regional parties of Kashmir are vitiating the atmosphere and creating uncertainty among Kashmiris by raising extraneous agendas the successful culmination of the Awami League rally has come as a morale booster to the nationalist sections in Kashmir valley. It has also served to debunk the claims that only regional parties command the allegiance of Kashmiris.

The rally as per the organizers was organized to expose those who were indulging in politics of deceit and emotional blackmail of Kashmiris to promote their personal agendas and roughshodding the aspirations of common people. It may be recalled that at the same venue a fortnight back former Chief Minister and PDP patron Mufti Mohd. Sayeed had delivered his controversial "self-rule" speech on the eve of his departure to UN. The Awami League wanted to send a strong message across that they and not the PDP was sensitive to aspirations of Kashmiris. Muft Sayeed's public meeting included 1,500 party cadres, while Awami League rally was attended by the common people. The success of the rally was significant in many ways. The PDP President Mehbooba Mufti, who came to the venue to address a hurriedly-organised rally had to face serious disappointment and return to Srinagar. She could hardly muster less than hundred people. The PDP leader had come to counter the impact of Awami League rally.

Why did the rally go unnoticed by a major section of the national media? It left Kashmiris guessing, particularly when some unbiased local media men described it as "one of the biggest rallies organized in recent times" in Anantnag. It is intriguing that some of the journalists who never miss an opportunity to defame Indian state for raked up "human rights violations" and the "excesses committed by Indian security forces" chose to ignore the rally. These media men do not feel shy in giving larger than life publicity to terrorists and other anti-national elements who seek separation of Kashmir from India. On the other hand some vernacular papers of Kashmir covered the rally at length.

Liaqat Ali, the youthful leader of Awami League told the rally that the "time has come for the youth to say goodbye to slogans of self-rule, autonomy and politics of deceit." Reprimanding NC, PDP and the Hurriyat Conference he said, "it is these parties, which made the youth of Kashmir to pick up gun only to invite disaster." He added that these parties were responsible for the 'considerable increase in the number of graveyards in Kashmir', as also for the "destruction of the social structure nurtured over hundreds of years."

The Awami League leader also ridiculed the claim of the PDP that it "has invented the concepts of de-militarization and self-rule." He said these terms owed their existence to UN Security Council deliberations. To the thunderous applause of rallyists Liaqat said that politicians who pursued 'politics of deceit' must be thoroughly exposed. He impressed upon the need to shift the focus to peace, progress, development, communal harmony and prosperity.

The rally was also addressed by Mr. Usman Majid, Awami League MLA from Bandipore. He said that politicians who speak different languages in power and out of power needed to be exposed. He added that the so-called mainstream leaders indulge in double-speak and multi-speak and say different things at different places. The MLA went on to question the credibility of those Kashmiri politicians who served Central Govt. in such capacities as Union Home Minister and Minister of State for External Affairs and were now raising demands for "autonomy 'and 'de-militarization'. He rejected the suggestion that J&K was a 'trilateral issue' and observed that 'people of J&K have a role to play in the resolution of the Kashmir problem'. He decried violence and said it brought only 'death and destruction'. Mr. Majid observed, "we have already paid a price by getting killed a generation of the youth in finding the illusory role for Kashmiris." He said Kashmir's prosperity lay in making optimum use of its natural resources.

The Bandipore MLA asked the people of Anantnag to strengthen the hands of leaders like Liaqat Ali.

Capt. SK Tikoo, a close associate of the slain Awami League founder Kuka Parrey, also spoke on the occasion. He asked the people to fight out the anti-India forces and said, "We are intelligent, mature, and competent and given a chance we can revolutionize the society." He was severe on those who "lead Indian delegation to New York and back home create troubles for India, create scare amongst ordinary Kashmiri Muslims saying they were unsafe in India." The rally has sent a clear message that there is a section among Kashmiris who reject communal and separatist politics. More than 15,000 Kashmiri Muslims have been butchered by the terrorists because they opposed terrorism and separatist politics. It is their voice that is now finding its way through Awami League. This voice needs to be consolidated if peace is to be retrieved in

Kashmir. This demands that GOI and the national political leadership delegitimise the politics of separatism in its various hues and bolster the forces of national unity in Kashmir. END

Communication

Kashmir Sentinel is highly informative

Sir,

I am regularly getting *Kashmir Sentinel* and find it interesting and informative. The way *Kashmir Sentinel* is raising the issues of the sons of the soil is commendable. You have rightly raised the voice of Kashmiri Hindus who have been facing lot of problems due to continuous spate of terrorism in the Valley. They deserve better treatment at the hands of administration. Credit should be given to Panun Kashmir which has always stood by their side. We all wish them success in their effort for safeguarding the interests of the people. Please keep it up.

I have also been reading the column **Kashmiri Pandit Diaspora in HP/Shimla** with interest. Shri Ambardar has done a historical job by bringing some luminaries to light like Sh MK Kaw, Anupam Kher and others. We have Sh. JN Sadhu (former Spl. Correspondent Indian Express and veteran Journalist) settled at Shimla. He had long innings in journalism. We would like to read about him in this column. I also started my career from Shimla as a correspondent and had retired as Editor Dainik Tribune, Chandigarh in 2003. I am from Himachal. I am still doing free lancing. With best wishes and regards.

—Vijay Saihgal
Chandigarh END

LETTERS

Kashmir repeated in Kazakstan

Sir,

What is happening in Kazakistan is what happened in Kashmir in 1990 leading to the exodus of Pandits, which now then is attributed to Mr Jagmohan, ex-governor of the State. There however is no Jagmohan in Kazakistan to explain it.

Why have the Muslims the would over, not condemned it? And how do our own 'secularist' explain it? Why are they silent? They cry hoarse now and then over the plight of Muslims in India. Their lip service is designed simply to attract vote.

Muslims in India have ruled the sub-continent for nearly a thousand years and their so-called present plight cannot be attributed to historical reasons like those of scheduled castes and tribes with whom they are compared invariably.

You can not set 'wrong' 'right' through distortion and falsehood which both for Muslims and non-Muslims in the country perpetuates a destructive hostility instead of creating a common bond of fellow feeling.

--P.N. Kaul

Talab Tillo, Jammu

Politicians' blame game

Sir,

Blame game is the usual trickery of the politicians Dr. Farooq Abdullah is not one whit embarassed to parrot lies. His latest is that Jagmohan provided transport to Kashmiri Hindus to migrate and that he killed Kashmiri Muslims (*Daily Excelsior* dated 2/12/2006). Contrast this with the latest from Mr Geelani who at long last makes a clean breast of what led to Pandit exodus from Kashmir by admitting that killing of Pandits by 'miltiants' led to their exodus-*Hindustan Times* dated 2/12/2006). This finally debunks the theories flooded by both terrorists and others in the Valley.

Dr Farooq Abdullah would like to be the President of India and not hesitate to tell lies to cover up his surrender to terrorism by resigning from the state government and surfacing in far away London to leave the field opon for terrorist deградations. All this in the hope to find favours for Presidential nomination of the country. --P.N. Kaul

Talab Tillo, Jammu

Contribution on 10th Day

Sir,

I have a humble suggestion regarding 10 Day Kriya function of KPs. In my view it should get revived to its ancient pattern where people used to contribute some money to help the person who had suffered the loss. Today he is not likely to accept this contribution from me or some other person. Instead, we could pool this amount

under a registered account no and later on the members of authorised committee could spend the amount for the welfare of the community.

Let you inform the members of the community and call for their suggestion.

A contribution of Rs 50/- or so is a meagre amount and no one will hesitate to pay it while paying homage to the deceased one.

--P.N. Saraf

28-A, Tawi Vihar, Sidhra, Jammu END

INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY OPTIONS ON PAKISTAN 2007

By Dr. Subhash Kapila

Introductory Observations

India's foreign policy establishment continues to be overly obsessed with diplomatic formulations which have borne no fruit especially during the military regime of General Musharraf. Even earlier too, it was the same case with all Indian Governments irrespective of their political hues.

Pakistan by its size, resources and military threat potential does not merit the bestowal of such over-sized obsession. Then why does this politically illogical obsession persist?

Obviously, there are strong external and domestic pressures at play on the Indian foreign policy establishment. Externally, the Indian Government is said to have been under intense United States political and strategic pressures to modulate India's foreign policy towards Pakistan in consonance with United States strategic interests in Pakistan. It desires that India should contribute towards the survival in power of General Musharraf in Pakistan.

Domestically, a fair section of the Indian foreign policy analysts advance the United States agenda and voice formulations which advocate and extol the Pakistani military dictators so called "out-of-box" solutions on Kashmir, Siachen etc. Such analysts, unmindfully even advocate Musharraf's line of "free-lance" Pakistan terrorists operating against India, when it comes to defending Musharraf's proxy war against India.

The year 2006, as it comes to a close, clearly indicates that Pakistan under General Musharraf in all the seven years of military rule has not responded in any substantial and meaningful manner to buy peace with India. His "out-of-box" solutions approach is a mere subterfuge to confuse the issues and do not merit serious consideration by India.

It is most inappropriate for India aspiring to be a global power to go out of the way to appease Pakistan's military dictator who today stands besieged within his own country and the Pakistani people want him out. The much advocated Indian Prime Minister's proposed visit to Pakistan falls within this category.

In terms of India's foreign policy options on Pakistan for the year 2007, the core issues at the end of 2006 boil down to two, namely:

- Should India Assist the Perpetuation of a Military Dictatorship in Pakistan?

OR

- Should India Adopt Pro-active Stances in Support of Restoration of Democracy in Pakistan?

Following the above examination, India's foreign policy options on Pakistan in 2007 will also be spelt out.

But before examining these two "core issues" a brief look at the contextual factors that need to be taken into account while determining India's options.

Contextual Factors That Should Determine India's Foreign Policy Options

India's foreign policy options towards Pakistan need to be viewed from the two determinants of national security interests and economic interests. In terms of India's economic interests, Pakistan refuses to budge at all towards any economic cooperation with India. In terms of national security interests, Pakistan even in the year 2006 has not exhibited any signs of stepping back from her conflictual and adversarial propensities.

To any realistic foreign policy analyst, it should be abundantly clear that the Pakistani military dictator has been using Kashmir and trade issues as "pressure points" against India to extract the objectives that he presumes would make him popular in Pakistan. His "out-of-box" solutions are cheap tricks of any street-corner magician – all illusions and no substance.

India needs to recognize the following contextual factors that hover in any dealings with Pakistan:

- Pakistan's next General Elections are due in November 2007. It is widely believed in Pakistan that the General will rig these elections like he did the 2002 elections to perpetuate himself in power. Only the United States can stop him from doing so.

- General Musharraf has continued to be both President of Pakistan and also as Pakistan Army Chief. Constitutionally he lacks legitimacy in both appointments.

- To perpetuate his rule, Pakistani media indicates that he is likely to get himself, re-elected by the outgoing National Assembly, before the elections. A constitutional break-down could occur if the new National

Assembly does not recognize the manipulation so inflicted by hoping to ensure another term of office as President.

General Musharraf therefore is “illegitimately” in power in Pakistan. If he enjoyed the popular mandate of the Pakistani people he would not have resorted to “out-of-box” political chicanery in Pakistan.

Pakistan’s political stability and security is in India’s national security interests. But is Pakistan today politically stable and externally and domestically secure when the following are taken into account:

- Pakistan externally is at odds with both its neighbors, namely, Afghanistan and India.
- Pakistan continues with its proxy war against Afghanistan and India.
- Pakistan is besieged domestically. Its Western frontiers are explosive and the Government is militarily challenged in Baluchistan, Waziristan, NWFP and Northern Areas.
- Pakistan Army’s domestic image has taken a beating in the above named regions.
- Domestic turbulence is expected to grow as the 2007 elections draw near.
- Military suppression of political discontent is a distinct probability.

So this is the likely picture in Pakistan in 2007, which India has to take into account in its foreign policy formulations and we now can examine the two “core issues” spelt out initially.

Should India Assist the Perpetuation of Military Dictatorship in Pakistan?

India ever since 1999 has virtually assisted the perpetuation of military dictatorship in Pakistan under intense pressure from the United States. One has written enough on this website ever since pointing out the pitfalls.

Some of the glaring examples that needed to be pointed out from my earlier papers are:

- India’s invitation to the Pakistani General for the Agra Summit was a policy blunder. The Americans wished to impart political legitimacy to General Musharraf and India obliged by extending this invitation.
- India backing down from its proclaimed stand of no talks with Pakistan until terrorism ceased and then indulging in parleys with the Pakistani military dictator.
- The present Indian Prime Minister’s certification of General Musharraf as a man who could be trusted and with whom business could be done.
- The Havana Declaration was a political sell-out this year.
- Composite Dialogue and peace process with a military regime perpetuates the according of unjustified political legitimacy to General Musharraf.
- Any proposed visit by the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Pakistan in an election year would be stamping further political legitimacy on the military dictator.

Clearly, the answer to the question: “Should India Assist the Perpetuation of Military Dictatorship in Pakistan?” is a big NO.

So far the Pakistani public has perceived that it is the Pakistan Army and the United States which have stood against democracy in Pakistan.

Surely, India does not want to be perceived as perpetuating a military dictatorship in Pakistan by a continued political engagement with a military regime in Pakistan’s election year of 2007.

Should India Adopt Pro-active Stances in Support of Restoration of Democracy in Pakistan

Actually, the flat answer to this question flows from the preceding examination and that answer is a resounding “YES”

India must adopt pro-active stances in support of restoration of democracy in Pakistan for the following reasons:

- India cannot be seen in South Asia as employing “double standards” in terms of restoration of democracy.
- In 2006, India even at the cost of her national security interests, worked pro-actively for restoration of democracy in Nepal.
- In 2007, India cannot be seen as impeding the restoration of democracy in Pakistan by continued legitimization of General Musharraf.
- A democratic Pakistan, however imperfect and wobbly to begin with is India’s national security imperative.
- Pakistan’s anti-Indian confrontationalist approaches arise from Pakistan’s foreign policy being under the control of the Pakistan Army, India has to pro-actively work against this stranglehold.

It is a puerile Indian policy establishment argument that the form of political dispensation in Pakistan is a Pakistani domestic matter and that India should deal with the Pakistan government of the day. If that be the case, then how does the Indian Government permit visiting Pakistani dignitaries including General Musharraf to have political meetings with Kashmiri secessionists like the Hurriyet leaders in New Delhi and their meetings with Pakistani diplomats during Hajj pilgrimages.

India cannot also be a party to the suppression of democracy in Pakistan when for the 2007 elections, the Pakistani General has announced that he will not allow former Prime Ministers Bhutto and Nawas Sharif to return to Pakistan to participate in the 2007 General Elections.

Further, Pakistan's former Prime Ministers Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif and other Opposition parliamentarians be invited to India and be given forums for propagation of democracy in Pakistan.

India must launch a sustained public relation campaign all over the world and especially in Washington, propagating the return of democracy in Pakistan.

India's Foreign Policy Options on Pakistan in 2007

India has only one justifiable foreign policy option on Pakistan for 2007 and that is to work pro-actively for restoration of democracy in Pakistan.

India needs to view Pakistan from the prism of Indian national security imperatives and not through the United States prism. It is strange that when it comes to India's policy towards China, we view it through the prism of China-Pakistan relations but have a different standard when it comes to viewing USA-Pakistan relations through the American prism and not through the Indian National Security prism.

To the above end, India must adopt the following policy approaches:

- All India-Pakistan CBMs and the peace process be frozen till 2007 election are over. All this should await the return of a democratic government in Pakistan enjoying a popular mandate through internationally supervised elections,

- During the interim India should cease all political engagement with Pakistan's military regime. Only diplomatic protocol engagement be maintained.

In short, India should freeze all political dialogue and engagement with the Pakistani military regime as a declaratory policy.

Should General Musharraf contrive to come back to power by domestic rigging and external strategic support, India should continue the above declaratory policy even after 2007.

Concluding Observations

India as the predominant power in South Asia should work towards the emergence of a stable, secure and economically vibrant neighbor. To this end, Pakistan needs to be pro-actively assisted by India to break free from the shackles of military regimes.

India should also impress on the United States as part of the US-India strategic dialogue that it cannot adopt double standards when it comes to restoration of democracy in Pakistan. It is rather strange that the United States maintains that the emergence of a moderate, Islamic democratic state of Afghanistan is its prime aim and yet next door it perpetuates a military dictatorship in Pakistan.

Pakistan's restoration of democracy is one case where India can fittingly adopt the moral high ground as part of its foreign policy options for 2007.

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Siachen Sellout

By Brahma Chellaney

A weakness of almost every Indian Prime Minister has been to portray as path-setting any major foreign visit, especially if it is to the United States or either of the two adversarial States - Pakistan and China. No Indian PM usually wishes to return home to domestic problems without having signed a "momentous" agreement or having achieved some other "historic success" abroad. That in turn has meant making concessions on matters of vital national interest.

Now Manmohan Singh is itching to visit Pakistan, although he has admitted more than once in recent weeks that Pakistani dictator Pervez Musharraf has not kept his word to halt state support for terrorist acts against India. The terrorist bombings in New Delhi, Bangalore and Varanasi since last October have all been linked to front organisations of the Pakistani military's infamous agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence. The ubiquitous ISI has an octopus-like influence within Pakistan.

Without answering the question as to why he wishes to reward General Musharraf for his recalcitrant conduct by paying an official visit to Pakistan, the PM through his handlers has been seeking to prepare the Indian public for his next sellout- an Indian military pull-out from the large Saltoro Ridge, of which the Siachen Glacier is a part. Official spinmasters have conveyed the PM's lack of interest in "empty summitry" with Musharraf. According to them, the PM will travel to Islamabad if he can sign a major agreement, such as on "Siachen", a popular appellation for the entire Saltoro Ridge.

Again, obvious questions have gone unanswered. Why should India vacate a strategically located ridge whose control Pakistan has unsuccessfully sought to wrest militarily? To help Manmohan Singh achieve a "successful visit"? To express India's gratitude to Musharraf for his continued export of terror? To aid Musharraf's despotic

hold on power at a time when he is increasingly becoming unpopular at home? To please the US, which wants India to bail out Musharraf through concessions on Kashmir and “Siachen”?

US President George W Bush has for long been taking India’s help to make his pet dictator, Musharraf, internationally respectable. This assistance India has rendered continuously since it invited him out of the blue to Agra and helped end his quasi-pariah status. In the period since the Agra summit, India has come a long way, aligning its Pakistan policy more closely with the US stance. That only emboldened Bush to use Indian soil in March to applaud Pakistan as “another important partner, and friend of the US” and to claim that India is “better off because America has a close relationship” with Islamabad.

Today, on the three core issues - democracy, nuclear proliferation and terrorism India, in deference to the US, is loath to put the heat on Pakistan. The PM speaks about democracy in Nepal but is silent on Pakistan. He has been a hawk on Iran and follows the US line in putting the importing state in the international doghouse while not once naming the exporting country (Pakistan) that admits illicitly transferring uranium-enrichment centrifuges and designs to Tehran. The PM’s yearning to visit Pakistan testifies to his ambivalent stand on Pakistani-aided terrorism.

The desire to please America by pulling out forces from Saltoro Ridge only shows the costs India is beginning to pay for the vaunted nuclear deal with Washington. For the US, the deal holds multiple benefits - from getting a handle on India’s nuclear-weapons programme and leverage on Indian foreign policy to opening the way to lucrative reactor and arms sales. Thanks to the deal, India can expect more of what it has heard in recent weeks - US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice’s emphasis on maintaining an Indo-Pak “nuclear balance”, and Assistant Secretary of State Richard Boucher’s rude demand that India “absolutely” define its deterrent in the sole context of Pakistan and enter into “mutual understandings” with that country “in both conventional and nuclear areas”.

An Indian pull-out from Saltoro is one of the “mutual understandings” that the US is encouraging India to enter into with Islamabad. Today, America actively promotes the Indo-Pak “peace” process, even though what India has got so far is not peace but more terrorism. Keeping Kashmir as a live issue and promoting the Hurriyat helps the US to leverage its Pakistan ties with India. In the hype during Bush’s India visit, not many noticed that the visiting leader, with the Indian PM by his side, publicly demanded Indo-Pak “progress on all issues, including Kashmir”.

No nation in modern world history has vacated a territory it holds just to please an adversary. But that is what the PM, under US urging, is looking to do. What will India gain strategically by forfeiting its control over a key ridge located where the present frontiers of India, China and Pakistan meet? Will it persuade Pakistan to stop using the weapon of terror against India? Can India feel reasonably sure that Pakistan, with its vantage ground position, will not catch it napping by encroaching on the vacated ridge?

Yet a scripted media campaign has been let loose in favour of a Siachen settlement centred on a significant dilution of India’s long-standing stance. The public is being told that a breakthrough can be achieved through an “innovative compromise” in which India accepts a military pullback from Saltoro Ridge without Pakistan agreeing to a mutually defined and demarcated Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL). An annexure to the agreement, however, will carry a reference to India’s present ridge control. If that is India’s definition of an innovative compromise, it is an open invitation to Pakistan to up the ante on all bilateral disputes.

The strategic objective of an Indian withdrawal has to be to end the dispute - not postpone a resolution to a future date - over the undefined line of control in the elongated Saltoro Ridge, the northernmost tip of the Indo-Pak border. A withdrawal without a formal Pakistani endorsement of the AGPL not only will rob India of the leverage it presently enjoys but will also undercut New Delhi’s central aim to buttress the sanctity of a clearly delineated, inviolable LOC - an objective that determined the outcome of the 1999 Kargil invasion.

Just as the LOC in Jammu and Kashmir has internationally been accepted as the de facto but unfringeable Indo-Pak border, a mutually authenticated AGPL will serve as the LOC’s northernmost extension. In addition to a formal exchange of maps with the positions held by each side marked on them, both countries also should agree to pull back their troops to points from where it will take the same time to reach the ridge. The two armies cannot go back to the pre-1984 positions, as Islamabad wants, because that will place Pakistani troops at an advantageous position to occupy the ridge. A mutually delineated AGPL will largely measure up to the reference in the old Indo-Pak accord that the line from Point NJ 9842 shall run “thence north to the glaciers”.

A pull-out without such agreed terms will be tantamount to an unforgivable dereliction of duty that will put India’s security in those icy heights at the mercy of Pakistan’s good conduct. India’s policy-makers ought to have absorbed by now the lessons of the loss of Aksai Chin to China, for which the country is paying long-term strategic costs. **If Pakistani forces were to occupy Saltoro following an Indian pullback, they will link up with Chinese troops at Karakoram Pass, expanding the Sino-Pak land corridor.**

India should seek peace and tranquillity on a ridge where temperatures touch minus 40 degrees and where altitude sickness and frostbite have caused more casualties than bullets and artillery rounds. But in seeking peace, India must heed the Ronald Reagan dictum; “trust but verify”. It will be foolhardy for India to pull out from Saltoro by reposing unverifiable trust in an adversary that has a record of taking it by surprise again and again.

Since independence, India has distinguished itself by reposing reckless trust in adversaries and then crying foul when they deceive it. One such “perfidy” hastened the death of Jawaharlal Nehru, who confessed to the nation the day the Chinese military invaded in 1962 that China had returned “evil for good”. Another “perfidy” was recounted by Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who in the Lahore Declaration allowed J&K to be singled out by name as a bilateral issue awaiting resolution. Then, a few months later, he bewailed in public that his “bus to Lahore got hijacked and taken to Kargil”. When the Musharraf-led Pakistani Army encroached across a clearly delineated frontier into Kargil, it can easily intrude into an un-demarcated Saltoro Ridge.

How often will India cry betrayal? One should trust a friend, not a foe. If India wishes to trust an adversary, that has to be backed by verification on the ground. As Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee himself said *on* October 7, 2005: **“If we vacate the posts and they occupy them tomorrow, how do we establish before the international community that this was what we had?”** That is why India had been seeking a mutually defined line of control on Saltoro Ridge. **Why yield to Pakistan now when militarily it is in a hopeless position to wrest control of the ridge?**

Until the mid-1990s, Pakistan was less willing to reach a settlement because of its belief that the Indian military had put itself in an untenable position by occupying the inhospitable heights. **Pakistan’s attitude was to let the Indians stew in their own juices. Since then, Pakistan has seen how India has facilitated its hold over the ridge through firm communications and logistical lines. Pakistan now cannot even think of militarily displacing Indian forces, so it craves for a political settlement.**

For India, there is little incentive to withdraw from the ridge, where a ceasefire continues to hold. In fact, India needs to leverage its Saltoro hold for securing peace beyond the ridge. A “Siachen” settlement can be part and parcel of a resolution of the Kashmir issue. Yet the PM has been floating fuzzy ideas. In mid-2005, for instance, he called for turning Siachen into a “peace mountain”. Rather than search for yet another confidence-building measure with Pakistan, the PM needs to look at the “Siachen” issue strategically.

India has a history of surrendering at the negotiating table what it has won on the battlefield. India gave back Haji Pir to Pakistan under the Tashkent Declaration, and then under the Simla Agreement it returned both territorial gains and large numbers of Pakistani prisoners without securing a Kashmir settlement. Now, it should not give up its 22-year-old, hard-fought control of Saltoro Ridge in its search for elusive peace with Pakistan. After the self-injurious nuclear deal, a “Siachen” pull-out will firmly establish the PM as “Mr Sellout Singh”.

—Source: Hindu-Religion

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*(The writer is a leading Strategic Expert based in New) END

Kashmir Dispute The Myth-III

By Dr. M.K. Teng

Another man, whose future was linked with the demarcation of the boundary in the Punjab, was Maharaja Hari Singh, the ruler of Jammu and Kashmir. The Jammu-Madhampur fair weather cart-road was the only communication link between the State and India. The two major all weather motorable roads, the Jhelum-Valley Road linking Srinagar with Rawalpindi and the Jammu-Sialkot road ran into the West Punjab. The railway line connecting Jammu with Sialkot also ran into the West Punjab. The border between the State and Kangra and the Punjab Hill States, which had decided to accede to India, was broken by rugged mountainous terrain. An alternate road could be built via Mukerian to connect Jammu with Kangra and via Doda with the Punjab Hill States. Indeed, when Mahajan and Teja Singh pointed out to the Commission the necessity of securing access to Jammu and Kashmir through East Punjab, Mohammad Munir and Din Mohammad suggested the construction of an alternate land route via Mukerian connecting Jammu with Kangra. The Hindu and the Sikh Commissioners realised, as did Hari Singh, the importance of the tehsil of Pathankot to the viability and the defensibility of the borders of India as well the Jammu and Kashmir State.

Sir Shadi Lal and Bakshi Tek Chand kept Hari Singh informed of the boundary demarcation in the Punjab. They were close to Mehar Chand Mahajan and had apprised him of the interest Hari Singh had in the demarcation of the boundary in the Punjab.

Hari Singh was suspicious of Mountbatten, whose mind he knew. He did not trust the Congress leaders. He had received a communication from States Minister, in which the latter had advised him to release the National Conference leaders and come to terms with them. Unsure of the course Sir Radcliffe would follow in respect of his State, he reportedly, conveyed to the British officials, through some of his trusted British friends, his interests in a balance border with the two Dominions of India and Pakistan and the importance of the Jammu-Pathankot road for the security of his State. Reportedly, he conveyed to the British authorities that in case he was not

secured the land route between Jammu and Pathankot he would have no other alternative except to depend upon the Dominion of India for the construction of a new transit route, across the eastern borders of the State with Kangra or with any of the Punjab Hill States, which had already acceded to India.

The British were not averse to a balanced border of the State with India and Pakistan, for they were keen to avoid any diplomatic or political lapse which would push the Maharaja into the lap of India. Some of the British officials sincerely believed that Hari Singh would opt for an arrangement in which he was not required to accede to any of the Dominions, if he was guaranteed peace on his frontiers. Ram Chander Kak, out of stratagem or straight devotion to his master, had spared no efforts to assure the British, that Hari Singh pursued a policy, which enabled him to retain his independence, rather than join India which was beset with serious difficulties.

In view of the extremely divergent views and deep disagreement among the Hindu and Sikh Commissioners and the Muslim Commissioners, the Boundary Commission was unable to reach a mutually acceptable agreement on the demarcation of the boundary across the Lahore Division. In accordance with the procedure laid down for the Boundary Commission, in case of disagreement among the Hindu, Sikh and the Muslim representation in the Commission, it was decided by mutual agreement to entrust the task of the demarcation to Sir Radcliffe, the Chairman of the Boundary Commission. The Commissioners, representing the Hindus and the Sikh as well as the Muslims agreed that the arbitral award made by Sir Radcliffe would be binding on them.

History had cast a unique responsibility on Sir Radcliffe, to lay down the future boundaries of the nation of India, which was on the threshold of freedom from centuries of slavery as well as describe the future boundaries of an independent Muslim state in India. The Congress leaders, were perhaps, oblivious of the elemental change the creation of Pakistan would bring into the civilisational boundaries of India and the far-reaching effect the establishment of a Muslim power in India, would have on its northern frontiers. Jammu and Kashmir formed the central spur of the great Himalayan uplands poised as the State was, it stood as a sentinel for any eastward expansion of any power from the west as well as the north.

Pakistan was, however, keenly conscious of the strategic importance of Jammu and Kashmir. But the Government of Pakistan was unable to judge the ability of Maharaja Hari Singh to defeat their designs. **Hari Singh played a historic role in persuading Sir Radcliffe to accept that his State could not be completely isolated from the Indian Dominion.**

The Muslim League leaders did not trust Hari Singh. They spared no efforts to convince the British officials in the Government of India about the necessity to ensure that the Boundary Commission did not deviate from the principle of the population proportions. **The Muslim League leaders were keen to acquire the Ravi Headworks at Madhopur isolate the district of Amritsar and seal the existing road-link connecting Jammu and Kashmir with India.** The League leaders sent Chowdhary Mohammad Ali to convey to the British officials in the Indian Government their concern about the future of the Lahore Division. Mohammad Ali met, Lord Ismay, the Political Advisor to the Viceroy to convey to Mountbatten the anxiety of the Muslim League leaders about any deviation from the principle of population-proportions the Boundary Commission may resort to in the demarcation of the boundary in the Punjab. Ismay told Mohammad Ali that the Boundary Commission was an independent body of which the functions were determined by its terms of reference, and the Government of India had no role in its function. Many years later, research in Pakistan revealed that during his meeting with Lord Ismay, Mohammad Ali showed the Political Advisor a sketch map of the demarcation of the boundary between east and west Punjab which was not strictly based upon the principle of population-proportions. Ismay, reportedly expressed dissatisfaction with it.

The award of the Boundary Commission was announced on 18 of August 1947, three days after the transfer of power in India. Sir Radcliffe left India the same day. The districts of Amritsar and Gurdaspur were included in the East Punjab, whereas the districts of Lahore and Sheikhopora were included in the West Punjab. The entire Muslim League leadership flared upon in anger against the inclusion of Gurdaspur in the East Punjab and blamed Sir Radcliffe of connivance in a craftily devised plan to give India access to Jammu and Kashmir and provide the Indian state the strategic ground to grab the State. Communal riots flared up in Lahore and spread to the whole of the Punjab.

Sir Radcliffe followed uniform standards in the delimitation of the boundary between India and Pakistan in Bengal as well as the Punjab. Evidently, he did not overlook the consideration of other factors, specifically mentioned in the terms of reference of the Boundary Commission in the delimitation of the boundary between the East and the West Punjab. He did take into consideration the nominal majority, the Muslims enjoyed over the Hindus and the Sikhs in Gurdaspur. The Tehsil of Pathankote in the Gurdaspur district had a distinct Hindu majority and it could not have been included in the West Punjab by any stretch of imagination. Sir Radcliffe had not followed the district boundaries as the basis of delimitation of the boundaries elsewhere in the Punjab. Besides, the Ravi irrigation headworks were located in Pathankot and they could not have been excluded from the East Punjab, to ensure a just and equitable distribution of water resources in the Punjab between India and Pakistan. undoubtedly, Sir Radcliffe did not overlook the necessity of providing a balanced border to the Jammu and Kashmir State, for which Mahajan and Teja Singh had spiritedly pleaded. The security of the Jammu and

Kashmir State, which constituted the central spur of the northern frontier of India and which was crucial to the security of the Himalayas, could not be left out the consideration of the Boundary Commission. The division of the Punjab was a part of the partition of India and the demarcation of the boundary between India and Pakistan could not be undertaken in isolation from its effects on the Indian States. The delimitation of the boundary in the Punjab around the Bahawalpur State, was undertaken with due consideration of its future affiliations. Bahawalpur joined Pakistan.

Sir Radcliffe recognised the inclusion of the district of Gurdaspur in the East Punjab as a strategic requirement of the security of the northern frontier of India, including the frontier of India in the Punjab. He accepted in his report that the inclusion of Gurdaspur in the East Punjab was necessary for the security of the district of Amritsar, which would otherwise be surrounded by Pakistan. Perhaps, Radcliffe was aware of the security of the northern Frontier of India, in which the British were more interested than the Congress leaders, who had warbled notions about the security of the Himalayas. Unlike the other officials of the Government of India, Radcliffe was free of the trappings, the British officials of the Indian Civil Service were strapped to. He did not visualise the partition of India as the British officials of the Indian Government did, and he was guided by his own judgement. **He refused to recognise the claim to the geographical expression of the Muslim nation of Pakistan, the way the British officials of the Indian Government did. He had little regard for their colonial concerns or Jinnah's notions of the ascendance of the Muslims power in India.**

An important consideration which Sir Radcliffe had in mind in dividing the Lahore Division was the future of the Sikh Community, which was bound to be adversely affected by the partition of the Punjab. The land and the assets owned by the Sikhs were largely situated in the west Punjab but a larger section of their population lived in the East Punjab. Besides, their main religious centres and most sacred shrines, including the Durbar Sahib, were located in the Lahore Division. The division of the Punjab was bound to uproot them from the West Pakistan and deprive them of their land and assets. The claim laid by the Muslims to the whole of Lahore Division, would divest them of their sacred places and shrines. Lahore was the seat of the Sikh empire of the Punjab, which had changed the course of the history of India. The demarcation of the boundary of the East Punjab was therefore, crucial to the survival and future of the Sikh community. Both Mahajan and Teja Singh emphasised upon the need to consider the interests of the Sikh community in the demarcation of the boundary in the Punjab.

The inclusion of Gurdaspur in the East Punjab mitigated, though only partially, the rigours of the division of the Punjab. The delimitation of the boundary in the Punjab, Sir Radcliffe undertook, gave the Muslims, who constituted 55 percent of the population of the Province, 65 percent of its territory. The Hindus and the Sikhs who constituted 45 percent of the population got only 35 percent of the territory of the Punjab. The Muslim League leaders had no reason to grumble. Their reconstruction were politically motivated and aimed to prepare ground to launch a new form of Direct Action to reduce the Jammu and Kashmir State.

—To be continued

(Note: The Articles in this series are based upon the documentary sources in the Archives of India, Archives of Jammu and Kashmir State, All States People's Conference Papers, Nehru Memorial Museum New Delhi, Sapru House Library, Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi, Documentary sources, published in Pakistan, Contemporary News Paper files and Interviews) END

Did Sheikh Abdullah visit Pakistan in October, 1947?

By Raman Kumar Bhat

Did Sheikh Abdullah visit Pakistan in October 1947 to meet Jinnah? If yes, how Mohiuddin Karra, hero of 'Quit Kashmir Movement' of National Conference remain unawares about it? Karra asks how could it have been possible when Sheikh Abdullah soon after his release from jail at the end of September was 'busy making speeches, giving press statements and meeting the people who came pouring into his house'. If such an event had taken place everyone would have known, Karra adds.

Bilquees Taseer, the wife of Prof. MD Taseer, former Principal of Sri Pratap College, Srinagar and a top Muslim Leaguer, provides new evidence, hitherto unavailable, in her book *'The Kashmir of Sheikh Abdullah'*. The book, which reflects strong communal bias and is based on oral testimonies of dramatis personnel active during 1947, has virtually gone unnoticed in J&K though it was published a decade back.

Why Jinnah, the leader of Muslim League and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the leader of Kashmiri Muslims hated each other exceeds the scope of this review article. Though Jinnah continued to hate Abdullah, the evidence provided by Bliquees Taseer indicates that Kashmiri leader did make attempts to break ice with Jinnah.

Nawab Mushtaq Ahmed Gurmani was Head of the Information Directorate at Simla and Delhi from 1943-47. After the creation of Pakistan he was appointed Minister of Kashmir Affairs for a few years. He was close to Jinnah. Prof. MD Taseer too served in the Information Directorate under Gurmani.

As per Gurmani, Taseer had tried to arrange twice meeting between Jinnah and Sheikh Abdullah-in early 1945 and 1946. The first meeting did not materialise. It was in early 1946 that Taseer brought Sheikh Abdullah to Gurmani again to arrange a meeting with Jinnah. The latter's reply was "If he (Abdullah) wants to see me let him write a request and then I will consider". How could a popular leader who carried the mandate of his people could stomach this insult? In contrast, Pt. Nehru, a taller leader of Indian people, treated Sheikh Abdullah as his equal.

In early 1947 yet another attempt was made by Hafiz Jullundri, poet and close friend of Sheikh, besides Maulana Daud Gaznavi and others. Initially, Jinnah agreed for the meeting, the date and time for an appointment was fixed. But when the party accompanied by Sheikh Abdullah reached Jinnah's house and were waiting in the drawing room, they were given the message that Jinnah had changed the mind.

Taseer still pursued with his efforts. His visit to Srinagar led to deputation of GM Sadiq to Lahore to hold talks with Muslim League leaders. What happened to this mission is a separate story.

The Pakistani left leaders-Mian Iftikharuddin, Prof. MD Taseer who wanted to outthrust Jinnah in championing the two-nation theory were trying all stratagems to trap Sheikh Abdullah and annex Kashmir for Pakistan. They were the principle players in first trapping Sheikh Abdullah, then if possible make him captive and finally formulating Tribal invasion of Kashmir if the first two stratagems failed to take off. Shameless intrigue of Pakistani Left leaders including Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Mian Iftikharuddin, Prof MD Taseer during 1947 is a blot on the history of left movement in the Indian sub-continent.

Taseer came to Srinagar on October 2, 1947 and left for Lahore the next day alongwith GM Sadiq. Mian Iftikharuddin, the cunning politician, came to Srinagar again only a day or two after Taseer and Sadiq had left for Lahore. Why were Taseer, Iftikharuddin in hurry to trap Sheikh Abdullah? Hadn't they okayed the plan for military invasion of Kashmir? The invasion date had already been extended twice. How insincere they were to their close friend, Abdullah is clearly established by facts.

Mian Iftikharuddin had once been a member of Indian National Congress Working Committee and spent two years in Jail in 'Quit India' agitation. Now he was a Muslim Leaguer, who wanted to annex Kashmir by hook or crook to vindicate the two-nation theory. From his Congress days he had developed a special relationship with Sheikh Abdullah. He came from Lahore by car at the beginning of October (1947). Iftikharuddin had visited Kashmir alongwith Faiz Ahmed Faiz in August-September (1947) when Sheikh Abdullah was in jail. The duo had met National Conference and Muslim Conference leaders to influence them to facilitate Kashmir's accession to Pakistan.

The Driver, Khizar had been in service of Mian Iftikharuddin for over thirty years. As per the Driver's testimony he drove Mian Iftikharuddin in his own car soon after Dr. Taseer visited Srinagar in the first week of October, 1947. They left Lahore early in the morning and reached Srinagar the same evening. Mian met Abdullah at his house at Soura and stayed for about two hours. Mian and his driver stayed at Nedous Hotel for the night. The next morning Sheikh Abdullah himself came to the hotel. All the three left for Lahore by Car via 'the Pindi' route.

Sheikh Abdullah spent two nights in Mian Iftikhar's house in Aikman Road, while Mian tried to persuade Jinnah then in Karachi on the phone to meet him. As per Begum Iftikharuddin Jinnah got excited and replied, 'I don't need to meet this man. Kashmir is in my pocket'. According to Sheikh Abdullah Jinnah's reply was 'who is Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah? I am prepared to discuss Kashmir only with the Maharaja or a senior government official from Kashmir'. Sheikh Abdullah as per Bliques Taseer, had told Suhail Iftikharuddin (Mian's son) and his lawyer friend in New Delhi in 1964 that he had made lightening trip to Lahore soon after his release at Mian's insistence who had already contacted Jinnah on the phone in Karachi, with a request that he would meet Sheikh Abdullah if he brought him to Karachi. Why did Jinnah first agree to meet Abdullah and then suddenly backtracked? To humiliate Sheikh Abdullah?

The now defunct "Civil and Military Gazette" of Lahore had reported this visit of Sheikh Abdullah to Lahore. According to Habib Kaifi, one-time secretary of J&K Muslim Conference people in Srinagar knew about Sheikh's visit to Lahore. Begum Zafar Ali, a MLA of J&K Assembly (1975-82) too confirmed the visit by Sheikh Abdullah to Lahore. Sheikh Abdullah left on the third morning, reaching Srinagar at 10 PM. It was Khizar who dropped Kashmiri leader at Srinagar.

The question arises if so many people knew in Srinagar knew about Sheikh's trip to Lahore how was Karra ignorant about it and did not about it know even four decades later. Was the entire NC leadership kept in dark by Sheikh Abdullah and only the Muslim Conference leadership was privy to it? Shri Omar Abdullah who visited Pakistani recently said there that his grandfather committed serious mistakes. Did he have repeated humiliation of his grandfather by Pakistani leaders in mind? The people are keen to know. END

Who will deliver justice to Pyare Lal Tickoo?

KS Correspondent

Shopian is an ancient town and houses one of the most sacred shrines of Kashmiri Pandits—the *Kapalmochan Tirtha*. Batapora, the quarter of Shopian, where 112 Pandit families lived till 1990, used to be the pride of the town. It also reminded world about Shopian's pluralistic character. Sadly, this became its undoing. How could entrepreneurs of Islamic fundamentalism reconcile to the existence of a pocket that stood as witness to the immense contribution of Kashmiri Pandits to the economic, social and political life of Shopian. It also lent prestige to the Shopian by reminding that peaceful co-existence between the members of the two communities was not an issue at stake here.

Pt. Saroop Nath Saraf, a son of Batapora, was the first political worker of the region who took up the battle for nationalism, democracy and social justice. Leading Indian National Congress leaders e.g. Sh. Keskar stayed underground in his house during the days of 'Quit India Movement'. He was liberal to the core and braved prison terms in conviction of his political ideas. He was the moving spirit behind the starting of National School, Shopian in 1941. For well-known Muslim intellectuals—Shamim Ahmed Shamim, Mohammad Sayeed Malik, Prof. MA Shaida, Sh. Mohammad Yusuf Teng etc. it became the alma mater. It was Saroop Nath the visionary who launched the agitation for district status for Shopian, though majority community stood to benefit more from it. The entire Batapora quarter was actively involved in the agitation.

Sh. Shamboo Nath Tickoo of the same locality spent 15 days in jail in the agitation for district, and was released on bail later. His son Pt. Pyare Lal Tickoo too was actively involved in secular affairs of Shopian. A cloth merchant by profession, for over two decades he was associated with the activities of Beopar mandal of Shopian and served as its Secretary from 1985-88. He actively associated himself with mainstream political parties of Kashmir and was a close friend of late Shamim Ahmed Shamima, MP and a well-known journalist. He was his election agent at Chrar in 1971.

What did Pyare Lal do to earn a fate that would shame any civilised society and a democratic government? First his 26-year old son was gunned down by terrorists. A month later his house was burnt down by them. Then a hostile government stepped in to complete the process of religious-cleansing. For forty years the State government never deemed it necessary to construct a building for housing Industrial Training Institute. Why did the government decide to choose the burnt earth of Pyare Lal Tickoo's house to build the ITI building even without going through the formality of seeking his consent? Couldn't it find a place in the whole of Shopian town for it? This at a time when it was telling the world that it was committed to return of Kashmiri Pandits! Something worse was in store for Tickoos again. 6 kanals and 10 marlas orchard land, was fraudulently occupied. Even after the declaration of judgement in Tickoos' favour, the same government refuses to implement its own verdict. What else can it be called? "GENOCIDE"! Pyare Lal's tragedy and predicament has posed serious questions on the role of civil society, the media and the government in a democratic society.

Batapora has been home to such outstanding Kashmiri Pandits —Dr RL Lahori, Dr UK Lahori, Jia Lal, Nand Lal, Brij Lal (of Lahori family), Lambodar Nath Kitchu, Jagar Nath Sathu, Sh. Raghav Ram and ML Kandhari, Jia Lal Koul, Radha Krishan Kaul, Dr. MK Punjabi, Jia Lal Raina, Sham Sunder Pardesi, Omkar Nath Koul, Dr HN Bhat, Sh BL Saraf, Amar Nath and Niranjana Nath Kokroo, Prem Nath Koul etc. Sh. Janki Nath Koul, who too lived here, was Zonal secretary of National Conference and Vice-president of Fruit Growers' Association.

Exodus:

As terrorist violence began in October, 1989 Pandits of Batapora curtailed their movement. With spate of selective killings of members of Pandit community in January-February, 1990 exodus began from Batapora locality as well. Each family took its own decision. By April, 1990 sixty of the 112 Pandit families had left for Jammu as the government had little control to bestow protection to the minority community. The members of the majority community did little to reassure the minority community. Another 30 families left in May. Only 10-12 Pandit families decided to stay back. They included the families of Shamboo Nath Tickoo, Avtar Krishan Koul, Pradiman Krishan Koul, Kanya Lal Raina, Dr HN Bhat, Sh. Brij Lal and Nand Lal Lahori, Jia Lal Lahori and Sh. Brij Nath Kitchlu.

Killing of Rajinder Tickoo: On June 16, 1990 Rajinder Tickoo son of Pyare Lal Tickoo, who was just 26, was shot dead by terrorists in the town. Rajinder had done MA Education from Kashmir University, Diploma Business Administration from University of Jammu. He had just completed one year Accountancy course from Finance Accountancy School, Srinagar. After six months training he had to undergo practical training for six months at Shopian Hospital. This too he had completed. On the fateful day he had gone to collect the certificate of attendance from the Hospital authorities. After coming out from the hospital at around 4 PM he went to the shop of his friend at Bus Stand. The terrorists who were following him fired a volley of shots at him. 4 bullets hit him—one in the chest, two in abdomen and another one in thigh. Rajinder died on spot. No member of the majority community came to pick him up. Traffic stopped, people ran helter-skelter. Those who seek to enjoy

saying on electronic media that Jagmohan provided trucks to Pandits to leave are only rubbing salt to the wounds of the minority Pandit community.

Meanwhile, one of the members of the majority community came to inform Pyare Lal at his shop in the bazar that his son has been shot at. Pyare Lal saw his son lying dead in a pool of blood in the shop. There was a bullet with marking of 'Made in China'. The objective of killing Rajinder, a scion of a prominent Batapora Pandit family, was to serve a warning to the remaining 10-12 Pandit families which were still holding out.

The dead body was taken to the Hospital where Dr. Sofi conducted the post-mortem. In those terrible times Pandits had even lost the right of mourning their departed ones. At the time of post-mortem only Rajinder's father and grandfather were present. Pyare Lal recalls, "I carried the body of my son in my hands. Scene of Raja Harishchandra (Harichandrazen raat)'s similar predicament was constantly appearing before my eyes. **Happenings create stories**".

Pyare Lal's mother exhibited rare courage. She mobilised Pandit neighbours to prepare warm water for giving bath to her beloved grandson. There was no purohit available. All the 12 Pandit families attended the cremation at cremation ground at Batapora. Everything was over by 5 PM. No member of the majority community came to Tickoo's house or attended the cremation. There were more than fifty families living here. This was second tragedy for Pyare Lal Tickoo. In January, 1989 his wife, who had just turned 40, had died of Mitral stenosis. The Muslim neighbours had grieved for her for four months. What had happened in just 18 months that '*Kashmiriyat*' evaporated like thin air? A fascist, fundamentalist movement had taken over.

All the Pandit families of Batapora who had not joined the exodus, spent the night at Tickoo's house, both to express solidarity with the bereaved family and to ponder over what to do next. It was at 8:30 PM that custodian of Law and Order, Deputy Commissioner, who belonged to the majority community turned up, exactly 4 and ½ hours after the killing. He asked Pandits if they needed any security. Pyare Lal Tickoo replied, "*Jo Hona Tha Woh Ho Chuka Hai Ab Kya Karne Aye Ho. Yeh Aapki Marzi Hai Security Rakho Ya Nah Rakho*". (whatever had to happen has happened. What was the need for you to come now? It is your wish whether to keep security or not). No security was provided during the night. Those who say Pandits were provided trucks to leave should ponder over who is politicking—they or the Pandits who faced religious-cleansing and an insensitive administration.

Next morning four members of the majority community came to express their grief to Tickoo's. One of them was their servant who had been with them for over twenty years, two were friends of Pyare Lal Tickoo and one was a close acquaintance of Pt. Shamboo Nath Tickoo. Times had changed. One has to be a member of the minority community and live the times of physical cleansing to understand what genocide means. It is easy to deliver sermons or write fashionable treatises on displacement of a cleansed community.

The Batapora Pandit families decided to leave for Jammu. A more responsible administration would have thought it to be part of its duty to provide transport to Kashmiri Pandits after this tragedy. This was not to be. Shamboo Nath Tickoo braved all dangers and went in a matador to Pulwama to arrange trucks.

On the 3rd day after the killing Tickoo family collected the ashes of their beloved Rajinder. Part of the ashes were immersed in Raembiar river which has been part of Shopian Pandits' history and which also used to collect the ashes of ancestors of Rajinder for centuries. The other part was taken by Rajinder's father to Hardwar to be immersed in Ganges. The Pandit families left for Jammu in two trucks.

Tickoo's had two cows which were being looked after by two servants. The cows used to give five kg milk in morning and 6-7 kg in evening. Tickoo's requested their neighbour to take care of cows. The neighbour refused saying this would invite reprisal from terrorists. The cows and a calf were let free. Tickoo's expressed sorrow that they could not take care of cows now.

For two days Tickoo family stayed in Gita Bhavan and then went to stay at Sarore, 22 kms way from Jammu. After a year the family was provided a room at Camp Muthi I. The small 10 ft x 10 ft room had to accommodate five persons—old parents of Pyare Lal, his two sons and Pyare Lal himself. There was no dearth of any kind for Tickoo's at Shopian. Now they were proverbial abandoned refugees. As camp life took toll of health of the family the Tickoo's left the camp to seek healthier accommodation outside. Pyare Lal's mother unable to face rigours of exile too died.

More shock was in store for Tickoo's soon after they left for Jammu. On 21st July 1990 first their house and the houses of other Pandit families were looted and the goods taken away in trucks. Then these houses were put to arson. The other houses of Batapora were burnt on the day when Nunda Reshi's Mausoleum was burnt by Mast Gul at Chrar, Budgam.

From time to time with uncertainty looming large many families had to go for distress sale of their '*poorans*'. Pyare Lal Tickoo and his neighbours—Kouls and Rainas whose houses were burnt on 21st July had already decided that come what may they would not sell their houses and the land. Pyare Lal Tickoo had also an orchard, 5 kanals and 14 marlas in size, in the vicinity of his house. It used to bear delicious apples. These Pandit families together owned 9 kanals and four marlas, on which stood 7 houses and an orchard. When asked why he did not

sell his *pooran* and orchard land, Pyare Lal Tickoo shot back "why should I sell the *pooran*? I want to return to my home".

State encroachment of Residential Land:

A Govt. which swears by "*Kashmiriat*" and loses no opportunity to proclaim to the outside world that "it was committed to bring back Displaced Kashmiri Pandits back to their homes with 'honour and dignity' had other ideas". If Pandit families decide not to sell their *poorans* there was every possibility that these families would return to rebuild their houses whenever situation permitted. The State government had also declared that it would provide financial aid for repair/rebuilding the damaged houses.

Soon after Mufti Mohammad Syed took over as the Chief Minister of PDP-Congress coalition government, Pandit families came to know that the District Administration had mooted a proposal to thwart the return of Kashmiri Pandits to Batapora. Without seeking consent of the Pandit families, either directly or through a notice, it wanted to acquire their residential land through the Land Acquisition Act. The families learnt that the Administration had mooted the proposal for the construction of ITI Complex upon the said premises.

In response to it Sh. Shamboo Nath Tickoo, father of Pyare Lal moved an application to SDM Shopian for removal of encroachment of his land. SDM in his letter no: 140-41/SDM/S/2003 Dated: 2/8/2003 asked the Tehsildar Shopian to furnish details within two days.

When nothing was heard for a year, the Pandit families sought intervention of the Chief Minister, the Collector Land Acquisition (SJM) Shopian, the Chief Secretary, the Financial Commissioner (Revenue), DC Pulwama. The families also prayed to the State Governor, NHRC, New Delhi and SHRC, J&K.

In their prayer to the Chief Minister, dated 5/8/2004 they asked, "If this is the situation it clearly violates the policy of the government and also violates the fundamental rights of the applicants. If at all, the District Administration and the Government is interested in construction of the ITI Complex, there are hundreds of patches of land within the town as well. They added the "action of the District Administration also speaks volumes, for malafide and extraneous considerations it has mooted the proposal for the acquisition of the proceedings". The Chief Minister Mufti Mohammad Syed, who has been going around talking about "Self-Rule, Self-Governance", did not feel it his duty to respond to the aggrieved Pandits.

The Pandit families in their petition to the Collector reminded that Hon'ble High Court of J&K in its various judgements had clearly stated that "the Collector has to show urgency for acquisition of any particular patch of land". They added that, "Prima-facie there appears no public purpose for the aforesaid acquisition and if at all the government is interested in construction of the ITI Complex, that can be constructed at any area of the town without violating the fundamental rights of the applicants".

Earlier on 24.7.2004 in his petition to the Financial Commissioner (Revenue), Pt. Shamboo Nath Tickoo asked, "We wonder to know that prior to this the sites which were taken for acquisition for ITI why they are dropped and our plots taken for acquisition, we being migrants and when State government has taken steps for our rehabilitation at our own native places....."

That kindly take necessary steps not to acquire our land of migrants, as there are so many plots of Kachari/state land free and open for such purposes".

Pyare Lal Tickoo, who retains strong will to force authorities to give him back what is his due said, "without seeking our consent through notification or personal notices to seven owners bulldozers were used to level our *poorans* and remove the debris of burnt houses. Why did the government feel the need to construct ITI now and not during the past 40 years? Couldn't it get space for ITI building in the whole of Shopian town?" The Pandit families have come to know that early this year the administration has illegally raised a boundary wall around the land it has forcibly encroached. Even after the case was reported in a section of media the State government remained unmoved. There have been complaints elsewhere too by Displaced Kashmiri Hindus. During the past four years of coalition rule the land owned by Pandits is being acquired ostensibly "for public purposes" under a deliberate plan to thwart their chances of return by "finishing their immovable property". In Ward No: 1 of Batapora the residential land of Pandit families—Lahoris, Sathus, Kitchlus and Panditas, which together measures 35-40 kanals was taken over for building bus stand. Sadly, GOI which depends for feedback on State authorities, did not try to intervene.

The Shop:

Pyare Lal Tickoo's cup of woes did not end here. In 1990 soon after he left his cloth shop in the heart of town was looted. Cloth worth 6-7 lakh rupees was taken away. The shop had sale of Rs 10 to 12 thousand per day. Subsequently, the shop was taken over by the government for widening of the road.

Fraudulent grab of orchard:

Pyare Lal's family owned an orchard, measuring 6 kanals and 10 marlas under Khasra No: 242 at Kanipora, Balpora (Shopian). The 58 walnut trees in the orchard produced 2 to 2.5 lakh walnuts annually. The present value of this crop is Rs 4 to 5 lakhs per year. This orchard was purchased by Pyare Lal's father Sh. Shamboo Nath in 1960 with proper registration and was under self-cultivation. They have also preserved the receipts of contractors to whom they sold the walnuts.

In 1996 the entire revenue record of the orchard was tempered by Tehsil and Revenue Officers and fraudulently transferred to Gani Bhat, son of Rehman Bhat and Musmati Sara, daughter of Rehman Bhat, R/o Kanipora. The Revenue officials fraudulently converted 'abi bagh into Abi Soem". Through a friend Pyare Lal came to know about the fraudulent occupation of his orchard.

Pt. Shamboo Nath Tickoo filed an appeal before the Financial Commissioner. Sh SD Singh the FC Revenue with Powers of Commissioner Agrarian Reforms in his landmark judgement dated 26th June 2002 after hearing the case for a year declared that **"Mutation orders are assailed, amongst others, on the ground that the property in question was an orchard long before Kharif 1971, during Kharif 1971 and continuously thereafter and thus exempt from the provisions of the Agrarian Reforms Act; that the order has been passed at the back of the appellant without his knowledge; that Rehman and Akbar in whose favour the mutations have been attested were dead at the time of entering the mutation"**.

Sh. SD Singh observed that, **"I agree with the counsel for the appellant that the attestation of the Mutations has resulted in perpetration of a fraud on the appellant and that this is in pursuance of a conspiracy hatched with the connivance of the Revenue officials. ..The circumstances under which such an illegality has been perpetrated warrant a thorough probe to fix the responsibility for appropriate action under law"**. The Financial Commissioner appointed Additional DC Pulwama, Sh AM Khanday as inquiry officer to hold a detailed inquiry in the matter and submit a report within a period of two months. What happened to the inquiry Tickoos do not know, though 4½ years have elapsed since then. With Kashmiri Pandits' leadership maintaining visibility on community's genocide, the nation is bound to ask 'who will deliver justice Pyare Lal Tickoo'. Till then he should suffer. END

Pandit refugees demand

“Right to equality and Right to life”

By Prof. Hari Om

The displaced Kashmiri Hindus have once again asked the authorities in the State and New Delhi to “address the problem of (their) genocide” so that they are able to exercise their “fundamental right to equality and right to live” in what is called secular India. The demand as put forth by them is a sad reflection on the nature of the Indian State and indicates the extent to which it has gone to appease in Kashmir the worst form of communalism and reduce the pro-India elements to a nullity.

The case in point is the over-generous attitude of the Indian State to those with blood on their hands because they, according to them, appear very relevant and utter neglect of those with no blood on their hands because they, as per them, are absolutely irrelevant. (Read those who want separation of Kashmir from India on the score of religion and those who are intensely pro-India and pluralistic in their approach, the Kashmiri Hindus.)

It would be a futile exercise to reflect towards the end of 2006 on the ongoing over 16-year-old orgy of death and destruction in Kashmir and the circumstances under which the Valley Hindus had to quit the Valley to save their life, dignity and culture in early January 1990. For, everyone is aware of what I am seeking to hint at. Leave alone those in the Union Government and their agents in the State, whose single-point agenda was, and still continues to be, to pamper the secessionists and fundamentalists and accommodate their sectarian and divisive views. Also ignore the umpteen appeals of the powers-that-be in New Delhi to the separatists to come to the Union capital and discuss with them what could satisfy them and their supporters in Kashmir and Pakistan.

The displaced Hindus and their leaders just cannot be questioned when they bemoan, cry and virtually denounce those who have been ruling the roost. They are indeed right when they say that the “problem of deprivation of their community is basically the continuation of genocide”. They also do not cross the line when they charge that “their community is being denied its share in government jobs and other spheres because there is a concerted and ideologically motivated campaign to destroy any scope of its survival...and eventually its return to homeland”. Any impartial observer with a secular and democratic outlook would also at once share their view that the “State has failed their community incessantly” and endorse their demand seeking “a national instrument to address the problem of genocide and its reversal”.

Just look at what has been done by the authorities to ex-clude the Kashmiri Hindus from the service sector. The total number of Kashmiri Hindu employees in 1989-90 was 12,500. The break up was: 11,342 out of more than two lakh employees working under the State Government, 1,059 in the Central Government offices and 628 and 204, respectively, in the Central Government and State Government public-sector undertakings.

What is their share today? Their share, according to a recent study, is a paltry 4,000 out of a total of more than four lakh State Government employees. It means that no less than “93 per cent of the households of displaced Kashmiri Hindus come under the category of unemployed”. It may not be out of place to mention here that the rate of unemployment in Kashmir is less than 30 per cent as compared to over 69 per cent in Jammu. This clearly indicates the State Government’s bias against and contempt for the displaced community.

It also needs to be underlined that between 1990 and March 2006, the State Government recruited as many as 2,65,000 persons. It may sound an exaggeration, but it is a fact that the State Government employed only 345 Kashmiri Hindus.

Under-representation of the displaced community in the service sector, or for that matter under-representation in the State-Legislature and no representation at all in the Council of Ministers, is one side of the sad story of a pro-India community.

The other side of the story is as sad as it is highly disturbing. Disturbing in the sense that attempts were made in the past, and are still being made, to ensure that the displaced community does not return to its land of Vitasta (Jhelum).

I am only referring to the "widespread usurpation and unauthorized occupation of the Kashmiri Hindus' houses, orchards, shopping complexes and business establishments" and "destruction of Hindu habitat in the Valley". I am also referring to the sale of property in a "state of distress". According to the "crash survey" conducted only "recently", "99 per cent of the Hindu families who have sold a part or whole of their properties in the Valley have done so in a state of distress". Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad feigns ignorance and says he is not aware of any "distress sale of properties of Kashmiri Hindus in the Valley" or of the "state of unemployment amongst the Kashmiri Hindus". But he is not the only one who has disappointed the community of displaced Hindus. His predecessors had also treated them shabbily and dismissed them as unworthy of any state help.

These hapless Hindu refugees perhaps still believe that the State Government or anyone in the Central Government would certainly come forward one day to regenerate their socio-cultural and politico-economic life. They are living in a fool's paradise. They must remember that the Indian State as it is would not do anything to mitigate their sufferings. It has betrayed them in the past to appease and please the fundamentalists and those who cleansed the Valley of all non-Muslims. It would ditch them in future too. Hence, the only panacea available to them is a separate homeland in the Valley invested with Union Territory status - a dispensation that allows free flow of the Indian Constitution, minus Article 370. They must take the plunge and immediately to obtain what they call their "fundamental right to equality and right to live".

(Formerly Dean of Jammu Universities faculty of Social Science) END

State Govt's ignorance on KPs' problems farce: Panun Kashmir

KS Correspondent

JAMMU, Nov 16: Panun Kashmir has taken strong exception to the recent statement made by Chief Minister Sh. Ghulam Nabi Azad at a conclave organised by the Congress Unit of Displaced Kashmiri Pandits. This was stated by Sh. Kuldeep Raina General Secretary Panun Kashmir while interacting with the media persons here today. Mr Raina said, that it is surprising that the Chief Minister has expressed his ignorance about the state of unemployment amongst Kashmiri Hindus. He has also expressed his desire to know if there are any distress sales of properties of Kashmiri Hindus in the Valley, that he would be more than 'willing to seek their' cancellation.

Mr Kuldeep Raina asserted that the Chief Minister has overlooked the massive litigation the Kashmiri Pandits have continuously been forced to resort to for redressal of their economic deprivations and widespread usurpation and unauthorised occupation of their houses, orchards, shopping complexes and business establishments. "The tone and tenor of his speech appears to be aimed at denying the reality of the economic deprivations to which Kashmiri Pandits have been subjected to," Raina said.

Panun Kashmir leader said that it is also a reflection of the state of affairs in the state government which even after 15 years does not have the relevant data of the human tragedy of religious cleansing. Or is it so that the government is deliberately trying to conceal the truth which it knows? We once again would like to take this opportunity to apprise the State Government about the state of affairs on the issue of employment and destruction of Hindu habitat in the Valley. Out of 265,000 recruitments made in state services till March 2006, Only 345 have been of Kashmiri Pandits, since 1990, Mr Raina said.

Sh Kuldeep Raina informed that "the number of Kashmiri Pandits in Government Services in 1989-90 was 11,342 out of more than 2 lakh employees in the Valley at the time of exodus. In the Central Government there were 1059. Besides, there were 628 and 204 employees in Central Government and State Government Undertakings respectively. This comes to around 12,500 Kashmiri Pandits employees in its entirety. They are registered with the Relief Commissioner as migrant employees. Our recent studies have revealed that number of Kashmiri Pandits Government employees is now about 4000."

That means 93% of the house holds of displaced Kashmiri Pandits come under the category of unemployed. We have conducted a crash survey recently. The sample being 1000 families, 500 in camps and 500 in non-camps. 99% of the families who have sold a part or whole of their properties in Valley have done it in a state of distress. The problem of deprivation of KPs is basically the continuation of genocide. The KPs are being denied

their share because there is a concerted and ideologically motivated campaign to destroy any scope of their survival in the state and eventually their return to homeland, Mr Raina said.

Dr MK Teng Chairman Advisory Panun Kashmir while reacting to a question said that GOI in the past has tried to intervene to some extent to correct the situation. Time and again the State Government has blocked these efforts. Has GN Azad joined his predecessor Chief Ministers to deny and trivialise the tragedy which has befallen on KPs? Or has he been rendered helpless in an administrative apparatus which is run by the precepts of Muslim Communalism and Fundamentalism?, Dr Teng asked. This is not the time to create new committees. Subterfuge and diversions which the successive state governments have employed have critically undermined their credibility amongst the displaced Kashmiri Pandits. The imperative necessity today is to intervene decisively and declare an employment package for displaced Kashmiri Pandits, Dr Teng asserted. Sh ON Trisal while interacting with the media persons said that the time is also ripe for the annulment of all the distress sales which have taken place in Kashmir Valley during the last 16 years. We have time and again demanded that problem facing the Kashmiri Pandits is no longer a state subject issue.

It is a national problem which involves the fundamental rights of "Right to equality and Right to life". "The state government has failed us incessantly and we demand a national instrument to address the problem of genocide for its reversal. GOI should intervene and declare a ministry of rehabilitation to address the issue", Sh ON Trisal demanded. END

THOSE WHO LEFT US

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

1. Sh. Janki Nath Tikoo S/o Lt. Raghu Nath Tickoo, R/o Karfali Mohalla Sgr; presently at D-25, Pocket-D SFS Flats Mayur Vihar Phase-III, Delhi. 4/10/2006
2. Anita Bhat W/o Sh. Rajesh Khajuria. 4/10/2006
3. Smt. Dulari Bakshi W/o Sh. Radha Krishen Bakshi R/o Magam, Kmr; presently at Lower Shiv Nagar, Jammu. 4/10/2006
4. Sh. Trilok Nath S/o Lt. Lakhman Dass Koul, R/o Magam Anangnag; presently at Q.No: 84, Phase-1st Purkhoo Camp, Jammu. 5/10/2006
5. Smt. Soomawati Patwari W/o Sh. Soom Nath Patwari R/o Mattan Anantnag; presently at H.No: 1, Digiana Pully Jammu. 6/10/2006
6. Smt. Uma Shori W/o Sh. Sri Kanth, R/o Kokernag Kmr; presently at H.No: 868 Lane No: 2, Ext. Anandnagar, Bohri, Jammu. 6/10/2006
7. Sh. Hari Krishen Harkar S/o Lt. Aftab Bhat Harkar R/o Malayar Sgr; presently at H.No: 189, Lane No: 3, Shant Nagar, Janipur Jammu. 6/10/2006
8. Smt. Usha Dhar W/o Sh. CL Dhar, R/o Karan Nagar, Sgr; presently at Manegaon Jabalpur. 7/10/2006
9. Sh. Jagannath Dhar R/o J-316, Sarita Vihar Delhi. 8/10/2006
10. Smt. Kishni Koul W/o Lt. Sh. Jawahar Lal Koul, R/o 34, JK Colony, BSF Campus Paloura Top Jammu. 9/10/2006
11. Smt. Rani Saraf W/o Sh. Shamboo Nath Saraf R/o Shopian Kmr; presently at H.No: 29 Sec-I Laxmi Nagar Muthi Jammu. 9/10/2006.
12. Smt. Muglani Devi W/o Lt. Sh. Prem Nath Mattoo, R/o Zadipora Kulgam; presently at H.No: 1, Lane No: 2, Gurrah Barnai Jammu. 9/10/2006.
13. Sh. Prem Nath Ganjoo S/o Lt. Ganesh Dass Ganjoo, R/o Wanpoh Anantnag; presently at Nowabad, Jammu. 9/10/2006
14. Sri Kanth Bhat S/o Lt. Sh. Gopal Bhat, R/o Nadimarg Kmr; presently at 70/2A, Lower Roop Nagar, Jammu. 9/10/2006
15. Smt. Gowrishori Raina W/o Lt. Sh. Jagar Nath Raina, R/o Habba Kadal; presently at 1/1, Ext. Pamposh Colony, Janipur, Jammu. 9/10/2006
16. Smt. Soomawati Razdan W/o Lt. Tara Chand Razdan, R/o Mattan Kmr; presently at Battal Ballian Camp, Udhampur. 10/10/2006
17. Sh. Deepak Bagati S/o Sh. Madan Lal Bagati R/o Bulbul Lanker Sgr; presently at 24-C, Sec-1, Bagwati Nagar, Jammu. 10/10/2006
18. Sh. Moti Lal Jad S/o Lt. Sh. Bag Lal Jad. R/o Nazuk Mohalla Anantnag; presently at H.No: 9A, Sec-4A, Trikuta Nagar Ext. Jammu. 10/10/2006
19. Smt. Gowri Sheeri Mattoo W/o Lt. Sh. Gwash Lal Mattoo, R/o Durga Nagar 160/3, Roop Nagar, Jammu. 10/10/2006

20. Sh. Mahraj Krishan Fotedar, R/o Sehpora Kulgam, Kmr; presently at 42-F Lower Shiv Nagar, Jammu. 11/10/2006
21. Smt. Chand Rani W/o Sh Dina Nath Dhar, R/o Khyar Anantnag; presently at 53/C Om Nagar, Udheywlla, Bohri. 11/10/2006
22. Sh. Niranjana Nath Parimoo S/o Lt. Sh. Bagwan Dass Parimoo, R/o Narsingh Garh Sgr; presently at H.No: 69, Lane No: 8, Upper Laxmi Nagar Sarwal, Jammu. 11/10/2006
23. Sh. Ravindra Kaul S/o Sh. Hari Krishen Koul, R/o Zaindar Mohalla; presently at C-804 MS Apartments and Hostel KG Marg Delhi. 11/10/2006
24. Sh. Shambo Nath Bhat S/o Lt. Sh. Shanker Bhat, R/o Lar Ganderball; presently at H.No: 10, Friends Colony, Paloura, Jammu. 11/10/2006
25. Sh. Radha Krishan Bakaya S/o Lt. Sh. Sri Kanth Bakaya R/o Sathu Barbar Shah Sgr; presently at H.No: 156, Manorama Vihar, Bohri, Jammu. 12/10/2006
26. Sh. Triloki Nath Koul S/o Lt. Sh. Shiv Ji Koul, R/o Nai Sarak Kmr; presently at 67-A, Patoli Mangotrian Jammu. 12/10/2006
27. Sh. Triloki Nath Tiku S/o Lt. Ganesh Dass Tiku, R/o 123 Jawahar Nagar, Sgr; presently at Boston USA. 13/10/2006
28. Sh. Janki Nath Koul S/o Lt. Sh. Raja Ram, R/o Uttersoo Anantnag, Kmr; presently at Balak Nagar Udampur. 14/10/2006
29. Sh. Tej Krishan Koul, R/o 318, Khojabagh Baramulla, Kmr; presently at 36-C, Block-A, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi. 14/10/2006
30. Sh. Girdhari Lal Koul S/o Lt. Dr. Dina Nath Koul, R/o Sathoo Barbar Shah Sgr; presently at Inderprastha, Faridabad. 15/10/2006
31. Miss Namrata Muju D/o Sh. Ajay Kumar Muju, R/o Flat No: C-I, Pocket-5, Sec-2, Housing Board Flats, Channi Himmat, Jammu. 15/10/2006
32. Sh. Amar Nath Warikoo S/o Lt. RN Warikoo, R/o 26 A/C Gandhi Nagar, Jammu, R/o Navi Mumbai. 16/10/2006.
33. Pt. Lambodhar Nath Ganjoo S/o Lt. Pt. Ganesh Dass Ganjoo, R/o Wanpoh Anantnag; presently at Lane: 4, Udheywalla. Jammu. 16/10/2006.
34. Smt. Uma Sadhu W/o Lt. Sh. Srikanth Sadhu, R/o Hatmura Anantnag; presently at H.No: 70/3, Sector 1-A, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.
35. Smt. Shyam Rani Kakapuri W/o Lt. Sh. Shyam Lal Kakapuri, R/o Zaindar Mohalla Habba Kadal, Sgr; presently at h.nO: 622, Sec-3, Upper Talab, Muthi, Jammu. 17/10/2006
36. Smt. Devki Taing W/o Lt. Pt. Madhusudhan Taing, R/o Vanpoh Anantnag; presently at Basant Nagar Ext. Janipur, Jammu. 18/10/2006
37. Smt. Roopawati Bhat W/o Lt. Sh. Mahishwar Nath Bhat, R/o Wachi Kmr; presently at H.No: 9, Lane No: 1, Anand Nagar, Bohri, Jammu. 18/10/2006
38. Miss Suman Zadoo D/o Sh. Raj Nath Zadoo, R/o Gund Ahalmar Nai Sarak Sgr; presently at H.No: 27, H.No: 17 Salian Talab Udampur. 18/10/2006
39. Smt. Sheela Devi W/o Sh. Makhan Lal Pandita, R/o Handwara, Kmr; presently at H.No: 11, Gali No: 9, Surya Vihar Bohri, Jammu. 19/10/2006
40. Smt. Soomawati Tikoo W/o Lt. Sh. Som Nath Tikoo, R/o 30-Shalla Kadal Sgr; presently at H.No: 4, Sector-2, JDA Roop Nagar, Jammu. 19/10/2006
41. Smt. Shobawati Bhat W/o Lt. Pt. Tota Ram Bhat R/o Magam Kmr; presently at H.No: 283/C, Sec-I Durga Nagar, Jammu. 19/10/2006
42. Sh. Prithvi Nath Raina, R/o Goja Mohalla Anantnag; presently at H.No: 33 Lane No: 2, Block-B, Roop Nagar, Jammu. 20/10/2006
43. Sh. Dina Nath Kachroo S/o Sh. Narayan Joo Kachru, R/o Baramulla, Kmr; presently at Flat No: EI Trikuta Appts. Sector-4A Trikuta Nagar, Jammu. 21/10/2006
44. Sh. Bansi Lal Tickoo S/o Lt. Sh. Dina Nath Tickoo, R/o Rawalpura, Sgr; presently at Chankyapuri New Delhi. 21/10/2006
45. Smt. Shyama Koul W/o Sh. Kishen Lal Koul, R/o Channapura, Sgr; presently at B-2, Asha Appts. Rajinder Nagar Sahibabad, UP. 21/10/2006
46. Sh. Makhan Lal Pandita S/o Lt. Sh. Tara Chand Pandita, R/o Mantapura Anantnag; presently at Vinayak Nagar, Upper Muthi, Jammu. 22/10/2006.
47. Smt. Kamla Bakshi W/o Sh. PN Bakshi R/o Bulbul Lanker Sgr; presently at 28, Opp. Krishna Building New Plots. 23/10/2006
48. Smt. Jaya Munshi W/o Sh. Ashok Munshi R/o Ali Kadal Sgr; presently at H.No: 19, Basant Nagar, Janipur. 23/10/2006

49. Smt. Parmeshwari Koul W/o Lt. Sh. Radha Krishen Koul, R/o Rainawari Sgr; presently at Opp. U-Block Govt. Qtrs. Subash Nagar, Jammu. 24/10/2006
50. Smt. Chuni Raina W/o Lt. Sh. Mohan Nirash, R/o A-41, Neb Sarai, New Delhi. 25/10/2006
51. Smt. Kamla Shori W/o Lt. Shamboo Nath Koul, R/o Jawahar Nagar, Sgr presently at H.No: 694, Palam Vihar Gurgaon. 25/10/2006
52. Smt. Roopawati Zafrani W/o Lt. Shamboo Nath Zafrani, R/o Kharyar Habba Kadal, Sgr; presently at 29-B, Pocket-A, SFS FLats, Mayur Vihar, Phase-II, Delhi. 25/10/2006
53. Smt. Soomawati W/o Lt. Sh. Sohan Lal Raina, R/o Chowalgam Kmr; presently at H.No: 20, Lane No: 1, Bantalab, Jammu. 26/10/2006.
54. Sh. Shamboo Nath Koul S/o Lt. Sh. Neel Koul, R/o Dalhassanya, Habba Kadal, Sgr; presently at H.No: 106 Sec-11, Faridabad. 26/10/2006
55. Smt. Laxmishori Tickoo W/o Lt. Jia Lal Tickoo, R/o Delhi . 26/10/2006
56. Sh. Jiya Lal Koul S/o Lt. Sh. Hari Ram Koul, R/o Sheshyar Habba Kadal; presently at H.No: 15, Kodgehalli Bangalore. 27/10/2006
57. Smt. Raini Jigri W/o Lt. Sh. Sohan Lal Raina, R/o Chawalgam, Kmr. 27/10/2006
58. Sh. Bushan Lal Koul S/o Lt. Sh. Govind Koul, R/o Anantnag, Kmr; presently at 662, Lane No: 5, D Ext. Suryawanshi Nagar Muthi, Jammu. 28/10/2006
59. Sh. Raj Nath Bhan R/o Raghunath Mandir Habba Kadal Sgr; presently at Gurdaspur Punjab. 28/10/2006
60. Smt. Prabawati Koul, R/o Dantar Anantnag; presently at 128-C, Lower Shiv Nagar, Jammu. 28/10/2006
61. Smt. Veena Bhat W/o Sh. Bushan Lal Bhat, R/o Delina Baramulla Kmr; presently at H.No; 47, Lane No: 3, Bharat Nagar, Bantalab Jammu. 29/10/2006
62. Sh.Raj Nath Bhan S/o Lt. Prem Nath Bhan, R/o Bagh Jogi Lanker Rainawari Sgr; presently at GSI Migrant Camp TPT Nagar, Narwal Jammu. 29/10/2006
63. Smt. Asha Ji W/o Sh. Tej Krishen Bhat R/o Rafiabab Sopore, Kmr; presently at 660-C-2 Purkhoo Camp Phase-III, Jammu. 29/10/2006
64. Smt. Raj Rani Raina W/o Dr. JL Rania, R/o 25, Wazir Bagh Ext. Sgr; presently at Pravin Colony, Trikuta Nagar, Ext. Jammu. 30/10/2006
65. Smt. Arandati W/o Lt. Sh. Radha Krishen Bhat R/o Zewan; presentnly at 459 Sector-II Vinayak Nagar, Muthi, Jammu. 30/10/2006
66. Smt. Dhanwati Chogtu W/o Lt. Shamboo Nath Chogtu, R/o Zaindar Mohalla Sgr; presently at F-162/5, SBI Qtrs. Rajouri, Garden New Delhi. 30/10/2006
67. Sh. Roshan Lal Bhat R/o Zewan; presently at Muthi Jammu. 30/10/2006
68. Sh. Makhan Lal Ganjoo S/o Lt. Pt. Gobind Joo Ganju, R/o Raj Bagh Sgr; presently at Noida. 30/10/2006
69. Smt. Danwati Sadhu W/o Lt. Ragonath Sadhu, R/o Tangmarg; presently at H.No: 9, Lane No: 3 Roop Nagar Enclave Jammu. 31/10/2006
70. Sh. Sarwanand Pandita S/o Pt. Aftab Ram, R/o Lolab Kupwara; presently at Mishriwalla, Jammu. 31/10/2006
71. Sh. Kashi Nath Koul, R/o Ghat Jogi Lanker Rainawari Sgr; presently at 152A Indrapuram Gaziabad UP. 31/10/2006
72. Sh. Shambu Nath Bhan R/o Bana Mohalla Sgr; presently at 150 Sector-2A, Extn. Trikuta Nagar, Jammu. 1/11/2006
73. Sh. Brij Nath Kissu S/o Lt. Sh.Gana Koul Kissu R/o Ghat Jogi Lanker Rainawari Sgr; presently at KP Saba Amphalla Jammu. 2/11/2006
74. Sh.Shiban Krishen Zalpuri S/o Lt. Sh. NathJi Zalpuri R/o Chinkral Mohalla Sgr; presently at C-6/1, Plot No: 6, Sector-3 Dwarika Delhi. 2/11/2006.
75. Sh. ML Kaul R/o Bagh Jogi Lanker Rainawari, Sgr; presently at New Delhi. 2/11/2006
76. Smt. Koushaliya Devi W/o Lt. Arzan Nath Raina, R/o Chowgam Qazigund Kmr; presently at H.No: 28, Lane No: 4, Sector-4, Lower Roop Nagar,Jammu. 2/11/2006
- (Contd. on Page 11)**
(Contd. from Page 2)
77. Sh. Jagar Nath Mattu S/o Lt. Pt.Prasad Ram Mattoo, R/o Badgam Kmr; presently at 30/31, Vipin Garden Dwarika Delhi. 3/11/2006
78. Smt. Madumati Padroo W/o Sh. Madhusudan Padroo, R/o Tikker Kupwara, Kmr; presently at H.No: 14, Lane No: 7, KB Nagar, Bantalab,Jammu.3/11/2006
79. Smt. Sheela Babu W/o Sh. BK Babu R/o Sathu Barbarshah Sgr; presently at 41-C Village Enclave Mattoo Colony Ext. Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.4/11/2006

80. Dr. Kanya Lal Wali S/o Lt. Dr. Gopi Nath Wali, R/o 1-Park Road, Sgr; presently at H.No: 180, Sector-21C Faridabad. 4/11/2006
81. Sh. Raghunath Suri S/o Lt. Sh. Ram Chand Suri, R/o Sangrampora Sopore Kmr; presently at 23/2, EWS Colony Roop Nagar, Jammu. 5/11/2006
82. Smt. Veena Malla W/o Dr. MK Malla R/o Sangrampora Sopore, Kmr; presently at 52-A/2, Amar Colony Gole Gujral Jammu. 5/11/2006
83. Smt. Prana Trakroo W/o Dr. SL Trakroo R/o 96 Sudeshan Appts. Partap Gunj Delhi. 5/11/2006.
84. Prof. ML Wazir S/o Lt. Sh. Moheshar Nath Wazir R/o Habba Kadal Sgr; presently at Baroda. 8/11/2006
85. Smt. Durga Davi Mattoo W/o Lt. Sh. Damodar Lal Mattoo R/o Ram Bagh Sgr; presently at A-21/102 Shalimar Garden UP. 9/11/2006
86. Smt. Bitu Bhat W/o Lt. Roshan Lal Bhat, R/o Shopian Dangerpora Kmr; presently at Sector-I, Durga Nagar, Jammu. 10/11/2006
87. Sh. Raj Nath Trakroo S/o Lt. Sh. Bal Jee Trakroo R/o Habba Kadal Sgr; presently at L-4/244 IRC Naya Palli Bhuneshwar. 13/11/2006
88. Smt. Kamla Ji Dassi W/o Lt. Sh. Mohan Lal Dassi R/o Anantnag; Kmr; presently at 206-B, Mayur Vihar Phase-II Delhi. 13/11/2006
89. Smt. Roop Wati Dhar W/o Lt. Sh Gopi Nath Dhar R/o Anantnag, Kmr; presently at 90-Swam Vihar Durga Nagar, Jammu. 14/11/2006
90. Smt. Arandati Koul W/o Lt. Ram Chand Koul, R/o Bulbul Lanker Sgr; presently at Shiva Enclave Lane No: 3 Roop Nagar, Jammu. 14/11/2006
91. Smt. Parmeshori Mattoo W/o Lt. Sh. PN Mattoo, R/o Bagh Jogi Lankar Rainawari Sgr; presently at B-8, G Block Paschim Vihar, Delhi. 14/11/2006
92. Sh. Jawahir Lal Raina, R/o Udheywala Bohri Jammu. 15/11/2006
93. Sh. Mohan Lal Bradoo, R/o Chambur Mumbai. 15/11/2006
94. Sh. Prithvi Nath Ji Raina S/o Lt. Manjoo R/o 58/1 Gund Ahalmar Nai Sarak Sgr; presently at 324/A, Durga Niwas Prem Nagar Tally Morh Jammu. 16/11/2006
95. Sh. RK Razdan R/o 59 Ashoka Enclave Phase-III Sector-35 Faridabad. 16/11/2006
96. Sh. Omkar Nath Bhat S/o Lt. Sh Gopi Nath Bhat R/o Balhama Sgr; presently at M 264 Govt. Qtrs. Top Sharkania Jammu. 16/11/2006
97. Sh. Nath Ji Dhar S/o Lt. Sh. Shezram Dhar, R/o Pattan Kmr; presently at Flat S-I, Plot No: 200/7, Sector-3 Vaishali Gaziabad UP. 16/11/2006
98. Sh. Shamboo Nath Pandita R/o Lalad Sopore; presently at 35 A/B, Vipin Garden Dwarika Delhi. 16/11/2006
99. Sh. Avtar Krishen Wali S/o Lt. Sh JN Wali, R/o Habba Kadal Sgr; presently at New York USA. 16/11/2006
100. Smt. Shyam Rani W/o Lt. Sh. Lal Bhat, R/o Wadipora Kmr; presently at Sharda Colony Patoli Brahmana, Jammu. 17/11/2006
101. Sh. Bushan Lal Daftri S/o Lt. Sh. Bishamber Nath Daftari, R/o Fateh Kadal Sgr; presently at 54/5, Laxmi Nagar Muthi, Jammu. 17/11/2006
102. Smt. Dhanwati Dhar W/o Lt. Sh. Tara Chand Dhar R/o Pazipora Kupwara Kmr; presently at H.No: 65 Lane No: 7, Vishwa Bharti Colony, Jammu. 18/11/2006
103. Sh. Janki Nath Bhat S/o Lt. Bishamber Nath Bhat R/o Batapora Sopore Km; presently at H.No: 5, Bank Colony Talab Tillo, Jammu. 18/11/2006
104. Smt. Soomawati W/o Lt. Sh. Sarwanand Pandita, R/o Khanoon Kmr; presently at E-407/A, Vinod Nagar, Delhi. 18/11/2006
105. Sh. Badri Nath Bhat S/o Sh. Prem Nath Bhat R/o Malpora Habba Kadal Sgr; presently at Qtr. No: 46 Nagrota Camp, Jammu. 18/11/2006
106. Sh. Prem Nath Pandita S/o Lt. Lassa Ram R/o Lazoora Pulwama Kmr; presently at H.No: 30, Lane No: 2, Khazuria Mohalla Paloura, Jammu. 19/11/2006
107. Smt. Indrawati Dhar W/o Lt. Sh. Amar Nath Dhar R/o Jogi Lanker Rainawari Sgr; presently at Z-38, Najafgarh Delhi. 19/11/2006
108. Smt. Santosh Bhan W/o Sh. P.N. Bhan R/o Bana Mohalla Sgr; presently at 1068, Nirmal Appts. Mehruli Delhi. 19/11/2006
109. Miss Neha Tickoo D/o Mr Rajinder Kumar Tickoo R/o Sathu Barbar Shah Sgr; presently at D-3, Parehvati Palam Delhi. 19/11/2006
110. Smt. Raj Laxmi W/o Lt. Sh. Amar Nath Zutshi R/o Bagh Jogi Lanker Rainawari, Sgr; presently at 46/4, MES Qtrs. Udhampur. 20/11/2006. END

Sati Sahni—An Interview-II

KS: How was the life of Kashmiris in 1930s and 1940s?

SS: This period was one of peace for the majority of the people. The life of people was orderly, secure, peaceful, easy, simple and delightful. Living was by and large inexpensive. Consummable items were unadulterated and available at affordable rates. There was no shortage of any kind.

KS: Can you elaborate further on consummable items?

SS: While I was at school in 1934-35 I used to get pocket money of 1 Anna per day. For one paisa i.e. one-fourth of an anna I would get six pears. My father was fond of purchasing consummables in bulk. He would take the personal *tonga* to purchase pulses and bulk vegetables from the river market at Zainakadal. You can have an idea about the economy from the rates of different food items. Big bag of *moong* which contained 2-2½ maunds was sold at Rs 2/-. The Baramulla belt was major producer of moong in those days. Agriculture in Kashmir was fairly well-developed and quite diversified. We would have many excellent varieties of rice-*mushkabudej*, *Zag* etc, which are no longer easily available. Rock salt or Nadroo (lotus stalk) would cost 50 paisa a seer. The big bag of any of the vegetables e.g. Hak, Monji, Potato, Onions would sell for less than a rupee. The cost of flour bag or that of 16 kg ghee cannister was Re 1 and 4 *annas*. Once while we were returning from Rawalpindi we halted at Uri for a while to do some purchases. We got half a bag of maize flour for Re 1 and full bag of Kagzi walnuts for 12 annas. In Srinagar in 1920s one could get best quality saffron for Rs 2 per *tola*, Pashmina for Rs 2 per yard etc. The mouth-watering *bakarkhani* and Pampore speciality, called by Kashmiris 'Shumal' would sell for 64 pieces per rupee.

KS: What sort of fuel you used those days?

SS: We used *chulha*. Hatab wood was the main fuel. We used to purchase it in bulk-150-200 *khirwars* at a time. For warming ourselves in *winters bukhari* and *kangri* were used. The finest quality coal of Chinar leaves would sell for 4 annas per bag. Hatab was used for *bukharis* as well.

KS: What were the means of Transport then?

SS: There was no motorised public transport. *Tongas* used to ply on all the routes-Srinagar to Pattan, Baramulla and within Srinagar to Badami Bagh, Safakadal etc. Number of cars/buses were few and far between. Traffic Police Department had just 10-15 personnel. The Department was headed by a Parsi officer whose surname was Patel, he was its Superintendent. This department was called Patel Police. Anyone who was employed in it got the appellation of Patel. One Kashmiri Pandit, Dina Nath was better known as Dina Patel because he worked under Parsi Patel.

KS: Any more details about Parsi Patel?

SS: His younger son Jehangir became the principle disciple of Swami Mukta Nandji of Igatpur, Maharashtra. The Swami had more than 117 *ashrams* all over India. In 1982 when Swami Muktanandji visited Kashmir the younger Patel accompanied him as Swami Sevanand Ji. I couldn't recognise him. It was he who made me recollect. He had completely transformed.

KS: How did the rapid strides in the economy of the State get reflected in life of Kashmiris?

SS: In late 1920s cars started coming to private life in Kashmir. Northern Motors Company which had its headquarters in Rawalpindi opened a showroom in what later came to be called Ganda Singh building. They sold Cheverlet vehicles. My father had purchased a Cheverlet car in 1928 for just Rs 2700. Till then we had a Tonga. The car ran on petrol. It had 4 seats, 4 doors. Till 1947 most of the trucks and buses which plied in J&K were only Cheverlets. Fare from Srinagar to Rawalpindi was Rs 5 for car and Rs 2 for bus per seat. It remained same until 1943-44. The fare was hiked when petrol rationing was introduced in 1941-42.

KS: How did the people keep themselves informed about the local, national and international developments?

SS: Means of communication were slow, almost non-existent. By and large people lived in complete or partial ignorance about what was happening outside their own city. In early 1930s we had one English newspaper-**Kashmir Chronicle**, published and edited by Pt. Gwash Lal Koul from Kashmir. There were a couple of Urdu newspapers. Sometimes a copy of Ranbir (Urdu) published from Jammu was available at one or two newspaper shops in Kashmir.

KS: Did newspapers from outside were available in Kashmir?

SS: Newspapers published mostly from Lahore—*Tribune*, *Statesman*, *Civil and Military Gazette* in English and *Zamindar*, *Inquilab*, *Milap*, *Pratap*, *Vir Arjun* in Urdu reached Srinagar 3-4 days after their publication. The English dailies were of eight pages. The Urdu papers carried news/views about Ahrar and Arya Samaj Politics. Lot was happening in Punjab. Since the newspapers were the only instruments of public opinion the developments in Punjab had their impact on people of J&K also.

KS: Who was the first newspaper agent in Kashmir?

SS: There was one Batra, a one-eyed person who used to get papers from outside and also sold local newspapers. He ran a shop selling electrical goods. Batra had his shop adjacent to the one of Dr Jaswant Singh in the building just opposite the Khalsa Hotel.

KS: When did Radio come?

SS: The Radio receiver came to Kashmir in 1935. The initial sets were big, unwieldy. I had preserved one till 1990 as an antique item. The broadcast would be just for 2-3 hours. The first shop for sale of Radio sets was started in Ganda Singh Building. We bought a set for Rs 800 in 1935. It was Stewart-Warner and had valves (not transistors) plus big sized speakers. The first broadcast I heard on my radio still does not get out of my mind. It was the speech of King Edward VIII, announcing his abdication because of his love and marriage to Lady Simpson. She subsequently became Duchess of Windsor. Though AIR broadcasts took place from one or two stations *BBC* even then was most reliable for news.

KS: How popular was Gulmarg as a Tourist spot those days for the foreign tourists?

SS: Gulmarg was home in summer to hundreds of British families at a time. In fact, more Britishers spent their summer in Gulmarg than in Srinagar. They would stay in huts and for short stay in Nedous Hotel. The latter too was functional in a number of huts, only the dining room/hall was common. The Centre of most of their activities used to be Club House which had a large two storeyed wooden structure. The ground floor had a large sized dance hall. Club house was burnt down by the raiders in 1947. The Church was also burnt but the Chapel escaped damage. It was rebuilt in 1975. When Germans started World War II on September 3, 1939 I happened to be in Gulmarg. There was panic and anxiety written on the faces of the Britishers in Gulmarg when the *BBC* announced the German invasion of Czechoslovakia.

KS: What about the locals?

SS: There were 2,3,4 bedrooms huts available on three or five year lease at the rent of Rs 500-800 annually. Our family had one of the 3-bed room hut for a period of five years. During the summer many of the local Srinagar families who could afford used to shift from Srinagar to Gulmarg. We too used to go for 6-8 weeks during vacations. However, we would shuttle too often as we had the facility of a car. My father was a very good horse rider. It would take him 20 mts. to cover the distance between Tangmarg and Gulmarg. For us it took well over 45 minutes.

KS: How important was Gulmarg for the local economy?

SS: It fetched lot of revenue. Locals would earn good amount of money. The shops dealing with medicines, Toiletries, Wine belonged to Pandits, while those of Tailoring, Barber Saloons, Shoemsmiths/leather goods, Gunsmiths etc. belonged to the members from the majority community. The Gunsmiths were the famous Bandokkhars from Rainawari. Good quality leather came from outside the state. In 1939 one of the finest pair of shoes of pure leather I bought at Gulmarg for just Rs 3. The shoemaker would first take the measurement, then take a try and if any alterations were still needed he would not mind. None of the Britishers owned a shop in Gulmarg. A photographer and chemist shop did belong to W.Lambert of Srinagar but his entire staff at the shops was Kashmiri.

KS: Gulmarg enjoys international reputation for Golf. Was it the only game played there?

SS: It was the Golfer's Paradise no doubt. Surprisingly, horse-racing and Polo was also played here. Polo matches were staged twice a week. Gulmarg provided to the Britishers their kind of life. There was no ban on shooting/shikar provided one had a license. The common shikars were black bear, birds, partridge/fowls etc. 3-4 Golf championships were spread over the whole season There used to be an annual bawl-dancing competition at the Club. In winters Gulmarg was the Ski capital of India.

KS: How often did Maharaja Hari Singh visit Gulmarg? What steps he took for its development?

SS: The Maharaja used to visit Gulmarg only on special occasions. He liked to play Polo at Srinagar; he was not too fond of Golf. His interests were fishing, hunting and visits to construction places. For fishing he had built lodges all over Kashmir. Gulmarg was not the favourite place for shooting for Maharaja. He had an eye for good location for constructing buildings. In Srinagar Gulab Bhavan and Oberoi Palace have such an excellent ambience. Mr Eugene Black, the first President of World Bank visited Srinagar in 1956 soon after Oberoi Palace was thrown open. He told me that it had the second best site for a hotel in the world, the other being Richmond Hotel in Switzerland. Maharaja Hari Singh took a number of steps to promote tourism and develop Gulmarg as a tourist resort. Tourist Department was established in India first time by him in 1928. It used to be called as Visitors Bureau. In the same year SKI Club of India was also started in Gulmarg. There was a piped water supply from Springs for Gulmarg tourists. Labourers would bring daily chopped wood pieces from forests for fuel purposes.

KS: Maharaja Hari Singh was quite fond of Polo.

SS: It is true but he patronised Tennis and bridge as well. At personal level he liked to play Polo and Bridge. Every Saturday there used to be Polo matches in Srinagar. He had developed the ground for Polo in the capital city. There would be 2-3 games depending upon the availability of sunshine. When no team from outside the state was available he would ask the local players to form two teams. It was to keep local players in good

practice. The main Polo teams that came from outside were those from Cooch-Behar, Bhopal, Jaipur etc. Whenever matches were played, Maharaja's courtiers, ministers alongwith their families were invited. They watched the Polo game from the two Pavillions. The common public had no permission to watch the game from the Pavillions. It would stand on the pavement outside the fencing. It used to be a great sight. For many years I enjoyed Polo matches from pavement side only. It was after 1945 onwards we got chance to see the game from the Pavilion. One of the pavillions, where PSC office is located, housed Radio Kashmir after 1947. For many years it used to operate from here. The other Pavilion was taken over by the Police Department.

KS: Did Ganderbal also have some tourist importance?

SS: From a tourist point of view Ganderbal was un-important but a holiday in Ganderbal was delightful. Our family had a three bed room Houseboat moored in Dal Lake. For four summers 1935 onwards we used to spend 2-3 weeks of autumn in Ganderbal. Staying in the house-boat and watching it being rowed across the Dal into Jehlum canal at Dal Gate, then to Sonawar and downstream to Chattabal, Shadipur, later upstream of Sind nullah to Ganderbal was quite exciting. I haven't enjoyed a better holiday than this. We would ask the Hanji to row slowly. After 4 hours journey we would halt for the night at Shadipur and then go to Ganderbal the next day.

In summers quite a few Houseboats other than ours used to be moored in Ganderbal. The place held attraction for two reasons. One it afforded the opportunity to live in a Houseboat. Secondly, it was an excellent site to watch the autumn with falling of Chinar leaves. Both the banks were lined with Chinar trees. In the ground of Chinar Bagh there stood 50-60 Chinars. It mirrored the Chinar Bagh of Srinagar. When we would not be in Houseboat we used to lie down on copper coloured leaves of Chinar on the ground. What a holiday it was! Some of the regular visitors who came to Ganderbal for holidaying were Nawab of Palanpur (Gujrat) and Maharaja of Jind. The latter did not have his family staying with him (for whatever reasons). He had a specially built houseboat for himself at Ganderbal. Besides his houseboat there used to have another boat specially constructed to house his big fleet of scores of different breeds of pet dogs. Many years later when his son Raj Kumar Jasbir Singh came as an Army Commander of Indian troops to Kashmir, probably in late sixties, I related all this to him. He said he had no knowledge about it. In Ganderbal like Gulmarg life was easy, inexpensive. On week days my father and myself used to come to Srinagar in Tonga in the morning and return to Ganderbal in the evening.

KS: There were many Punjabis in 1930s, 1940s in Kashmir. What sort of social life they lived? How did it impact Kashmiris?

SS: During Maharaja Pratap Singh's reign for most of the senior appointments in administration the Maharaja had to depend on educated, well-trained experienced officers from outside J&K. Surprisingly, the Maharaja made his selection from mostly two regions-Bengal and Punjab. Bengali ministers and officers played important role in giving shape to social life and in developmental activities. Among Bengali officials the well known names were Sir Albion Banerjee (Administration), Sh. LC Bose (Chief Engineer Electrical for 11 years), Sh. JC Chatterjee (Archeology), Dr Mitra (Health Services). Many of the engineers, judicial officers, administrators came from Punjab. K.B. Abdul Qayoom was Chief Justice of State High Court. Sh Bodh Raj Sawhny was Barrister from Lahore. He was charged with creating the higher judiciary structure. Later, when High Court was set up he was appointed as officiating Chief Justice.

KS: What were the consequences of the monopolisation of high state jobs by Bengalis and Punjabis?

SS: There was strong resentment by members of the native nobility and the feudal class. A whispering campaign was started against the officers from outside. Maharaja Hari Singh had to promulgate a notification in 1927 laying the foundation of State Subject Law. Under this three categories of State Subjects were created. Category A included those who were hereditary citizens of the State and had landed property. In category B there were people who came from outside but had acquired landed property here. Then there was C category where the people were either employed in J&K Government State Service or had been living here for the past ten years but did not own any landed property. END

Srinagar in 1930s and 1940s— Glimpses of Social Life-II

By Shambo Nath Gorkha
Communications:

Before 1947 Jehlum Valley Road and Banihal Cart Road (then open for 6 months only) linked Kashmir to the northern India. The last destination for the former was Rawalpindi and fare was Rs 5. Two Transport Companies--Nanda Bus, Charag Din and Sons used to operate passenger and goods services on BC Road to Jammu.

Nala Mar Canal with its arterial network linked different parts of Srinagar city and boat was main mode of transport in the city. Nala Mar extended from Shelteng to Gadroo, Tulmulla and passed via Habbakadal, Babademb, Mangleshwar Bhairav, Bagh Dilwar Khan, Khushal Sar etc. It divided Srinagar city into two parts. 5

bridges-Naidkadal, Bohri Kadal, Saraf Kadal, Kadikadal and Razvori Kadal spanned across it. Canal used to be dry in winter months. In summers shopkeepers brought their house building material of green dry grass, firewood, timber, bricks, stones etc, besides firewood in big boats called Khochoos to different ghats. Canal also provided transport to Pandits to go to Tulmulla after passing through Bohri Kadal, Razouri Kadal, Kawdara, Aali Masjid, Idgah, Gadroo. The journey was covered in Doonga.

Essential Commodities:

Vegetables-Karela, Tori, Beans, Cucumber, Watermelon, Potato and other vegetables sold for one anna per seer. Apples, Apricot, Cherry etc also were sold at this rate. The same was the price for Moong Dal, Dried Beans, Muth, Peas and dried Waternuts. Flour used to cost 8 p per seer. The price of fish was 6 p per seer and that for gooran (small fish) 2 p per seer. Rs 1 bought six maunds of firewood, edible oil would cost Rs 1 Re and 12 annas for 5 seers and 3 chatanks. The price of different items was: Rs 2.7 Annas per Khirwar (83 seers), Sugar-6 old paise per 250 gms, Tea leaves, Kahwa and Sheerchai-5 p per pav, washing soap: 5 p per pav, Meat-6 p per pav in summer and 7 in winter, bread 80 for 1 rupee, Milk and Curds-5 p per seer, Brinjals 250 for Re 1, Rocksalt: 9 seers for Re 1, Lotus roots (Nadru)-6 p per one gedi (Dal Lake) and 5 p for that of Anchar Lake, Cheese-1 seer for 1 Anna, Karamsag-1 Anna per seer, white cotton (Latha), Chabichap and Shermarka sold for 4 annas per yard. The cost of Militia and night cloth was 2½ annas per yard. This cloth was nicknamed Gari Vugra. The price of Japanese silk (Boski) was 4 annas per yard. The rates for Dhusa (Pashmina), Rafal Sari and Silk Sari were Rs 25, Rs 5 and Rs 3 respectively.

The umbrella would cost 12 Annas, while price of an electric lamp was 10 p. The gold sold at Rs 30 per Tola and Silver at 8 Annas per Tola.

Heads and legs of sheep were sold by selected butchers called 'Kalhari Puj'. Flies were seen swarming, all over. These butchers would shout 'Batar Maaz' to attract poor customers among scavengers. This meat sold at a pav per anna.

Currency:

British currency was used in J&K. Common denomination was Rs 1 coin (pure silver), 8 Annas (32 p), 4 Adhay paise (96 paise), 4 Annas (made of silver included 16 p, 32 adhay paise and 48 paise). Re 1 coin included 192 paise. In J&K State pais were not used. Before British currency Chilki Rupee was in use. It is said that two centuries ago an elephant owner was roaming in Srinagar city. He wanted to sell his animal and had priced it at 1 Kodi (Har). Not a single person came forward to purchase his elephant. In rural areas barter system was in vogue, while in Srinagar currency was being used for purchase of commodities. There was no paper currency for denominations of Re 1 and Re 2 but Rs 5, 10 and 100 were available in paper currency.

Breaking out of IInd World War pushed the prices of essential commodities up sharply. Average Kashmiri was hit hard by the rise in prices of rice, cloth, flour etc. Blackmarketers, hoarders would dump their stocks and then sold these at exorbitant prices. State Govt. took strong notice of it. It set up Supplies Deptt and appointed Sh. JN Zutshi, later DG Information, as Controller Supplies. Rationing was introduced for essential commodities, cloth, k.oil and sold at government rates on ration cards.

People dealing with handicrafts, Numda making, factory owners, traders, wholesale dealers earned lakhs of rupees. They had purchased goods at low prices and sold these at high prices. These people built up huge palatial mansions and demolished centuries old houses.

In the period 1931-1946, 90% population in Srinagar city lived below poverty line. Unemployment was rampant. Labourers received low wages and could not make two ends meet. Commodities were cheap, yet majority of Kashmiris lived below subsistence level.

Purchasing power was low. People were resigned to their fate and attributed poverty to supernatural forces.

In 1939 with the onset of economic depression due to war, the British Indian government introduced currency denominations of Rs 1 and Rs 2 and withdrew silver currency. Traders and labourers made good money. Govt. employees faced hardship. To ease their problem Dearness allowance was introduced for the first time in J&K.

In 1940 one morning a Markhban from Budgam came to Srinagar with two bags of 'Mushkbuj' (flavoured rice) laden on his horse. It was high quality rice with pleasant taste and smell. He wanted to sell it for Rs 2-12 Annas, people were willing to pay 4 Annas lesser. However, Markhban agreed. Meanwhile, some ladies took handful of rice near their noses for smell. Markhban took strong offence to it. He then went to other parts of city but could not find buyer for his special rice. He then prayed that there be bad harvest for shali (Paddy). He felt the prices would then skyrocket and Srinagar city people would learn a lesson for life. A week later heavy rains followed by flash floods destroyed the shali crops. Rice went out of market. Blackmarketers and hoarders had a hayday, minting money by selling rice at exorbitant prices.

In 1934 Pt. PK Wattal started Woollen Mills at Shirin Bagh-'Shri Karan Singh Woollen Mills'. Hundreds of skilled/unskilled Kashmiris found employment in it. Workers were paid six Annas (36 p). Since the prices of essential commodities were less, workers were generally satisfied.

Joint family system was the norm. Usually one member of the family was bread earner, serving either in Govt. or Pvt. Institution. Silk Factory was started by the State Govt. at Raj Bagh. It provided employment to

hundreds of Kashmiris. Prior to it Raja Upinder Kishan Koul had started two factories- **Match Factory** and **Pharmaceutical Factory** at Baramulla, where many people were employed. After World War II Defence Ministry of GOI opened recruitment centres for taking soldiers and labourers.

'Jabri' schools were started by Maharaja Hari Singh for imparting free and compulsory education to people. The government provided free books, notebooks, slates, wooden Takhties etc. to enrol students. However, the educated youth did not have sufficient jobs available.

Radio:

Soon after the outbreak of IInd World War, BBC and Radio Berlin started daily broadcasts in Hindi at 7:45 PM and 8 PM respectively. BBC underplayed German advances. The listeners would get confused. In general people had sympathy for Germans and hate for the British.

At first, there were only six Radiosets in Srinagar City-Maharaja, SP College and the other 4 belonged to affluent gentry. The common people would listen to broadcasts in compounds of rich people to the BBC and Radio Berlin news.

Meanwhile, 'Himalaya Soas' also installed a Radio set for workers at their Shirin Bagh factory premises, near Woollen Mills Karan Nagar. Residents of Shirin Bagh and Chattabal used to come to listen to Radio here. Even such prominent people-DN Raina, Shyam Lal Chrungoo, Bishamber Nath Kaul, Dina Nath Mirakhor, Dr Jia Lal Koul and Makhan Lal Matto (presently at Mumbai) used to come here)

Sanitation and Health Care:

There was no proper water supply scheme one and a half centuries ago in Srinagar city or other villages. People used Jehlum water for drinking, bathing and washing purposes. In rural areas streams and springs served the utility. During the rule of Maharaja Pratap Singh water works department came into existence. Harvan Reservoir was built to provide clean water to residents of Srinagar. It was fed by Marsar nullah. When it started old ladies felt astonished on seeing underground pipes. They would exclaim:

"Vuchtav Angrezav Kiyah Kari sal

Nalka dabavikh Zaminas tal"

(See what trick the Englishmen have played

They have buried the tap pipes under the ground.)

The affluent people got water connections to their homes, common people made use of public taps. These taps, were provided mohalla-wise. To meet the increasing demands two more schemes-Rangil (Kangan) and Dudh Ganga water supply schemes were initiated. Subsequently, water supply schemes were extended to rural areas.

Srinagar Municipal Corporation also launched a sanitation drive. Public latrines were built in each mohalla of the city. A force of safai karamcharis were raised to clean these on daily basis. After cleaning, they would dump the excreta in big boats. From different ghats it was taken and put into deep wells. Subsequently, it was sold through bidding to vegetable growers for use as manure. This formed important revenue for SMC. Upper sections built their own latrines. Vegetable growers directly removed this excreta for use in their fields.

For overall cleanliness, SMC set up different wards, each supervised by ward officer. Sanitary supervisors were made responsible for the work done by safai karamcharis/sweepers. Sanitary Jamadars/Supervisors wore a badge on red cloth around their neck. The badge, a brass plate had 'Jamadar Safai' written on it. Sweepers used to clean the city twice a day, morning and evening. Mashkees would spray water on the roads.

For cure of flu, cough, cold, fever etc. people used to take '*Khamira, Bunafsha, 'Khamira Gulab', 'Mulhati', 'Kahzaban', 'Brandy', 'Sharbat'* of Gul-e-Bunafsha'. For cure of illness people used to repose great faith in Pirs and Hakeems. Well known Hakims included Hakim Ahmadullah, Pt. Sahaz Bhat, Pt. Sham Bhat, Pt. Bal Hakim, Hakim Gulam Mohiuddin, Hakim Sansar Chand.

Tuberculosis, Typhus, Cholera would take heavy toll of people's lives, Typhoid was rampant.

(From Page 13)

Hakims used to charge 8 Annas (50 p) for visiting patient at home.

Leading Physician Dr. Gwasha Lal Koul, MRCP would charge Rs 5 for seeing a patient at home. Only rich people could afford this fee. Other well-known doctors of this period included—Dr. Shamboo Nath Peshin, Dr Dwarka Nath Muthoo, Dr. Janki Prasad Raina, Dr. Gopi Nath Chughtu etc. They played a pioneering role in setting up of National Hospital, Karan Nagar. Dr ON Thussu started **Ratan Rani Hospital** in memory of his first wife. She had died of burns at Tulmulla. There were some private clinics in the city but rural areas lacked modern health infrastructure. Missionary Hospitals at Rainawari, Drugjan, Baramulla and Anantnag served people well. Well known missionary doctors included Dr Neve, Dr Wasper, Dr Macpherson etc.

Pandit ladies would store water, made from washing rice, in a big earthen pot and then add Ajwain, muth and pepper-mint. After forty days this water was collected and named 'Kanz'. It had pleasant smell but bitter taste. It was boiled and retaken with cooked rice. Dr. Gwasha Lal Koul used to recommend this water for its 'Vitamin B content'. Some ladies used to collect water of boiled rice, called enema in local language in a big earthen pot

daily and then put cooked vegetables like knol khol (Kadam/Monji), Radish and Turnip in this. The mixture collected after a week, 'Chokur' was then taken with food/cooked rice. It had also pleasant smell and bitter taste.

Society and Politics:

Till 1931 social peace prevailed. Events of 1931 and subsequently in 1934 shook the Pandit minority. However, after the riots were over, intercommunal relations got restored.

During this period NC was popular in Valley but did not have any impact in Jammu and Ladakh. Pt. Jia Lal Killam and Kashyap Bandhu were among the first to join NC. Subsequently, DP Dhar, ML Misri, NN Raina (Saraf), PN Jalali, ON Trisal joined NC. These Pandits played an important role in making 'Quit Kashmir Movement' a great success and even went to jails.

Kashmir was visited by a galaxy of national leaders in this period. They included Acharya Kriplani (147), Nehru (1938-1946), Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, Mountbatten and Gandhi (1947) VD Savarkar and Jinnah. Dewan Chaman Lal and Asaf Ali had accompanied Nehru for taking up Sheikh Abdullah's defence. VD Savarkar, the Hindu Mahasabha to President was given a civic reception at DAV Magarmal Bagh, where he advised Kashmiri Pandits to join Hindu Mahasabha. The host and the leader of Yuvak Sabha, Pt. Shiv Narain Fotedhar opposed this suggestion arguing that the Kashmiri Pandits were in minority and had to devise their own ways.

Shri Mahraj Krishan Dhar, Governor of Kashmir, was a tough administrator. A day before Nehru's arrest, Dhar was seen personally supervising arrangements for despatching a company of Armed Forces. After paying regards to Nehru, Dhar told him, "I am your relative. Please forgive me for maintaining law and order. As such I request you to desist from entering the territory of J&K State. Comply with the orders of the ruler of J&K State, otherwise I would have to take you in custody".

**The writer edits "Janat-e-Kashmir", an Urdu Weekly, Jammu. END*

PURANIC CONCEPT OF MOUNTAINS OF KASHMIR

By M.M Munshi

Puranas cover a period of more than a millennium starting from about the time of the coming into power in India of the Shunga Dynasty to the time of invasion of North India by Gaznavi. It was a chequered period of our history; great warriors, powerful monarchs, brilliant outputs in art and literature, but unfortunately combined with unhealthy growth of blind superstitions and the decay and death of spirit of adventure, thought as well as in practical life. In spite of modern researches, we have yet to learn about the essential facts of those days and among these facts are many which are related to geography. India's association and communication of those days was not confined to the narrow parochial limits of the subcontinent, but extended to at least to a superficial knowledge of a large part of the then known world as in the reference to Nile river and its source in one of the *Puranas*. The orthodox Pandits who usually swear by *Puranas* or *Shastras* know very little about their contents or meanings. Their rhetorical knowledge does not enable them to identify the most of the rivers or mountains or other features to which these words refer.

Vayu and *Nilamata puranas* form the basis of this write up together with Ksemendra's *Samayasmidrika*, Bilhana's *Vikramankodevarosa* and Stein's interpretation of Ancient geography of Kashmir based on Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*. *Vayu Purana* contains the geographical data described in all the *Puranas* and in certain cases gives more details including those on Kashmir, *Nilamata purana* which deals primarily with Kashmir and other texts were selected as those give information not contained in the puranas. Approaching Jammu & Kashmir from the plains of Punjab we come to the lesser Himalayas referred as *Bahirgiri* in *Nilamata* and literature include Pir Panjal Range, and its south westerly spurs, west ward extensions of Dhauladhar, namely

Jugdhar, Ladadhar, Trisuldhar, Mundidhar Trikuta hills etc and foothills including Siwalik Range which has been mentioned as *Upagiri* in Mahabharata *Chula Himavanta* in Pali and Astadhyayi. *Usiraka* in *Dharva* (hilly area between *Vitasta* (Jhelum) and *Chandrabhaga*. (Chenab) is most probably Kalidhar and its eastward extension. *Usiradhavaja* of Vinaya texts, *Usiragiri* of Divyavadana and *Usinaragiri* of the Kathasaritsagara have been identified as designations of the same hills i.e Siwaliks in *Darva* and *Madra* (area east of *Chandrabhaga*) by B.C.Lal. There is no specific or direct mention of Pirpanjal Range which forms watershed between *Kasmira* in the north and *Darva* and *Madra* in the south in *Nitamatha*. But peaks of *Bahmasakli* or *Brahmasaki* of the Pir panjal Range where Visnu, Brhama and Maheshvara took their positions and *Kramasaras* (Konsarnag) have been mentioned in the legend pertaining to draining of Satisar and killing of the demon Jalodbava. Mention has also been made of the westernmost peak *Naubandana*. At the end of the *Manvantara* Mashevara (Shiva) transforms himself into water and turns the whole world into an ocean, Parvati assumes the form of a boat and the future Manu puts all the seeds in that boat. After assuming the form of a fish Vishnu pushes the boat and ties it to the high peak protruding above the water and hence the name *Naubandana*. However *Pantsaladhara* mentioned by Ksemendra has been identified as Pir Panjal Range..

The northern limit of the Kashmir valley is marked by the Great Himalaya Range referred in puranas as *Antargiri* and in the Pali literature as *Maha Hemavanta*. A number of southerly and southwesterly ridges/ spurs radiate from the central range giving rise to a number of side valleys. The most prominent ridge *Saskach* (Sasakot) bifurcates from the great Himalaya range near Mushran upstream of Amarnathji cave shrine forms a water parting between Sind and Lidar rivers. The *Saskach* follows a south-west north-east trend and at Drunnar or Hangsatu immediately below Sonamarg is traversed by the Sind river forming a narrow gorge beyond which it was known as *Bharatagiri* (north Kashmir or Sogput Range) isolating the *Krshna* (Kishenganga) valley from Sind and main Kashmir valley. Part of the same spur forming a triangular mass of mountains bound on the north and east by *Sindu* (Sind) valley and south and west by Lidari (Lidar) valley and the main Kashmir valley extends as far west as *Bastavalika* or *Jeyarudasaras* (Dai lake) and Ganderbal has no modern name but was known in Puranic times as *Mahadevagiri* and at a latter date as *Dudvana*. Lakes of *Manasaras* (Marsar) and *Tarasaras* (*Tarsar*) and shrines of *Hareshvara* (Hareshor) and *Mahadeva* are located on the triangular mass. The southern flanks of Dadvana are capped by peaks of Dhanada and *Vasrvana* (Vastarvan.) A minor spur of *Mahadevagiri* immediately south of Dal lake and north of Jhelum and west of Zabarwan known at present as Shankracharia hill was known as *Jyesthatudraparvata* or *Gopadri*. The original temple is believed to have been built by Jaluka son of Ashoka. The isolated hill of Hariparbat was known by the name of *Harparvata* and *Sarikaparvata*.

To the east of Dudukant Pass and north of Lar pargana on the north Kashmir range rising to about 16,000 feet stands the *Harmukuta* Shiva's diade popularly known as Harmukh. The lake which is at the foot of the glacier at an elevation of about 13,000 ft. is the glacier fed Kashmir Ganga, *Utraganga* or *Utrasaras* at present called as Gangabal.

According to *Matsya Purana* *Aruna* mountains lie to west of *Kailasa*, and according to *Vayupurana* on the other side of *Kailasa* and contains hundreds of peaks and is dominated on the south by *Dhumralohita* -the king of mountains. Lake *Silodaya* lies at its foot from which a river rises and flows west. The mountain to west of *Kailasa* with hundreds of peaks is apparently Ladakh Range This is the *Aruna* range of puranas. And *Dhumralohita* which lies south of and near *Aruna* is the Nanga Parbat and its significance as king of mountains can be visualized by the fact that summit of Nanga Parbat is 26,620 ft above msl with its base at the side of Indus is 3500 ft. exposing a fall of 23,120 ft. to an observer at its foot on the riverbed or on one of the passes connecting Kishenganga valley with that of Indus valley. The un paralalled view is much more impressive than that of Namchebarwa Peak and bed of Tsangpo (Brahamputra) in eastern Tibet. Lake *Sailodaya* appears to be Mahapadamsaras (Wular Lake) which once covered whole of Kasmira (Kashmir Valley) as Satisar and river *Siloda* which still flows through it is the *Vitasta* (Jhelum). The fall of more than 23,000 ft exposed to the gaze of observers during the Purana Times led to the belief that *Dhumralohita* (Nanga Parbat) was the highest peak in the world.

*(The author has remained a Senior Geologist with Geological Survey of India). END

Panun Kashmir organises Interactive Meets

KS Correspondent

Panun Kashmir held a series of meetings in different localities of Jammu like Bantalab, Bohri, Muthi. The meetings were held in continuation to the process initiated by the organisation to receive feed back from the community and share the organisational view point about the issues concerning the community.

Addressing these meetings, Panun Kashmir Chairman Dr Ajay Chrungoo highlighted various facets of the struggle and asked the community brethren to be optimistic and contribute to the struggle. Dr. Chrungoo assailed the successive governments for being indifferent to the community and even denying them their due share in employment etc.

Exhorting the community to be optimistic, Dr. Ajay Chrungoo asserted that Kashmiri Pandit is politically more important than at any other time in the recent past. He added that notwithstanding the indifference of political establishment at the centre and at state level to the concerns of the exiled community, Kashmiri Pandit has a definite role in the solution to Kashmir imbroglio. He said that unlike past Kashmiri Pandit is seen as a primary party to the Kashmir issue and wherever the issue is deliberated in any national or international fora Pandits' concerns are not overlooked. He added that invitation to Pandits to participate in Round Table Conference (RTCs), convened by the Prime Minister, is the reflection of same truth.

He asked Pandits to give up attitude of self denigration and look to the positive sides of their struggle which will help the community to overcome all the hurdles. "No doubt, there are some negative aspects but there are many achievements as well. If we go on neglecting achievements and highlight the darker side, it is not going to

benefit us. If we project positive side otherwise, we will be inspired to achieve our objective," Dr Chrungoo asserted.

Panun Kashmir Chairman said that despite all odds, it is the out-come of the community struggle that we survived the worst period. "We not only survived but established our foot hold and symbols of our culture, tradition and religion," Dr Chrungoo added.

Referring to recent comments of Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister about distress sales and unemployment in the community Dr. Chrungoo said that it reflects the negative attitude of the government towards Pandits. He added that it is ironic that government has not yet any statistics about such issues and it shows how it has ignored the gravity of the situation. "All the sale deeds involving Kashmiri Pandits selling their immovable property are distress sales. Pandits were forced to sell their property as it was either encroached upon or occupied and there are instances when administration failed to undo these illegal occupations. Even Pandits were counselled to sell the property to the occupant. If all such sales are not distress then what else was it?" questioned Dr Chrungoo.

Dr. Chrungoo said that it is the number-mass or the economic power that make a community politically important but Pandits lack in both. "The only weapon with the community is its dissent and struggle, we should continue the same to achieve the goal of homeland", PK leader said. Dr MK Teng, Chairman Advisory Panun Kashmir, said the community has to understand why it is in such a condition and who the forces are, that are responsible for their plight. He added that if it has failed to identify the enemy as yet, it is unfortunate. Dr Teng said that denial of employment to Pandit youth is the continuation of process of discrimination in which meritorious youth of the community have been denied their share even in professional courses since independence.

Professor Teng said that Kashmiri Pandits have made great contributions in the building of Indian nation and its contributions in strengthening the northern frontiers cannot be ignored.

President All State Kashmiri Pandits Solidarity Conference Sh ON Trisal described Panun Kashmiri as an ideological and revolutionary movement which needs revolutionary approach to achieve it. Asking Pandits to turn to the pages of history to learn that in any such revolutions, people who deviate from the ideology and main objective of the movement are destined to fall apart.

Mr Trisal said that Unity should always be objective oriented and putting just heads together shall serve no purpose. He said that community is united on the issue of homeland.

Launching a scathing attack on Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, former J&K Chief Minister and Patron PDP, for floating the balloon of self-rule, Mr Trisal said that all such solutions are aimed at weakening the sovereignty of India over Jammu and Kashmir. Referring to Mr Sayeed's longing for Yusuf Shah Chak rule, Mr ON Trisal said that it was Panun Kashmir that put the history in right perspective and described Chak ruler as a renegade. He added that Mufti and company had no argument to counter it. Mr Trisal said that Panun Kashmir took a firm stand on vital issues like peace process, replacement of BSF by CRPF for counter insurgency measures and subsequent events vindicated us.

Prof. ML Koul said that Panun Kashmir stands for consensus among the community on vital issues and result oriented unity but the organisation doesn't approve of any such unity which is just for unity and devoid of any ideological commitment. Chiding Ghulam Nabi Azad for his ignorance about the level of unemployment in the exiled community, Mr Koul said that 13,000 community youth submitted applications in response to Dr Farooq Abdullah's governments' announcement of employment package. He added that submission of such a large number of applications is testimony to the level of unemployment in the community.

Sh Kuldeep Raina, General Secretary of the organisation, gave a detailed account of the activities of the PK in recent past. He said that in order to educate Indian masses about the ugly inhuman and barbaric face of so-called freedom struggle, Panun Kashmir organised Photo-Exhibitions at Delhi and Mumbai and is in the process of organising the same at other places in the country. He said that these photographs, exhibiting vandalism and desecration of temples and shrines, have been taken from various parts of the Valley at high risks and have unmasked the real facet of the communal subversion. He said that the exhibition has been named as "Sakshatkaar" as it is really an encounter with the truth.

Referring to distress sale and employment package, Mr Raina said that it was during the first meeting with interlocutor KC Pant in Srinagar that Panun Kashmir raised the issue of declaring all sale deeds, involving the sale of immovable property of Pandits since 1990 as null and void as all such sales are distress sales. He added that the organisation welcomes the development that other organisations have also realised the import of the issue.

Mr Kuldeep Raina said that Panun Kashmir has been demanding an employment package to the tune of 20,000 and we have been raising the issue at every proper forum. He added that, in fact, the organisation dedicated year 2006 to the unemployed youth. Panun Kashmir leader said that failure of Farooq Abdullah to live to the promise, Mufti Sayeed governments denial of tracing any such applications and Ghulam Nabi Azad's ignorance about the level of unemployment in the community only reflect negative attitude of successive governments towards the concerns of the community. Among others who shared their opinion were advocate RK

Koul, Prof. Sumbly, Mr Vinod Koul and Mr Sundri Lal Koul at Bantalab and Mr. Vijay Chicken, Mr ML Koul and Mr Hriday Nath Pandita at Bohri, Sh ON Wattal and Sh Ajay Kaul at Muthi, Mr BL Koul and Satish Sher, the organisation secretaries compared the programmes. END

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

November 5, 2006—December 3, 2006

Nov 5: For his refusal to allow his daughter Mobina to marry a terrorist, terrorists gunned down Ahad Bhat at Maglogi in Gool alongwith Mobina, wife and a niece. Two terrorists were killed at Phagroo, Thathri. A boy was killed and three others injured as they fiddled with an explosive device while playing in a field at Sonarvani, Bandipore. A terrorist and two OGWs were arrested and arms recovered in different operations across the Valley.

Nov 6: A terrorist and a civilian were killed in Doda while an OGW of HM was arrested in Banihal. A girl and another civilian were injured in a firing incident at Tral Bus Stand. A police cop was injured as terrorists fired at their vehicle at Kulangam, Handwara. A soldier died in mysterious firing in Leh. Four exfiltrators were arrested in Baramulla. Jammu observed bandh as civil secretariat opened here today. 9 civilians including four overstaying family members of PoK crossed over LoC.

Nov 7: Security forces killed two terrorists at Bari Behak Rangwar while terrorists killed a constable in Rajwar, Kupwara. Terrorists hurled grenades on an Army vehicle in Tangmarg and a CRPF camp near Shiraz Cinema Srinagar; two Army jawans, two CRPF men and two civilians were injured in the attacks. A timber smuggler was injured as troops opened fire on the smugglers in Shopian. A SPO turned HM terrorist was shot dead at Budhs, Gandoh. A 17 year old boy who was being taken for arms training was rescued while a 70- year old Pakistani national was arrested near LoC.

Nov 8: Security forces eliminated three LeT terrorists at Darman, Gandoh while a HM terrorist was killed in a clash between HM and LeT cadres at Ghuroo, Gandoh. Troops recovered RDX in Thathri and destroyed a terrorist hide-out at Badi Naal, Banihal. A terrorist was killed in an operation at Drangiyari, Handwara. Terrorists shot dead a woman Raja at Warpora, Sopore. On the first day of arrival of a railway coach by road, terrorists caused an IED blast near Railway track at Gulzarpora in Awantipora injuring a civilian, another IED blast was caused at Kehnil, Tral. Four suspected terrorists were arrested in Baramulla.

Nov 9: Terrorists shot at and injured a 9th Class student Tariq Wani at Dooraswani, Lolab. Terrorists also fired at a Maruti Car in Khrew but the occupants escaped unhurt. Body of a woman was recovered at Chak Badwani, Qazigund, students in Tral held a demonstration against alleged torture of a student and a youth by RR. An Army jawan was killed and his neighbour, who came to his rescue, injured by terrorists at Pangai, Rajouri, Army handed over the civilian who had inadvertently crossed the LoC to Pakistani Army.

Nov 10: Five people were killed and 60 others injured as terrorist lobbed a grenade towards the procession led by Bareilvi cleric Maulani Abdur Rasheed near a mosque at Tahab, Pulwama. People captured the alleged grenade thrower and handed him over to Army. The youth has been identified as Ghulam Nabi Mir alias Sohra of Litter, Pulwama. Two CRPF men and three civilians were injured in a grenade attack at Hari Singh High Street, Srinagar. Terrorists fired upon a Civil Tata Sumo carrying troops and injured its driver in Baramulla.

Nov 11: The terrorist captured at Tahab told reporters that he threw the grenade at the behest of Hizbul Mujahideen. The Tata Sumo driver, injured yesterday, succumbed to his injuries. Three AK 47 rifles and four pistols were recovered in a search operation at Kota, Mendhar. Terrorists beat-up a SI and a cop at Kot Bhalwal fail. Four terrorists were awarded 22 year rigorous imprisonment by a Sessions Court at Jammu.

Nov 12: HM Battalion 'Commander' Mohammad Shia alias Unis was killed in an operation at Batkote, Pahalgam. A civilian was injured in an encounter in Magam, Handwara; an eight-year old girl, injured in Tahab-grenade attack, succumbed to her injuries. As Indo-Pak Foreign Secretary level talks begin today, Hurriyat leaders rushed to Delhi to meet the Pakistani Foreign Secretary. Farooq Abdullah described terrorism as the biggest challenge for humanity. Police cracked down on Kot Bhalwal jail, arrested a terrorist Jamali and picked up four Assistant Superintendents in connection with Mobile phone use in jail premises.

Nov 13: Two soldiers and a terrorist were killed and two police cops and a jawan injured in an encounter at Malla Parot in Khour. A HM terrorist Muzaffar alias Zahid Kamran surrendered in Doda. A terrorist kidnapped and subsequently beheaded Noor Din of village Mehar in Kishtwar; a child was injured in a mine blast in Nowshera. Police recovered arms and ammunition from Doda forests. A jawan was killed in firing on LoC. Terrorists gunned down a civilian at Sof Shali, Kokernag. Three soldiers were buried alive in a snow-avalanche in Gurez sector. Two more jail warders were held in mobile-use case. Separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani favoured plebiscite again.

Nov 14: 28 persons, including an Army Major and a Dy. Commandant of IRP, were injured in two powerful blasts targeting an Army convoy in Baramulla and a camp of CRPF in Srinagar. The death toll in the Tahab-blast reached to seven with death of one more victim. Eight terrorists were reportedly trapped in an

encounter in Gulgam forests. Doda police rescued a student who was kidnapped by terrorists for his recruitment. A grenade was defused near Kishtwar Bus Stand while PSO of an NC activist was shot at in Thathri, Doda. As India gave Pakistan evidence of its links with terrorists and secretary level talks conclude, Pak foreign secretary meets Kashmiri separatist leaders but fails to forge 'unity' among them.

Nov 15: Seven freshly infiltrated terrorists were eliminated in last 48 hours in Kupwara district. While four Armymen including a Major were injured, hunt is on for three more terrorists in the area. One more terrorist was killed in Magam area of same district. A terrorist was killed at Sumbar in Ramban and another was arrested by Police from Kither, Kishtwar. Police claimed to have arrested contract killer Makora, who had been hired to kill Kot Bhalwal jail Superintendent.

Nov 16: Close on the heels of capture of a local terrorist at Tahab, villagers of Awoora in Kupwara captured a Pakistani terrorist Saquib Aziz Malik and handed him over to Police. His three associates were killed in Helmetpora-Gulgam forests. Police arrested two VDC members Ghulam Mohammad and Ghulam Hussain of Tanda, Garethar (Doda); the duo had connived with terrorists and surrendered their weapons and helped the terrorists to loot the weapons of other two VDC members. Govt. replaced Superintendent of Kot Bhalwal jail. A court convicted a jail warden Mohammad Deen for seducing and impregnating a Pak lady-Shenaz at District Jail Poonch 10 years ago.

Nov 17: Two more terrorists were killed in Kupwara. A terrorist hide-out was busted and huge cache of arms and ammunition recovered in Cherhar-Shiva Jungles (Baramulla); three suspects were arrested from Kulgam. Terrorists hurled a grenade towards a patrol party of RR at Bandwara; it missed the target and exploded without causing any damage. Police arrested Bashir Ahmed alias Nikka; a resident of Koti Doda and a student of Government Higher Secondary School, Doda, for his terrorist links. Security forces recovered arms and ammunition at Palhalan, Banihal. An Army jawan Sher Singh committed suicide at Nachlana, Ramban. Bitta Karate joined JKLF as its Chief Organiser.

Nov 18: A terrorist was killed in Khour while an OGW of LeT was arrested and large quantity of ration recovered from a terrorist hide-out in Doda. Terrorists gunned down two civilians at Chak Nutnusa, Kupwara. A letter reportedly written by HM revealed shortage of cadre and finances.

Nov 19: A civilian and two CRPF personnel were injured as terrorists lobbed a grenade towards a naka at Kawdara, Srinagar. Terrorist lobbed a grenade towards a BSF picket at Bandipora, which failed to explode. Terrorists abducted a father-son duo from Amlar, Pulwama but later set free father. As a terrorist hide-out was smashed and arms recovered at Kach-Pathri, Shopian, officials claimed that hundreds of terrorists were waiting across the LoC for their infiltration. A SPO was arrested for raping a girl in Manjakote.

Nov 20: A HM terrorist was killed at Thacchu Mohalla, Gool and a terrorist attack was repulsed, forcing foreign terrorists to escape leaving behind two AK-47 rifles and ammunition, in Ghambir Mugalan, Rajouri. A terrorist each were killed at Devar, Lolab and Mehmoodabad, Dooru. A PoK MLA was among 117 who crossed over the LoC at Chakkan-da-Bagh. Fake currency was recovered and a youth held in Rajouri.

Nov 21: Two terrorists, including HM Commander Arif Tunda, were killed at Kawana, Banihal. A grenade attack at Surankote Police Station failed to cause any damage. Three persons were arrested for impersonating as terrorists in Rajouri and two others were held from Mahore, Udhampur for terrorists links. Terrorists killed a PDD JE at Bus Stand Mamoosa, Pattan and body of a Kashmir University student, who was allegedly hanged to death by terrorists, was recovered at Gulab Bagh, Naudal in Tral. The amalgam of four terrorist outfits named as "G-4" warned Kashmiri youth against joining security forces.

Nov 22: Terrorists killed a jawan at Kangan and a civilian at Zalloora in Sopore. Two LeT terrorists were held in Delhi. While former Prime Minister Atal Bihari alleged that UPA was confused about tackling terrorism, Union Home Minister Shiv Raj Patil said that terrorists were planning to use sea-route and oil and nuke installations were under threat.

Nov 23: Three top LeT terrorists were killed in an encounter of Hunzar, Dachan. A suspect was arrested from Akramabad, Doda and a teacher of Government Middle School, Pangai (Rajouri) Choudhary Fazal Hussain was arrested for LeT links. Arms and ammunition was recovered in Doda and Poonch. Lawyers in Kashmir boycotted the court work to protest attack on their President. Afzal hanging issue rocked Parliament. Prime Minister opined that terrorism is not now Kashmir-centric and asked security forces not to be complacent.

Nov 24: Three soldiers and a released terrorist were injured in two different incidents of firing in Bandipore and Kulgam. Lawyers continued boycott of courts today also.

Nov 25: In a day of violence nine soldiers, one civilian and two terrorists were killed and two jawans injured in different incidents in Kashmir Valley. 18 terrorists surrendered after their return from PoK. A surrendered criminal Sanjay Kumar alias Bittu alias Bakra was shot dead at a doctor's clinic in Trikuta Nagar Jammu.

Nov 26: Two LeT terrorists were killed in an encounter on the outskirts of Pampore. An encounter was reportedly going on between terrorists and security forces in Bandipore. Days after clash between two separatists groups ISL and DPM in Rajbagh, the supporters of Yasin Malik and Mirwaiz Umar Farooq clashed in the

stronghold of Mirwaiz, Bohri Kadal, Srinagar. The ceasefire between India and Pakistan along the IB and the LoC completed three years.

Nov 27: A terrorist was killed while three others managed to escape in an encounter at Sesman, Qazigund. Forces destroyed a terrorist hide-out and recovered arms and ammunition from Zazbal forests in Tral. A police cop and a civilian were injured in different incidents in Rajouri and Poonch districts. A Pak national Mohammad Tariq was sentenced to 15 years rigorous imprisonment. Two JeM terrorists were held in Delhi. Indo-Pak foreign ministers to meet on January 13, 2007 in Islamabad.

Nov 28: Hizbul Mujahideen 'Div. Commander' Suhail was killed at his hideout in the residential locality of Mufti Mohammad Sayeed in Bijbehara. Terrorists fired upon the widow of one-time HM chief Majid Dar's widow Dr Shameema Badroo at Chanpora, Srinagar. Nine civilians, including five tourists, were injured in a grenade attack in Tangmarg, Baramulla. Admist alleged use of mobile phones by terrorists in Kot Bhalwal Jail, government suspended the ex-Supdt. of the jail Sheikh Abdul Rashid. It was during Sheikh's tenure that the mobiles were recovered.

Nov 29: Bodies of two women were fished out of Jhelum. Five kg RDX were recovered in Bhaderwah. Two days after the arrest of JeM terrorists, Delhi Police described them as conduits for shipping hawala money and explosives.

Nov 30: A RR Commandant was injured in an IED blast at Baramulla while a terrorist was killed in Kreeri, Baramulla. Three terrorists were killed at Mahore while three more terrorists surrendered in Doda. An OGW of terrorists was arrested from Ratan, Doda and arms were recovered in Dudu area of Udhampur. Court dismissed a petition by Army officials in Pathribal killing case. Hurriyat leader Prof. Gani Bhat said that Hurriyat was ready for talks with the Centre.

Dec 1: At least 25 jawans were injured in an accidental blast inside Army Battle School at Keri, Rajouri. Terrorists kidnapped a girl from Mantoo, Gandoh. Two suspects were arrested in Poonch and a Pakistani national in Arnia sector. A Lt. Colonel ended his life in Mahore.

Dec 2: A court exempted Yasin Malik from personal appearance in IAF personnel killing case. Making mockery of security arrangements, a Pakistani Mirza Noor landed in the hands of Police and Army in Kanachak after travelling seven states undetected. Hurriyat distanced itself from PDP's self-rule.

Dec 3: Terrorists killed a contractor at Baramulla and injured a student at Tujjar Sharif, Sopore while a terrorist was killed at Harwan, Srinagar. Finance Minister Abdul Hamid Qarra had a narrow escape as a terrorist lobbed a grenade on a road in Gool minutes before his arrival. Wife of a HM terrorist was wounded in an exchange of firing at Parshola, Doda. Security forces arrested two OGW's of terrorists and rescued a girl in Doda. Hashmi Qureshi and Sajad Lone opposed self-rule and autonomy. END

Wedding ceremonies of old Kashmiri Pandits-II

By Dr. R.K. Tamiri

Barring Lahore, Delhi and Lucknow, the number of Pandit families living in different cities of northern India at times did not even exceed ten. It was unusual to find the bridegroom from the same city. Invariably, the *baratis* had to tread fairly long distances. Pt. Moti Lal Nehru had booked the full train for taking *barat* of Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru from Allahabad to Delhi. This had its impact on some of the ceremonies associated with the marriage. In course of time compulsions became regular customs. Leading families used these innovations to display their affluence.

Laganchir, Sanzivaru, Phoolon Ka Gehna:

It is quite possible that these three ceremonies may not have been on the same day/or the day of *barat* previously or at places where the bridegroom happened to be from the same city as the bride. All the three ceremonies have Kashmiri origin, though *Sanzivaru* and *Phoolon Ka Gehna* have become out of date among Kashmiri Pandits of Kashmir. Till 1930 the cosmetics box given to the bride was called *Sanzivaru* in Kashmir also. It was a papier mache item, usually round in shape and had decorative work on it. Items of personal use for the bride were put in it. In village Sanzivaru was made of Wicker. For *Phoolon Ka Gehna* also there is evidence to suggest that this was in vogue among Pandits in Kashmir.

As per Shri Arjun Dev Majboor, a noted poet and accredited researcher a common metaphor prevalent among Pandits of rural Kashmir was: Even if you can give nothing even a *dejhori* of flower and a white *saree* would suffice (*Agar na Kihin Hekhas Karith, toiti dijhas Posha dejhor tah safed doiit*). Father-in-Law would suggest this to his counterpart.

All *lagans* of old Kashmiris used to be rot *lagans* (night *barats*). *Laganchir*, *Phoolon Ka Gehna* and *Sanzivaru* functions took place separately with 1-2 hours difference and commenced few hours before the arrival of *barat*. *Purohit* would take *laganchir* to bride's home and get money and sweets as thanks giving.

Sazvaru was an item for the ceremony of decorating the bride. *Sanz* means decorative and *varu* means things. Interestingly, Henny Sender calls 'Sazivaru' as '*Satoroo*'. About the change, replacing the wood with expensive leather, she critically comments, "the switch was regrettable both because it imposed an additional financial demand serving no useful purpose and because it removed the Pandits of the plains just a bit more from the practices of those still in Kashmir".

It used to be an *attache* of papier mache or carved walnut wood. It included such items for the bride—*bindi*, silver *dabi*, nail, *missi*, teeth shagn, *kajal dabi*, mirror, comb, *saboon dani*, powder puff, *pashmina shawl* etc. All these were made of silver. *Sanzvaru* also contained *Gulab Pash* (case containing rose water) and *Itar Pash* (scent) for *baratis*. Groom's family was very particular about the sprinkling of *Gulab water* on them by the bride's family on the procession of *barat*. Many families sent special instructions through the *Purohit* for sprinkling of *Gulab water*. It was linked with the *Izzat* (honour) of *barat*. *Sanzvaru* box was covered well embroidered satin or velvet cloth with '*Sada Suhagan*' (long and happy married life) inscribed on it. At times groom's horoscope for passing it on to bride's parents was carried by *Purohit* in it.

In a slight variation, which reflects an innovation of Lucknawi Pandits, *Sanzvaru* made of silver was presented. *Sanzvaru* was taken to bride's home in a procession accompanied by a live band and the *Guru*.

In *Phoolon Ka Gehna* ceremony the bride is decorated with jewellery made from flowers. *Phoolon Ka Gehna* was an indicator of what jewellery groom's side would offer to the bride. Young ladies from the groom's side would carry floral jewellery and a new sari for the bride on a silver plate. They would go to bride's home in a ceremonial procession. A band playing traditional *Shehnai* music would accompany them. Fresh red roses and jasmine flowers are used for preparing floral jewellery—necklaces, earrings, the '*tikka*' braids for the bride's hair, anklets, *bazubands* (arm bands), '*tagadis*' (waist bands), the *ankelets* and a special thumb ring called '*arsi*'. The latter has a small mirror embedded in it to help bride view herself in it. Toys and dolls were also presented to the bride in this function. The bride's side served tea and sweets to the guests from groom's side. In certain cases where Groom's side resided in the same city, *Phoolon Ka Gehna* ceremony would take place one day before the *barat*. In that case the bride's side served dinner to the ladies carrying *Phoolon Ka Gehna*. Henny Sender describes this custom '*Phoolon Ka Gehna*' as not only beautiful but also practical.

Seherbandi

Turban (*Pagadi*) for the groom is tied by his uncle (in certain families by the brother-in-law). '*Sehra*' or floral veil for the groom was common. In wedding rituals of old Kashmiris, a case of departure from Kashmiri Pandits of Kashmir, *pufi* (father's sister) is not important. Traditional *zang* on *Seherabandi* is offered to the *purohit*. The groom is made to sit on mare. In Lucknow Pandits this was uncommon.

In the family of Late Shivnath Katju sword for the groom was popular. In Lucknow grooms wore *Chooridar Pyjama*, *Sherwani* Achkan, flower *Sehera*, two gold necklaces and gold and jewels studded *safa*. The Kashmiris of Kashmir would also tie a golden thread called **dov** around the groom's turban.

After the tying of *Sehera* the groom is made to stand at the entrance of the house on *Viyug* (rangoli-drawn in colourful designs). All the elders of the family shower coins on to the '*Viyug*' after taking them around the groom's head a few times. '*Zang*' is again offered. All this is to keep the groom secure from the 'evil eye'.

Old Kashmiris do not put on special headwear of *Zooj* and *Kalpush* on the head of the bride for *lagan* ceremony.

Arrival of Barat

The groom used to be brought in a decorated buggie, which is now replaced by car. The servant holds a silver umbrella over the head of the bridegroom. A pot *Maharaja* (shadow bride groom) with *chatri* (*umbrella*) closely follows the groom. A '*veghu*' is laid at the bride's home. The bride is brought to the '*veghu*' by her maternal uncle. The *barat* is welcomed with the sprinkling of rose water. The groom too is taken to the '*veggu*' to be alongside the bride.

Barat used to be 80-100 in number depending upon the capacity of the groom's father to pay fare for the *barat*. On an average *barat* used to stay for 2-3 days. All the arrangements for lodging and food were made by the bride's family.

Pt. Suraj Narain Bakshi, a scion of an old Kashmiri family of Jammu and related to the clan of Nand Ram Tiku from his mother's side, recalls, "I once went with *barat* to Nathdwara in Rajasthan. The *barat* stayed there for 6-7 days. The bride's father was a high official there. All the shopkeepers of the town had instructions from him to lavishly entertain the *baratis*. Even for whatever the *baratis* purchased in the market, the entire bill was footed by the bride's father".

There were also certain innovations in 'arrival of *barat*' ceremony. Pt. Suraj Bakshi's grandfather, Pt. Jagan Bakshi was married in Aima family of Srinagar. Colour was added to the *barat* through the presence of professional lady dancers, band and large-scale bursting of crackers. Such paraphernalia was otherwise uncommon in Kashmir.

Sh. Suraj Bakshi's father Pt. Iqbal Nath was married to the daughter of Late Maharaj Krishan Tikku, a direct descendant of Nand Ram Tiku's brother. The latter was an official in Punjab National Bank and had died before

the marriage of his daughter. The bride's maternal grandfather, who hailed from the family of Kouls in Srinagar, had arranged the marriage function in Srinagar. *Barat* of Sh. Iqbal Nath went in boat.

On arrival of *barat*, bride's side used to release pigeons to ward off evil-spirit to bridegroom. This practice was prevalent in Kashmir also in 1930s and 1940s. Gota is then served to *barat*.

Its preparation was a troublesome procedure—coconut was grinded in Chakki/machine to appear as thin rice flakes. *Barat* is then given *Sharbat* to drink. *Barat* is treated to a grand vegetarian feast. Food was served in *patras* (leaves) or *thalis*. In case of rot *lagan* the wedding couple also joins the dinner. The groom eats in a silver plate and after that the bride is fed from the same plate. There are some variations of this in Lahore and Lucknow Pandits. The parents of the bride usually fast on the day of *lagan*. **Hazri** custom was seen among UP Kashmiri Pandits. Different types of sweets are served. *Hazri* could be *choti* (small) or *badi* (big). In *choti hazri* sweets were served in a cup, while in *badi one* plenty of sweets were available.

Lagan:

After the lavish vegetarian meals, the wedding ritual is performed around the sacred fire. After the seven *phas* the couple is made to sit facing each other under a pashmina shawl. It is the same shawl that was sent by the groom's family in *Sanzvaru'*. The couple view each other through a silver mirror. The wedding ritual may at times last the whole night. *Posh Puja* is a ritual that these old Kashmiris have preserved in its original flavour. Late Amar Nath Sapru had dilated upon the significance of this ritual nine decades back in an interesting treatise. The present author also had the opportunity to go through Ranjit S.Pandit's commentary on wedding rituals, including on *Poshpuja* at Anand Bhavan, Allahabad. This has been displayed in the form of plaque put on the *verandah* where *lagan* ceremony for Indira and Feroz Gandhi was performed.

Posh Puja is performed in the morning after the wedding ritual. Close relatives participate in this ritual, where flowers are showered on the couple and blessings given for happy married life. Members of the bride's family stand near the bride, while those of the groom's stand next to the groom. In *Posh Puja* the wedding couple are treated as *Shiva* and *Parvati* and worshipped as such. *Daya bata* is given to the couple after *Posh Puja*, cook gets the *shagoon*. In *Dayabata* the bride and the groom feed each other some food, essentially rice, signifying the end of the ceremony. **Bidai** (*vidai* or departing)

The send off ceremony is called *Bedai* (*vidai*). The bride is escorted to the *Viyug* and takes some coins in her hands. She throws these over the top of her head.

Mam Nabad was a heavy item for bride's parents, shawl or suitings were given. In Punjabis Mama or *Mossy Ki Matni* is given, depending upon the stakes involved.

On arrival at the marital home the couple is made to sit on large upturned baskets. They are made to feed each other with sweet rice and curd. Now the *Dejeharoo* is removed and replaced with silver tassels or *Atahroo*. This is the final confirmation of wedding status. In Kashmir the couple was made to sit on the hearth. The cook would serve food-sweet rice, vegetables and curds. This is fed to the couple by the *pofi*. The cook is given *dan zang* (Hearth thanks giving).

Satraat:

For *Satraat* the couple was taken to temple where there would be change of *lagan* dress both for the groom and the bride. Lot of utensils were given. Some families used to give the whole *satraat* of silver.

Garasun:

While Kashmiris resident in Kashmir call this function as *Gara-atichun*, old Kashmiris pronounce it is *Gara-Sun*.

The bride's brother and sister come to their sister's marital home to take her to her parent's home for one day. *Garasun* function is completed before departure of the *barat*. The bride's family throws a lavish non-veg. feast to welcome the relations of the groom. Food was served with full protocol. The delicacies were prepared by Kashmiri cooks. Their number was 25-30 and were resident mostly in Lucknow and Meerut. From there they would go to different cities of Northern Indian to cook food in wedding functions of Kashmiri Pandits.

The relatives of the boy are paid money. In 1940 the amount to be paid to them could range from Rs 5 to 50 thousand. *Garasun* meal was usually a lunch function. The groom's side used to be quite demanding. It is also true that the previous generations in this respect were a little more sophisticated. *Garasun* and *phirsal* used to be a common function because the families of the bride and groom used to live in distant cities. The bride's relations were not called for *garasun* by the groom's side in reciprocation.

Parmasun

Parmasun was another meal served to the *baratis* on the day following *Garasun*. What significance this ceremony had among old Kashmiris is not clear. According to Sh. Arjun Dev Majboor *Parmasun* means change of clothes. After *lagan*, in-laws dress the bride in a new clothes. The groom also changes the dress. In villages of rural Kashmir and among old Kashmiris where the groom was from a distant place this change of clothes was not done at the marital home but at some person's house nearby.

Bidai Ka Khana: *Baratis* were also served packed lunch for return journey.

Lagan Ke Baad Mithai: The distribution of sweets after marriage was a custom probably copied from the Muslims. The distribution had come to embrace more and more recipients. Sweets were presented to the in-laws of the bride alongwith other gifts. Probably, this a replica of Roth Khabar function.

Gulmuth, the gifts/cash offered by relatives to the bride/the bridegroom is called by the same name by old Kashmiris.

Postwedding customs in the following year are not cumbersome among old Kashmiris. Since Shivratri was not celebrated by old Kashmiris in Kashmiri style it has no special significance in wedding. The bride is not called to parental home on the occasion, no walnuts or gifts are given on the occasion. On *Navreh*, called *Navroz* by old Kashmiris, the bride's parents would invite groom and serve sweets. Cash and clothes used to be given to the groom. For groom's side birthday function of the boy used to be a big affair. A lavish feast was served to the guests. On the birthday of the bride/the groom turmeric laced rice is prepared but no gifts are sent by the bride's side to the groom. Unlike Kashmiris of Kashmir, old Kashmiris would not send cash on birthdays of the close relations of the groom. There is no Shishur function among old Kashmiris. Instead on Diwali and Holi, to show sensitivity to the customs of the places of new settlement, cash, dress and sweets are sent to the groom's side. This giving of money on festival day was called by old Kashmiris as *lawaz-ma*.

Postscript

Certain non-wedding customs among old Kashmiris show the impact of displacement. *Ekdashi* and *Purnmashis/Satynarain* became more important than *Ashtmi*. *Mundan* function was not an important one. *Janev* was a very important function. Duribat of Matamal was usual. First Abeed was as usual given by Mossy. Unlike Kashmiris of Kashmir, in old Kashmiris cash abeed was not only given to Guruji, but cash and at times gifts were also offered to the boy undergoing *Yagneopavit* ceremony. Maximum age for *Janev* in old days used to be 15-16 years. No meat was prepared on Kushalhom function. On the day of *Navreh (Navroz) Thal barun* was practised. There was no difference in death rituals.

(Note: In preparation of this article my special thanks are due to Dr. BN Sharga and Sh Suraj Narain Bakshi for providing me rare photographs/documents. Besides this Sh Arjun Dev Majboor, Mrs. Madan Shungloo and my parents provided valuable inputs to help me build a historical perspective on it. Much more information needs to be recorded on this subject than has been recorded here--The Author) END

Shri Shivstotravali audio caseette and CD released

KS Correspondent

An Audio Cassette/CD of Shri Shivstotravali containing 14 different hymns of Shiv Upasana was recently released at different places including Jammu. Under the banner of Omkaram Audio Video, Chennai, the audio is composed by Smt. Girija Pandit. Smt Girija Pandit is a proficient composer and singer, who has already composed and sung in different languages including Kashmiri, Gujrati, Bhojpuri, Punjabi and Hindi and till date 45 cassettes of different languages have been released. Her cassettes of Punjabi Gurbani and Kashmiri language have been widely acclaimed. END

Community News

Kashmiri Samiti Udaipur elects body

KS Correspondent

UDAIPUR, Dec 3: General body meeting of Kashmiri Samiti, Udaipur was held on 3/12/2006 Sunday afternoon at Manikyalal Verma Park, Dudhtalai, Udaipur. All Kashmiri Biradari members with family attend the meeting.

All members appreciated the work done by executive committee of Samiti for last two years and unanimously decided to elect the executive committee members for next two years as under:

Rajeev Mujoo, President; Rajesh Bhat, Vice-President; Sandeep Razdan General Secretary; Sunil Bhat, Treasurer. END

Ensure safety of Indu Jalali

KS Correspondent

"Panun Kashmir in its Working Committee felt deeply concerned about the safety of Smt. Indu Jalali who has been facing lot of harrasment from miscreants. Smt. Indu Jalali who fought for Justice in Priyadarshani Mattoo murder case had lodged several complaints including complaint with SSP Ghaziabad regarding threats received by her with no avail. Panun Kashmir urges upon the UP government to provide fool-proof security to Smt. Indu Jalali with immediate effect.

KSS elects new body for 2006-8

KS Correspondent

FARIDABAD, Nov 26: The elections of the office bearers and the executive body of KSS Faridabad were held under secret ballot at Sharika Bhawan on 26 of November 2006.

Following members were elected:

Padamshri JN Kaul, President; Dr. ML Hashia, Senior Vice-President; Rajender Magazine, Vice President; Sh Puran Patwari, General Secretary; Sh AK Monga, Treasurer; Sh Vijay Kaul, Dr SK Rawal, Joint Secretaries; Sh Kuldeep Kachroo, Assistant Treasurer and Elect Members: Sh. Kashi Akhoon, Sh Anil Dhar, Sh Ashok Kaul, Sh Subash Premi, Sh PL Bhat, Dr AK Raina, Sh SN Kak, Sh Vinod Dhar, Dr SK Handoo, Sh CL Wali, Sh. Surender Bhat, Dr JL Fotedar, Sh. PN Dhar, Smt. Mohini Dhar, Sh KL Kaul, Sh. ML Kaul, Sh Opender Kaw, Sh RN Kaul, Smt Indira Kaul, Sh Surender Kachroo and Sh Romesh Bhat. END

'Kashmir Hindu Sanskars (Rituals, Rites and Customs):

A Study—A REVIEW

By Upender Ambardar

The book under review titled as 'Kashmir Hindu Sanskars' (Rituals, Rites and Customs): A study is authored by Sh. S.N. Pandit. Before remarking upon the review of the said book, it is imperative to have a clear understanding of religion, culture, Sanskars, ritual rites and customs, which are altogether distinct and separate entities.

Etymologically, the word religion comes close to the meaning of 'dharma', originating from the Sanskrit root word 'Dhar' meaning to garner, to consolidate, to integrate, to sustain, to blend, to guard, to shield, to preserve or to safeguard. Religion is also said to be the cosmic order of the entire reality, rather it is a triad of the body, soul and the spirit. In other words, religion upholds and sustains the people by blending one's self with the divine supreme. In addition to it, religion also reaffirms the bond and link between the physical body, the soul which dwells in the body and the Divine Spirit. Religion is also supposed to cement our association with the entire humanity the universe in which we live and innumerable manifestations along with the associated unexplainable mysteries

Another term in vogue i.e 'Sanatan Dharma', which signifies an ancient revered tradition along with the accompanying spiritual pursuit, which encompasses the entire universe, the land in which we live, the country and the society in addition to the whole set of families and the relationships. The famous Sanskrit saying 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam i.e. the whole universe is my family and that all beings, are one bears testimony to this concept of 'Sanatan Dharma'. All the religions have three aspects of philosophy, rituals and mythology, among which philosophy runs same in all the religions with rituals and mythology exhibiting variations. Next comes culture, which in my opinion is a face-up to the past, which prepares us for the future. Culture is a complex interplay of diverse components of customs, rituals, ceremonies, beliefs, taboos and codes of social habits and conduct along with the related institutions and methodological activities. It is the culture, which acts as a lever to enforce the people to adhere to the socially acceptable moral, ethical and principled norms. The expressive strategy is one of the aspects of culture, which includes music, dance, art, literature and above all the mother tongue. Lastly, culture encourages and inspire the people of a particular set-up to interpret the individual and social life meaningfully.

The quality of excellence of culture is determined by rituals, rites and customs, which enrich our lives by nourishing our souls and in the process give a purposeful meaning to our time-tested traditional values. The rituals, rites and customs are a set of rules and norms of conduct, which ensure the cultural welfare of a social group or a community by guiding our everyday actions. They are invaluable and helpful for our mental, physical, psychological and spiritual well-being. Having a strong emotional base, they are interwoven in the matrix of our social and cultural lives. As such, they provide socio-cultural directions that give strength and might to the community. Last but not the least are the Sanaskars, which are integrated acts of purification of the mind, which help in self-realisation. Sanskars leave a permanent and everlasting impression on the mind. They are acquired gradually and slowly either by scriptures but mostly by observations. They not only connect us with the past but also force us on the righteous path. Now coming to the book titled "Kashmir Hindu Sanskars", authored by Sh SN Pandit is a whooping 461 pages tome, thoughtfully structured into seventeen chapters and is priced at Rs 475.

It covers a huge range of subjects ranging from 'Garbadhana' i.e. very conception for life to the last and final stage of life. The book under review is a recounting of religio-social cultural history of Kashmiri Pandits, enfolding a fascinating and detailed account of almost every aspect of our ritual, rite and custom.

Perhaps, it is for the first time that the said book gives a telling insight into everything connected with our customs and rituals, providing an in-depth chronicle of our daily lives. The book gives a clear understanding of the daily rituals and rites meant both for men and women, supposed to be performed from dawn to dusk. The

author in introduction dwells on the past history by describing Kashmiri Pandits—the Saraswat Brahmins as the direct descendents of Kashyap Rishi. The introductory narrative also unfolds the point that at the onset of first Manvantra, the nine rishis namely Maricha, Atri, Angira, Pulastya, Vishvmitra, Bhardwaja, Gautama and Jamedagni were the first to inhabit the drained-out land of Satidesha. The author also enlightens us that though sixteen Sanskars are in vogue among Hindus outside Kashmir but in contrast to it, Kashmiri Pandits have twenty four Sanaskars to guide them right from the conception and birth to death.

In the journey of life, these Sanskars are signboards that indicate directions to be followed at various stages of life. The chapter two covers almost all the rituals right from the pre-natal Sanaskars and rituals starting from 'Bijwapan/Garbhadan' to the post-birth rituals of 'Truy' (third day after birth, 'Shransondar' (ritualistic bathing), 'Kaha-Nethir' (Jatakarn), 'Namkaran', 'Nishkraman' or 'Masi-Nyathir', 'Tsatjihim Shran' (ritualistic bath for both mother and child after forty days), 'Aniprashun', 'Kun-Chomban', 'Voharvod' (birthday) and 'Zarikasay'. In the chapter three of the said book, the author Sh. S.N. Pandit familiarises the reader with the philosophical, historical and religious background of all the rituals connected with 'Yagnopavita' ceremony starting from the chopping of fire-wood (Zyun-Tsatun), the shopping on the auspicious day, 'Dapun' or the ritualistic invitation to the guests, 'Gari-Navay' or cleaning of the house, 'Mehndiraat', 'Devgon' (rites invoking blessings of God), 'Hawan Shalla' for the Yagnopavita and the actual thread ceremony ending with the 'Koshalhom' ceremony. In the subsequent chapters numbered fourth, fifth and sixth, a wide range of insightful information is also given by the author Sh. S.N. Pandit—starting right from the ritual of matching of horoscopes or 'Tekin-Milnavin', engagement or 'Kasamdriay', 'hair-dressing' or 'Mus-Muchravan', 'Lagni Chir' or intimation for marriage date and timings, the arrival and reception of 'barat', the significance of the decorative welcome sign of 'Vyug', feasting of the guests, the ritualistic pooja at the door of the bride's house, 'Kanya-dan function', 'Athavass' or holding of the hands by the bride and the bride-grooms, 'Saft-padi' or seven steps undertaken by the groom and the bride jointly, 'Dayi-bata' or sharing of the food by the groom and the bride, 'Posha-pooja', and lastly departure of the barat. The author also gives a telling account of the post-marriage functions and ceremonies in the chapter six, which comprise of 'Kadil-tar' or crossing of the bridge on way to the bride-grooms' home, 'Zam-brandh' or gratifications to the groom's sister, 'Maet-mohar' or presents for the mother-in-law, 'Trunk-Havun' or display of the dowry, 'Sutrath', 'Roth-Khabur' or welfare information, 'Phir-Sal' or first invitation to the son-in-law and 'Ghar-atchun' or formal feasting at the the respective homes of the bride and the groom.

The festivals and occasions during the first year of marriage like birthday, 'Netri-Vohravodh' or the first marriage anniversary, 'Shravni-punim' or Raksha-bandhan, 'Zarma-Satam' or Janam-Ashtami, 'Shishur-lagun' or ritual at the advent of winter, 'Shivratri', 'Navreh', 'Zangtra' i.e. third day of 'Navreh', in addition to the functions of the occasion nature like 'Nav-sheen' i.e. first snowfall etc. have also been detailed by the author. Sh. S.N. Pandit, the author also gives good insight in the rituals and customs pertaining to death like 'Anteshti', 'Dah-Sanaskar' or cremation, collection of the mortal remains and subsequent immersion at 'Sangam', bathing and washing of clothes known as 'Chalun', tenth, eleventh and twelfth day rituals, the fortnightly and monthly rituals of 'Pachvar', 'Maaswar', rituals at the end of six months i.e. 'Shudmos', 'Vaharvahr' or rituals at the end of one year and lastly 'Shradh' or the death anniversary.

The said book also successfully captures the entire gamut of the festivals and auspicious occasions of the year like 'Shivratri, Navreh, Zang-tra, Durgaashtami, Ramnavami, Baisakhi, Nirjala-ekadashi, Mela Khir Bhawani, Ashad Navami, Ashad Chaturdash, Raksha-Bandhan, Janam Ashtmi, Vinayak Chaturthi, Veth Truvah, Navratra, Vijay Dashmi, Dipawali, Gada Batta, Kyhetchri-mavas, Shishar-Sankrath, Thal-Barun and Kaw-Punim etc.

The inclusion of the information regarding the auspicious moments like 'Saath-Vuchun', superstitions, taboos, lunar and solar eclipses, 'Malamas' and 'Banamas' etc. reflects author's social awareness and denotes his successful attempt to reach-out fully to his community members with his descriptive narration. In the concluding chapter, the author familiarizes the reader with different planets and their consequent effect in various zodiac positions. Lastly coming to the cover of the book, I am reminded of Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk's assertion that book covers are like faces, the more attractive, colourful and captivating one's are fast selling. The book under review has an appealing and alluring bright coloured cover displaying holy signs and diagrammatic representations of the Yagnya-Shalla, in addition to an abstract of the 'Kalash' etc.

In short, the book '**Kashmir Hindu Sanskars**', written by Sh. S.N. Pandit is a valuable guide that tells us everything about our culture, heritage, traditions, rituals, customs and festivals. It is a book for all and everyone. It is packed with graphic details, fascinating facts and information rendered in sequential order. The relevant folk songs on the occasion and the rituals with accompanying English translation is its added charm.

Painstaking study and investigation has been undertaken by the author to prepare this cultural treatise, which makes the book to stand-out from the rest. Unarguably, the book will serve as a base material for further research about the rituals, rites and customs of Kashmiri Pandits.

*The author specialises in Kashmiri Folk-Traditions and Culture.